

Wizard Quest

Written by

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Inspired by true events

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EXT. ATARI HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

The iconic "Atari" gaming logo marks the office complex.

SUPERIMPOSE: Sunnyvale, CA 1984

INT. ATARI HEADQUARTERS - MAIN OFFICES - NIGHT

Plenty of empty desks and moving boxes, a sign that the company is downsizing.

Down a dark hallway, light spills out of one wide open office door. There is a mix of PEOPLE CHATTING and computer BEEPS and BLIPS.

INT. ATARI HEADQUARTERS - GAME ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The ATARI 2600 GAMING CONSOLE connects to a computer monitor at a desk terminal. It's an iconic piece of hardware with a plastic wood grain finish and two boxy joystick controllers leashed to it.

On the monitor screen, the adventure of a twenty pixel-tall dark man plays out. The pixel man dodges other pixels as he navigates the screens pitfalls.

The controller sits in the hands of **GEORGE**, 18, large tortoiseshell rim glasses, Hawaiian shirt. His delicate and calculated movements with the controller translate to the screen with deft precision.

George sits among nine other terminals each with their own gamer playing an Atari System. FLASHES from the screen light their anxious and determined faces.

HOWARD, 30s, a balding, pot belly man, monitors the players. He excitedly paces behind them. He CHEERS them on.

HOWARD

I see excellent progress. This is the best of the bunch, this is why you all are here.

Away from the terminals, buzzing around the office desk in the corner of the game room, is the last of this tournament's attendance, the suits.

The five business men casually converse. On the table before them lays a folder crammed with paperwork, a t-shirt, and a GOLDEN CHALICE. Yes, right there on the desk casually sits an ornate shimmering goblet bejeweled with blue sapphires.

Howard looks at his stop watch.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
Fifteen minute warning, keep
playing. Just make it as far as
you can. Don't forget to use the
clue sheet.

George's attention shifts to his CLUE SHEET. It's a laundry list of sixteen or so items on a single sheet of dot matrix printer paper. Several words have been written down and clues crossed off. George shakes his head, unable to make heads or tails of it.

George navigates his game's character sprite into a new dungeon. After slaying a bat creature twice his size, he approaches the one square block in the room. With a push, the block shifts to the side and triggers a mirthful 8-BIT TONE.

The SCREEN FLASHES to all black. Then white text appears:
"Prime Words".

George adjusts his glasses as he reads the text. He, not-so-smoothly, leans back a bit to make sure his neighbors do not see his accomplishment. And just as quickly as it came, the screen disappears and George's pixel man is back in the dungeon.

After a beat, something hits George. He turns to the clue sheet. He crosses off all the clues that are not prime numbers. Luckily the words that are left (#'s 2,3,5,7,11,13) are all clues he has already solved. He circles those words and the message becomes clear "Chalice appears north west tower fountain."

GEORGE
(sotto)
Oh, my stars and garters.

George leans back in. The pixel man dashes through on screen dungeon. He blasts past enemies and obstacles. With a few key strokes George enters the northwest tower.

His sprite casts a water spell and blue pixels flow freely into the fountain structure in the center of the room. George's man climbs into the fountain and drudges around water. His character comes to a stop.

An 8-BIT MELODY CHIRPS and the pixel man holds overhead his discovery: the golden chalice. The screen flickers and with strobing text, "Congratulations adventurer! You have completed the Wizard Quest."

HOWARD

He completed the quest! We have another champion!

The other gamers halt their games and turn to George. Some stand to get a look at his screen. Others let out SIGHS of disappointment. One guy POUNDS on his terminals in frustration.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

Lawyers, bring forth the chalice!

Howard starts to CLAP and the crowd follows suit. George blushes, too bashful to say anything as gamers crowd, congratulate, and pat him on the back.

George stands over a desk with a stack of paperwork. He eagerly signs away as lawyers dictate pages of contracts and NDAs.

George crosses the last "T" on the paperwork and then turns to the crowd. Howard presents the Golden Chalice to George.

George smiles wide and lifts the chalice high overhead.

The crowd of gamers erupt with CHEERS.

FREEZE FRAME! and cue the MONTAGE OF GAMING HISTORY

"Pinball Wizard" by The Who propels the universe forward through the 80's, 90's and 00's. Titans of the gaming industry whiz by in chronological order such as:

- 1985 - Nintendo's Super Mario Brothers debuts
- 1989 - Tetris is played on every Game Boy
- 1991 - "Sega Does What Nintendo Don't" ad campaign
- 1992 - Mortal Kombat fatalities shows brutal graphics
- 1995 - AOL connects millions with dial up tones
- 1995 - Windows 95 has everyone playing Free-cell at work
- 1995 - Sony Playstation and Crash Bandicoot
- 1996 - Nintendo 64 displays a 3D Super Mario
- 1997 - Tamagotchi's the virtual pet
- 1997 - Lara Croft Tomb Raider is a polygon female badass
- 1998 - Pokemon's Pikachu warms our hearts
- 2000 - The Sims good for starting virtual families
- 2001 - Nokia Phones with Snake
- 2001 - Microsoft X-box delivers Halo
- 2002 - Grand Theft Auto Three a sandbox criminal life game
- 2004 - World of Warcraft becomes leader in online gaming
- 2005 - Angry Video Game Nerd reviews bad games on Youtube
- 2005 - Shadow of the Colossus epic and beautiful

EXT. RATHSKELLER - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSE: Rockville, MD 2005

This concert hall is alive with the sounds of JAMMIN' ROCK MUSIC. A line has formed outside this grungy rock dive.

A bouncer examines the ID's from a group of teenagers. The cards are obvious fakes when compared to the teenagers. The bouncer waves them in anyways.

INT. RATHSKELLER - CONTINUOUS

The live band on stage commands the room with their GARAGE ROCK MELODY. The crowd thrashes to the beat.

The moment is caught in an instant with a distinctive CLICK and WHIR of a camera shutter. From behind the camera is DAPHNE (17). Her black leather jacket adorned with concert pins lets us know this is not her first show.

She brushes back her brunette curly hair and lines up another shot. Satisfied, she smiles and shimmies way from the crowd.

Daphne leans against the far wall to catch her breath. She looks at her watch and searches the room.

She surveys the crowd with her camera. She zeroes in on **JULIAN** (18), shaggy haired, dark jeans, slim yet attractive Johnny Ramones's figurative grandchild. SHUTTER SNAP.

Holding hands with Julian is **CRYSTAL** (16), a platinum-haired, pouty-lipped, band groupie. Crystal is the punk rock version of Betty to Daphne's Veronica.

Daphne SNAPS another photo as Crystal turns her away. She panics, holsters her camera, and avoids Crystal's glare.

Daphne, not so casually, slinks away to another part of the concert hall. She pulls out her CELLPHONE. She types a text message to "Julian".

DAPHNE (TEXT)
Hey you, are you available
tonight? I found something, I
can't really explain. I need help.

She spies across the room to see Julian feel the buzz from his phone. Julian types back.

JULIAN (TEXT)
What kind of new game is this? No.

DAPHNE (TEXT)
Pretty, please?

Julian SIGHS. He turns off his phone and puts it back in his pocket.

Daphne, rejected, exits the venue.

EXT. RATHSKELLER - CONTINUOUS

Daphne exits the concert hall. Across the street she finds her parked VOLKSWAGEN GOLF and drives off.

EXT. MONTGOMERY STORAGE - NIGHT

Daphne's VW reaches a GATE.

Daphne holds up a storage unit key a SPACE INVADERS KEYCHAIN and a "MONTGOMERY STORAGE" TAG with "Unit 115. Gate Code #1470" written on the back in sharpie.

She types in the code and the gate jerks to life. She pulls into the structure and parks.

EXT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Daphne stands in front of Unit 115. It's as wide as two car ports with a couple of dings in the vast ROLL-UP METAL DOOR.

She drops the lock to the ground lifts the door to the sound of ROLLING METAL.

Up against the door, stacked to the ceiling are many cardboard boxes and plastic bins. It's an overwhelming sight.

 DAPHNE

 What the hell is all this?

Daphne finds a light switch near the front wall of the unit. She gives it a flick and sees the LIGHT SHINING from somewhere back inside the unit.

She finds the one aisle in and ventures on.

Daphne passes shelves of old computer parts collecting dust. Sprinkled amongst the shelves are a few pop culture items, board games, vinyl records, comics, and more.

She reaches the back of the unit, a WORKSHOP.

In one corner there is cabinet with an old desktop computer, CRT Monitor, and all kinds of other consoles and computer thingies. Against the wall is a square of shag carpeting and an older TV on a rolling stand, it's some kind of faux living room.

In the other opposite corner are three arcade cabinets: DONKEY KONG, MS PAC MAN, and FROGGER.

Daphne pokes around at the items on the desk. She brushes the dust off of a notebook with lengthy handwritten notes.

Daphne opens up a few of the BROWN BOXES. She pulls out handfuls of big box computer games and other gaming paraphernalia. An endless supply in great condition, but Daphne casually tosses them around as she digs.

Daphne finds a box labeled 'shirts'. A dozen or so HAWAIIAN SHIRTS. She gathers a big bundle of the shirts and gives them a big hug. She picks out one of the stylish Hawaiian shirts and tosses it on.

She wanders over to the arcade units. She looks behind the set up and sees that the cabinets are all plugged into a power strip. She switches the button on the power strip and the cabinets chirp to life all at once.

She stands back and takes in all their glory as the SWEET CHIP HARMONICS flood the unit.

Daphne steps up to Frogger. She finds a cup of quarters on top of the machine. She slots a coin into the machine and selects player one. She begins to play, her world around her transforms.

START GAME VISION

"GAME VISION" is a warping of reality that exists solely in Daphne's imagination. As she zones into the pixelated mayhem of the gameplay she places herself in the first person view of the game character. This time it's Frogger!

The Frogger Frog leaps on to the highway. It turns up-road and stares down a SemiTruck. It HONKS madly at her. She dodges the truck and crosses more lanes. With a couple of Lilly pad and log jumps she is home free.

After some more gameplay, a BUZZING PHONE frightens the Frogger Frog. In an instant, the poor thing is flattened by a station wagon: GAME OVER.

END GAME VISION

EXT. UNIT 115 - DAWN

The sun begins to rise outside the unit.

INT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Daphne pushes back from the machine.

DAPHNE

Damn it.

