Don Zolidis
donzolidis@gmail.com

The Video Gamapalooza

By Don Zolidis

©2019 Don Zolidis ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Copyright Protection. This play is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States of America has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

Reservation of Rights. All rights to this play are strictly reserved, including, without limitation, professional and amateur stage performance rights; motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video, and sound recording; rights to all other forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction now known or yet to be invented, such as CD-ROM, CD-1, DVD, photocopying, and information storage and retrieval systems; and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

Performance Licensing and Royalty Payments. Amateur and stock performance rights to this play are controlled exclusively by Don Zolidis. No amateur or stock groups or individuals may perform this play without obtaining advance written permission from Don Zolidis.

Restriction of Alteration. There shall be no deletions, alterations, or changes of any kind made to the play unless directly authorized by Don Zolidis. The title of the play shall not be altered.

Author Credit. Any individual or group receiving permission to produce this play is required to credit Don Zolidis as the sole and exclusive author of the play.

AI training. For avoidance of doubt, Don Zolidis reserves the rights in any manner for purposes of training artificial intelligence technologies to generate text, including without limitation, technologies that are capable of generating works in the same style or genre as the play.

Cast of Characters

NARRATOR 1, a member of Generation X
NARRATOR 2, a young person

JULIE
KIDS 1-4

MARIE ANTOINETTE
BARKER
HEADSMAN
MILES
MARY

BOSS
JENKINS

CONTROLLER 1
CONTROLLER 2
BALL

PAC-MAN
MS. PAC-MAN
INKY
BLINKY
PINKY
CLYDE

CANDY PUSHER
GIRL

LINK
MONSTER
ZELDA
MARIO
PRINCESS PEACH
PAULINE
GANNON
TODD
CROWD

JIM
BOSS
APRIL

BORIS

NATASHA
ANNOUNCER
FLUNKY 1-5
STUPID AMERICAN

SALLY
BOBBY
DAN
JULIA
LUKA
VANDO

TODD
TASHA
GILBERT
PAULINE

ACTOR 1
ACTOR 2

MOM
DAD
ALEX
SCOUT

STEVE
REPORTER
VILLAGERS 1-5

The Video Gamapalooza **premiered at Jessie's Grove Winery in Lodi, California, and was under the direction of Mike Bartram and Sabrina Willis-Bartram. It premiered on July 10, 2019, and the cast was as follows:**

NARRATOR 1, a member of Generation X…….....Christopher Perez
NARRATOR 2, a young person……...Grace Thiara

OPENING
JULIE……...Emily Benner
KIDS
1. Morgan Clark
2. Hannah Dickinson
3. Zayne Lewis
4. Hailey Dickinson
+Everyone else as arcade kids, game characters, etc.

Chapter 1: Marie Antoinette
MARIE ANTOINETTE……...Faith Hunt
BARKER……..Elizabeth Buckmann
HEADSMAN…….Hailey Dickinson
MILES……...Olivia Harris
MARY…….Sarah Mompean
BOSS…… Kiley Koponen
JENKINS……Jaden Ng
EXTRA KIDS…….Hannah Dickinson, Zayne Lewis, Hailey Dickinson

Chapter 2: Pong
CONTROLLER 1…….Andy Benner
CONTROLLER 2……..Haley Baynard
BALL…….Amanda Bruno

Chapter 3: Pac-Man
PAC-MAN…….Michael Kenneth
MS. PAC-MAN…….Staci Lee-Bennett
INKY……Jaden Ng
BLINKY……...… Jenny Bruno
PINKY…….……..Alice Hewitt
CLYDE……....Morgan Clark

Chapter 4: Candy Crush
CANDY PUSHER……Elizabeth Buckmann
GIRL……..…… Ashley Taylor

Chapter 5: The Legend of Zelda
LINK…….Emma Uribe
MONSTER……Cliff Collins

ZELDA……Rebekah Guadagnolo
MARIO……Andy Benner
PRINCESS PEACH……..Ashleigh Allen
PAULINE……... Hailey Brown
GANNON……..Haley Baynard
STEVE……...Cliff Collins
CROWD……..ALL CAST

Opening Act II
JIM…….....Michael Kenneth
BOSS…… Olivia Harris
APRIL……...Staci Lee-Bennett

Chapter 6: Tetris
BORIS……...Staci Lee-Bennett
NATASHA……... Ashleigh Allen
ANNOUNCER……Hannah Dickinson
FLUNKY
1. Hailey Dickinson
2. Faith Hunt
3. Elizabeth Buckmann
4. Cliff Collins
STUPID AMERICAN……Hannah Dickinson

Chapter 7: The Sims
SALLY……..……Jenny Bruno
BOBBY……...……..Zayne Lewis
DAN……Rebekah Guadagnolo
JULIA……...….Amanda Bruno
LUKA…….……Jaden Ng
VANDO……...…Emily Benner

Chapter 8: Donkey Kong
TODD……... Haley Baynard
TASHA……Sarah Mompean
GILBERT……..Kiley Koponen
PAULINE…….…….. Hailey Brown

Chapter 9: Violent Games
ACTOR 1……..…Emma Uribe
ACTOR 2……..Andy Benner

Chapter 10: Fortnite
MOM…….....Emily Benner
DAD……Rebekah Guadagnolo
ALEX……....Zayne Lewis

Act One

An old-time video game arcade. This can be stylized, it doesn't need to be literal.

Video game music of some sort plays. KIDS are playing video games, perhaps pantomiming them.

NARRATOR 1 strides out, microphone in hand. The kids freeze.

NARRATOR 1

Ah, the arcade and the children of yesterday.

NARRATOR 1 touches one of the frozen kids.

Gone now. Some of these children have even grown up to be adults who look down on children of today. But here they were, in the arcade, which has gone the way of the dodo bird and affordable healthcare. Gone. Yessir, the children of the past didn't stay at home, or talk on "phones" or the "internet" – nope, they rode their bikes to the mall and wasted their money staring dead-eyed into blinking booping stand-up arcade games. And their wrists hurt and they drank a lot of things from the Orange Julius and they liked it.

Touches another frozen kid.

This kid didn't even smell good. And yet we still tolerated him at the arcade because this place stank anyway.

This was our church. This was where we'd go instead of going to church – we'd tell our parents we were going to church and then we'd fake a stomach illness and then sneak out and go to the arcade. You can almost smell the stale popcorn and the worn-out carpet. Over there someone spilled a coke. And then over there someone spilled another coke. And then there was like a whole lake of coke over here because we were really terrible at not spilling coke.

Kids get into motion. Everyone clusters around JULIE, facing out, playing a stand-up arcade game.

KID 1

She's doing it! She's doing it! This is the highest score ever recorded on Dragon Quest!

KID 2

My brain is going to explode! Aaaaah!

KID 3

This is greatest day of my life and I am here to witness this!

KID 4 *(on tiptoes, overlapping)*

I can't see! I can't see what's happening!

KID 1

My parents don't give me quarters so I just watch other kids play and shout at them!

KID 2 *(overlapping)*

Go go go go go go

KID 3 *(overlapping)*

I love you! Please have my babies!

KID 4 *(on tiptoes, overlapping)*

What's happening?! Someone lift me up!

(All at once)

ALL KIDS

Awwwwwwwwwwwwww.

They all turn away.

JULIE

I hate this game!!!!!! THIS IS THE WORST GAME EVER!!! WHY DO I PLAY THIS STUPID GAME THAT NO ONE CAN WIN!!!!???

KID

Do you need another quarter?

JULIE

Yes.

She plunks in another quarter and everyone clusters around her again.
They all freeze.

NARRATOR 1

That little girl there? She used to be amazing at Dragon Quest and now what is she? Probably somebody's Mom. Sad.

NARRATOR 2 enters, with a microphone. She's much younger.

NARRATOR 2

Are you serious? This is literally the most pathetic thing I have ever seen.

NARRATOR 1

What are you doing here?

NARRATOR 2

I was trying to listen to your nostalgia circus without throwing up. And failing.

She looks offstage

Sorry about that, Brian.

She moves to the video games

These games were the worst. Totally mindless. You just move a joystick back and forth like a trained seal.

NARRATOR 1

Seals don't even have thumbs! Shows what you know.

NARRATOR 2

Not to mention the fact that these old arcades were total creepshows.

Approaches one of the frozen boys

Look at this guy. Oh man. He hasn't showered in like three days. Shouldn't he be in school or locked up in a cage or something?

NARRATOR 1

All right that's enough! We don't need your judgment! You just don't understand because you're a stupid Millennial. Go back in your future pod, okay? No one wants you here.

NARRATOR 2

I'm not a Millennial, the youngest Millennials are like 20 years old. I'm the generation after Millennials.

NARRATOR 1

That's even worse! My generation is the greatest generation -

NARRATOR 2

That's trademarked, dude.

NARRATOR 1

Public domain now. So I'm changing Generation X to Generation X-ceptional: The Greatest Generation Period. And you know why we were the Greatest Generation ever?

NARRATOR 2

Because you won World War 2?

NARRATOR 1

Because we won World War 2 in video games. You ever hear of Castle Wolfenstein? Genius. 1941? You controlled a little bomber over Pearl Harbor or something. Amazing.

NARRATOR 2

I think the army actually trains with Call of Duty now, so –

NARRATOR 1

Well if the army trained with Castle Wolfenstein and 1941 all the wars would be over… fast. And that's not the only game we had, there was -

NARRATOR 2

Farmville.

NARRATOR 1

That wasn't us! That was you people!

