

THE GOLDBERGS

"Game Mom"

Written by

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COLD OPEN

OPEN ON a dated commercial for the release of the Nintendo Game Boy. In it, grown men in office spaces gleefully play with the handheld device.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

It was April 21st, 1980-something,
and Nintendo had just released the
biggest thing to ever happen to
gaming: the Game Boy.

The words "You Don't Stop Playing Because You Get Old" flash across the commercial screen.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

Not only did the portable gaming
device introduce a whole new
generation to the thrills Nintendo
had to offer--

Another phrase flashes across the screen: "But You Could Get Old If You Stop Playing."

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

--But it reeled in the old timers,
the OGs of gaming, reminding them
how and why they fell in love with
video games in the first place.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLIAM PENN ACADEMY - DAY

ADAM wanders the halls of his high school, and everywhere he looks, his peers are playing with Game Boys.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

The flip side, however, was being
reminded how everyone had a Game
Boy. Except you.

JACKIE rushes up to Adam, Game Boy in hand.

JACKIE

Adam! I've been looking for you all
day; where've you been?

ADAM

(shrugging)
Busy.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Busy avoiding Jackie and her fancy
new Game Boy. Just look at the
thing!

Adam looks, clearly jealous.

ADAM
You're so pretty.

JACKIE
Aw, thanks Adam!

ADAM
I was talking to the Game Boy.

A beat. Then...

JACKIE
I've been playing Tetris all day.
It's soooo addictive, I can't even
focus on school!

Adam stares, full of jealousy.

ADAM
Yeah, me neither...

He walks down the hall, towards the school's front doors.
Jackie walks alongside him, playing.

JACKIE
You really have to get one of
these, Adam!

ADAM
Uh huh.

JACKIE
I mean, everyone has one!

ADAM
Sure.

JACKIE
You'd really stand out if you
walked around without one.

ADAM
Jackie, do you have anything else
to talk about besides the Game Boy?

But Jackie isn't listening; she's intently playing.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
But she didn't. No one did.

EXT. WILLIAM PENN ACADEMY - CONTINUOUS

Adam and Jackie exit the school, and Adam spots his mother waiting in their family car.

ADAM
My mom's here. Uh, talk to you
later?

Jackie is too glued to her screen and gives a delayed response.

JACKIE
Sure, whatever you say. Bye!

Adam <SIGHS> and gets in the car. BEVERLY is angry.

BEVERLY
What in God's name is everyone
looking at? I could have smooshed
multiple frail, little bodies if my
motherly senses weren't so acute.

ADAM
(deflated)
It's the Game Boy. Everyone at
school has one.

BEVERLY
Well, not everyone.

She boops his nose.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I don't want my schmoopie becoming
a mindless zombie who walks
cluelessly into oncoming traffic,
oh my God!

At that moment, COACH MELLOR, on a Game Boy, crosses the street without looking. Beverly swerves to miss him.

ADAM
Mom, watch out!

Mellor isn't even aware of his close brush with death. Instead he's yelling at the Tetris game he's playing.

COACH MELLOR

You're supposed to fall where I
tell you to! These buttons aren't
built for my strong, athletic
hands!

Beverly swerves so hard, the car rides up onto the sidewalk,
and kids who had been playing there jump out of the way.

KID

Hey, watch it!

BEVERLY

(out the window)

It's fine! Everything's fine!

We hear a loud <POP>, and one of the front tires deflates
completely, with a blank faced Beverly and Adam sinking into
their seats.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE**INT. GOLDBERG HOME - LIVING ROOM - LATER**

Adam sits on the couch, mindlessly flipping through TV channels as he tries to find anything to entertain himself with. He even flips past his favorites, like *Back to the Future*. That's how low he's sunk.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

I couldn't take my mind off of the Game Boy. After the incident at school today, neither could my mom.

Beverly pokes her head out from the kitchen.

BEVERLY

The sooner they outlaw those Boy Games, the better! From this moment onward, I decree this house a No Boy regime!

As she disappears back into the kitchen, MURRAY walks in through the front door and drops his pants.