Daphne, a bit sour, reaches for the phone in her pocket. She flips it open. Multiple texts from her mother asking "Where are you?".

Daphne ignores the messages.

She takes off the Hawaiian shirt and carefully packs it back in the box with the others.

She grabs a MILK CRATE of gaming stuff: an Atari game console with loose cords and games thrown in.

Daphne pulls down the shutter and locks up the storage unit.

INT. VOLKSWAGEN GOLF - DAY

Curled up in the back seat sleeps Daphne. Her black leather jacket substitutes as a blanket as it rises and falls with her sleeping breath. The floor is littered with loose school papers, coffee cups, and other trash.

A BODY SLAMS down onto the car hood. Daphne springs awake.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

A group of three SKATER PUNKS laugh as their PUNK LEADER rolls off the hood of the car.

PUNK LEADER

Wakey, wakey!

Daphne rages as she pops open the back door.

DAPHNE

Asshole!

Her hair is a rat's nest and her mascara smeared.

More high school students walk by. Some steal a glance at Daphne and the scrappy Volkswagen Golf.

Daphne reaches for a backpack from the car floor. She produces a WALKMAN WITH HEADPHONES. She slides on her boots. Headphones go on, and a modern garage rock style song plays. She tosses the strap of her expensive pro-consumer DIGITAL CAMERA over her shoulder.

She abandons the Volkswagen home and bops on her way to the school.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Daphne receives a few more looks. Her rock band t-shirt and ripped jeans look wrinkled and slept in.

SIMON (17) is deep into nerd talk. He's a pretty average sized guy, NASA t-shirt, glasses, noodle arms, and un-styled hair.

SIMON

Super Metroid on SNES is where it's at, far superior to the original. Better planet to explore and cooler space suit for Samus.

KATIE (16) pauses for effect with her big reveal. She is a ball of energy. With hair in braids and a comfy cardigan, her style is more about functionality.

KATIE

Oh I'm not disagreeing, but there's something about playing the original. It's just so ethereal and atmospheric. I beat it under an hour and finally got the best secret ending; Suit-less Samus.

SIMON

The bikini ending? That's pretty impressive, ummm how'd she look?

KATIE

Pixelated, it was glorious. Achievement unlocked.

SIMON

And you don't find it sexist at all? The highest achievement to the game is getting the protagonist naked.

KATIE

I find it empowering.

SIMON

You never see the opposite though. Mario doesn't defeat bowser and then drop his overalls in celebration.

KATIE

He saves the princess, it's implied.

Simon closes his locker and immediately takes notice to the obnoxious FLYER stuck to the locker next to his. It reads "All-State Wrestling Rally."

SIMON

Why do they have to put these things right on top of my locker? This is my only slice of real estate in this whole school and it's muddied up with these inconsiderate wrestling goon's flyers.

KATIE

Damn their school spirit, will they ever stop rallying? Rage against the machine, Simon!

Katie throws up her fist in protest. Simon is not amused.

Simon rips down the flyer.

KATIE

Hey have you received any word yet?

SIMON

They were supposed to get notices like yesterday, of course they haven't sent me anything yet.

KATIE

Huh, what's up with that?

SCHOOL BELL rings.

SIMON

Forget about it.

The two head to class.

KATIE

Is Pac-Man naked? He wears gloves and boots but that doesn't mean he's, you know, covered up.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

STUDENTS settle into their desks as the TEACHER writes on the board. None of the students pay attention.

Daphne peeks her head through the cracked classroom door to see if the coast is clear. Simon, sitting on the opposite side of the classroom, takes notice.

Daphne slides in and over to her vacant desk.

Simon watches her every move.

Daphne pulls out the appropriate TEXTBOOK, flips it open, and, KERPLUNK, drops her head down to rest.

Simon stares at her. But suddenly, SMACK! A SPITWAD lands a direct hit to his temple. Simon spazzes out and wipes the spitball away.

He turns over his shoulder to see TWO GOOFY STUDENTS snicker his way. The larger of the two waves his McDonalds yellow and red striped plastic straw in the air smugly at Simon.

SIMON

(sotto)

Jesus fuck, you kidding me?

Simon flips the student the bird shielded behind his TEXTBOOK from the teacher. The spitball prankster mockingly does the same. Simon shakes it off and turns his head forward.

On Daphne's side of the room, she wakes up from her quick nap and hears the faint BUZZ of a CELL PHONE in her pocket. She flips open her phone under the desk.

JULIAN (TEXT)

We should talk about last night.

She carefully stows the phone. Daphne rests her chin on her folded arms and contemplates the text.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

The hundred or so students have grouped themselves by tables in their own chaotic fashion.

Simon sits with his like-minded friends **PETE** (17) and **TIM** (16). Pete is a bit of a caveman and the only student who can grow a beard in high school. Tim is a scrawny and fragile individual.

Pete and Tim are LUNCH TRAY people, while Simon is a BROWN BAGGER.

PETE

I'm going to buy a new controller after school if you guys want to play some more Halo 2 this weekend.

TIM
Please, don't buy any more of
those horse shit Mad Katz
controller, Pete.

PETE
Why not?

TIM
Because they're cheap garbage. And
you buttholes always stick me with
it.

PETE
You mean affordable garbage, you
gonna chip in some cash then, Tim?

SIMON
Garbage is still garbage. They're
gonna break, you'll save in the
long run.

Katie sits down at the table with an ENVELOPE in hand. Pete
grabs her attention.

PETE
Katie. Mad Katz
controllers...

KATIE
Oh, they're pieces of hot trash.

Pete deflates.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Good news, everyone!

Katie smiles and slides the envelope over to Simon.

SIMON
This is it.

KATIE
I had a counselor meeting. Dr.
Charles happened to have them on
his desk and I asked nicely if I
could deliver yours.

SIMON
I've never felt comfortable
calling him 'doctor'.

PETE

Whoa, that's the scholarship results?

SIMON

Yeah.

TIM

It's a big envelope, that says it right there.

KATIE

Open it, ya goof.

Simon smiles and peels back the envelope flap. He pulls out a TWO PAGE LETTER and another THICK SHEET of card stock. He pours over the letter head. Simon's smile fades.

PETE

Ha, he's putting us on.

Simon reaches for the thick paper. With an ornate border and gilded words front and center that read "Finalist". It is a certificate of sorts...

KATIE

What's going on?

SIMON

I was in the top percentage but they "regret" to inform me I didn't get it.

KATIE

Not the end of the world, there's definitely more options.

SIMON

This was the one though. I had it, would have been no worries, no money, no loans. And they give me this.

He stands up at the end of lunch table and holds up the certificate.

SIMON (CONT'D)

It's a god damn loser trophy.

He slams the certificate onto the table and knocks Tim's lunch tray onto the floor. Tater tots, ketchup, mac and cheese ruin Simon's PANTS. The excitement turns a few heads. He storms out with his book bag flopped over his shoulder.

PETE

Should we give him a moment?

TIM

If he has a pudding cup in that brown bag, I think it's fair game that I can have it now.

Katie gathers the envelope and heads out.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Simon storms down the hallway, embarrassed and ready to get out of dodge. He reaches his locker and drops his bag, looking back down at his messy pants.

Katie catches up with Simon with envelope in hand.

KATIE

This is the weirdest, to send along a certificate. But you know, people don't accept scholarships sometimes, or get dropped from them completely. You never know what can happen and you could be next in line.

SIMON

Katie, why are you so damn rational?

Katie smiles at Simon. Simon reaches for his combo lock and sees...

SIMON (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch!

The same FLYER as before has reappeared on his LOCKER DOOR. Simon rages and in a wild swoop rips off the flyer.

ALONZO

Hey man!

ALONZO (18), a wrestling jock, jogs over. He has flyers and masking tape in hand.

ALONZO (CONT'D)

I've been putting those up all day. It's all-state, and we worked hard for that. Have some school pride, man. Are you gonna put that back up or do we have an issue?

Students start to gather for the show. Simon is unhinged.

SIMON
 Fuck your rally, and fuuuuuckkkk
 your flyer!

Simon crumples up the flyer and tosses it at Alonzo.

Alonzo's primal instincts kick in, and he slams Simon by the shoulders up against the locker.

ALONZO
 Come on man, get with the program.

Even from his tippy toes and back to the locker, Simon does not change his deposition.

SIMON
 I am the program.

The students exchange glances.

STUDENT (O.S.)
 What the fuck did he just say?

VICE PRINCIPAL WARNER barrels through the crowd up to Simon and Alonzo.

VICE PRINCIPAL WARNER
 My office, you two, now!

Alonzo and Simon snap back to reality. Simon lands on his feet and regains his sanity.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Daphne steps with confidence across the bustling lunch room. She approaches a table filled with half a dozen skater and rocker students, which fits her motif. She grabs an empty seat without hesitation.

DAPHNE
 Killer show last night.

There's uneasiness in the group. A **ROCKER GIRL** leans and whispers to Daphne.

ROCKER GIRL
 You know you're only going to
 cause trouble by sitting here.

DAPHNE
 That's me, nothing but trouble.

The group looks over Daphne's shoulder as Julian steps to the table. With him holding hands once again is Crystal.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)
Hello Julian, you wanted to talk?

Crystal stomps down her foot.

CRYSTAL
You got some nerve coming around
like this, you psycho stalker.

DAPHNE
Uh yeah, I've been really hard
pressed, chasing him down at my
own high school during our shared
lunch hour.

CRYSTAL
Boo, she's saying weird things,
and making fun of me again.

DAPHNE
(mockingly)
Boo!

This gets a laugh from the table. Julian shakes his head.

JULIAN
Daphne, forget about it. You can
head out, don't worry about the
message.

Crystal snaps at Daphne.

CRYSTAL
Wait, you're still messaging with
my Julian?

DAPHNE
(to Julian)
What, does she got you on a leash?
He's like a fun guy if you let him
run around once in a while.

CRYSTAL
I don't need your baggage. Showing
up at every concert we go to,
buzzing around him. We all saw you
snapping photos of us. You're
deranged and it's not cute.

Daphne pulls her CAMERA out and presents it to Crystal.

DAPHNE
Not gonna find anything on here.
It's empty.
(MORE)

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

I'm sure you're familiar with the concept.

CRYSTAL

Drop the shitty attitude and excuse yourself. Get over whatever neglectful DADDY thing you're riding out.

Daphne SLAPS Crystal. The CAFETERIA FREEZES. Daphne, slowly lowers her hand.