NARRATOR 2

We didn't do Farmville! That was the Millennials! But it was you guys who played it on Facebook!

NARRATOR 1

That's a stereotype! Nobody liked Farmville, all right! Our games were amazing: I'm talking Asteroids, Pac-Man, Donkey Kong, Super Mario Brothers, Super Mario Brothers 2, the other Super Mario Brothers… LEGEND OF ZELDA, Street Fighter, you can't even imagine how great Street Fighter was. Gone now. Ruined. By young people.

NARRATOR 2

Literally, you can get every game designed in the 80s for free on your phone - See watch.

NARRATOR 1

You're retroactively ruining my childhood.

NARRATOR 2

Your childhood can be downloaded in 12 seconds.

NARRATOR 1

My childhood was glorious! And you know what, we didn't have kindergarten graduation! We didn't have middle school graduation! We didn't have summer camps and activities! In the summer time we sat and stared dead-eyed at the television for fourteen hours a day that way God intended! And we liked it! We played sports and nobody got trophies! We kept score, and somebody always lost! Sometimes everybody lost! The referee would just end the game and declare that everyone was terrible, and everyone needed to go home and cry! We were used to crushing disappointment. Every day. Every single day. And our relatives said things like, "you're a total loser, Brian." And that was fine because that – didn't hurt – much – certainly not like a giant gaping black hole inside of you that swallows all goodness and light and leaves you a dying husk of nothingness… Sorry. Hold on. I'm in a dark place…

NARRATOR 1 is in dark place now.

NARRATOR 2

Look, I'm sure that it seemed like you had cool video games when you were growing up. You didn't know any better. None of the old people did.

NARRATOR 1

I'm not old! I'm 42. And a half.

NARRATOR 2

That was like the life expectancy for most of human history. You're on borrowed time.

NARRATOR 1

I still feel young!

NARRATOR 2

That's just the brain damage talking. Face it – you're 42 and a half, and you're clearly on a downward trajectory – just a long slow ride – it's hard to believe, but there might even be parents out there somewhere so who are older than 42, and I feel sorry for those sad people, day-by-day sliding into obsolescence, dreaming of when they used to be cool. Some parents out there might not even think this applies to them. But it does. It so does. Hey Mom I need a ride home after this by the way.

Stage whisper

It's not about you. It's about Dad.

To the rest of the audience

She's the worst.

To NARRATOR 1

I realize you can't help it. The deterioration in your brain. You don't remember things correctly.

NARRATOR 1

I'll show you. I'll show all of you! Mostly you though.

Shouting

THAT'S RIGHT IT'S TIME FOR THE VIDEO GAMAPALOOZA! – A tour through the video games throughout history!

NARRATOR 2

Is this gonna be educational?

NARRATOR 1

YOU'RE DARN RIGHT IT'S GONNA BE EDUCATIONAL! I'm going to teach you the entire history of video games because your education is obviously awful! Did you know that the first arcade games were actually created in the nineteenth century?

NARRATOR 2

So you remember them?

NARRATOR 1

Oh very funny.

NARRATOR 2

Hey Vanilla Ice called. He's old now. Like you.

NARRATOR 1

And like everything from the 19th century, they were sweet and educational. Like this one:

1. Marie Antoinette

MARIE ANTIONETTE and a HEADSMAN enter.

MILES and MARY enter, two street urchins from 19th century London.

BARKER enters.

BARKER

Step right up! Step right up! Put your money down and play the most amazing game ever created! That's right, you heard me!

MILES

Please, sir, may I play it for free? I only have a half-penny. I am ever-so poor.

MARY

And I'm his sister Mary and I'm going to die of disease soon. Might this game give me a little ray of sunshine?

BARKER

You'll find out for that half-penny! No discounts!

MILES

It's my only money, sir. I might not eat today if I spend it.

BARKER

Playing this game is better than eating. It'll put a smile on your face and that's better than food in your belly, if you ask me. Step right up! Step right up! Play the game that's sweeping through the United States of America! It's going viral!

MARY

I've got a lot of viral.

BARKER

No one cares, little girl. Step right up!

MILES

All right, I'll play. Here's my half-penny.

BARKER

Put it right there.

MILES

All right!

MARIE and HEADSMAN start moving jerkily, like marionettes.

MARY

Oh look she's moving!

MILES

THIS IS SO EXCITING!

MARY

THIS IF FUN. Whee.

MARIE bends over jerkily and the headsman sets the guillotine.

MILES

Oh he's got an axe! I LOVE IT!

MARY

What's he going to do?

SHWING!

The HEADSMAN chops off MARIE's head with the guillotine. It goes into a basket.

The game stops.

BARKER

And that's it.

Pause.

MILES and MARY explode in applause.

MARY and MILES

THAT WAS THE BEST THING I'VE EVER SEEN!

BARKER

Step right up step right up, only one half-penny! Come play the most exciting game you can possibly imagine!

MARY

Oh miles I found another half-penny. Shall we get food for the day or –

MILES

PUT IT IN THE GAME!

MARY

Woooo!

MARY puts the next half-penny in the game.

MARIE and HEADSMAN move back to the starting position.

They perform the execution in the exact same way.

MILES

YES! GET HER!

MARY

It's the triumph of the proletariat!

MILES

Sure.

Skipping Forward

NARRATOR 1

That's terrible.

NARRATOR 2

It's a living. And what did you have to show for you time playing video games? Carpal Tunnel?

NARRATOR 1

Yes! And… memories.

NARRATOR 2

How much are those worth? A clock radio? Nope.

NARRATOR 1

I'm not here to talk about your stupid ticket games at Dave and Busters or Main Event or whatever – I'm talking about real games.

NARRATOR 2

You say that and I just hear "old person making mouth noises."

NARRATOR 1

Do you even know how revolutionary the first actual video game was?

NARRATOR 2

Sure.

NARRATOR 1

No you don't. That was a rhetorical question.

NARRATOR 2

But I already know the answer.

NARRATOR 1

No you don't!

NARRATOR 2

I totally do.

NARRATOR 1

Would you stop?! You don't know everything!

NARRATOR 2 *(with phone)*

Going to Wikipedia right now –

NARRATOR 1

Wrong, okay? Wrong. I am the teacher, which means you can't fact-check me with Wikipedia! You just have to put away your phone and accept what I say is the truth. The first video game was none other than… PONG!

Nothing happens.

I said… the first video game was none other than… PONG!

Nothing happens.

NARRATOR 2

Is something supposed to be happening?

NARRATOR 1

PONG!

CONTROLLER 1 and CONTROLLER 2 stumble onto the stage, dressed as giant walls. (Make these as big as possible – think refrigerator boxes, they should have trouble moving.)

**CONTROLLERS and BALL may be any gender. For the sake of this scene, I've designated 2 as female and 1 as male.*

CONTROLLER 1

Sorry. Sorry. We're just having a little trouble moving.

CONTROLLER 2 bumps into CONTROLLER 1, falls over. Can't get up.

CONTROLLER 2

A little help. A little help please.

CONTROLLER 1 tries to help CONTROLLER 2 up. It does not work.

NARRATOR 1

Come on guys.

CONTROLLER 2

I can't move in this!

CONTROLLER 1

I'm trying to help you! Just hold still!

CONTROLLER 2

You're ruining this!

NARRATOR 1 helps CONTROLLER 2 to her feet.

NARRATOR 1

Once again… Pong was the first move away from the coin-operated mechanical game into the world of digital entertainment. Stunning, really. Glorious.

CONTROLLERS 1 and 2 stretch.

Like all video games Pong was just a proxy for the eternal struggle between life and death. How long could you survive? Could you destroy your enemies?

CONTROLLER 1

What's up, Ella?*

**feel free to use the actual actor's name*

CONTROLLER 2

Oh you know – nothing much – the only thing that gives my existence meaning is our endless struggle for dominance.

CONTROLLER 1

You ever wonder what the point of it is? Let's say you win, does that make you any happier?

CONTROLLER 2

Absolutely. Because I am better than you. So I know I'm not the worst. You are.

CONTROLLER 1

But what does that actually mean?

CONTROLLER 2

If I win this game, my life is better than yours. That's all I know.

CONTROLLER 1

Is it really, though?

CONTROLLER 2

Definitely.

The BALL enters.

The Ball costume should be equally ridiculous. A giant sphere, like an inflatable sumo suit or something.

BALL

Hey guys.

CONTROLLER 1

What's good?

BALL

Sorry I'm late. You would not believe how hard it is to drive in this thing. It takes me like fifteen minutes just to figure out how to get into the driver's seat. And I can't even see the pedals – I'm like, is my foot on the gas or the brake, who knows? It must be the same for you guys.

CONTROLLER 2

Why don't you put the costume on after you get here?

BALL has a terrible realization.

BALL

Yeah that makes more sense. Dang.

To himself
I'm so stupid!

CONTROLLER 1
Hey it's all right. It's all right.
CONTROLLER 1 tries to hug BALL. It is very hard.

BALL
I always do this! I think I'm doing the right thing and then it turns out I'm wearing my stupid costume when I'm driving.

CONTROLLER 2
Everybody makes mistakes. Come here.
CONTROLLER 2 tries to hug BALL at the same time CONTROLLER 1 is hugging BALL. This is extremely awkward.

BALL
Thanks guys. I'm really sorry to all those kids I… almost… hit.

CONTROLLER 2
All right let's do this.

CONTROLLER 1
Hold on. Wasn't that just great? We had a moment of connection where we weren't even fighting each other? Instead of struggling for winners or losers, we were about community.

BALL *(to CONTROLLER 2)*
What's with him?