MURRAY

(calling out)

I'm home, and I'm headed straight for the TV! You've been warned!

Murray heads straight for the recliner and plops himself down, giving a satisfied <SIGH>. He kicks back and notices his downtrodden son.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Didn't you hear the announcement I made 10 seconds ago? TV's mine.

Adam dejectedly tosses the remote towards his father. Murray raises a brow.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

What are you doing cooped up in here anyway? Don't you have friends to play with?

ADAM

What's the point? All my friends are playing with their Game Boys anyway... even Jackie.

MURRAY

What the hell's a Game Boy?

ADAM
(seriously)
Only the coolest, most ingenious
technological achievement of our
time!

Beverly decides to re-intervene, coming out from the kitchen
entirely.

BEVERLY
Oh *please*. What about rocket ships?
Or did you forget *we landed on the*
freakin' moon?
(beat)
What about telephones? Cars?
Electricity?

ADAM
Those pale in comparison to the
pure genius of Mr. Gunpei Yokoi!

MURRAY
I would rather *not* get involved,
but I'll end up in the middle one
way or another, so... why do you
want a Game Boy so bad?

ADAM
It's the ultimate gaming machine!
It has 8 kB of internal S-RAM, 2
pulse wave generators, a display of
160 x 144 pixels on a 66mm screen,
and a frame rate of 59.7 frames per
second. And the best part is, it's
all *portable!*

MURRAY
Wow. Only a true die hard would
know all the nerd talk behind it.
You want one that badly, huh?

ADAM
(sincere)
Oh dad, with all my heart.

Murray <LAUGHS>.

MURRAY
You almost had me there, but that
last line delivery... nah. You laid
it on too thick.

Adam frowns.

ADAM

Why can't I get one?

MURRAY

Oh, you can get one, I don't care.
But I'm not paying for it. You
already have your other gaming
thingy, and you hardly touch that
anymore.

Adam picks up the dusty NES and begins to lift it up and
down, as if that's how you play and enjoy it.

ADAM

Are you kidding? I play with it all
the time! Wheee!

MURRAY

Even I know that's not how you play
with that thing.

BEVERLY

He's right, Adam, you barely play
video games anymore. You're far too
busy with school and Jackie and, *it*
breaks my heart to say it, growing
up. It's time to let it go and move
on.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

But I didn't want to let it go. I
had never wanted something so badly
before. It wasn't just a game. It
was an idea, the preservation of my
childlike interests and wonder, and
I wasn't ready to move on from
that.

Adam runs up the stairs, upset.

INT. ARCADE - DAY

Meanwhile, BARRY is hanging out with the JTP at the arcade.

BARRY

I got Pac-Man next!

Barry steps in front of an eager 12-year-old who was waiting
to play. She crosses her arms angrily.

ARCADE KID

Hey! I was next!

BARRY

Oh, I'm sorry. Do you have a high score on this machine?

The high scores roll up on the Pac-Man arcade game, and TSY for "Big Tasty" is number 6. The kid frowns and leaves.

BARRY (CONT'D)

I didn't think so!

He cracks his knuckles and dives in as ANDY, GEOFF, NAKED ROB, and MATT gather round and cheer on their fearless leader.

JTP

Tasty! Tasty! Tasty!

No one at the arcade is as old as they are; they're definitely too old for the intended age group. But that doesn't stop them! They only get louder!

JTP (CONT'D)

TASTY! TASTY! TASTY!

Barry's palms are sweating as he's rapidly operating the control panel as Pac-Man twists and turns on the screen. The JTP, in their excitement, begin to rock the arcade cabinet back and forth.

An ARCADE EMPLOYEE comes marching over, upset.

ARCADE EMPLOYEE

Stop it! Stop it right now, or you'll have to pay for a new machine!

The JTP just <LAUGH> as they ignore him, and Big Tasty aims to break his personal high score.

The arcade employee, however, is not amused. He goes to the back of the machine and unplugs it. Barry and the JTP <GASP>.

BARRY

Why would you do that? I was on a winning streak!

ARCADE EMPLOYEE

And now you're on your way out!