Crystal lets out an exaggerated GASP and grabs at the RED HANDPRINT across her cheek. The camera slips from Daphne's hand and drops to the floor. It makes an unpleasant CRACK sound as it bounces off the tile floor.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Get out of here you crazy bitch.

Daphne scrambles to the floor to gather up the camera. Everyone else is too paralyzed to do anything.

The attention of the cafeteria turns to an approaching **LADY TEACHER**. The teacher crosses the court with a disciplinarian stride.

An unknown student blows a LOUD RASPBERRY FART. The cafeteria erupts in LAUGHTER.

Crystal takes comfort in Julian and buries her head into his chest. Julian looks at Daphne. Daphne shrugs.

Daphne makes eye contact with Julian. She jokingly blows her own raspberry and cracks an apologetic smile. Julian shakes his head but can't help giving a glimpse of a smirk.

The LADY TEACHER grabs Daphne by the arm and leads her out of the chaotic cafeteria.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - DAY

An **ADMIN ASSISTANT** mills away on her desktop computer, looking at web pages and chatting on messenger.

Simon sits in a chair and anxiously awaits his turn for the principal's office.

Daphne is sent through the door by the Lady Teacher. She directs Daphne to a seat next to Simon and briefs the Admin Assistant.

Daphne crosses her arms. Simon still hasn't taken his eyes off her. Daphne can feel his eyes on her.

DAPHNE

You got something to say?

SIMON

Did you get in trouble or something?

DAPHNE

What do you think?

SIMON

I think you got in trouble or something.

Daphne looks over at Simon with a sneer. She looks down at his food-stained pants. She chuckles and leans back.

DAPHNE

You smell like a hot dogs and cheese, nice look.

Simon nods knowingly. She stares at the stains.

SIMON

Thanks, take a picture. It'll last longer.

Daphne pulls out her CAMERA and does just that.

SIMON

Well, I'm real glad I started talking to you.

DAPHNE

Well, fuck off to you too.

ADMIN ASSISTANT

You two stop that.

SIMON

Stop what?

ADMIN ASSISTANT

Language, stop it with the eff off'ing.

The two smirk.

The Vice Principal's door swings open. Alonzo exits and the VP Warner stands in the doorway. He gestures to Simon to enter his office.

Simon grabs his book bag and turns to Daphne. She flashes him a peace sign and he heads in.

Daphne awaits her fate. The Admin Assistant makes phone calls, and various staff and students enter and exit.

Daphne fiddles with her digital camera. She replays the photo of Simon but something is off with the image, warped.

She examines it for damage. She detaches the lens and finds a hairline crack on the glass. She frowns and curses under her breath.

She flips through her catalogue of photos from last night. There are stunning pictures of the alternative rock band giving their all on stage. Punk rockers flash rocking fist pumps and stick their tongues out.

Then Daphne stops on a photo. Taken from some distance, it is the photo of Julian and Crystal. She zooms in. Julian has her hands around Crystal as they watch the concert. Daphne frowns. She deletes the photo.

ADMIN ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

Daphne, I have your mother on the line and she wishes to speak to you.

Daphne cautiously answers the phone.

MRS. CHAMBERS

(on the phone)

After this call, you are coming directly home, got it, Daphne?

DAPHNE

Got it.

Daphne hands the receiver back to the Admin Assistant who treats it like a hot plate and hangs it up.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - ROUNDABOUT - DAY

Simon exits the school.

A lone car waits in the roundabout, a blue '94 Dodge Caravan.

Simon gets in.

INT. DODGE CARAVAN - CONTINUOUS

Simon tosses his bag in the back and buckles up.

Sitting driver side is **MR. BARNES** (late 40s), glasses, bald, dress shirt and tie... he looks like a dad.

MR. BARNES

One week of detention, not bad for a first offense. Do you think they call that serving a dime, you know, during talk in the schoolyard?

SIMON

Geez, Dad. Way to equate school to the likeness of a prison. At least we can agree on that.

MR. BARNES

It'll be an experience, roughen you up a bit. VP Warner said it won't effect your transcript so that's good. Hey, any word on the scholarship?

SIMON

No, counselor said the results are delayed won't be in for a while.

MR. BARNES

Whelp, no news is good news. although good news is good news too... if they're taking this long you gotta be one of their top candidates, no doubt.

SIMON

Shirt and tie today, Dad?

MR. BARNES

Oh, nothing too big, just met up with some of the other guys from the old gazette bullpen. Talked for a bit, see how everyone was getting along. Now Don, he found a great gig doing some grant writing and they're always looking for more fellows, said he would put in a good word.

SIMON

Sounds promising.

Simon produces a smile for his dad. Mr. Barnes smiles back and drums on the steering wheel.

Simon turns his attention out the window.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DAY

Daphne parks the Volkswagen Golf in the drive way. She exits the car and prepares to walk into the house.

In the doorway is **MRS. CHAMBERS** (40s), and she is not happy. She has high-waisted jeans with a braided brown leather belt and her pastel button up tucked in. She waves Daphne through the door with a sweeping arm gesture.

MRS. CHAMBERS

Welcome home, you're back in 24 hours, saved me from going down to the police station to file a missing persons report.

DAPHNE

I believe You have to wait 48 hours, you're being overly dramatic.

MRS. CHAMBER

Oh, I'm being just the right amount of dramatic.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

TED (50s), sits at the kitchen table. A mustached silver fox, basketballer tall. His gentle demeanor makes him seem very approachable. He has some FILES in front of him.

Daphne flops her BOOK BAG on to the table and flies by Ted.

TED

Hey, kiddo.

Daphne dives into the fridge without pausing.

DAPHNE

Hello, Ted.

Mrs. Chambers steps into the kitchen.

TED

How's school?

MRS. CHAMBERS

She got herself suspended.

TED

Whoa, not cool. Are you okay, Daphne?

MRS. CHAMBERS
Yeah, not cool.

Daphne closes the fridge and pops open the SNAPPLE BOTTLE she found inside.

DAPHNE
I am fine, thanks for asking, Ted.
It's only a three day suspension.

MRS. CHAMBERS
Daphne got in an altercation with another student. She is starting fights.

DAPHNE
She is currently in the room. I did not start the fight.

MRS. CHAMBERS
I was on that phone call with the Vice Principal and heard enough. I'll have you know, they called me at the church and the poor Reverend picked up the phone. Lucky for you he said he would say a prayer.

DAPHNE
But you're the church admin, why are you making Reverend Pearson answer calls?

TED
(to Daphne)
I would encourage you to plead the fifth.

MRS. CHAMBERS
Oh stop it, Ted.

Ted puts his hands up. Mrs. Chambers turns back to Daphne.

MRS. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)
Listen up, this family provides you with everything you need and more. So let's get this attitude adjusted. When we call, pick up the phone or you will lose it. And no messages on the fridge stating that you're staying overnight at friends, on a school night none the less. We haven't even met this Tiffany.

(MORE)

MRS. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)
 Next time I want to talk to her folks. If not, I am your mother and will otherwise automatically assume you are face down in a gutter somewhere. All we want is kindness and communication or we're going to have to take your car keys away.

DAPHNE
 Fine then I won't drive myself to school.

TED
 You can take the school bus.

DAPHNE
 Gross, you guys can't do that. It's not even your car! (pause)
 It's Dad's car.

MRS. CHAMBERS
 Stop that, that's not fair.

DAPHNE
 What do you know about fair? You didn't give a shit about...

Gentle Ted disappears as he SLAMS down his FILE and stands.

TED
 We don't disrespect in this house.

Daphne storms through the kitchen, collects her book bag, and marches up stairs.

Mrs. Chambers hangs her head.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Daphne throws her BOOK BAG and dives into her bed. She lets out a SCREAM OF FRUSTRATION into her pillow.

INT. BLOCKBUSTER - NIGHT

CLOSE ON - Simon's hand restocks a DVD copy of *Scream*.

Simon and Katie stand in the horror section of the Blockbuster store. Simon, in work uniform, pushes a trolley cart of DVDs, restocking the shelves as he goes. Katie follows through the aisles of the brilliant gold and blue video rental store.

KATIE

It's going to be a Miyazaki night: Princess Mononoke, Totoro, and Nausicaa. Tim and Pete said they'll come and my little sister will probably watch too.

Katie shows off the DVD in hand to Simon.

SIMON

Can't come over tonight. House arrest on school nights.

KATIE

What about tomorrow night?

SIMON

Picked up the double shift. Probably will have to clock a lot more hours now with this scholarship thing out the window and keeping up my lavish lifestyle.

KATIE

By lavish lifestyle you mean the flea market? You are not gonna miss out on the Saturday madness?

SIMON

The only games I can pick up now have to be at bargain prices. Paycheck is Friday so that means I got some spending money. We're still on for Saturday. Sound good?

KATIE

I wouldn't miss it for all the discount flea market tube socks in the world.

SIMON

You are a dork. Alright, let's hit the check out, I'm gonna sneak you some Twizzlers while you're at the register.

KATIE

Oh you mean Red Vines?

SIMON

Them fighting words and you know it.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Daphne's ALARM CLOCK is deafening. She groans as she SLAPS the snooze button. It's 7:30AM. She's half awake while she sits up in bed. Her pajamas are an oversized Rolling Stones T-Shirt.

From her bed she peaks through the window blinds. Three cars sit in the driveway.

She flops back to bed.

The ALARM CLOCK rocks her awake again. The same procedure as she looks out the window. Now there's one car in the driveway, the Volkswagen Golf. It's 10:30AM.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Still waking up, Daphne fixes her self a large CUP OF COFFEE and a GIANT BOWL of FRUITY PEBBLES.

She sets the cereal bowl on the kitchen counter and reaches for a REMOTE CONTROL. She turns on the TV in the living room and flips through the daytime programming. She happily settles on the *Price Is Right*, Plinko is on!

The remote plops down and she handles a monster size spoonful of fruity pebbles to her mouth, followed by a loud CRUNCH.

But then... she starts to hear something, a DIGITAL BLIP of sorts in the distance. WAKA WAKA WAKA WAKA.

She follows the noise in her head as she crosses over to the stairs and ventures up.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The WAKA WAKA is even more pronounced now as she slowly creeps up to the open door of her bedroom. On the floor is the crate of game stuff from the storage unit.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Daphne sits in front of bedroom TV and the WAKA WAKA subsides. GAME STUFF from the storage unit spilled out on the floor. She reaches behind the TV to connect the last RF adapter.