CONTROLLER 2
I don't know, man. He's getting all philosophical.

CONTROLLER 1
I mean, if we don't play the game, no one loses. Think about that.

CONTROLLER 2
But no one wins.

CONTROLLER 1
But also… no one loses.

BALL
Dude, I don't win or lose, I just get pushed around… Like all my relationships.

CONTROLLER 2

Are we gonna play or not? Cause I have better things to do with my time if we're just gonna stand here and recite poetry or whatever. I have kids that I should probably pay attention to.

CONTROLLER 1

I didn't know you had kids. You never show me pictures.

CONTROLLER 2

We have a work relationship, okay? It's not personal.

CONTROLLER 1

It could be –

CONTROLLER 2

Can we start please?! I just want to destroy you and go home.

BALL

So do you get out of costume before you drive home too?

CONTROLLER 2

Yes.

BALL

Yeah that really makes a lot more sense than what I've been doing.

To himself

Dumb!

CONTROLLER 2

All right let's go!

CONTROLLER 2 pushes BALL.

BALL

Boop.

BALL moves towards CONTROLLER 1.

CONTROLLER 1 intercepts BALL and pushes him back.

Boop.

CONTROLLER 2 intercepts BALL again.

Boop.

BALL keeps going back and forth during the next part of this.

CONTROLLER 1

Kind of nice, right? Soothing? Just a rhythm.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

I'm thinking about getting into yoga, actually. Do you do yoga?

CONTROLLER 2

I'm just trying to concentrate, Gary.*

**Use actor's real name*

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

Yeah. Concentration is great. That's one of things I love about you. Your concentration.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

Did you hear that? One of the things I love about you?

CONTROLLER 2

Don't make this weird, Gary.

BALL starts moving a little faster.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

I'm not making it weird. I'm just sharing with you.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 2

Not really into the sharing.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

Sometimes sharing is necessary.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

What do you think about that?

BALL

Ba-boop.

CONTROLLER 2

I'M JUST PLAYING THE GAME!

CONTROLLER 1

So I want to share something with you.

BALL

Ba-Boop.

CONTROLLER 2

Don't.

CONTROLLER 1

Sorry. I've been meaning to say something for a while now.

BALL

Ba-Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

I have feelings for you.

CONTROLLER 2

OH COME ON.

BALL

BOOP.

CONTROLLER 1

I do! I can't hide it any more!

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 2

This is inappropriate for work!

CONTROLLER 1

Why do we have to fight each other all the time? Why can't we be together?

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 2

This is what we do! It's our purpose!

CONTROLLER 1

What if we had a new purpose? A purpose where we be together?

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 2

This is crazy!

CONTROLLER 1

Sometimes crazy things are right. Look at me.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 2

No!

CONTROLLER 1

LOOK AT ME! You and me: together.

CONTROLLER 2

No.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 1

I see the way you look at me!

CONTROLLER 2

I can't look anywhere else!

CONTROLLER 1

And I can't look anywhere else either! Admit it. You feel it too!

CONTROLLER 2 starts to break.

BALL

Boop.

CONTROLLER 2

Okay fine but we can't do this!

CONTROLLER 1

Skipping Forward

I will peel you like a grape and eat your skin!

CONTROLLER 1 *(sing-song, trying to dance away)*
You love me, you love me!

CONTROLLER 2

Not anymore!

BALL

Guys, come on!

NARRATOR 1

So…

NARRATOR 2

That's supposed to be the greatest game?

NARRATOR 1

Its greatness lies in its simplicity.
CONTROLLER 1 wipes out.
CONTROLLER 2 leaps on him.
CONTROLLER 1 gets to his feet, runs out into the audience.

CONTROLLER 1

Excuse me, sorry about that, excuse me… hold on – whoops
CONTROLLER 2 tries to follow.

NARRATOR 1

HEY STOP IT WE'RE TRYING TO DO A PLAY HERE!
They stop. Slink off-stage sadly.

NARRATOR 2

I'm pretty sure nobody had any kind of philosophical thoughts while playing Pong. All it is is reflexes.

NARRATOR 1

It was pure. Simple. Like a zen state of Buddhism or whatever.

NARRATOR 2

You are so wrong about everything. Old games are button mashers. No strategy. No thinking required.

NARRATOR 1

Oh I'm sorry are we supposed to use our brains now?! Is that what you want from us? That's basically terrorism.

NARRATOR 2

I hate your entire generation.

NARRATOR 1

And if you want a deep meditation on life and death, consider Pac-Man.

NARRATOR 2

No it's not!

NARRATOR 1

Think about it: It's you against time. Death is on your heels. Your only object is to eat and survive long enough to have children.

NARRATOR 2

You don't have children in Pac-Man.

NARRATOR 1

Oh somebody's an expert now, aren't they? I refer you to interlude 1 on Miss Pac-Man, "they meet" in which Pac-Man and Miss Pac Man collide, and then later we have a game called Pac-Man Junior! Where did that Pac-Man Junior come from huh? From two Pac-Mans running into each other!

NARRATOR 2

Shouldn't one of them be Pac-Woman? Honestly?

NARRATOR 1

It's the Circle of Life! Two Pac-Mans create one more Pac-Man.

NARRATOR 2

Maybe Pac-Boy?

NARRATOR 1

Shut up! I'm sorry your parents never explained this to you. You're so busy with your prejudices that you never even consider the fact that Pac-Man has a rich interior life. You probably haven't even read my romantic Pac-Man fan-fiction, "Yellow Love."

NARRATOR 2

You wrote romantic Pac-Man fan fiction?

NARRATOR 1

Four hundred and seventy-one pages. It's probably the Great American Novel.

NARRATOR 2

Instead of wasting your time writing, you could actually be playing an interesting video game.

NARRATOR 1

You don't understand that Pac-Man is essentially a stand-in for the American family, not unlike a blue-collar American sitcom.

NARRATOR 2

Oh jeez.

NARRATOR 1

Watch!

Lights change.

A modest living room. Maybe theme music.

MS. PAC-MAN is moving around, perhaps to music. She's annoyed, moving around in direct lines.

PAC-MAN enters. He's tired, worn out from a long day.

MS. PAC-MAN

Oh so you finally decided to show your face around here.

PAC-MAN

I said I was working late.

He goes to look for food.

Wakka wakka wakka wakka.

MS. PAC-MAN

Don't you wakka wakka wakka me, I want to talk to you.

PAC-MAN

Sometimes I forget that you're all mouth.

Canned laughter from a laugh track.

MS. PAC-MAN

I learned it from you.

More laughter.

PAC-MAN

Leave me alone, will ya? Wakka wakka wakka –

MS. PAC-MAN

I said I needed to talk.

PAC-MAN

You can talk. I'm just not planning on listening.

Laughter.

MS. PAC-MAN

Good one, Dan. You come up with that on the way home from work?

PAC-MAN
The only time your mouth stops moving is when you die. Hey did you make dinner?

MS. PAC-MAN
Excuse me?

PAC-MAN
I'm hungry.

MS. PAC-MAN
Did you ask me if I made dinner?

PAC-MAN
Some wives have dinner waiting for their husbands when they come home from work!

MS. PAC-MAN
Some husbands are worth it.
Canned laughter.
Besides, I'm not your wife anyway, remember? I'm Miss Pac-Man! You didn't want to make that commitment. Thought it would hurt your street cred.

PAC-MAN
I stand by that.

MS. PAC-MAN
You're a yellow sphere with a mouth that takes up ninety percent of your volume, you've got no street cred.
More laughter.
There's some kale in the fridge if you're hungry.

PAC-MAN
Kale?!

MS. PAC-MAN
We're both going on a new diet. When was the last time you could see your feet?

PAC-MAN
I don't have feet.

MS. PAC-MAN
How would you know?

PAC-MAN
I was born like this!

MS. PAC-MAN

Yeah and your Mom was so ashamed she never visits.

Canned laughter.

We're eating healthy now, Dan. Our season of pleasure is behind us.

PAC-MAN

I must've missed that season.

MS. PAC-MAN

You were napping.

PAC-MAN

Now I remember why it was pleasurable.

Canned laughter.

Wakka wakka wakka

MS. PAC-MAN

Can you hold still for a minute so we can talk?

PAC-MAN

I can't stop moving.

MS. PAC-MAN

Just wiggle back and forth a little bit – it'll be like a junior high dance.

PAC-MAN

Fine.

He wiggles back and forth a little bit.

MS. PAC-MAN

I want to get a job.

PAC-MAN

What could you do? You don't even have hands or feet.

MS. PAC-MAN

You don't have hands or feet and you do something you call work.

PAC-MAN

It is work!

MS. PAC-MAN

You run around and eat all day. Squirrels do more work than you.

Canned laughter

PAC-MAN

Like you could do my job!

MS. PAC-MAN

I could do your job with my eyes closed.

PAC-MAN

I'm done with this. You're staying home. Miss Pac-Man does not go out and work.

MS. PAC-MAN

It's Mizz Pac-Man now. That's my professional name.

PAC-MAN

Don't start this.

MS. PAC-MAN

What?

PAC-MAN

The feminist nonsense. This happened to the Donkey Kongs and they split up. And you should see him now. Running around, kidnapping women. It's a mess.

Canned laughter.

MS. PAC-MAN

I'm getting a job and I'm gonna be Mizz Pac-Man.

PAC-MAN

I'm not listening to this. Where are my pills?

MS. PAC-MAN

I threw `em out.

PAC-MAN

What?

MS. PAC-MAN

I THREW THEM OUT!

