

021102 Press announces the release of Player vs. Environment, the genre-defying novel about gamers by May Berchon

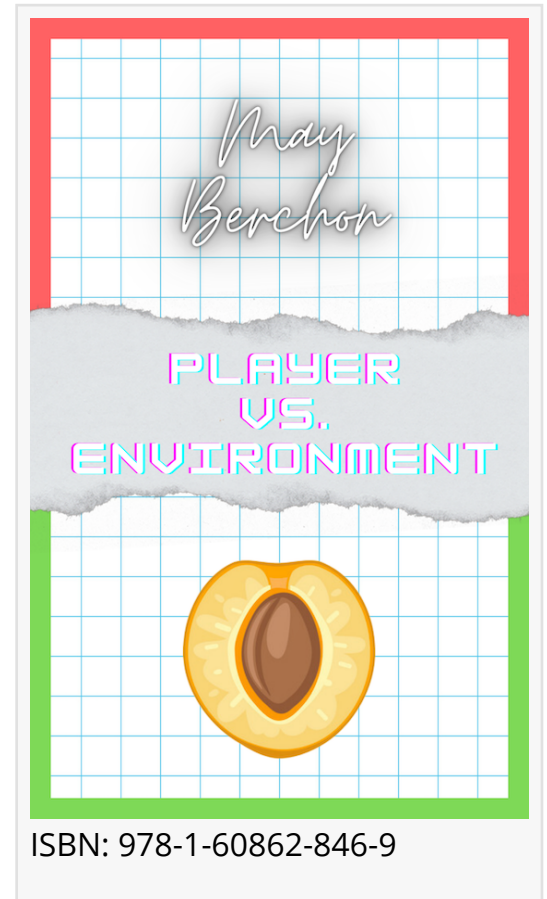
Player vs. Environment drops November 29, 2022, just in time for holiday shopping

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA, November 28, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 021102 Press is proud to announce the release of May Berchon's debut [novel, Player vs. Environment](#). Berchon emerges as a leader in fiction rallying against misogynoir and institutional racism. The book is also a meditation on various social issues people face like abortion, gender politics, and normalizing the maintenance of one's mental health.

Berchon describes the inspiration behind Player vs. Environment: "Well, it's about a Black film executive named Ebony who goes through this horrifying betrayal and breakup with her Jewish boyfriend, only to wind up working with him years later at a video game publication. So, not only does she have to deal with the trauma of seeing her ex every day, but she's the only Black person working in an environment where her presence is deeply unwanted. I worked in editorial and as a creative for 15 years, so I thought it would be cool to write what I know, and set it in an industry that I love, like gaming."

Video games have been a force in entertainment for decades, but in recent years, the industry has exploded into a hotbed of excitement for players, developers, and journalists. This, and Berchon's time spent as a writer, led to her creating a unique cast of characters and situations modeled on her own life experiences and some of the archetypes found in toxic workplaces.

"A lot of what the Ebony character goes through in the book, I went through in real life on several jobs and in some cases, personally. Pretty much every job I've had since moving up the career ladder I've been the only Black person or only person of color in those media outlets or organizations. I've been called the 'N' word on jobs and faced other offensive behaviors by bosses who tell me how racist they aren't because they voted for Obama or because they



adopted a Black kid or visited Africa, or because they're, you know, white but 'ethnic' white. That one I get a lot, 'I can't be racist. I'm Sicilian,' or 'I can't be racist. I'm Jewish,' or 'My mom's Mexican so I can say that stuff.' Like, what does that even mean? People say just the craziest stuff to me at work. I've been asked if my parents are white because of the timbre of my voice. I've been asked what it was like to live in the projects even though I grew up in the suburbs and on military bases. Like, people just assume. It's been so liberating seeing this recent trend of Black female authors with editorial backgrounds sharing similar experiences in their books. It made me more brave in terms of my own storytelling."

Player vs. Environment is a glorious intermingling of African American culture and Jewish culture, but at times, those relationships are strained. This made the author fearful of tackling the subject matter with her patented unflinching voice, especially in light of recent antisemitic rants by stars like Ye (Kanye West) and Kyrie Irving.

"Well, this book was written long before those controversies. But yeah, you're always worried about offending people. I mean, I'm nerdy and emo and would never want to be called antisemitic. But I also thought it was important to tell this character's story honestly. I feel so much solidarity with all people in the struggle, regardless of gender or race, whether they're Christian, Muslim, or Jewish. And yet, several of my biggest bullies in the workplace were white people who just happened to be Jewish. Like, how do you reconcile that? To gloss over it would be dishonest. To change the ethnicity is super sociopathic. For that reason, I'll admit feeling pressured not to talk about that for fear that people might think I was making some grand social commentary against Jewish people or something, or just outright being a jerk, which I'm not. I don't want to be part of anyone's gross hate agenda and it's nothing but love as far as I'm concerned because I was raised that a few bad apples don't spoil the bunch."

She has triumphed over adversity with a debut work that is steamy, hilarious, violent, angsty, and culturally significant. It's a must-read this holiday season.

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