The TV comes to life and an Atari game in the machine is up and running.

Daphne crosses her legs and grabs a controller. The game cartridge reads "Adventure". The cartridge graphic has a mighty dragon serpent, a hedge maze maze, and a knight.

The screen display is unimpressive, what barely passes for a castle gate and a LONE SQUARE PIXEL. More precisely, a yellow pixel. Daphne moves the pixel with they joystick.

START GAME VISION

Daphne's imagination places her into the game play. Bt something is not right as she can only Imagine herself as the yellow cube.

END GAME VISION

 DAPHNE

 I don't get this at all.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Daphne navigates behind the LARGE WOODEN DESK. Boxes of Ted's files and books lay about.

On the desk is LARGE DESKTOP COMPUTER and MONITOR. Daphne sits down in the executive swivel chair. With a quick jostle of the mouse, the computer pops out of sleep mode with the classic Windows XP chime.

Daphne types away into the web browser. Daphne browses E-Bay and other sites for a REPLACEMENT CAMERA.

Even at bargain prices, the best lenses start at \$1,000 and go higher from there.

Daphne groans and scowls. RING!

Daphne looks off to the far side of the large desk where a PHONE and ANSWERING MACHINE sit by the edge. It RINGS a few more times. Daphne makes no move to answer it but stares on.

As heard from the ANSWERING MACHINE:

 MRS. CHAMBERS (O.S.)

 This is Karen!

 TED (O.S.)

 And Ted! We can't come to the phone right now so....

 MRS. CHAMBERS & TED (O.S.)

 Leave a message at the beap!

Daphne sticks out her tongue and makes a retching sound.

ANSWERING MACHINE BEEPS.

JUNK HAULERS (O.S.)

Hello Mrs. Chambers, Junk Haulers returning your call to confirm your appointment for Monday at Montgomery Storage unit 115. Meet us on site with the keys Monday and we're all set per your reservation. Make sure to remove any items you intended to keep prior to arrival. If you have any questions call us back at 301-HAULERS.

Daphne reclines back in the executive chair and pivots from side to side.

DAPHNE

What the hell?

Daphne clears the message on the answering machine.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Oprah is on in the background. She holds the SPACE INVADER KEY CHAIN in her hand and turns it over and over again.

Her phone BUZZES. There's a text:

JULIAN (TEXT)

You weren't at school today? Can you meet me? I'm thinking the burger place.

Daphne thinks for a moment.

DAPHNE (TEXT)

Okay, can be there in 30 min.

EXT. BURGER TIME - DAY

Daphne pulls into the parking lot of Burger Time restaurant. It's a roadside, greasy spoon kind of diner.

INT. BURGER TIME - CONTINUOUS

Daphne enters the joint and surveys the patrons.

Julian sits in a booth and sips on a BLACK COFFEE. He has headphones on and bobs his head to the music. Daphne approaches. He pops off the headphones and stands.

The two stare at each other for the briefest of moments, the universe stands still. Julian breaks first and offers a handshake.

JULIAN

Thanks for coming out.

Daphne takes the hand and gives it an exaggerated arc.

DAPHNE

Howdy Partner.

He shrugs it off, a tad embarrassed.

JULIAN

Damn it Daphne, have a seat.

CUT TO:

INT. BURGER TIME - MOMENTS LATER

After a beat, the WAITRESS hands off a WHOPPING BURGER to Daphne and refills Julian's coffee.

JULIAN

We need to talk shared custody of venues, you can't show up to the same concerts if you're gonna antagonize the friends. And you should definitely not come to any of the band's shows. No more games.

Daphne overloads her fries with ketchup, pepper, and salt. She eats a heavy soggy fry.

DAPHNE

Meeting up for burgers is okay then? Young Crystal know you're up to no good with the ex?

She picks the pickles of her burger and offers them to Julian. He shakes his head no. Daphne shrugs, "your loss."

Daphne takes a giant un-lady-like bite of her burger. It's cute and obnoxious at the same time.

JULIAN

Crystal is off the wall sometimes but I like her.

DAPHNE

She's a band groupie and you know it. She's all filler no killer.

JULIAN

She's cool and we have fun together. And she is without the moodiness, the stark view on the world, and the excessive sarcasm I was previously attuned too. Of course, I mean that in a loving way.

DAPHNE

Just what every girl wants to hear. Well, I'll get out of your hair then. I'm out of here anyways. Figured I'll go run away and travel the world, maybe Paris? I'm done with this town. There are people, places, and things far beyond the reach of our town's borders. Just need to fix my camera.

JULIAN

Well, I guess you've abandoned school. With what money are you traveling with? I'm nervous that you can't afford this burger, actually.

DAPHNE

I have burger money. But I need croissant money. Plane ticket money.

Daphne produces her WALLET. She looks down into the wallet and has exactly a TEN DOLLAR BILL. She flops the bill on to the table.

DAPHNE

Now what do we do?

Julian stands up to leave after putting his coffee change on the table.

JULIAN

That stuff, like what went on in the lunch room, you know that's uncalled for. I'd like you to be a friend, and just keep your cool from now on.

DAPHNE

You got it, friend.

Julian exits. Daphne slumps in the booth for a beat.

DAPHNE
That fucking sucked.

Daphne heads to the exit and notices a BULLETIN BOARD with flyers. One catches her eye: GREAT EASTERN FLEA MARKET, SATURDAY!!!

She stops dead in her tracks. Daphne RIPS the PHONE NUMBER TAG off the bottom of the flyer.

EXT. BURGER TIME - DUSK

Daphne leans on the VW Golf and calls the number from the tag.

DAPHNE (to phone)
Hello, do you all have any tables left? Okay, cool, when and where do I have to be? How early tomorrow?!

Daphne gets into the car and starts it up, still on the phone. She drives off.

EXT. UNIT 115 - DAY

Daphne lets out a giant yawn as she loads out BOXES from her father's storage unit and stuffs them into her car. The morning sunbeams silhouette the VW Golf.

She reaches the box of Hawaiian shirts. She kneels down next to it and thinks. She closes up the box and slides the whole thing with a mighty push off into the corner away from the entrance.

Car maxed out on space, she locks up the storage unit.

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

VENDORS set up their BOOTHS as the EARLY BIRDS and MALL WALKERS check out the wares.

It has everything: typical discount cleaning supplies and toilet paper booths; burning essence sticks, questionable oils, and crystal booths; cheap plastic knock off toy booths; and snobby mid century furniture dealers.

Katie and Simon dig away at a junk sellers booth. Bins of DVDs and VHSs have caught their interest.

Katie holds up a GAME CASE.

KATIE

I got me a "Dance Dance Revolution" here, you've been meaning to get some workouts in.

Simon pops over and checks it out.

SIMON

Yeah right. This could be fun, would probably be better than my mom's old Jane Fonda VHSs.

KATIE

Also "Buns of Steel", tough as hell but we looked pretty good in leg warmers.

SIMON

I looked horrible. You looked great, you should crimp your hair again. True dedication.

Katie blushes as someone catches Simon's eye. He leans over.

SIMON

Scumbag reseller alert.

Katie looks to see an overweight gentlemen, late 40s, dirty glasses, thick black mustache. A real garbage person.

KATIE

It's Wario.

WARIO gather up a large stack of cases and pays for them all with a \$20 bill.

SIMON

Damn, you see that, he snatched up a bunch of PS1 black box games. We were just about to get to those bins.

KATIE

Son of a biscuit. Every week. Place your bets now to see how high he marks those up. I say \$50 each at least.

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAPHNE'S STALL - DAY

A **MANAGER** from the flea market helps guide Daphne in the booth's parking space. He holds a fist in the air and the she hits the brakes. She steps out.

MANAGER

We close at 4PM, need to be packed up and out of here by 5PM. You were suppose to be here at 8AM, so remember that next time we got rules you know.

DAPHNE

Loud and clear, chief. But seriously, thanks.

The Manager scoots along. Daphne gets to work.

Daphne lugs one, two, then three boxes in to her FLEA MARKET STALL. She opens up the flaps to a box and pulls a sharpie from her pocket. She write's on the box "COMPUTER STUFF."

Daphne grabs for a fourth box when a 30-something **TREKKIE** slides up to the booth. His defining feature is his Star Trek: the Next Generation shirt. He carefully reaches into the first box and pulls out a big box computer game: ULTIMA.

His eyes grow wide. This is a factory sealed, perfect copy of 1981's Ultima.

The Trekkie digs more and more. It's a treasure trove of classic gaming. The trekkie is so damn nervous you can hear the tremolo in his voice.

TREKKIE

Hello, excuse me, miss?

Daphne turns around, a bit baffled.

DAPHNE

Miss?

DAPHNE

Find something worth buying?

TREKKIE

Could you bother to tell me how much you are thinking for the Ultima's? I'd be interested in the editions one through three.

Daphne eyes him up and down.

DAPHNE

Oh those? Hard to put a price on those, they're really computer-tastic... But that set is twenty... thirty bucks?

TREKKIE
 (lightning quick)
 Yes, please.

The Trekkie wrestles with his wallet and forks over the bills, trembling.

The nerds have multiplied, and another three start pouring over the boxes. Daphne smiles confidently.

EXT. FLEA MARKET - SAME

Katie and Simon wander the flea market. Katie gets a text on her phone.

KATIE
 Oh snap.

SIMON
 What's up?

A group of nerds power walk past in a waddling frenzy.

KATIE
 It's Pete, he says "Games. Old new stock. South side of market, lots of them."

The two join the flock of nerds headed to the south side.

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAPHNE'S STALL - DAY

It's a full on feeding frenzy as the growing dork congregation pour through the boxes.

DORK ONE
 How much?

DORK TWO
 Do you accept Discover card?

DORK THREE
 Do you have more in the car?

DORK FOUR
 Can you wait for my mother to come with my cash?

Daphne is so overwhelmed.

DAPHNE
 Give me a second.

Wario, now among the crowd, has procured a WHOLE BOX to himself fending off the weaklings to get first glance at the offerings.

Simon and Katie find Pete and Tim in the crowd.

SIMON

Holy crap must be some good stuff.

PETE

Uh doye, it's the motherload.

TIM

I got my hands on a mint
Wolfenstein 3D and a Doom.

PETE

This other guy found a box of
Magnavox Odyssey 2 stuff, complete
in box and some developer looking
cartridges too. And Pong, you guys
like Pong?!