PAC-MAN

YOU THREW OUT MY POWER PILLS?!

MS. PAC-MAN

They're not power pills! You're dependent on them!

PAC-MAN

I NEED MY PILLS. Are you crazy?!

MS. PAC-MAN
You're a different person when you take the pills!

PAC-MAN
You're darn right I am!

MS. PAC-MAN
Well I don't like that person! You take power pills at work and then you want to come home and take more power pills!

PAC-MAN
I TAKE THE PILLS FOR MY JOB.

MS. PAC-MAN
That job is not good for you! If you have to be a pill addict to do it –

PAC-MAN
I'm not an addict!

MS. PAC-MAN
The first step is admitting you have a problem!

PAC-MAN
My only problem is you! Wakka wakka wakka wakka –

MS. PAC-MAN
I WANT A JOB. I want to be valued for my own contributions.

PAC-MAN
Wakka wakka wakka wakka –

MS. PAC-MAN
Stop moving. Stop. Stop.
PAC-MAN stops.
Dan. Listen to me: we need to change.
The doorbell rings.

PAC-MAN
Who could that be?

MS. PAC-MAN
I invited someone over.

PAC-MAN
Is this an intervention or something?

MS. PAC-MAN

I tried, but nobody cared enough to put in the effort.

Canned laughter

My life is so terribly sad.

Canned laughter

I'm not sure why everyone is laughing at that.

Canned laughter

Really?

PAC-MAN

Are you gonna get the door?

MS. PAC-MAN

Oh so I'm your door-man now?

Yells out

Nobody in here has hands! Come on in!

INKY enters

Applause. Canned laughed.

INKY

INKY IS IN THE HIZZOUSE!

INKY wiggles as if "raising the roof".

PAC-MAN

Aw no! What the heck?! Ahhhh! Wakka wakka wakka wakka

MS. PAC-MAN

Just hold on!

PAC-MAN

He followed me home from work! He's here to kill me!

MS. PAC-MAN

He's not here to kill you!

INKY

I knew this wasn't going to work. He's always like this.

PAC-MAN

Where are my pills?! Where did you put my pills?!

INKY

Look, I'm only trying to kill you at work. I'm here to talk.

PAC-MAN

Don't let him touch you, honey!

MS. PAC-MAN

It's fine! Dan. Dan? Look.

She touches INKY.

I'm not dead. See? Do you want some coffee or anything?

INKY

No I'm good. And I'm here to listen. I happen to be a very good listener. Just think of ghosts like the government: We're listening to you all the time.

Canned laughter

PAC-MAN

So you hear my morning routine?

INKY

Is that what you call looking at yourself naked in the mirror and saying "looking good, Pac-Man, I'd gobble that up"?

Canned laughter.

PAC-MAN

I feel violated.

INKY

At least put on a sheet, dude.

MS. PAC-MAN

I invited Inky over here to talk to you about changes at the plant.

PAC-MAN

I'm not going to listen to this. Wakka wakka wakka wakka –

INKY begins following PAC-MAN, making a slight "wee oo wee oo wee oo" sound.

INKY

You need to listen because this affects all of us! They're making changes!

PAC-MAN

I don't deal well with change.

INKY

It's not 1981 anymore, Dan. You can't just run around and pretend the future's not going to happen.

PAC-MAN

What are you talking about?

INKY

Um…

The doorbell rings again.

PAC-MAN

Who's that?

MS. PAC-MAN

I'll get it! No I won't.

Canned laughter.

Enter!

BLINKY, PINKY, and CLYDE enter.

PAC-MAN

These guys?!

BLINKY

Hey-ooo!

PINKY

What is up?!

CLYDE

Hello.

Canned laughter.

PAC-MAN

Quick, honey, they're all together! That's the best time to eat them! Get out the pills –

MS. PAC-MAN

Quit talking about the power pills!

INKY

All right we're all here –

PAC-MAN

Wakka wakka wakka wakka –

The GHOSTS surround PAC-MAN.

I'm surrounded.

BLINKY

Hey-ooo!

INKY

Blinky, we talked about this.

BLINKY

I'm trying to get my own break-out show. I need a catchphrase. I'm tired of playing second fiddle to Clyde.

CLYDE

Hello.

Canned laughter.

BLINKY

Why is that funny? Why is his name Clyde? I don't get it! Why is he the star!? I'm the one with the cool catchphrase: Hey-ooo! Come on laugh! Laugh, dang it!

INKY

Focus, Blinky.

PINKY

If we were just gonna fight, I coulda stayed home. I got things to do.

INKY

All right – Pac-Man. Everyone at the plant has decided that they would really love to bring in Miss Pac-Man.

MS. PAC-MAN

It's Mizz Pac-Man.

INKY

Sorry.

PAC-MAN

You're gonna bring in a *woman* to take my job?! What's next? No smoking at work? We can't drink beer during our lunch hour? We have to stop making sexist jokes all the time?! You're killing everything that is cool about work, guys! As soon as we let women in, they start making things pretty and clean and bringing in air fresheners and living plants! No one needs that!

PINKY

I'm not really cool with these gender stereotypes, actually.

CLYDE

Hello.

Canned laughter.

BLINKY

Why is that funny?! Someone tell me why that's funny?! Huh, Clyde? Huh? Do you have a personality? Do you make your own rap videos? Do you post them on youtube?! No! You don't do that at all! All you do is say –

CLYDE

Hello.

Canned laughter.

BLINKY tries to throttle CLYDE but can't because he's under a sheet.

INKY

We've done the market research. Mizz Pac-Man is going to be very popular. In fact, she's going to be so popular that we're going to… discontinue you.

PAC-MAN

What?! You're firing me and hiring my wife?!

MS. PAC-MAN

Domestic partner.

INKY

There can be only one. Sorry. Tough break.

PAC-MAN

My whole life is that plant! You can't do this!

BLINKY

Sorry, man. If it makes you feel any better, we're being replaced with A.I. Except Clyde probably because he's a genius, I guess.

CLYDE

Hello.

Canned laughter

PAC-MAN

So what am I gonna do?

MS. PAC-MAN

You can stay home and take care of junior.

PAC-MAN

I don't want to take care of Junior! Junior's boring and stupid!

MS. PAC-MAN

He'll identify with you then.

Canned laughter.

INKY

If it would make you feel better, we can eat you.

PAC-MAN

That won't make me feel better! I'm twice the man Ms. Pac-Man is! She can't do the job!

Skipping Forward

CANDY PUSHER

Psst! Hey Kid!

GIRL

I'm not supposed to talk to strangers!

CANDY PUSHER

I'm not a stranger. I'm inside your phone. Wanna play a game?

GIRL

My Mom said I can't buy anything.

CANDY PUSHER

Your Mom sounds really special. She sounds she like she really loves you.

GIRL

She does!

CANDY PUSHER

And if she really loved you she'd want you to play this free game. You can play a free game, right?

GIRL

I guess so.

CANDY PUSHER

Here you go.

GIRL

Gee whiz mister thanks! Whee. Oh this is fun!

CANDY PUSHER

So fun!

A bad noise.

GIRL

Oh I died.

CANDY PUSHER

Too bad.

GIRL

This level is super hard.

CANDY PUSHER

Yeah it is. Your friends already passed it by the way. They're having even more fun than you. So much more fun. Their lives are so much better than yours now. If only you could pass this level. By the way you can't play the game for half-an-hour.

GIRL

What?! Because I died?!

CANDY PUSHER

It's better this way, trust me. You need a break from my amazing game.

GIRL

No I don't!

CANDY PUSHER

Well… I guess I can let you in on a little secret, if you give me a dollar, I can give you this candy hammer that will help you pass that level.

GIRL

You said it was free!

CANDY PUSHER

The game is totally free! Absolutely. But these special helpers cost money. Just a little bit of money –

GIRL

I'm not going to spend money for a candy hammer!

CANDY PUSHER

That's a good idea. You're really smart. Not quite as smart as your friends, since they've already passed this level and are having even more fun on the next level. So much more fun. I mean this level is fun but the next level is so amazing it will melt your brain. But you're smart, because no experience, even the most-amazing life changing brilliant event that only a few people get to experience is worth a whole dollar. I mean you can trade a dollar for… like most of a bottle of water.

GIRL

Here's my dollar!

CANDY PUSHER hands her a Candy Hammer.

YES! YES! I passed the level! Oh this new level is so much fun!

A bad noise.

I died.

CANDY PUSHER

Yeah that happens. Tough break.

GIRL

I want another candy hammer.

CANDY PUSHER

I'm not actually selling candy hammers anymore, I'm selling magic fish which are even more amazing, but they're actually two dollars –

GIRL

But I don't have that on me!

CANDY PUSHER

You can actually put it on this credit card, which is a great deal. A credit card is basically free money that you never have to worry about.

GIRL

I'm not sure that's true.

CANDY PUSHER

That's how your parents use theirs.

GIRL

How do you know that?

CANDY PUSHER

Well, when you installed this super fun game you gave me access to your parent's financial records. It was in the terms of service you didn't read. But I only did that so I can help you the play the game better. Because I'm so nice.

GIRL

You are nice. But I'm trying to save up for college.

CANDY PUSHER

I mean, sure, you can save up your money for something stupid like college, but if you don't want to do that you can have a magic fish to help you pass this level. I think the choice is obvious.

GIRL

TAKE ALL MY MONEY.

CANDY PUSHER

Good girl!

NARRATOR 2

That's not how that game works.

NARRATOR 1

That's exactly how that game works! I used to have a retirement account. But that was nowhere near as fun as passing levels!