CUT TO:

EXT. ARCADE - MOMENTS LATER

Barry and the JTP are escorted out of the arcade.

BARRY
(calling back)
You may have won this round, but
we're the JTP!

JTP
JTP!

BARRY
We know exactly who we are and what
we want, and what we want are high
scores!
(to JTP)
Who's up for dominating another
arcade?

As the rest of the JTP <CHEERS>, Geoff suddenly turns
awkward.

GEOFF
Actually, I've... got to go. Just
remembered I have to be somewhere
at this exact moment in time.
Completely un-rescheduable.

BARRY
Have to be somewhere? But you're
part of the JTP! You follow my
every move and do exactly as I
command!

GEOFF
Sorry, Barry. I'll make it up to
you, promise. Catch you guys later?

JTP
Bye, Geoff! / See you later! /
Later.

Barry's curiosity is aroused.

BARRY
What was that about?

The JTP act suspicious, as if they're covering for Geoff.

ANDY
I don't know, but we probably
shouldn't look too much into it.

NAKED ROB
(shrugging)
Geoff's a busy guy, I think.

MATT
Let's just leave him alone.
(beat)
How about that new arcade, Game
Afoot?

Barry squints at the JTP, suspicious, but they head off for the next arcade.

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Adam's in his room, completely distraught over the heart-breaking news of no Game Boy. Beverly and Murray crowd the doorway.

BEVERLY
Aww, schmoopie, you know I don't
like to see you down...

ADAM
(obviously down)
I'm not down. I'm just thinking
about what you said, about me
needing to let go and grow up. I
thought you always wanted me to be
your little baby.

BEVERLY
Of course you'll always be my
little snuggle monster! That will
never change!

ADAM
Then spoil me like one! Buy me the
Game Boy! It's that easy!

BEVERLY
Oh no! If you think I'm going to be
emotionally manipulated into buying
one for you, you've got another
thing coming!

Adam puts on his best puppy dog face.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
(panicking)
Murray! Intervene before I'm
emotionally manipulated into buying
one for him!

MURRAY

Look, if the thing really means that much to you, why don't you work for it?

Adam shudders, mentally revisiting unpleasant memories.

ADAM

The last job I had, I completely ruined. I'm not sure I'm ready to rejoin the workforce.

MURRAY

Okay, fine, no job. How about school? Your last report card was a little, eh, hit and miss. If you can get your grades up by end of term, then we'll talk about the Game Boy.

ADAM

Really?

Murray genuinely smiles.

MURRAY

Really.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - END OF THE WEEK

Adam proudly shows Murray, who's resting in the recliner, his report card. Straight A's.

MURRAY

Already? It hasn't even been a week!

(beat)

Beverly!

Beverly enters, ecstatic her baby did such a good job.

BEVERLY

Oh, I just knew it! I knew my baby was a little genius just waiting for the right push, *even if the right push is something I'm totally against.*

She loads him up with hugs and kisses, and he tolerates it for the Game Boy.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
What do you say you and I take a
quick trip to the mall and pick up
that Boy Game?

ADAM
Game Boy.

BEVERLY
What'd I say?

INT. GAME STORE - LATER

At the store, the Game Boy is propped up on a pedestal as a
prized possession. Adam gawks at it in awe.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
There it was, in all it's 8-bit
glory, and it was about to become
mine.

Beverly flags down the STORE ATTENDANT.

BEVERLY
Hi, hello. My baby boy here did
such a good job with his grades
that I, his parent, have decided to
reward him.

The store attendant blankly stares back.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
Please fetch your finest Game Boy
for my *fine* little man.

Beverly <GIGGLES> and winks at Adam.

ADAM
(under his breath)
Do it for the Game Boy, Adam. Do it
for the Game Boy.

The store attendant returns with a Game Boy.

STORE ATTENDANT
That'll be \$89.99.

Beverly swallows hard.

BEVERLY
Oh wow, that much for a little gray
box?

She sees Adam's hopeful face and forces enthusiasm.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
...It's worth every penny!

As Beverly pays for the device, she hands it to Adam.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
I was now going to be one of the
cool kids and sink countless hours
into this handheld rather than
homework.

