

A script from



“The I Love You Game”

by
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- What** As Jeff confesses to Justin that he no longer loves his wife, he’s met with a surprising response. Justin challenges Jeff to “level up” as he explains that marriage is an opportunity to fall in love again, as many times as it takes.
Themes: Duo, Comedy-Drama, Marriage, Love, Divorce, Faithfulness, Vows, Commitment, Valentine’s Day
- Who** Justin – 20s-30s, a young married man with a romanticized view of love, and iffy-to-non-existent Christian convictions (may be played by a woman--with some word changes)
Jeff – 40s+, a long-married man with a seasoned wit and strong Christian convictions, underpinned by genuine compassion (may be played by a woman--with some word changes)
- When** Present
- Wear (Props)** Business casual clothes
Table
Chairs
Two coffee cups
Thermos
Smart phone
- Why** Matthew 19:5-6; Malachi 2:14, 16; Genesis 2:23-24
- How** Don’t let your actors get trapped at the table. When Justin becomes worked up, have him rise, move away. Have Jeff go to him and become animated when he talks about The “I Love You” Game.
- Time** Approximately 5 minutes

Justin sits at the table, playing a game on his phone, clearly unhappy, distracted. Jeff walks past behind him, thermos and stack of cups in his hands.

Jeff: *(without looking at Justin)* Meeting in five. Ron wants everyone there.

Justin does not answer. Jeff stops just, crosses back the table and sits next to Justin. Pours him a cup of coffee.

Jeff: If you want sugar you have to come to the meeting. *(Pause; Jeff pushes the cup closer)*

Justin: *(picks up cup, sips)* I'm thinking of leaving Rachel. *(Painfully)* I'm not in love with her anymore.

Jeff takes a breath, closes his eyes (thinking a prayer).

Justin: *(not really wanting to hear the answer)* What should I do?

Jeff: Put it to a vote.

Justin: What?

Jeff: How would she vote?

Justin: Well, right now she's hurt, so...

Jeff: And the other two? They get a vote.

Justin: What other two? We don't have kids.

Jeff: God. He invented the thing, so guess what his vote'll be.

Justin: Yeah. *(Rolls his eyes)* And?

Jeff: Us.

Justin: Us?

Jeff: The person you created when you became "one flesh." Remember? I was at your wedding. The preacher said, "You are no longer two, but one. And, therefore, what God has joined together, let nobody tear apart." So you know how *Us* is gonna vote. Oh, and by the way, you already voted when you promised not to tear *Us* apart.

Justin: *(distracted, moving away)* But I don't think I love her anymore.

Jeff: *(pauses, then smiles wistfully)* Oh, you will again.

Justin: *(turning back)* How can you be so sure?
Jeff: Because I've been there too many times to count. *(Gestures toward the meeting room)* Call a meeting!

Justin: What?

Jeff: You may not get a re-vote, but you do have a right to call meetings. Then lay your heart before Us, and ask your wife to do the same. Of course, Us'll probably cry or get angry, because that's what Us does when it comes out of hibernation. But once you remember you don't have a re-vote, you'll realize—

Justin: That I'm trapped?

Jeff: No, that you're free! Free to rediscover this amazing thing that's part you, part her, and part the One who invented it. And once you start feeding it, it'll get healthier and more interesting; you two are always changing, so Us is always changing. *(Points as Justin's phone)* Which is what makes the 'I Love You' Game so appealin—and challenging; it's all about newness and discovery.

Justin: *(half annoyed, half intrigued)* The 'I Love You' Game?

Jeff: Yeah. But don't try to drum up that feeling with somebody else. *(Beat)* Are you?

Justin: No. *(Convicted)* Maybe. *(Honestly)* Not yet.

Jeff: Infatuation, Justin! Nobody can stay new, so stop deceiving yourself that they can; it's a loser's strategy. Quit trying to get back to square one—level up!

Justin is surprised that Jeff knows this phrase.

Jeff: And do it together, because that's the only way you can move forward. *Re*-new, not new, is the key to the game! Then one day you'll look at her and realize—

Justin: That I still love her?

Jeff: No, that you have a *new* love for her. A level two love.

Justin: And *that's* permanent?

Jeff: No, it's never permanent.

Justin: But I want—

Jeff: To fall in love, yes. But to do that you have to be *out* of love.

Justin: So—

Jeff: So you can fall back *in* love. Over and over again. Level three, level four, level five...

Justin: That's possible?

Jeff: It's not just 'possible.' It's how the game works!

Justin: What level are you at?

Jeff: Somewhere in the triple digits. And trust me, it's infinitely better than repeating level one over and over again. So, are you ready to put it to a vote?

Justin: I'll lose.

Jeff: Yep. Which means—

Justin: I win?

Jeff: Exactly. C'mon.

They start off together for the meeting.

Jeff: *(as they're exiting)* Oh, and get a good referee.

Justin looks a question at him.

Jeff: Marriage counselor.

Lights out.