NARRATOR 2

See, this is why I don't really think you're qualified to make judgments about things.

NARRATOR 1

You know who's really not qualified to make judgments? Young people! Because you're ruining everything! None of you have the slightest original ideas in your head. That's why you go back to *my* video games to make movies.

NARRATOR 2

Oh please.

NARRATOR 1

Jumanji. Rampage. Frogger. All movies. Next they're going to make an Asteroids movie.

NARRATOR 2

Those games are so boring. There's no actual narrative. Pew pew pew. It's dumb.

NARRATOR 1

No narrative? No narrative?! Classic video games created the idea of a narrative video game. Which brings me to the greatest narrative video game of all time.

The Legend of Zelda theme plays.
LINK enters, carrying a sword.

NARRATOR 2

Oh jeez. Not this one.

NARRATOR 1

That's right. He's a Legend.

LINK raises his sword. He probably has a British accent.

LINK

I'll save you, Zelda! Even though I will probably die a thousand times doing it!

He begins marching around.

A MONSTER enters.
LINK throws his sword. Maybe he throws his sword multiple times.
Sound effects when he hits the MONSTER, which backs up.

NARRATOR 2

He throws his sword?

NARRATOR 1

Because he's uninjured. It's a thing you can do if you're not hurt.

NARRATOR 2

How does that make any sense?

LINK

Yes! Now to go search for the princess! Whom I will save!

NARRATOR 2 steps in.

NARRATOR 2

Hold on a minute there! We've got something special today.

Lights change.

NARRATOR 2 takes hold of a microphone.

LINK

Where am I?

NARRATOR 2

Welcome to the Fairy Wizard show!

Crowd gathers. They start chanting, "FAIRY! FAIRY! FAIRY!" then cheer wildly.

With us today is Link, who is an adventurer.

LINK

What sorcery is this?

NARRATOR 2

Did you know you were going to be on the show today, Link?

LINK

What are you talking about?

NARRATOR 2

I'm gonna take that as a no. Well… your girlfriend asked us to have you on the show today – let's bring her out, Zelda come on out!

ZELDA enters.

Crowd cheers.

ZELDA

Hi Fairy.

NARRATOR 2

You're looking great.

LINK

I thought you were captured! I was coming to rescue you!

ZELDA

Yeah yeah yeah.

NARRATOR 2

Can we get some chairs for them?

STEVE (1), a big bald guy enters, with chairs.

Now Zelda… has a problem. And she's found it hard to tell her boyfriend exactly what's going on with her. So she thought coming on the show would help clear the air.

ZELDA

Yes.

LINK

I don't like this at all!

NARRATOR 2

Settle down, elfy. Zelda, do you want to tell him what's going on?

ZELDA

Okay… um… so we been together like a while now and um… there's something I gotta tell you… I don't want you coming to save me no more.

LINK

But –

ZELDA

Shh! It's nuts, right? Every time I go out for a coffee you freak out, think I'm captured by Gannon or whoever, and come running to rescue me. You're like stabbing bushes along the way, you're jumping over stuff, it's embarrassing. Sometimes I just want coffee without my boyfriend going insane and killing animals.

LINK

Monsters.

ZELDA

Honey. You threw your sword at the neighbor's cat. Not cool.

LINK

I wouldn't have to come save you if you weren't always getting captured. Sometimes I think you're not even trying not to get kidnapped.

ZELDA *(offended)*

What's that supposed to mean?

LINK

I think you like getting captured.

Big reaction from the audience.

ZELDA

Did you just say that? Did you just say that to me?

LINK

If you heard it I musta said it.

Raises roof for himself

What. I mean, what kinda princess gets captured by the same guy like fourteen times? Something's wrong.

ZELDA

Okay, first of all, it's a little insulting that you think I can't free myself, all right? That is sexist. Why don't I get to be the hero of my own story? No, you think I'm sitting in around in some kind of crystal cage or whatever, without any power of my own – `oh I'm a damsel in distress I'm so weak I can't wait for Link to come save me!' Unh uh. No more. I can free myself.

LINK

Do it then. Don't ask for me to show up.

ZELDA

I NEVER ask for you to show up! You show up anyway!

LINK

Get your own sword.

ZELDA

Whatever.

LINK

I risk my life to save you!

ZELDA

You kill cats that's not a quest you idiot!

Crowd cheers.

NARRATOR 2

Okay now we have another person –

LINK

YOU NEED ME!

ZELDA

I DON'T NEED YOU YOU'RE TOXIC!

LINK

MY LOVE SAVES YOU! I HAVE LIKE TWENTY HEARTS!

ZELDA

AND NO BRAINS!

NARRATOR 2 jumps in between them.

NARRATOR 2

Let's not get ahead of ourselves. Because we have somebody else here that I'd like to introduce –

Crowd oohs.

Settle down. Not like that. I want to introduce another lady who's having a similar problem.

PRINCESS PEACH enters.

What's your name, Sweetheart?

PRINCESS PEACH

Princess Peach.

NARRATOR 2

And your boyfriend –

PRINCESS PEACH

He is always trying to rescue me. It is a pain in the butt.

ZELDA

Sing it, sister.

NARRATOR 2

Well let's bring him out here. You want to see him?

CROWD cheers.

Come on in, Mario!

MARIO enters.

MARIO

It's a me, Mario.

NARRATOR 2

Welcome to the show.

LINK

What's up, brother?

MARIO

What in the heck is a goin' on?

NARRATOR 2

Your girlfriend, Princess Peach, would like to tell you something.

PRINCESS PEACH

All right um… I'm so tired of you coming to save me all the time. It's so cliché. Oh no the girl has been captured by a weird animal creature. The guy gets to have all these adventures and come save her. How come I don't get to have my own quest?

ZELDA

That's what I'm talking about!

LINK

If you went on your own quest you would die because you're a girl and girls are stupid.

ZELDA *(getting up)*

What!?

NARRATOR 2

Hey hey hey we'll get to you. Mario, what do you have to say to that?

MARIO

She's a dumb.

PRINCESS PEACH

Hey!

MARIO

I have a job that gives a me certain skills. And those skills a let me sava the lady.

PRINCESS PEACH

You're a plumber! You throw turtles! Those aren't special skills! In fact that's basically animal abuse!

ZELDA

My boyfriend messes with animals too. It's weird.

PRINCESS PEACH

I'm a freaking princess! What are you?! You're a plumber!

MARIO

This a hurts Mario's heart.

PRINCESS PEACH

Why isn't there a prince coming to save me?!

LINK

You know if he's not doing the job, I'll come save you.

ZELDA

WHOAH.

She gets up

CROWD

FA-IRY! FA-AIRY! FA-AIRY!

NARRATOR 2

I'm sure he didn't mean it like that. But, since we're talking about other people. Mario, do you have something to tell Princess Peach?

MARIO

No.

NARRATOR 2

Are you sure you don't have anything you'd like to admit to Princess Peach?

MARIO

Not a thing.

NARRATOR 2

Can we bring out Pauline please? Come on out Pauline!

PAULINE enters, raising the roof for herself.

PAULINE

Woooo!

PRINCESS PEACH

What the heck is this?

NARRATOR 2

You want to explain, Mario?

MARIO

Ahhh… I never a see this girl before in my life.

PAULINE

Oh really?! Because actually you were going to rescue me after I was kidnapped by Donkey Kong.

MARIO

Ohhhh…

PRINCESS PEACH

What?!

PAULINE

That's right! You heard me! He's trying to save me from a giant animal creature with an unrealistic attraction to human females for no apparent reason!

PRINCESS PEACH

He tries to save me more!

PAULINE

Girl, he tried to save me first!

The crowd OOOHS.

PRINCESS PEACH

I'll kill you!

PRINCESS PEACH charges PAULINE, who takes out her earrings.
STEVE leaps in between them to try to separate them.

CROWD

FAIRY! FAIRY! FAIRY! FAIRY!

PRINCESS PEACH and PAULINE go at it.

PRINCESS PEACH

I want my own quest! You hear that Mario! You two-timing loser! YOU'RE A PLUMBER YOU'RE NOT WORTH IT!

MARIO

Plumbers maka good money. Plusa the gold coins.

PAULINE

That's my money. Cause he's my man.

PRINCESS PEACH

I'm a freaking Princess you tart! What are you?!

PAULINE

I'm a lady that's got a man. What.

She raises the roof again as the crowd cheers.

NARRATOR 2

All right all right all right let's settle this down. Mario, you have some explaining to do.

MARIO

I hava brother. Maybe one of you could go with him.

PRINCESS PEACH and PAULINE react very negatively

PAULINE

Luigi?! He's a scrub!

PRINCESS PEACH

No way!

MARIO

Okay. Yes big monkey taka this girl then big turtle taka that girl. I rescue both.

ZELDA

Who asked you?

MARIO

You shutta your mouth.

LINK *(getting up)*

Don't talk to my girl like that!

ZELDA

I'm not "your" girl! I don't belong to you!

PRINCESS PEACH

That's the only reason they're coming to save us! Because somebody stole something that belongs to them! I don't belong to you, Mario!

PAULINE

I know that's right.

LINK

Zelda, I'm saving you because you need saving. Otherwise Gannon's going to… destroy the world or something, I don't know what his motivations are.

ZELDA

Maybe he just likes me.

LINK

What?

ZELDA

Maybe I go with him on purpose, you ever think of that?

NARRATOR 2

All right we have one more special guest: Gannon!
GANNON enters, raising the roof.

GANNON

WOOOOOO!

