

"The Princess Bride"

by

William Goldman

1987-Shooting Draft

FADE IN ON:

A VIDEO GAME ON A COMPUTER SCREEN

The game is in progress. As a sick coughing sound is heard.

CUT TO:

THIS KID

lying in bed, coughing. Pale, one sick cookie. Maybe he's seven or eight or nine. He holds a remote in one hand, presses it, and the video game moves a little bit. Then he's hit by another spasm of coughing, puts the remote down.

His room is monochromatic, greys and blues, mildly high-tech. We're in the present day and this is a middle class house, somewhere in the suburbs.

CUT TO:

The Kid's MOTHER as she enters, goes to him, fluffs his pillows, kisses him, and briefly feels his forehead. She's worried, it doesn't show. During this

MOTHER

You feeling any better?

THE KID

A little bit.

MOTHER

Guess what.

THE KID

What?

MOTHER

Your grandfather's here.

THE KID

(not overjoyed)

Mom, can't you tell him that I'm sick?

MOTHER

You are sick, that's why he's here.

THE KID

He'll pinch my cheek. I hate that.

MOTHER

Maybe he won't.

2.

The Kid shoots her an "I'm sure" look, as we

CUT TO:

THE KID'S GRANDFATHER bursting into the room. Kind of ruffled. But the eyes are bright. He has a wrapped package tucked under one arm as he immediately goes to The Kid, pinches his cheek.

GRANDFATHER

Hey! How's the sickie? Heh?

The Kid gives his Mother an "I told you so" look. The Mother ignores it, beats a retreat.

MOTHER

I think I'll leave you two pals.

And she is gone. There's an uncomfortable silence, then...

GRANDFATHER

I brought you a special present.

THE KID

What is it?

GRANDFATHER

Open it up.

The Kid does. He does his best to smile.

THE KID

A book?

GRANDFATHER

That's right. When I was your age, television was called books. And this is a special book. It was the book my father used to read to me when I was sick, and I used to read it to your father. And today, I'm gonna read it to you.

THE KID

Has it got any sports in it?

CUT TO:

THE GRANDFATHER

Suddenly passionate.

3.

GRANDFATHER

Are you kidding? Fencing. Fighting. Torture. Revenge. Giants. Monsters. Chases. Escapes. True love. Miracles.

CUT TO:

THE TWO OF THEM as the Grandfather sits in a chair by the bed.

THE KID

(manages a shrug)
It doesn't sound too bad. I'll
try and stay awake.

GRANDFATHER

Oh. Well, thank you very much.
It's very nice of you. Your vote
of confidence is overwhelming.
All right.

(Book open now, he
begins to read.)
The Princess Bride, by S.
Morgenstern. Chapter One.
Buttercup was raised on a small
farm in the country of Florin.

DISSOLVE TO:

The story he's reading about, as the monochromatic look of
the bedroom is replaced by the dazzling color of the English
countryside.

GRANDFATHER

(off-screen)
Her favorite pastimes were riding
her horse and tormenting the farm
boy that worked there. His name
was Westley, but she never called
him that.

(to the kid)
Isn't that a wonderful beginning?

THE KID

(off-screen doing his best)
Yeah. It's really good.

GRANDFATHER

(off-screen reading)
Nothing gave Buttercup as much
pleasure as ordering Westley
around.

CUT TO:

4.

BUTTERCUPS FARM - DAY

BUTTERCUP is standing, holding the reins of her horse, while
in the background, WESTLEY, in the stable doorway, looks at
her. Buttercup is in her late teens; doesn't care much about
clothes and she hates brushing her long hair, so she isn't
as attractive as she might be, but she's still probably the
most beautiful woman in the world.

BUTTERCUP

Farm boy. Polish my horse's
saddle. I want to see my face
shining in it by morning.