KATIE

What are they charging?

TIM

Thirty bucks for these, but this
crowd slowed things down, everyone
seems to be waiting to get their
bids in now. We got to go pull
more cash out.

Simon pushes his way to the front. He finds a frantic Daphne as she tries to unload even more from her car and answer questions. She's just dumping boxes onto the table at this point and letting the dweeb roaches skitter.

Simon catches himself staring at Daphne.

Katie squeezes under Simon's armpit to get to the table edge.

KATIE

This is the real deal, that guy is
holding like a dozen NES games
still shrink wrapped.

Simon looks to his right to see Wario who still selfishly claims a box for his own. Wario sifts through a few items on the table and Simon can see a few things clearly...

WIZARD QUEST GEAR. A t-shirt, some Atari cartridges, and some comic books. In the hand of Wario is the GOLDEN CHALICE in all its sparkling brilliance.

Wario quickly packs the stuff back into the box and barks to Daphne.

WARIO
One hundred for this whole box of
junk.

Daphne skeptically walks over. The roll of the 8-bit WAKA WAKA WAKA WAKA tingles in the back of her imagination.

DAPHNE
Junk? Yeah right.

She looks in and the WAKA WAKA rings louder and faster.

DAPHNE
Looks more like a two hundred
dollar box.

Simon climbs over the stalls table. He tumbles from the table and inside the stall. This got everyone's attention.

Simon pops up by Daphne and Wario. The 8-BIT DRUM BEAT fades.

SIMON
I'm shutting it down!

The crowd erupts with RABBLE.

DAPHNE
Hot Dog Cheese Boy?

Simon wrestles the box from Wario.

SIMON
This is not for sale!

DAPHNE
What the hell are you doing?

SIMON
You have no idea do you? Some of
this stuff is collectible and some
valuable. This box though, could
be priceless.

DAPHNE
It's just video games...

Simon reaches into the Wario Box and holds up the chalice.

SIMON
It's Wizard Quest.

A couple of jaws drop in astonishment.

TREKKIE

I need to look.

The nerds crowd the box and pull some items out from T-shirts to comic magazines. One PATRON even SNAPS a few dozen photos with his CELL PHONE of Wizard Quest swag. He gets a close up of the title "Wizard Quest issue 4, Swamp World."

Katie squeezes her way in to protect the goods.

KATIE

You heard the man, sale's over,
get!

Daphne looks to Simon.

DAPHNE

Really?

SIMON

Yeah.

A pushing match between Wario and a MUSCULAR POINDEXTER.

After a beat the MANAGER and a SECURITY GUARD come break up the two squabblers. The security guard shuffles Wario away and he sneers back at Simon but then cackles devilishly.

The Manager clears the crowd some and then commands to Daphne.

MANAGER

Pack it up.

Daphne is pissed and turns to Simon.

DAPHNE

Thanks, bucko.

SIMON

I think you mean you're welcome.

Simon packs up the Wizard Quest box as the commotion dies down. Daphne yanks the box from Simon.

DAPHNE

What the hell is a Wizard Quest?

Simon scrunches up his face in frustration, knowing he won't get through to her.

SIMON

That is gaming history, those are
considered legendary artifacts.

DAPHNE
But is it worth anything?

 SIMON
You'd be a damn fool to sell it.

 DAPHNE
Well, a big thanks for shutting
down my booth in that case then.

 SIMON
Do what you want then.

Simon walks away and Katie follows.

 KATIE
But all that cool stuff?

 SIMON
Forget it. It belongs in a museum.

 KATIE
So do you Dr. Jones!

Daphne, on the other hand, loads up her car with what remains. She SLAMS her CAR TRUNK in a fit of frustration.

EXT. UNIT 115 - DAY

Daphne loads the boxes back up in the storage locker. She stacks and kicks them into place.

From a top shelf a VHS TAPE flops onto the floor. It makes a loud SMACK on the concrete and demands Daphne's attention.

She stares at the tape for a second before picking it up. A few dates are scribble on the label, one being "April 5th, 1993".

She walks back out to her car. She tosses it into the passenger seat.

The WIZARD QUEST BOX is the last box in her car. She hesitates and then leaves the box in the trunk.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DAY

Daphne rolls into the driveway and parks. She exits the car and then enters the house.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM- DAY

Daphne turns on the TV/VCR combo in the corner of her bedroom. She ejects the tape in the player *Can't Hardly Wait* and inserts the MYSTERY TAPE from the storage unit.

After a certain amount of static, we see a grainy image inside of a FUDDRUCKERS RESTAURANT. Daphne cocks her head.

INT. FUDDRUCKERS - DAY

In the video kids run and scream around a table that has a large sheet BIRTHDAY CAKE. The camera hovers over table. The cake is decorated with "Happy Birthday Daphne" surrounded by all the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

The CAMERA OPERATOR continues through the restaurant and finds the arcade cabinets.

It's GEORGE, no longer the scrawny teenager but a receding hairline father figure. He laughs as he leans over the shoulder of a young Daphne (6).

Daphne stands on her father's toes to see into the arcade cabinet: Ms. Pac-Man. She operates the controls.

GEORGE

Daphne, get the cherry. Oh! You got it. Wow!

Daphne laughs and cheers with her father.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM- DAY

The reflection of the home video plays out in Daphne's tear filled eyes.

A door SLAMS.

MRS. CHAMBER

Daphne! Get down here now!

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Daphne barely reaches the bottom stair as she is accosted by her mother.

MRS. CHAMBERS

Heaven and the Lord Almighty above, you just don't get it missy.

DAPHNE

What's the malfunction?

MRS. CHAMBERS

Where have you been? Out partying all night? For all I know boozing.

DAPHNE

What? Uh no, I was here last night, you saw me in this house.

MRS. CHAMBERS

And we went to bed and come this morning you were nowhere to be found. No notes, nothing. I called your phone over and over again, and you can't even pick up your mother's phone call. We've been out looking for you.

Daphne scrambles into her BAG for her PHONE.

DAPHNE

I left before you all were up. What number were you calling? I didn't get a single...

Daphne opens her phone: dead.

DAPHNE

The battery is dead, I must not have charged it last night.

MRS. CHAMBERS

Ah huh, then where were you since the crack of dawn?

DAPHNE

I wasn't anywhere.

MRS. CHAMBERS

We're taking the car away.

DAPHNE

You can't do that!

MRS. CHAMBERS

While you are living under my roof, you live by my rules.

DAPHNE

Well then I won't live here anymore, problem solved.

Daphne backs out of the house.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Daphne makes a break for her car but stops dead in her tracks.

Ted has opened the driver's side door and leans inside the car. With a couple METAL CLANGS Ted locks "The Club" into place over the STEERING WHEEL.

DAPHNE
Oh, come on, Ted!

TED
Sorry kiddo, come back into the house and we can work on a plan as family.

The 8-bit drum returns and intensifies WAKA WAKA WAKA WAKA.

DAPHNE
She's all yours, I'm out.

Daphne pops open the trunk. Inside is the the WIZARD QUEST CARDBOARD BOX. Daphne stuffs the rest of her belongings into the box and SLAMS the trunk.

Daphne takes to the street. She journeys down the road and doesn't look back.

Ted looks to Mrs. Chambers who has been standing porch side.

TED
I mean, I have to go after her, right?

MRS. CHAMBERS
Let miss temper tantrum have her way since she thinks she doesn't need this home. It'll be just like when she ran away at age five, home by dinner.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Daphne stands next to a payphone and drops a couple dimes into the coin slot. She dials the operator.

INT. SIMON'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Simon stands in the doorway of his bedroom. Behind him sits Katie on the floor with a game controller in hand and Mario Kart paused on the TV.

MRS. BARNES (O.S.)
Simon, there's a call for you...
it's a girl.

Simon picks up the phone in the upstairs hallway and shouts to the downstairs.

SIMON
I got it, Mom!

Simon places the receiver to his ear and diligently waits to hear his mother hang up.

SIMON
Hello?

DAPHNE (O.S.)
So do you really know all about
this Wizard Quest stuff and
everything?

Simon can't believe his ears. He smirks and plays cute.

SIMON
Do I know who this is?

DAPHNE (O.S.)
Answer the question, Simon.

SIMON
I thought I went by hot dog cheese
boy, how'd you know my name,
DAPHNE?

DAPHNE (O.S.)
We've had at least one class or
two together every semester,
Holmes. And in third grade you
invited the whole class to your
pool party, you got really sick
doing the dizzy bat and up chucked
onto the diving board.

SIMON
Okay, okay, geez. Umm, It'll take
some explaining but yeah that's
Wizard Quest stuff you have and
more.

DAPHNE (O.S.)
Alright, then sit tight, I'm
coming over.

Daphne hangs up the phone and Simon is left with the dial tone.

Simon hangs up the phone. He turns to his bedroom to see Katie who has been hanging on every word of the conversation.

KATIE
The plot thickens.

SIMON
Who are you, the narrator?

EXT. SIMON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Daphne walks up the driveway with the Wizard Quest box in arms. She rings the doorbell.

INT. SIMON'S HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Daphne enters the Barnes' homestead and ventures upstairs.

Mr. Barnes can't help but gawk at this strange girl.

Mrs. Barnes walks into the foyer.

MRS. BARNES
Honey, who was that at the door?

MR. BARNES
A girl came here for Simon.

MRS. BARNES
Is it the girl that just called?

MR. BARNES
Isn't Katie here?

MRS. CHAMBERS
Yeah, Simon has two girls in his room.

MR. BARNES
Two girls...

Mrs. Barnes punches him in the shoulder.

INT. SIMON'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Daphne steps into the open bedroom and takes it in. It's a teenager's bedroom with far too many relics from his childhood: the action figures, video games, comic books, lego models, and movie posters.

Simon and Katie crowd the desktop computer when they notice Daphne.

SIMON

Oh wow, you're here. Welcome to my bedroom.

KATIE

And you brought the box.

DAPHNE

Hi Simon, and Katie, right?

Katie smiles; it's nice to be noticed.

KATIE

Yeah!

There's an awkward pause as Katie and Simon stare at Daphne who hasn't broken away from the doorway.

DAPHNE

So.... where do we start?

SIMON

Let's take a look, dump the box on my bed.

Daphne does so. A bunch of WIZARD QUEST PARAPHERNALIA rolls out. The most significant items that fall down are the CHALICE and the copies of the COMIC BOOKS.