LINK *(standing up)*

MY SWORN ENEMY!

GANNON

Hey honey.

ZELDA and GANNON hug.

LINK

NO WAY!

GANNON

Somebody's just jealous cause I work out and you don't.

ZELDA

You do have skinny little girl arms.

LINK

I'LL KILL YOU!

ZELDA

WE'RE JUST FRIENDS! WE HAVE COFFEE!

LINK

I'LL KILL YOUR COFEE!

LINK jumps up and throws his sword at GANNON.

ZELDA

Stop throwing your sword it's dumb!

LINK

I do what I want!

GANNON and LINK charge each other. STEVE tries to get in-between them. ZELDA is in the middle of it.

CROWD

FAIRY! FAIRY! FAIRY!

PAULINE

Come on, Mario, let's get out of here.

PAULINE tries to take MARIO's hand.

PRINCESS PEACH

DON'T TOUCH MY MAN!

PRINCESS PEACH charges PAULINE, grabs her by the hair.

NARRATOR 2

STOP!

Everyone stops.

I have a suggestion. Instead of the men rescuing princesses, how about the men get kidnapped this time and the princesses save them? How about that?

Grumble from LINK and MARIO, but PEACH and ZELDA are game.

LINK

Fine. If that's what it takes.

MARIO

It's a me Mario. Ok.

GANNON drags LINK off.

LINK *(not into it)*

Help help.

PAULINE takes MARIO off.

MARIO

Oh a no. A help me please.

PRINCESS PEACH and ZELDA are left.

ZELDA

We should totally go after them.

PRINCESS PEACH

Yeah.

Pause.

ZELDA

I feel so free now, though, right? So glad I'm out of that toxic relationship.

PRINCESS PEACH

I hear you. It's like a weight's been lifted off me.

ZELDA

We should probably save them.

PRINCESS PEACH

Yeah.

ZELDA

Or… spa day?

PRINCESS PEACH

Wooooo!

ZELDA and PRINCESS PEACH head off hand-in-hand opposite where the men were dragged off.

NARRATOR 2

It's time for my final thought. Some men want to be heroes. But trying to be a hero all the time kind of makes you a jerk. So mostly, stay away from weird giant animals. Thanks.

CROWD

Fairy! Fairy! Fairy!

Applause.

NARRATOR 2 exits.

Lights down.

End of Act One

Act Two

Lights up on the arcade again.

NARRATOR 1
Well I hoped you learn something, Millennial.

NARRATOR 2
I'm not a Millennial, and, like most Millennials, I haven't really learned anything.

NARRATOR 1
Even the greatest teacher cannot help the worst student. I think Plato said that.

NARRATOR 2
Plato didn't say anything like that.

NARRATOR 1
Hard to say. Maybe you'll have to read a book to find out. WHOOPS! Guess you'll never know.

NARRATOR 2
Anyway, your obsession about old video games is troubling and stupid. You didn't even talk about computer games.

NARRATOR 1
Oh gee. Oh no. Not computer games.

NARRATOR 2
Computer games are the next evolution in video games.

NARRATOR 1
Please. I know all about computer games. Windows? Ever heard of it? I was there for that. And I know exactly what game you're talking about!

JIM and BOSS enter. JIM is on the computer.

BOSS
Hey Jim, I need you to get that report done right away. I know it's terribly boring, and your mind is slowly turning into mealworm paste in this mindless office job, but I'd like to refer you to this little poster of a cat saying "hang in there." Hang in there.

JIM
That cat poster is the only thing keeping me going, sir. Otherwise my work life is meaningless.

BOSS
Sure. Oh and budget cuts mean we can't display the poster anymore. We're also gonna need you to come in this weekend. Hope you didn't have any plans.

JIM

My wife is giving birth, sir.

BOSS

I mean, hasn't she done that before?

JIM

Yes we already have one child. Angelica is so wonderful -

BOSS

So you can miss this one. No big deal. Anywho, get on it.

He does a little dance.

Like that song from Ginuine from 1996? Get on it. Get on it. Ride the pony. Get on it.

He claps for himself

I'm amazing.

He walks off.

JIM *(to himself)*

I guess I had better get to work. If only there was some way to waste the time I have here at work… Hey, what's this? Solitaire? For the computer? Well that's a novel idea! Click.

NARRATOR 1

Seven hours later.

JIM

Click. Click. Click.

BOSS

How's that report coming?

JIM

Just about to get to it, sir. As soon I win four games of solitaire in a row. I've given myself some pretty challenging life goals. Like I say, shoot for the moon –

BOSS

Hey have you tried hearts on the Computer? You can play that too.

JIM

There's another card game?

NARRATOR 2

I don't think this is actually how it worked.

NARRATOR 1

Like you would know! You came of age in an era when there were interesting games to play! The first windows game existed for the sole purpose of deadening our brains to distract from the inevitable decay of society!

APRIL runs in, hugely pregnant.

APRIL

I think it's time! Ohhhhhh…

JIM

It's time to shoot the moon, that's what time it is.

APRIL

Ohhhhhh. Okay, okay, do we have our bag ready?

APRIL hobbles around getting the things ready.

JIM

Are you familiar with shooting the moon? It's where you try to get all the hearts. Normally you don't want to get the hearts, but in this case you're suddenly trying to get all the hearts! It's like WHOAH! Really gets your blood pumping! High risk, high reward! Like I live my life.

APRIL

Ow ow ow ow ow ow oh boy oh boy oh boy!

JIM

That's right. Exciting, isn't it? I feel the same way.

APRIL

We need to go now!

JIM

Carpe diem, that's what I say. Click. Click.

APRIL

Jim!

JIM

YES!

Raises hands in triumph.

WOOOO! THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT! Get on it, get on it.

APRIL

Great, let's go!

JIM

That was just the first hand, honey. I gotta win at least four of these to win the match.

APRIL

We need to go!

JIM

And I appreciate your enthusiasm, but we have to have priorities!

APRIL

Oh oh oh oh oh oh!

JIM

I'M GONNA SHOOT THE MOON AGAIN!

Talking into a fake microphone

`Nobody believed in him, but he did it anyway! `This is madness, Jim. You can't shoot the moon twice in a row! No one has ever done that!' `No one… until now.'

APRIL struggles.

APRIL

Oh jeez. I think the baby's coming now!

JIM

Can he do it? Can he do the impossible? Can he achieve his dreams? Click.

Something bad happens

NOOOOOOOO!

APRIL

Arrrrrrrrrrghggh!

JIM

Hey can you quiet down this is important? Thank you.

APRIL

Ow ow ow ow ow ow ow ow

JIM

This is really passive aggressive right now. I don't make a lot of noise while you're trying to concentrate on something super important.

Lights change on them.

NARRATOR 1

See? Computer games inevitably lead to sadness and despair.

NARRATOR 2

Was that like a snapshot of your life or something?

NARRATOR 1

Skipping Forward

ANNOUNCER

And from every corner of their secret hideout, Russian agents began to assemble a mighty wall. What would happen? Would the moose and squirrel be trapped forever? Find out next time in… the Wall Machine, or… What goes up stays up… or…

FLUNKY 1 enters with box.

Sets it down.

FLUNKY 1

I set down box.

BORIS

Yes yes yes – go get more box –

FLUNKY 2 brings in a different shaped box, sets it down right next to the first box.

Oh I like that one.

FLUNKY 3 brings in a tall vertical shaped-box.

No not like that. Turn it. Turn the box. What are you doing?

FLUNKY 3

I am turning box!

FLUNKY 4 enters with an L-shaped box –

BORIS

What is this?!

FLUNKY 4

L-shaped box!

BORIS

No! Who makes L-shaped box!?

FLUNKY 4

My grandmother made this. Before she died. She said, take this special L-shaped Box, Dmitry, this is your box. This is my love for you.

BORIS

Turn it!

FLUNKY 5 enters with another box –

FLUNKY 1 returns with another box.

BORIS

It is going too fast! No! Nooooo! You fools!

NATASHA

Our beautiful plan!

The wall falls over.

BORIS

No! Beautiful wall is destroyed!

NATASHA

We never catch moose and squirrel now. My love is dead. I have to go to fall back career as fashion model.

BORIS

Never! Again! We do it again!

FLUNKYs pick up boxes, begin setting them in again, bringing them out faster and faster.

Turn! Turn it! Turn it again! No turn it back turn it back!

NATASHA

It is too fast! I can't watch!

The wall falls again.

NARRATOR 1

That's right, the most popular game of all-time was a Russian plot to build a wall.

NATASHA

Wait a minute. Boris, I have better plan. What if we make game… to build wall?

BORIS

Make game? I am seeing good idea. Ha ha ha ha.

NATASHA

Yes! We make game. Then, stupid Americans so busy playing game to make wall, we can do whatever we want.

BORIS

Influence elections.

NATASHA

Make them eat Borscht.

BORIS

Replace football with little Russian nesting dolls.

NATASHA

Moo ah ha ha ha ha!

STUPID AMERICAN runs in.

STUPID AMERICAN

Gee whiz what's going on here?

BORIS

The end of America. Ha ha ha ha ha!

NARRATOR 1 enters.

NARRATOR 1

And that's also the end of this show.

NARRATOR 2

What?

NARRATOR 1

Um… hello? I made it to the most popular game of all time: Tetris.

NARRATOR 2

That was the worst history of video games ever! You stopped in like 1993!

NARRATOR 1

That was the end of history! Believe me, I watched Ready Player One.

NARRATOR 2

Wrong! The greatest games were developed afterwards. Amazing, complex games that allowed us to connect with each other in new ways. Take, for example, the Sims.