CUT TO:

INT. BARRY'S ROOM - DAY

Barry, phone in hand, decides to ring up his sister.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
While my new life was just
beginning, Barry was testing out a
new career in detective work.

Barry is patched through to Erica's R.A.: SRINI.

SRINI
Hello! May I ask who is speaking?

BARRY
It's Barry, Erica's brother. I need
to talk to her.

SRINI
Oh... Erica... Well, she isn't here
right now.

BARRY
What do you mean she isn't there?
She isn't allowed to be unavailable
when I need her!

SRINI
I'm sorry, but she can't come to
the phone. She's, uh, at practice,
or... shopping for groceries! Take
your pick.

BARRY

Obviously she's avoiding my phone call because she knows something I don't know, and rather than spill the beans, she chooses to hide like a coward.

(beat)

Good move, Erica. You know I can crack you like an egg.

SRINI

Um... I'm just going to hang up now and pretend we never had this conversation.

The phone clicks, and Barry stands, resolute.

BARRY

If Erica's hiding something, I'll get to the bottom of it...
Detective Goldberg is on the case!

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER**

Adam bursts into the living room and flings himself on the couch, ecstatic he's finally got a Game Boy.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

The box itself was a true work of art. It was futuristic and nostalgic all at the same time, and I couldn't stop gawking at it until--
-

MURRAY

Open it already! The suspense is killing me!

Murray's still on the recliner -- he hasn't moved. Adam gleefully tears open the box and holds in his two hands the compact video game system.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

A rush of pure, unadulterated joy and happiness overcame me in that moment. I finally had one.

MURRAY

Are you crying?

ADAM

This is the happiest day of my life!

Beverly sheds a tear as well. She loves seeing her baby happy.

INT. BARRY'S ROOM - LATER

Barry phones up Naked Rob.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

Barry, however, was having the complete opposite day of his life.

BARRY (ON PHONE)

Hey Naked Rob, I just wanted to see if... Oh. You're leaving to take care of your cousin's great aunt's hamster right now?

(beat)

(MORE)

BARRY (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
Do you think...? No? Okay. Bye, I
guess.

Barry hangs up, confused.

BARRY (CONT'D)
Something isn't adding up. No one
from the JTP is free today, and
it's a Saturday! I can't spend
today alone.

Barry heads for the door.

BARRY (CONT'D)
If the JTP won't come to me, I'll
come to the JTP!

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Beverly approaches her youngest, who's been obsessively
playing the Game Boy since he opened it.

BEVERLY
You've been playing that thing
nonstop. Maybe it's time for a
little break?

Adam can barely talk, his language is reduced to caveman
grunts.

ADAM
(angrily)
Uhhhh.

BEVERLY
Okay, no break. Mind if I watch for
a minute?

ADAM
Pleh.

Beverly sits on the bed next to him and intrusively watches
him play.

BEVERLY
Where are those blocks falling
from?

ADAM
Doesn't matter.

BEVERLY

Why do they disappear when they
line up?

ADAM

I don't know.

BEVERLY

That's completely unrealistic.
Nothing just *vanishes* like that.

ADAM

Don't interrupt!

BEVERLY

(hushed voice)

Sorry! You keep on playing; you
won't even notice I'm here!

2 seconds later...

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Oh, you shouldn't have placed it
there! You could have put it on the
other side!

Adam makes another mistake.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

No, no, you did it again!

ADAM

(getting frustrated)

Mom, let me play!

BEVERLY

I'm sorry, baby, I want to, but I
can't sit by and watch as you make
rookie mistakes.

ADAM

Oh yeah? Why don't you try?

He shoves the Game Boy into Beverly's hands, startling her.

BEVERLY

Oh, I don't think so. There's twice
as many buttons! I'm not good with
these things.

ADAM

But you're a great talker! Put your money where your mouth is and prove to me you can match colored blocks together better than I can.

Beverly and Adam have a silent stare off confrontation, but Beverly rises to the occasion.

BEVERLY

Fine. Long live the Bevolution.