KATIE

It's a literal treasure trove.

DAPHNE

Can you guys stop doing that? Tell me what I got here.

SIMON

Alright, alright. Wizard Quest was this video game.

DAPHNE

I got that far, go on.

SIMON

Not only was it a video game, it was this contest. Here, check it out.

Simon pulls from a stack of his own comic books: UNCANNY X-MEN #133. He flips to the center of the book and indeed there is an ad for ATARI'S WIZARD QUEST: DESERT TEMPLE. The ad depicts pictures of the prize: four golden Chalices and a king's crown. In big numbers, the total prize pool is advertised as a total value of \$150,000.

SIMON

It's 1980 and Atari is king of the video game consoles. They're selling games like crazy and are feeling unstoppable. So they come up with this gimmick to push even more games on to the market and the world starts seeing ads for Wizard Quest.

Daphne points to the ad.

DAPHNE

Wait, is this the gold goblet I have over here?

KATIE

Yeah, that's one of only four that exist in the world.

SIMON

How it worked was that you signed up for the Atari club newsletter. You get the game on the day of the release and play like a mad man. Once you beat the game you discover the secret code. Mail in that secret code to Atari headquarters and the top players are selected to play a tournament of sorts to win one of the in real life golden chalices.

Daphne picks up the Chalice. The 8-Bit WAKA WAKA's silently hum in the back her mind as she touches it.

DAPHNE

Wow, so all that fuss over one of these?

KATIE

It's said to be 14K gold, and the jewels are genuine sapphires according to the ad.

Katie digs through the pile and finds a POLAROID PHOTO dated 5/4/1984.

SIMON

Whoa, check out that photo.

The photo is of Daphne's dad GEORGE and HOWARD the Atari designer. George smiles and holds the Chalice with both hands.

The WAKA WAKA's fade away.

Daphne's feels emotional looking at her young father. As she stares at the photo, she chokes up for a second.

KATIE

Look at the date: eighty-four.

SIMON

Yeah, looks like the eighties.

Katie jumps back over to the computer and pulls up a saved tab. She browses and reports to the group.

KATIE

According to the internet, the third game of the series was released in Christmas eighty-three, Wizard Quest: The Lake Temple. It ends up being Atari's last of the series because of the video game crash. Rumor has it that to fill their obligation to the contest Atari held a secret competition to crown a winner of the third chalice. But on this forum it's all speculation. No one knows if anyone won that competition.

SIMON

Nineteen eighty-four. This guy in the photo is that winner.

DAPHNE

That's my dad.

KATIE

Look at the chalice, it has blue gems that match the Lake Temple Chalice from the game. This has to be the third contest.

SIMON

This is all your dad's stuff? He must be a hell of a game player.

DAPHNE

Yeah, he must have been really good at all this.

SIMON

It's quite the legacy. We have a piece of gaming history here.

DAPHNE

I have one of only four, and according to the contest flyer this is worth at least \$25,000.

KATIE

Well, maybe one of three. There is a fourth chalice somewhere. I mean, the chalices were all photographed together at one time, so they definitely existed. But that game never came out, the contest ended.

SIMON

Wizard Quest: The Sky Temple.

Katie references the computer to check the name, she nods.

Simon digs through the pile and pulls up the comic book. He holds out the title for Daphne and Katie to see "Wizard Quest: The Sky Temple"

KATIE

Well, there it is.

DAPHNE

What?

SIMON

Wizard Quest: The Sky Temple. The fourth game never came out. This book is not supposed to exist.

DAPHNE

And there it is. What do you think my dad was doing with it?

SIMON

Each game in the series came with a comic book illustrated by none other than Walt Simon-son. The comic had hidden clues which the games would reference. You look in the book and you can get through to the end of the game. Otherwise you can't beat them. And for all we know these are the only copies there are.

DAPHNE

Dad was looking for another golden chalice!

There's four copies of the comic. Katie pans through them.

KATIE

Look at these markings, must be
some kind of artist proofs. Whoa
and look in this one.

Daphne takes the book to examine it. Inside the cover is an
inscription. "To George from Walt, Happy questing!"

The delightful WAKA WAKA's are back stronger then ever.

DAPHNE

We're sitting on the greatest
treasure map known to all gaming
history. Let's play the game.

An 8-bit POWER UP CHIMES and the WAKA WAKA's disappear.

SIMON

There's no game to play.

Katie types away at the computer. She points to a link.

KATIE

There's a ROM! I knew it, in the
back of my brain I knew it.

DAPHNE

You two speak a whole other
language. Rewind, with what is a
ROM?

KATIE

The game exits as a ROM. We can
play it.

Simon investigates off of Katie's computer.

SIMON

It was uploaded a few years back.
Someone found a copy of it at
Silicon Valley garage sale. It's
less uncommon than you would think
but developers have all kinds of
this stuff packed away for years
that eventually leaks out into the
world.

DAPHNE

That's it right there, I need you
two on my side, you guys know
stuff. This is what my dad was
leaving me to figure out. I have
to finish what my dad started.

Simon and Katie look to each other.

KATIE

Us two?

DAPHNE

I'll give you a little something
for your trouble.

SIMON

Money? Are you bribing us?

DAPHNE

Don't you see it? I'll do you even
better, we get another chalice.

KATIE

But the contest is over.

DAPHNE

Is it? The rules still apply, they
guaranteed \$150,000 in prizes.
They paid out the Lake Temple
chalice, and they are obligated to
pay out the Sky Temple as well.
There are federal gaming laws,
quiz show rules that are in our
favor, I think.

SIMON

You're telling me we play this
game and we get another twenty-
five grand chalice?

DAPHNE

Look, no one has ever beaten the
game, and it doesn't work without
the book, which we could be the
sole possessors. Beat the game,
get the chalice.

KATIE

And once the fourth Chalice is
found, there's even the
championship tournament for the
Wizard's Crown, that's \$50,000.

SIMON

Katie's right, but this could all
be a big nothing.

DAPHNE

But there's a small chance that I
have a golden ticket sitting in
my... our laps, what do you say?

(MORE)

DAPHNE (CONT'D)
No more selling off this nerd
bait, I cannot believe I'm saying
this, let's go for the chalice.

 SIMON
Fifty-fifty partners?

Simon puts out a hand for the deal. Daphne hesitates.

 DAPHNE
Sixty-forty.

Simon looks to Katie, she nods. Simon takes Daphne's hand and
shakes it.

 SIMON
Let's Quest.

Daphne reveals a soft smile while shaking Simon's hand.

 DAPHNE
Alright, now I'm really gonna need
you two to step in again.

 KATIE
I can download the ROM and set up
an emulator. But we're gonna need
some gear, joysticks and stuff.

Simon shrugs.

 KATIE
The Game Shack would have what we
need but it's closed tonight and
not open on Sundays. How about
Monday?

 DAPHNE
Monday is too late.

 SIMON
Really? Maybe we can check some
thrifths but they're probably
closed too...

 DAPHNE
I think I know a spot that might
have some joysticks, computers,
and well everything.

 SIMON
Yeah?

DAPHNE
Okay, let's pack it up.

Simon and Katie are bewildered but do as commanded.

EXT. SIMON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Daphne leads the charge out of the house with the Wizard Quest cardboard box in hand. Simon and Katie trail behind.

DAPHNE
Okay, whose car can we take?

KATIE
I don't have a car.

SIMON
My dad must have just taken the minivan... not really suppose to take it out late at night anyway.

KATIE
I thought you had that cute little tuna can you're always driving around?

DAPHNE
It's locked up at the moment.

Daphne contemplates the situation.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)
I think I can get us a ride.

Daphne starts texting on her phone.

EXT. SIMON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A STATION WAGON slowly approaches Simon's driveway. The driver steps out of the vehicle. It's Julian and he doesn't look too happy.

Daphne smiles and walks forward with the box. Simon and Katie cautiously follow.

Julian holds up his CELLPHONE.

JULIAN
Really, this doesn't look like a 911 situation. We were halfway through band practice when I canceled it, you know.

DAPHNE

We need a ride, it's very urgent.

Daphne loads the box into the back and heads for the passenger side door.

SIMON

We really do need a ride.

KATIE

We're searching for joysticks!

SIMON

Don't tell him that.

Before Julian can argue, all three are in the car.

INT. STATION WAGON - CONTINUOUS

Julian leans in through the driver's side door.

JULIAN

I kind of want you all to get out.

DAPHNE

You're already here, the time it could take to argue and negotiate would be way more time than to just drive us. Pretty, pretty please.

JULIAN

Everyone out of the car, now!

Katie and Simon exit.

DAPHNE

Fine, let's negotiate.

JULIAN

Why do I feel like I'm the the hostage in this situation?

Daphne pulls out an ID BADGE with a lanyard.

DAPHNE

Personal chauffeur service and I give you the Warped Tour.

JULIAN

You'll have to do better, you know my crew always buys Warped Tour tickets every year.

DAPHNE

This ain't no ticket. It reads "Press Pass," and that's full access backstage rubbing elbows with punk rock legends.

JULIAN

Yeah, like that's even legit.

DAPHNE

Totally legit, I crunched the paperwork, sent in an application and here we are. As a published concert photographer I got the credentials.

Julian gives her a side eye.

DAPHNE

Blogging counts.

She slides the pass to Julian. Julian turns it over in awe.

DAPHNE

Feels good to touch, does it not?
It can be all yours.

Daphne knocks on the window and waves on Katie and Simon. The two dive back in.

Julian looks disgusted, slides the pass into his jacket pocket, and slams his hands on the wheel.

JULIAN

Where are we going?

Daphne claps with excitement.

DAPHNE

Montgomery Storage off of the Pike.

JULIAN

This is your one and only ride.
Who are these guys again?

KATIE

I'm Katie and that's Simon, we go to school with you.

JULIAN

That's right, can you guys tell me what you're up to?

DAPHNE
Absolutely, not.

JULIAN
Cool, Daphne. Did she ruin your
date night or something too?

SIMON
(quickly)
Oh us? We're not dating.

Katie blushes.

SIMON
I mean there was this one time at
Summer Camp, but Katie called it
off after like a day, it was
agreed it was for the best.

JULIAN
Okay...

DAPHNE
Oh honey, you're embarrassing the
kids.

Daphne reaches into the glove compartment and finds a CASSETTE
TAPE. It's marked DEMO.