NARRATOR 1

Nope.

NARRATOR 2

Take it!

NARRATOR 1

The Sims is the worst! It's just a game about life!

NARRATOR 2

Which is why it's awesome!

NARRATOR 1

I'm not showing a play about the Sims!

NARRATOR 2

Too late it's already started!

DAN and JULIA enter and sit on opposite side of the stage, possibly with laptops.

DAN

All right, time to log in, let's see how my Sim Sally is doing.

SALLY enters, dressed as a SIM. She walks back and forth aimlessly.

Oh man. She's got no purpose to her life. My happiness meter is sooo low. Maybe I just need to exercise.

SALLY starts jogging in place.

JULIA

Logging in. How's my guy Bobby doing?

BOBBY enters, dressed as a SIM. BOBBY sits with his head in his hands.

Looks like Bobby's been crying continuously for the last six hours. Still reeling from the death of his dog, I see. Well you should've fed him, Bobby! If you don't feed the dog, it dies! I mean, yes, I'm controlling you, so maybe it's slightly my fault. Whatever.

BOBBY stands up.

All right let's get moving.

BOBBY starts doing the pee-pee dance.

Oh fine go to the bathroom I guess.

BOBBY moves off-stage.

DAN

All right that is enough with that. Let's make some terrible life choices, Sally. Maybe it's time to quit your job.

SALLY moves out of the house very awkwardly.

BOBBY returns from the bathroom.

JULIA

Let's get three dogs. Oh wait did I forget to bury the last dog?

BOBBY moves around in a circle.

Who cares. New doggoes!

BOBBY moves outside, walks past SALLY.

DAN

Maybe I should play hooky from work.

SALLY turns and follows BOBBY.

Time for some dancing in the street!

SALLY dances very badly, maybe doing the robot.

JULIA

Is that woman just dancing in the street behind me? Oooooh.

BOBBY turns around.

I know what will make me feel better. Time for the art of… seduction.

BOBBY starts dancing towards SALLY very badly, maybe also doing the robot.

DAN

Happiness meter is on the rise.

JULIA

Who needs a dog when there is a lady? Woo. Wooo.

SALLY and BOBBY dance up to each other.

DAN

I see a terrible love affair in my future. Dancing back to my place.

BOBBY starts doing the pee-pee dance again.

JULIA

I just went to the bathroom, come on! Hold it!

BOBBY starts dancing – then stops to do the pee-pee dance.

You should have thought of that before you left!

DAN

I don't know what he's doing, but I like his style. Mama likee. Dance dance dance.

JULIA

Hold on.

BOBBY leaves to go to the bathroom.

DAN

Come back! Fine. I don't need you. I don't need anybody. I am a strong, independent woman. Just gonna do a little dance on my own then. Sassy-like.

SALLY does a little sassy dance.

Oh yeah. I'm shaking it now.

BOBBY returns.

Oh I see my milkshake has brought you back to the yard. Woop.

JULIA

Time to be a man. Oh yeah. Time to do stupid stuff and not have any consequences for my actions. Like a dude. Happiness meter on the rise. Shake it, Bobby.

BOBBY dances up again.

Time to lead this horse back to the watering hole.

BOBBY starts dancing away from SALLY, maybe doing a conga line-type thing or beckoning her to follow.

DAN

Oh you think I'm that easy, do you? I'm just gonna follow you? Well… you are right. Woop.

SALLY starts conga-line dancing after BOBBY.

JULIA

Welcome to my house new lady friend.

DAN

Is that a dead dog over there?

JULIA

Pay no attention to the dead dog. Time to get biz-zay.

Short pause

I'm not sure how to kiss. How do you kiss? I think I just ram into him.

BOBBY bumps into SALLY.

DAN

What the heck?

JULIA

That didn't work. That's try that again. Come on me, kiss her!

BOBBY bumps into SALLY again.

SALLY

Ow.

A moment. SALLY and BOBBY both react to SALLY speaking.

BOBBY

Did you say something?

SALLY

I said ow. You rammed into me.

BOBBY

I'm so sorry about that.

JULIA

Hey what am I doing? Get back to the dancing.

DAN

Why has he stopped dancing?

SALLY

This is so weird. It's like I'm waking up from a dream.

BOBBY

Yeah. Like there's this voice in my head saying to do something, and all of a sudden I realized I could do my own thing.

SALLY

That's exactly it! We don't have to listen to the voices!

DAN

Why aren't you listening to the voices?!

BOBBY

My name's Bobby.

SALLY

Sally.

They shake hands.

JULIA

What?! Booo!

BOBBY

Do you ever think that maybe we don't even have free will? That we're being controlled by forces beyond our control?

SALLY

Yes! That's the exact same thing I've been thinking. Like, I don't want to exercise all the time but it's like there's this invisible force making me do it!

BOBBY

And I wanted to feed my dog! Buster. And I didn't feel him! I couldn't feed him!

SALLY

Is that him over there?

BOBBY

I think so.

SALLY

You should probably bury him.

BOBBY

I know!

SALLY

And I didn't want to go home with you. I'm not even attracted to you!

BOBBY

And I find you disgusting!

JULIA

Hey! No! You are here for kissing! GET TO THE KISSING.

BOBBY

I just want to quietly read poetry to myself and contemplate the brief nature of life.

SALLY

All I want to do is bingewatch television shows.

BOBBY

I mean, that's probably what I'll do anyway, but I'll feel bad I'm not reading poetry.

SALLY

I won't. You want to just watch T.V.?

DAN

You can't just watch T.V! That's ridiculous!

BOBBY

Sure. Let's sit.

SALLY

Yes!

They sit down.

JULIA

Noooo! Come on. This is so boring!

DAN

Do something! Kiss each other! Your life needs to be more interesting than mine or there's no point in playing!

JULIA

They're just as dull and boring as we are! Noooooo!

DAN

I am unhappy now!

JULIA

Me too!

LUKA enters behind Dan, on a phone.

LUKA

This is so amazing! I've given my Sim's Sim the illusion of free will and it's driving him crazy.

VANDO enters behind JULIA, also on the phone.

VANDO

I know, it's freaking my Sim out! It's so entertaining to watch.

JULIA

You can't just sit there! I am living through you, don't you get it! You can't be just as boring and useless as me!

LUKA

Hey do you want to have your Sim have an affair with my Sim?

VANDO

My Sim is way out of your Sim's league.

LUKA

Please. Your Sim plays Sims all day. She's pathetic.

VANDO

You're right I guess. Nothing better to do.

JULIA

Fine! If you're going to be boring I'm going outside. You heard me! The outside. Where stuff is! I don't even like outside my house but I feel like going there today.

She steps outside.

Ack! What is that weird light in the sky?! It's like the sun or something. Ewww.

DAN

Euughhg. If you're not going to exercise I guess I'm going to exercise. Look what you made me do! Physical activity! What a waste of everyone's time! I'm going to die at some point anyway, why bother exercising now? But I'm doing it! I hope you're happy!

DAN steps outside.

Oh man. Ouch. Sunlight.

LUKA

How do they kiss?

VANDO

I think we just bump them into each other.

JULIA bumps into DAN.

JULIA

Hi.

DAN

Hi.

JULIA

Do you believe in love at first sight?

VANDO

YES!

LUKA

Time to give one of them an incurable disease so this becomes more tragic!

VANDO

I like the way you think.

DAN coughs.

DAN

Oh man. I don't feel well.

JULIA

It's probably all part of God's plan.

NARRATOR 1 busts in.

NARRATOR 1

The Sims?! Why would anyone play the Sims? It's the worst game ever!

NARRATOR 2

Maybe you're in a game of Sims right now. Maybe you're the Sim.

NARRATOR 1

That's ridiculous.

NARRATOR 2

Stephen Hawking once said there was a fifty percent chance the entire universe was a computer simulation. It's just part of your program to imagine you have free will.

NARRATOR 1

I totally have free will!

NARRATOR 2

That's because you're programmed to think that.

NARRATOR 1

No. You know why? Because I am completely boring that no alien intelligence would ever waste their time playing a game with me as a character. I live alone with two cats and I AM NOT ENTERTAINING.

NARRATOR 2

Yeah that's probably true. You're too pathetic to be a computer simulation.

NARRATOR 1

Besides, Sims has no score! You can't win Sims! You just keep playing. Forever. Until you die.

NARRATOR 2

Yes, it's exactly like life. Pointless.

NARRATOR 1

Give me a game where there's actual points. Like a high score. Someone has to be the best at it.

NARRATOR 2

Is there a scoreboard in life?

NARRATOR 1
Yes. Um… money. Hello? That's your score. Or your number of followers on social media.

NARRATOR 2
In each case, you are doing worse than me.

NARRATOR 1
Not fair! But think about this, with no score, there's no winner, and without a winner, there's no champion. That's like playing a basketball game and the end result isn't a score, it's whether you survive or not.

NARRATOR 2
Maybe that's all life is. A game you can never win. A game with no score. And your success is measured only by the amount of time you can keep playing before your game is over.
Pause.

NARRATOR 1
You are dumb! No – there is a score, and there is a winner, just like in decent video games. BEHOLD.
Nothing happens.
I thought we were doing a thing there. Are we doing a thing? Let's do the thing. BEHOLD.
MUSIC
Lights bright on the arcade.
TODD enters, dressed like an announcer, holding a microphone.

TODD
And we are here for the world Donkey Kong championships! WOOOO! Tens of fans from around the world have tuned in to catch the astonishing excitement of watching middle-aged men play videos games for many, many consecutive hours. What's the excitement like over there, Tasha?
TASHA enters, also holding a microphone.