She begins to play and quickly proves she's a master.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Oh, look at that! I got my first row to disappear!

ADAM

(bitter)

Beginner's luck.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

But Beverly Goldberg proved she was more than just a beginner. She was a master at Tetris.

BEVERLY

Ha ha! No one knows how to utilize every inch of space like Beverly Goldberg!

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

Just like that, I had lost my Game Boy.

Adam <GULPS>, a "what have I done look" flashing across his face.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Barry is on his way to Geoff's house, riding his bike over.

BARRY

I'm getting to the bottom of this, and there's nothing better than head on confrontation when the other person doesn't want it!

EXT. GEOFF'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He parks his bike in front of Geoff's house and walks up to the front door. He spots the entire JTP inside Geoff's living room, talking in muffled voices.

BARRY

I knew something was up!

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

It was then that Barry decided to do the rational thing and spy on his friends. But instead of the suave sleuth Sherlock Holmes, he was more the bumbling and clumsy Inspector Clouseau.

Barry begins to go around the side of the house when his foot <BREAKS> through a wood panel and falls into the porch.

BARRY

Ack!

He tugs and tries to get it out before the commotion can alarm anyone, but he can already see and hear the JTP scatter inside.

BARRY (CONT'D)

(shouting)

No! This can't be happening! I'm the quietest person I know!

He finally wrenches his leg free and dives for cover in some nearby bushes. Geoff opens the door but doesn't spot Barry.

GEOFF

(back to the JTP)

Must be the neighbor's dog again. He's really obsessed with our rose bushes.

Geoff goes back inside, and it's revealed Barry landed in said rose bushes. He crawls out and <MOANS> in pain, his face, arms, and neck covered in rose thorns.

BARRY

I can't feel my face... or any other part of my body.

He turns onto his back and lies still for a moment, but he hears the JTP move towards the door, and he's forced to dive right back in to avoid detection.

ANDY

Glad you set this up, man! I really
can't wait to see how it turns out!

BARRY

OW!

The JTP members take their leave.

NAKED ROB

It's been hard keeping this from
Barry, but it's for the best.

GEOFF

It'll all be worth it in the end.

MATT

See you later, Geoff!

The three boys pile in the car they came together in, and
Geoff heads back inside.

Barry climbs out of the rose bushes again.

BARRY

I'll find out what they're hiding
the second I find out how to pick
thorns out of my--

He picks a large rose thorn out of his buttcheek.

BARRY (CONT'D)

OUCH!

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Beverly has become crazed with the Game Boy. Adam approaches
her, cautious.

ADAM

Hey mama, you've been playing for
exactly 3 hours and 47 minutes.
Think I could have a turn?

Beverly doesn't even look at him, her fingers blazing at the
speed of light.

BEVERLY

Not now, sweetie. Mama has a high
score to break.

ADAM

Uh, okay. I guess I can sit and watch for a bit.

TIME CUTS WITH ADAM IN VARIOUS POSITIONS ON THE COUCH, WAITING FOR HIS TURN.

ADAM (CONT'D)

How's it going? Can I play yet?

Beverly <HISSES>. Adam retreats, scared.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Adam finds his dad in the kitchen getting a drink.

ADAM

Dad! I don't want to alarm you, but mom's gone absolutely crazy!

Murray takes a long sip and sets the can down matter-of-factly on the kitchen counter.

MURRAY

Tell me something I don't know.

ADAM

No! Like actual crazy! Like addicted to video games crazy!

MURRAY

(not buying it)

Your mom has gone through her fair share of addictions, but video games? Nah, that's not something she'd ever get into.

Adam points to a stack of dishes on the counter, stacked in a Tetris block formation.

ADAM

Oh yeah? What about that?

MURRAY

(shrugging)

She always stacks them like that!

CUT TO:

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Adam shows Murray his clean laundry, stacked in neat colored squares on his bed.

ADAM
Look at the laundry!

MURRAY
(slightly nervous)
You know she likes to get creative
when she folds!

CUT TO:

INT. MURRAY/BEVERLY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Adam points to a new sweater Beverly was working on, one with Tetris shapes hand stitched onto the front.