JULIAN
What are you doing?

DAPHNE
You guys got to hear Julian's
band.

JULIAN
Stop that, it's just a rough
recording.

Julian tries to fight her off with one hand but she manages to
pop the tape in. A crunchy sounding garage band crackles across
the cassette tape. It's catchy garage-rock music. Daphne yells
over the music.

DAPHNE
They're good. Aren't they?

KATIE
Yeah!

Daphne continues to rock out in the front seat. Julian tries to
scowl but can't help but grin. He sings along to his song under
his breath.

EXT. UNIT 115 - NIGHT

Daphne rolls up the storage door to reveal the mess of boxes. Katie and Simon peer in.

SIMON
This is the place?

DAPHNE
This is the place.

Julian, from in his station wagon, leans out the window.

JULIAN
Ummm, were you expecting me to drive off and leave you here at this mystery storage unit?

DAPHNE
Yeah, kind of.

Julian puts the car in park and investigates with the other three.

Daphne finds the LIGHT SWITCH and illuminates the unit. The glow from the back of unit creates a trail through the boxes for the crew to follow.

INT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

The gang reaches the cubby hole in the back with the COMPUTER WORKSTATION, RETRO TV set up, ARCADE CABINETS, and shelves of GEAR.

KATIE
It's gorgeous!

DAPHNE
I think you guys can find whatever gear you need here. The shelves have bins of all kinds of stuff.

Katie hops over to the computer and Simon runs up to the arcade machines.

SIMON
These are classic, Frogger, Donkey Kong? Do these actually work? They're in great condition.

Katie boots up the computer at the main work station.

KATIE
Hey, the power works!

JULIAN

Can someone finally clue me in to what the hell I'm looking at?

DAPHNE

You were suppose to drive away no questions asked.

SIMON

For goodness sake, just tell him.

Daphne stomps her foot in frustration and pivots to Julian.

DAPHNE

You know how I said my dad was kind of into computer games? Well, turns out he was really into computer games.

JULIAN

Whoa, this is all his stuff? Looks like no one has touched it in years. You and your mom just kept it like this the whole time?

DAPHNE

My mom did, I don't know why she kept it like this or why she didn't tell me at all about it.

Simon at this point has turned on FROGGER and begins to play.

SIMON

That's crazy, this stuff is epic. He must have been a legend around these parts.

JULIAN

So why here now with these two goof balls?

KATIE

Hey! Are we the goof balls? Damn, if you have to ask you're probably the goof ball.

Daphne takes a huge breath.

DAPHNE

I need their help solving this secret video game tournament from the earlier 80's called Wizard Quest.

(MORE)

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

It's got a golden chalice we want to win and we can do that by using a comic book that only I own a copy of. And we need joysticks which should presumably be in a box around here since my father seemed to have owned one of everything, including a Frogger machine which is not on the itinerary of things to accomplish tonight.

Simon's Frogger stops in mid-traffic and is squashed by a semi-truck.

SIMON

Uh, right.

Daphne catches her breath.

DAPHNE

I think that about covers it, good?

JULIAN

I guess so.

KATIE

And that's strictly confidential information.

JULIAN

There's a golden chalice?

Daphne reaches into the box they brought in and produces the CHALICE. She passes it over to Julian. He holds it up and admires it.

JULIAN

Whoa, that's so metal.

KATIE

Yeah, 14K with embedded sapphires.

Simon starts exploring the tubs of gear on the shelves. Each bin Simon opens seems to explode with cables and wiring.

SIMON

If these bins are any indication, if he owned one of something he probably owns another ten.

Daphne joins the search. After a beat, Daphne pulls down a bin.

DAPHNE

What do you think?

Simon looks into the bin. There's about three dozen classic gaming joysticks.

SIMON

Jackpot, one of these should work, looks like there's some adapters too, Katie.

KATIE

Guys this computer checks out, it's an old operating system but I can probably get the ROM over here and set up an emulator. Looks like it can even broadcast to the TV setup here. Or we can just use my laptop.

DAPHNE

No wait, why don't we run two systems?

Simon lifts up a bird nest of tangled joysticks.

SIMON

You have enough controllers for it. Are we allowed to stay in the unit?

DAPHNE

It's 24 hours access, and my dad clearly used it for some kind of workshop. There's nothing stopping us.

KATIE

Okay if I can download the Windows 98 version of the software from my computer, burn that to CD ROM, I can do this. Ah crap, but I don't have an internet connection here.

JULIAN

There's a cafe nearby that has, you know, a place where you can plug in for free. I could take you...

Everyone stares at Julian.

SIMON

So you want to help?

DAPHNE

I don't know.

JULIAN

Are you all kidding me? You just told me the craziest story about secret video games, lost golden treasures, and now I'm standing in the stockpile of relics used for VH1's "I love the 80's". I don't think driving away is an option anymore.

Katie grabs her bag and laptop.

KATIE

Noice, we got this. We'll be back by the time you guys are done untangling those controllers.

SIMON

Cool, we got a plan.

Daphne SLAPS a twenty dollar bill into Julian's hand.

DAPHNE

Triple, venti, soy, no foam latte. Welcome to the party pal.

INT. CAFE - NIGHT

With soft lighting and wood grain features, this cafe has your casual mix of hip CAFFEINE ADDICTS and LAPTOP LURKERS.

Katie has taken residence at a corner table. She inserts a CD into her laptop's disk drive, types a bit, then leans back at her terminal.

Julian steps up with a TRAY OF FOUR COFFEES. He passes off one cup to Katie before sitting down.

KATIE

Got the ROM, now just writing it to CD. Three percent done.

JULIAN

Uh, cool.

KATIE

Oh! Four percent!

Awkward pause.

KATIE

Oh and it skipped five and went right to...

JULIAN

You can just say if it's done when it gets there.

KATIE

Yeah, you got it.

Awkward pause.

KATIE

You're in a band?

JULIAN

That's right.

KATIE

Do you still play clarinet? We were in middle school band together and you were 2nd chair clarinet.

JULIAN

That's right, you were first chair trombone.

KATIE

Oh yeah, I was in charge of the bone squad.

JULIAN

Traded in the clarinet for a guitar. More fun to play punk songs and figured girls would be more interested in a guy rocking out with a six string.

KATIE

Tell that Kenny G, smooth jazz has its groupies, you know he pulls some tail.

Julian chokes on his coffee.

JULIAN

Can't say I compare to Kenny in that department.

KATIE

Speaking of, you and Daphne, you two are a couple? Were a couple?

JULIAN
Past tense, she umm... kissed
another guy and that was that.

KATIE
One hundred percent.

JULIAN
Yeah, one hundred percent.

The CD pops out of the disc drive.

KATIE
I mean, the disc is done.

JULIAN
Right, let's get these rapidly
cooling coffees back.

Katie navigates on her computer once more.

KATIE
Got it, let me just wrap some of
this up, want to leave a few tabs
open just in case and...

A look of dread crosses Katie's face.

KATIE
Oh we are so fudging fudged.

Julian leans in to see Katie's laptop screen.

INT. UNIT 115 - NIGHT

Simon and Daphne are busy housekeeping the storage unit to
create some work space.

Simon lines up a tall black office chair in front of the
computer desktop.

DAPHNE
Alright it's looking a little less
messy and dusty around here.

SIMON
But we are limited on seating
options. We got the office chair
for the computer, then maybe the
arcade stool for the second set
up, and lastly a sizable bean bag
chair.

DAPHNE

Perhaps folks double up on the
bean bag chair?

Simon sweats a bit at the thought and shakes it off.

SIMON

I will slide some cases over. With
all this single seating, this must
have been your dad's like fortress
of solitude.

DAPHNE

His what?

SIMON

You know, Superman's arctic
fortress, ummm private castle with
his collection of his most
favorite things.

DAPHNE

You think so? I knew he loved
games but Mom hated the stuff. She
must have made him keep it all out
here.

SIMON

No joke, he definitely loved
games.

DAPHNE

I mean I knew that, growing up if
we weren't out at the parks
exploring or at the swimming pool,
you could find us at the pinball
arcade. He would give me a full
bucket of quarters. I couldn't
believe it, felt like he was
giving me thousands of dollars to
go play. It was probably more like
ten bucks. We would play pin ball
and games all day. If that ball
ever got stuck he knew just where
to bump the machine with his hip
to dislodge it. But my favorite
machine was Ms. Pac-Man.

SIMON

Why Ms. Pac-Man?

DAPHNE

Because she had a bow in her hair
and I would wear a bow in my hair,
and that was bad ass.

SIMON

I agree.

DAPHNE

I could make one quarter last ten
or fifteen minutes on Ms. Pac-Man,
Dad said I was a natural.

Simon points over to the MS. PAC-MAN MACHINE.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

Yeah I was surprised to see he had
one himself. Probably bought most
of this stuff after the divorce.
He actually moved away for a bit
for work but came back here to his
home town by the end.

Simon reaches behind the arcade cabinet and boots up the
machine.

SIMON

Maybe he got it for you. Let's see
if the tale is true about you the
arcade wunderkind.

He checks change slot to find some quarters, nothing. Simon
struggles to get the game started.

Daphne slyly pulls a quarter out of the cup on the Frogger
machine.

Daphne nudges Simon to the side of the MS Pac-man cabinet. She
inserts the quarter into the coin slot. She glares at Simon, an
intimidation tactic. Simons heart skips a beat. She smiles, and
then hits player one.

The game is on and Daphne looks truly happy for the first time
in a while.

INT. UNIT 115 - SOMETIME LATER

Julian and Katie cautiously enter as they hear SHOUTS, YELLS,
and 8-bit cacophony.

They turn the corner to see Simon and Daphne over the Ms. Pac-
Man cabinet. They playfully argue.

SIMON

I made it farther in the level,
therefore I went farther in the
game than you.

DAPHNE

Check the score board pal, higher
score wins.

SIMON

You died on like the fourth level
chasing ghosts.

DAPHNE

I eat ghosts to get the most
points cause points matter. I
ain't afraid of no ghosts.

Katie and Julian look at each other, unsure of what to make of
this budding friendship / oblivious flirting.

JULIAN

Hey you two.

KATIE

We got a slight problem.

INT. UNIT 115 - MOMENTS LATER

The gang stands around Katie's laptop.

We see an open tab for an eBay auction. The WIZARD QUEST AIR
TEMPLE COMIC BOOK has been listed for sale and it's already up
over \$500 with a few bids.