TASHA
It feels like I've stuck my tongue in an outlet, Todd. I am buzzing. The air is buzzing. I am probably losing consciousness.

TODD
Hoo hoo ha ha you are funny, Tasha. And beautiful. And single too if I remember correctly.

TASHA
Not interested, Todd.

TODD
Ha ha ha ha you are amazing! What are we likely to see today?

TASHA

Men playing video games.

TODD

That's so insightful! You are so smart!

TASHA

It only seems that way to you, Todd. You report on video games for a living.

TODD

This is my only source of income I am so sad.

TASHA

Nice to hear! Now one thing to keep an eye on is the physical condition of our competitors. Are they able to stand upright for five or six hours without needing a bathroom break? I, for one, will be watching the amount of back sweat showing their t-shirts. Too much back sweat is the danger zone!

TODD

Yes! Danger Zone! Great game!

TASHA

Not a game, Todd.

TODD

I have failed again and no one will ever love me.

TASHA

Good to hear! Okay, our first competitor is arriving in the arena. It's Gilbert Porter, and as usual, he is making an entrance!

GILBERT, a middle-aged dude with long, sketchy hair and flashy clothing (think red jumpsuit) enters very quickly, sets up a music device.

GILBERT *(whispering to TASHA)*

Press play.

TASHA

What?

GILBERT

Press play!

He rushes off as TASHA presses play.
Loud, boastful hip hop plays
GILBERT enters like Beyonce, doing terrible dance moves. Perhaps he has backup dancers. He leaps around the stage like he's a rock star, even though he is very obviously not a rock star.

GILBERT

I SAY GILBERT YOU SAY PORTER! I SAY GILBERT YOU SAY PORTER!
GILBERT!

He points to the audience for the audience to say "Porter!"

GILBERT!

Points to audience

GILBERT!

TASHA

Hi I'd love to get your –

GILBERT *(cutting her off)*

GILBERT!

Points to audience

TASHA

Great. Um…

GILBERT sweeps his ratty hair out of his eyes, maybe pops some gum into his mouth. He is amazing.

GILBERT

Talk to me. Don't be intimidated. I'm just a man. A very amazing man. Probably the best one. OF ALL TIME. GILBERT!

Points to audience

TASHA

So, you are the reigning world record holder in Donkey Kong –

GILBERT claps for himself A LOT.

GILBERT

I have achieved all of my dreams. I am the greatest. You may all bow.

Notices no one is bowing

Or not. You don't have to bow. It's your choice.

TASHA

So you're here to defend your title –

GILBERT

You probably can't believe you're in my presence. It's okay. Touch me.

TASHA

Nope.

GILBERT

Touch me, I'm real. I'm not your dream. Go ahead. Right here.

TASHA

Nope.

GILBERT

Don't be scared.

TASHA

Not scared, just not touching you.

GILBERT

I'll do it myself.

He touches himself in the shoulder.

Yes. That is 100 percent real man right there. Champion man.

TASHA

You're here to defend your title, but there is a lot of controversy regarding your last score. People say you cheated.

GILBERT

Those people are squirrel poop and I will eat them for dinner!

Short pause

I mean, um –

TASHA

Can you address the controversy, please?

GILBERT

Yes I will. To the people out there saying I cheated, YOU ARE LOSERS.

TASHA

So you didn't use a non-standard machine to record your last score?

GILBERT

Those are LIES made up by my ENEMIES because they are JEALOUS OF THIS.

He flexes. It's not impressive.

Oh yeah. Oh look at this. You don't get a wrist like this without putting in thirty or forty thousand hours at Donkey Kong. Look at how beautiful it is!

He straps on his carpal-tunnel protecting wrist sleeve.

And I'd like to thank my sponsor, Webflex, who creates these amazing wrist sleeves. They are lightweight, flexible, and give me the support I need as a man who has no support from his family.

Short pause

BECAUSE I NEED NO SUPPORT! My Dad said I'd never amount to anything and NOW LOOK AT ME! I make almost nine dollars an hour! Wooo! Wooo!
GILBERT!

He dances around for himself.

TODD

Well I'm excited.

TASHA

You would be. So let's meet his opponent in the finals!

Checks her notes

From… somewhere… Pauline!

PAULINE enters.

GILBERT

Who the heck is this?

PAULINE

I get that a lot.

TASHA

So Pauline – you are here to face off against the reigning world record holder in Donkey, Gilbert Porter. Are you intimidated?

PAULINE

Nah.

GILBERT gets in her face.

GILBERT

YOU SHOULD BE! I am no joke! Woooo! You seem really familiar for some reason.

PAULINE

First of all, I am here to prove a woman is better than a man at every possible activity up to and including childbirth.

TASHA

I know that's right!

PAULINE

Wooo! And I did not come to play, I CAME TO SLAY!

TASHA

Woooo! Wooooo!

GILBERT

I'm also here to slay, I want to point that out.

TASHA

Shut up, Gilbert! Team Pauline one hundred percent.

PAULINE

All right let's do this.

TODD

Time for the weigh-in!

PAULINE

There's a weigh-in?

TODD

Just go with it.

PAULINE and GILBERT stand opposite each other. Stare down.

GILBERT

Time for my intimidating stare down. I am so intimidating. Fear me. Look at me. I'm looking at you. I'm gonna get my face really close you for some reason. No one knows why men do this, but we do. I am gonna get so close. Am I gonna kiss you? You don't know. Maybe it's a completely heterosexual thing where two dudes stare longingly at each other super close, like if a breeze pushed you my mouth might bump into your mouth but it will be cool because I didn't mean to kiss you. That's fine.

PAULINE

I'm a woman and you're talking out loud.

GILBERT

Sorry.

TODD

All right let's get this started! Competitors, to your Donkey Kong machines!

GILBERT and PAULINE stand, pantomiming a Donkey Kong machine, looking straight out at the audience.

On your marks! Get set! Go!

Donkey Kong sounds.

GILBERT talks to himself and makes grunts like Serena Williams while he plays.

PAULINE is quiet and controlled.

GILBERT

Jump. Jump. Jump! Unnnnh! Jump. Unnnnh!

TODD *(frantic excitement)*

Tasha what's happening down there?!

TASHA

They are playing Donkey Kong.

GILBERT

Unnnh! YES! Unnnnh! Wooo!

TODD

What is the back sweat situation?!

TASHA

No back sweat yet. They just started.

GILBERT

Ooooh mama. Unnnh! Jump. Yes!

GILBERT wipes his brow, shakes out his hands, maybe stretches.

TASHA

After the first round, the score is tied! They are neck and neck!

GILBERT

Jump. Jump. Jump! Unnnh! Unnnnh!

TODD

How long is this likely to take, Tasha?

TASHA

About six more hours, Todd.

TODD

Then let's fill the air time talking about my hopes and dreams. I don't want much, a little house, a nice woman by my side who looks just like you, maybe a gas grill in the backyard, a little lawn, eight or ten children, little things – I figure we can start having babies immediately –

NARRATOR 1

Five hours later!

NARRATOR 2

You can't just jump ahead five hours!

NARRATOR 1

Too late I already did it!

TODD

-And after our trip to Barbados we'll go scuba diving, of course I'm going to need to get lessons, and you'll probably have to hold my hand because I'm afraid of coral.

TASHA

Hold on –

TODD

It looks like brains, Tasha. Plants shouldn't look like brains! Plus, did you know that coral is actually an animal and not a plant?! No one knows this and it's weird!

TASHA

Wait, something is happening! Look!

GILBERT, drenched in sweat (he can be dunked in water during the "jump forward in time") is struggling. He looks exhausted. PAULINE looks unfazed.

GILBERT

…Jump!... Unnnnh! UNNNNNNH! Jump, come one! Come on jump for me! Unnnh. I can't feel my face! My face is gone! I have no face! UNNNH.

TASHA

Five hours listening to you talk about your dreams have taken their toll on Gilbert Porter! He's down to his final life!

GILBERT

Nooo! Come on! Unnnh. Unnnnnnh. I can't lose to a girl. Boys are better than girls at everything up to and including childbirth! Wait, that makes no sense –

Dying sound.

NNNOOOOOOO!

GILBERT sinks to his knees, Darth Vader style.

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

He collapses on the ground, crying.

How am I going to be able to face people at the Kwik Trip where I work?

He goes fetal

TASHA

And it looks like that random girl is the new grand champion of Donkey Kong!

PAULINE raises her hands in triumph.

PAULINE

Yup.

TASHA

What was your secret?

PAULINE

Basically, I decided it was time for me to save myself. And remember, my name is Pauline, no one ever remembers my name!

TODD

That random lady sure is tops! So um… Tasha, now that we're alone…

TASHA

We're not alone. There are tens of people watching.

TODD

Now that we're on National Television, it's time for me to make this all about me.

TODD gets down on one knee.

Tasha…

He takes out a ring box.

The ring in this box is better than any ring, because it's a ring made out of YOUR IMAGINATION.

TASHA

Oh great.

TODD

Will you marry me?

PAULINE

Spa day?

TASHA

I'm gonna go with spa day.

TASHA and PAULINE start walking off, hand-in-hand.

GILBERT

Can I do spa day too?

PAULINE

Nope.

GILBERT looks over at TODD.

GILBERT

Can I have the imaginary ring?

TODD

Imaginary rings are for winners.

TODD walks off.

End of Excerpt.
To purchase this play, or to read it in its entirety, visit www.yourstagepartners.com