ADAM
Hmmm?

MURRAY
She always stitches horizontal
blocks of--
(beat, realizing)
Oh boy...

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
With my dad now on my side, it was
time to implement Operation: End
Game Mom.

EXT. GEOFF'S HOUSE - DAY

Barry plucks out the last thorn from his face and angrily flicks it, but it doesn't leave his finger. Instead, he accidentally jams it into his thumb and cries out.

BARRY
Are you kidding me? This day
couldn't get any worse!

It's at that moment that a car approaches Geoff's home.

BARRY (CONT'D)
Lainey?!

LAINY exits the vehicle and meets Geoff at the door, hugging him excitedly.

LAINY

Geoff! It's soooo good to see you!

GEOFF

(laughing)

Yeah, I've missed you! The guys
just left, so you're a little too
late.

LAINY

It's okay. To tell you the truth, I
came late on purpose. I just wanted
to see you.

Geoff gives a wide grin and gestures her inside, placing his
hand on Lainey's back.

Barry instantly flares up.

BARRY

Oh no! You can hurt me, break my
bones, crush my heart, electrocute
my brain -- but you *can't hurt*
Erica!

Barry climbs back up onto the porch and consciously avoids
the wood panel that's broken. He quickly becomes careless and
gets stuck after breaking through another wood panel with the
other leg.

BARRY (CONT'D)

This has got to be the worst day of
my life.

Barry <GRUNTS> as he tries to pull free, but then his other
leg gets stuck, and both legs plummet through, his balls
hitting solid wood.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Hmmph!

Barry makes a face and topples over, his weight causing the
entire porch to topple inward, and he falls underneath.

Geoff and Lainey rush out, but Barry masterfully rolls away,
further under the porch.

GEOFF

What happened?!

LAINY

Should we call someone?

Barry waits with bated breath until he hears Geoff and Lainey go back inside. He tries to roll out but realizes... he's stuck.

BARRY

Oh no.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Murray and Adam confront Beverly.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

While Barry hid from confrontation,
my dad and I embraced it.

MURRAY

Hey Bevy, I think it's time to put
the game down and do something
else. Permanently.

Murray sits on the couch next to his wife and seductively
puts his arm around her shoulder.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

What do you say you and me go
upstairs, alone... and I let you
peel the dry skin off my back? I
know how much you love that!

BEVERLY

Not interested.

Her eyes are wide as her fingers blaze across the buttons.

ADAM

Mom, I'll let you take me to one of
your jazzercise classes and parade
me around like a human-sized doll!
You can dress me in anything you
want, and I'll be cheery and happy
about it!

Beverly blinks, but she remains strong and focused on the
game.

BEVERLY

No, thank you.

MURRAY

I'll make dinner for an entire
month if you put that game down
right now.

ADAM

And I'll give you hugs and kisses
any time I leave or enter this
house if you never play my Game Boy
again!

Beverly finally relents and puts the game down momentarily.

BEVERLY

(frustrated)

Don't you get it? I am completely
invested in this game that not even
the love, or in this case, *obvious*
bribes of my own family can break
me away from it!

MURRAY

Alright, that's it. It's clear the
Bevolution has gone too far! It's
time for military rule!

Murray reaches out for the game, but Beverly freaks out!

BEVERLY

Don't touch it! I'm on the best
streak of my life!

MURRAY

It's just a video game, Bevy! You
don't need it!

BEVERLY

Murray, I swear to God, if you ruin
my streak, I will ruin you!

They tussle over the game, and it ends up being flung up into
the air and clashing hard onto the ground. It <BREAKS> upon
impact.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Oh, son of a--!

She's <BLEEPED> before we can hear her swear.

ADAM

Oh balls, balls, *balls*! This can't
be happening!

He picks up the broken Game Boy and tries to turn it on. The
screen flickers, but it won't work.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Look what you did! All I wanted was
to play my game in peace, but then
you both got involved and ruined
it!

Adam runs upstairs, upset. Murray and Beverly are at a loss
for words.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**EXT. GEOFF'S HOUSE - DAY**

Barry is pinned under the porch and frantically tries to free himself.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

As Barry was pinned by decades-old wood and debris, he dug deep and relied on his resourcefulness and cunning to get him out.

BARRY

HELP! HELP ME! I'M STUCK!

Geoff and Lainey peer in through the hole above.

LAINERY

Barry?

BARRY

Lainey! Is that you?

LAINERY

Why are you under Geoff's porch?

BARRY

Better question is, why are you at Geoff's house?

Lainey goes a little red in the face.

GEOFF

We've got to get you out, Barry!

BARRY

Oh no! I'm not coming out until I get some answers.

CUT TO:

INT. GEOFF'S HOUSE - LATER

Barry sits, arms crossed, on Geoff's couch.

BARRY

I'm not leaving this couch until I get some answers.

Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz speak with the Fire Department.

FIREMAN

You're lucky the kid's okay. Your entire porch is sinking, which means your home's foundation is unstable. If it wasn't for this accident, you might have come home one day to your house in half.

The Fire Department leaves.

MR. SCHWARTZ

(to Barry)

Thanks to you, we solved a problem we didn't even know we had.

BARRY

It's my job, sir. Happy to help.

The Schwartz' exit the room, while Geoff and Lainey join Barry on the couch.

GEOFF

So glad you're okay, man! You had us really worried.

BARRY

Worried, huh? You obviously weren't worried about seeing Lainey alone, *without me*.

GEOFF

(guilty)

Oh... this? It's... not what it looks like!

LAINEY

Yeah, there's a perfectly logical explanation for why I'm here!

BARRY

Then give it!

Geoff and Lainey look at each other, worried.

GEOFF

We can't.

BARRY

I thought you guys were my friends, but I guess I was wrong. This was one secret I didn't want to uncover...

Barry leaves, heartbroken.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Meanwhile, Murray and Beverly are having a particularly nasty spat, blaming each other for the broken Game Boy.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

Barry wasn't the only one feeling
the effects of a broken heart.

BEVERLY

Oh Mur, we've destroyed our little
boy and I'm not sure if he'll ever
recover!

Just then, Barry enters through the front door. He heads straight for the kitchen to retrieve anti-itch cream in the medicine cabinet. We see all of the medication sorted in colored Tetris formations.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Oh hi, honey. I haven't seen you
all day!
(beat)
Is everything okay?

BARRY

My cheeks are on fire, and we're
out of ointment. *Thanks, mom!*

Barry storms off, leaving Beverly behind.

BEVERLY

I have failed as a mother. Both of
my babies are in pain, and it's
because of me.

Murray takes in a deep breath of air and <SIGHS>.

MURRAY

No, it's not. We're both to blame.

Murray puts a compassionate arm around Beverly's shoulder.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

We broke one kid's game and
completely ignored the other one.
(beat, remorseful)
I'm sorry I tried to take it from
you and forcefully end your
Bevolution. I want to see you
happy, I genuinely do, but I'm
scared too. I'm scared you'll
change and end up being a different
Bevy than the one I know and love.

BEVERLY

(touched)

You know I'll never change. I may pick up new hobbies and interests along the way, but I'm still the same mama bear who demands snuggles from her cubs and takes care of her big papa bear.

MURRAY

You know how I feel about that nickname.

BEVERLY

We need to make this right, and I think I know how.

EXT. GOLDBERG HOUSE - THE NEXT DAY

Murray, Beverly, Adam, and Barry pile into the car. The mood is tense, but Murray and Beverly are unusually excited. Beverly is in her unfinished Tetris sweater.

BEVERLY

Aren't you excited for the pa-- I mean, grocery store?!

MURRAY

Yeah, who doesn't love waiting behind people with full shopping carts?

BARRY

What's gotten into you two? Especially you, dad, I've never seen you excited for the grocery store.

ADAM

Why do we have to go? Barry and I need time to properly mope our losses.

MURRAY

Just be quiet. You morons'll see.

EXT. GEOFF'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

They pull up to Geoff's house, where the porch is roped off.

BARRY

Oh no, why are we here? I don't want to see Geoff's stupid face ever again.

Murray and Beverly get out of the car, but neither Barry nor Adam budge.

ADAM

I want to go home.

MURRAY

Get out of the car, or you're both grounded for the rest of the year.

(beat, softer)

Trust me, I think you'll want to see what's inside.

Beverly is so excited, she can barely contain herself.

BEVERLY

Come on! Let's go! Hop, hop!

Adam and Barry reluctantly exit the car, and the four of them step through the home's side door to find--

INT. GEOFF'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

EVERYONE

Surprise!

The decorated room is filled with the JTP and Barry's friends! Even ERICA and POPS are there.

BARRY

Wait... a surprise birthday party?
For me?

BEVERLY

I wish I could take credit for surprising my delicious birthday schmoopie, but it was all Geoff's idea. He really wanted to do something special for your 18th birthday!

Geoff grins and gives a small wave.

BARRY

(to Geoff)

Is this true?

GEOFF
(emotional)
You're the best, bro. Without you,
the JTP wouldn't be what it is
today.

The other members encircle Barry.

JTP
(sappily)
JTP!

Geoff and Barry hug it out before Lainey approaches them.
Barry points at Geoff and Lainey.

BARRY
So, are you two...?

LAINHEY/GEOFF
No, of course not! / Nothing like
that!

LAINHEY
It was just some last minute
birthday preparations.
(beat)
I, uh, am still kind of hung up on
my last boyfriend...

Barry wordlessly points to himself, and she nods. He pumps
his fist into the air.

BARRY
Yes, I knew it! There's a reason
I'm called Big Tastey!

Beverly brings out a nicely wrapped present and hands it to
Barry. He looks at it, then looks at Murray.

MURRAY
You deserve it, ya moron.

Barry rips through the packaging to find--

BARRY
A Game Boy? Awesome!

Off to the side, Beverly slips Adam a wrapped present too.

ADAM
Wait, what's this?

BEVERLY
Open it and see.

He slowly unwraps the present and finds his Game Boy, repaired as if it were brand new. Speechless, he hugs his mom.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I got carried away. I understand how fun these little gadgets are and why you wanted one so bad.

(beat)

You know, you can grow up and *still* enjoy things like this. But no matter how big you get, you'll always be my little man.

ADAM

Thanks, mama.

(beat)

You're actually really good at Tetris. Maybe one day I'll be as good as you.

Beverly smiles, trying not to cry.

BEVERLY

That's what every mother dreams of hearing from her child.

As the party begins...

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

I had learned to connect with my mom in a way I didn't know was possible: through video games. They brought out the kids in both of us, and even though I continued to rocket into the uncertain future of adulthood, I knew that some things would never change.

Beverly and Adam enjoy the party together, exchanging genuine smiles (even a quick side hug).

END OF ACT THREE

END TAG**INT. GEOFF'S HOUSE - LATER**

The party now over, guests begin to file out the side door. Erica hugs her parents goodbye.

ERICA

As soon as college lets up, I
promise I'll visit!

MURRAY

That's my college pumpkin, making
her parents proud!

BEVERLY

We talk about you all the time,
Erica. We couldn't be happier!

They leave, and Geoff shoots Erica a *look*.

GEOFF

They still don't know?

ERICA

No one does, except you, me, and
Pops.

Pops is in the other room, admiring an obviously crystal
statue.

POPS

Is this made of actual gold?
Classy!

GEOFF

Someone's eventually going to find
out. I thought Barry had because he
was acting so weird.

ERICA

(laughing)

Barry couldn't solve a case even if
it was staring him right in the
face.

Pops heads for the door.

POPS

Should we hit the road, kiddo? It's
a long drive back to Florida, and I
will not miss Bingo again!

GEOFF
Should your grandpa be driving?

ERICA
No, but I shouldn't have dropped
out either, yet here we are.

GEOFF
Be safe, Erica. I miss you every
single day.

Erica gives Geoff a quick kiss.

ERICA
Don't worry about me. Next time you
see me, I'll be on stage, right
where I belong.

Erica and Pops leave, and Geoff <SIGHS> as he watches her go.

END OF SHOW