DAPHNE

I thought you said we had the only
copies of this comic. You gave me
the whole lost treasure speech and
everything.

SIMON

Where did this come from all of
sudden?

JULIAN

It looks like it came from us.

KATIE

I checked out the seller, it's
Wario.

JULIAN

From the Super Mario games?

They all look at Julian.

JULIAN

What? I've played video games.

SIMON

He's this scumbag reseller from the flea market. Always price gouging and never a fair deal. Bad mustache, sweaty, and overweight.

JULIAN

Got it, a Wario.

DAPHNE

That's the guy who got in a fight over this stuff at the flea market? You mean that gruesome son of a bitch could have stolen one of my dad's comics?

SIMON

With all that commotion he had an easy opportunity to snatch one up no problem. He knew instantly that it was Wizard Quest stuff and it had value.

DAPHNE

I'm gonna call the police on that rotund man.

JULIAN

I was thinking about that, but you guys don't have any concrete proof against him. We hardly know how much stuff your dad has or how he even acquired it. It'd be our word against his.

KATIE

There's a bigger issue at hand. He posted most of the interior pictures of the comic in the auction. I had the page opened up cause I was searching for any information on the Air Temple game online. It was on the hardcore gamer message boards that have flagged the auction and posts are already speculating about using the pages to finish the game's puzzles.

SIMON

Holy crap, are they saying that they are starting to decipher anything from the game?

KATIE

Nothing conclusive yet but the window for opportunity is there. And the auction was set for twenty four hours. We got maybe a little over two days before someone has that physical copy in their hands.

DAPHNE

Let's get gaming.

INT. UNIT 115 - LATER

Simon's rear end sticks out from the bottom of the COMPUTER DESK. With a CLICK from underneath, the desktop computer comes to life.

SIMON

It's alive!

Katie laughs at this. Daphne and Julian do not.

SIMON

Okay, Katie, jump into the driver's seat.

Katie hops into the computer chair and scoots to the keyboard.

KATIE

Well poop, it's asking for a login in and password.

SIMON

Admin, admin? Admin, password? blank user, no pass?

Katie tries some combinations.

KATIE

None of that, the only user name here in the field is "ScoobyDude"...

JULIAN

Your dad's gamer handle is ScoobyDude?

DAPHNE

I don't know... maybe?

KATIE
Was your dad a fan of the cartoon?

SIMON
Or smoking doobies?

JULIAN
Wait, you were named after THE
Daphne?

DAPHNE
Oh my god, I'm a cartoon
character.

SIMON
Is your middle name Velma?

JULIAN
Nah, probably Shaggy.

Daphne goes beat red and covers her face.

KATIE
I was named after Katharine
Hepburn.

SIMON
That's great, Katie.

KATIE
Let me try Daphne as the password.

She types.

KATIE
No, not it.

JULIAN
Scooby snacks? Mystery machine?

SIMON
Scrappy Doo?

Katie types again.

KATIE
Jinkies!

SIMON
Did you figure it out?

KATIE

Yeah, it was "jinkies" and "8545",
found it on a post-it note over
here on this journal.

Katie lifts up the post-it note to show. It's on the open page
of GEORGE'S JOURNAL full of doodles of swords and sorcery, gem
stones, etc.

SIMON

Your father was a true fan through
and through.

KATIE

Time to run some updates, boot up
some files, and then it's game
time.

SIMON

Okay, Katie is copying over the
emulator files and to set up
George's, I mean "ScoobyDude's"
station with the cloned ROM, that
way we have two games running and
we can solve twice as fast. Daphne
and I, let's go through the boxes
and make sure there is nothing
that we missed.

JULIAN

Why both of you?

DAPHNE

Simon knows what to look for and
it's my dad's stuff.

JULIAN

Cool, cool. And I will...

KATIE

Order a pizza?

Daphne tosses Julian one of the comic books.

DAPHNE

And brush up on your reading.

Julian catches the book and accepts his fate.

JULIAN

Hope you all like pineapple on
your pizza.

EXT. UNIT 115 - NIGHT

Julian walks back in with PIZZA BOXES in hand.

INT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Julian hands out slices of pizza. Katie yells for the group.

KATIE
Here we go, guys!

The group gathers around chowing down on some pizza.

Katie turns up the volume to the desktop computer and increases the browser window to full screen. Katie taps the return button.

A lightening strike crosses the screen and with an 8 Bit WAIL an image of a WIZARD and the TITLE "Wizard Quest" strobes in beautiful 80's graphics.

The group looks on in awe as the flashing lights dance across their faces.

Katie unravels the cord from one of the joysticks. She passes the controller over to Daphne.

DAPHNE
Wait, me?

KATIE
It feels right.

The others nod.

Katie stands up and Daphne jumps into the pilot seat.

KATIE
Just hit the button to start.

Daphne does so and the game transports her through a doorway into a bright yellow room. A SMALL PIXELATED FIGURE stands in the center of the room: the Wizard.

DAPHNE
Yeesh, not again. What the heck is that?

SIMON
These Atari games, you really have to use your imagination. That's You, you are the Wizard. Just think of yourself as the Wizard.

Daphne closes her eyes.

START GAME VISION

This time the wizard looks like Daphne. Long robe, grey beard but with her punk rock leather jacket and curly brown hair.

Simon's voice seems to echo.

SIMON (O.S.)
Start exploring, I'll get a pad of paper and we will start mapping out worlds.

DAPHNE
Okay...

Daphne walks the wizard into the next room, another flashing door graphic. In the next room, an EAGLE swoops in on the Wizard.

DAPHNE
Weak!

The large bird swipes at the Wizard multiple times. A SKULL AND CROSS BONES appears where the Wizard once stood. the screen fills with the words "Game Over"

END GAME VISION

Simon comes back with pen and paper.

SIMON
What the hell?

KATIE
She's gonna need some practice.

Katie starts to set up her gaming station.

Julian looks up from the comic he's reading.

JULIAN
That was the Sky Temple Guardian Eagle, says in the comic she just wants her egg back.

DAPHNE
I would fucking say so.

SIMON
Then let's find us an egg.

Simon walks over to the unit corner, he's found a whiteboard and dry erase marker. Simon writes on the board "Eagle's Egg"

Daphne grits her teeth and starts a new game.

WIZARD QUEST SERIES OF SHOTS / INTERCUT WITH GAME VISION

Daphne's Wizard jumps and misses landing on a platform: GAME OVER.

Playing from her LAPTOP, Katie's Wizard finds what looks like a FLUTE.

Simon writes on the whiteboard "Find the Instruments".

Julian chows down on a slice of pizza. He points to an item on Daphne's screen and her Wizard picks it up, another INSTRUMENT.

Daphne uses MAGIC SPELLS to vaporize some SKELETONS. Simon next to her cheers her on and the two high five. Katie and Julian separately look on jealously.

Katie's Wizard is lost in a seemingly endless maze. Her Wizard walks through repeating screen after screen to no avail.

Simon taps out Daphne and takes over the computer station. Daphne was stuck on the maze as well.

END SERIES OF SHOTS / END GAME VISION

INT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Simon drops the joystick in frustration.

SIMON

There's no cracking this maze.

Katie has her computer on her lap looking at some browser tabs.

KATIE

Well this is where everyone originally got stuck in the game. They all seem to think the comic was the key to getting any farther and solving the maze.

Daphne flips through one of the comic books.

DAPHNE

Alright, let's study up and see what we can find.

Simon looks at his watch.

SIMON

Holy shit, it's 11:30.

DAPHNE
Is that late for you?

KATIE
Kind of, we should start packing.
I'm surprised I haven't gotten
like a dozen messages from my mom
yet.

JULIAN
Yeah, I gotta run.

SIMON
We gave it a good try, maybe go
again tomorrow?

Simon starts to wrap up the controller. The others start packing. Daphne looks heart broken.

DAPHNE
No guys, we can't stop.

SIMON
The auction won't finish until
tomorrow, then they got to mail
out comic. we got some wiggle
room.

DAPHNE
Actually, we don't exactly.

KATIE
What's wrong?

DAPHNE
I got a message, well, my mom got
a message on our answering
machine. Junk Haulers are coming
Monday morning to take everything.

JULIAN
Whoa, they're junking all this?

SIMON
They can't do that. This is not
junk, for starters.

KATIE
We will just explain everything to
your mom.

DAPHNE
We can't take that risk, we're not
on the best terms.

(MORE)

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

She hid this all from me, and that means she purposely wants this all gone.

Daphne starts to choke up.

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

She's gonna take it all away, she hates everything in here, every trace of him, she hates my dad, and she hates me.

Katie runs over to give Daphne the biggest hug she can muster. Daphne turns away, a bit embarrassed.

KATIE

We're in this together now, you got it, we're not going anywhere.

DAPHNE

This felt like our chance to do it right.

SIMON

I can call my folks and tell them I'm staying over at Pete's.

KATIE

Same.

JULIAN

You guys oddly make a pretty good team and all.

DAPHNE

You're part of the team now too, stupid.

JULIAN

Really?

Julian blushes, a bit in shock. Katie moves over to Julian and gives him a hug.

KATIE

One of us!

JULIAN

I guess, we're gonna need more coffee.

DAPHNE

Awesome you guys, but what do we do now?

SIMON

I got an idea, I think we need to channel the grand master here, ScoobyDude.

Simon runs off to one of the shelves in the shop.

Simon comes back and tosses a Hawaiian shirt over to Daphne. She snatches it from the air as Simon hands out others to the crew.

SIMON

To play like a grand master and think like a game wizard; One has to look the part.

INT. UNIT 115 - LATER

The group sits side by side against one of the walls, adorned in the Hawaiian shirts. They have lost all their excitement as they concentrate hard for a solution.

DAPHNE

I'm trying to channel the wisdom the best I can.

JULIAN

This is a normal strategy for you guys?

SIMON

I was trying to be inspiring.

Katie puts a comforting hand on Simon.

KATIE

Oh, you did good on that part.

JULIAN

And we do look great.

SIMON

I've read that comic back to front, nothing about a maze.

DAPHNE

And the white board has nothing?

KATIE

Stuff we are still working on: no egg yet, instrument items but can't play them, something about a pegasus, and ruby stones.

Daphne shuts her eyes tight and we hear her internal 8-bit spider-sense tingle again WAKA WAKA WAKA.

Daphne stands and heads towards the sound of the WAKA WAKA and it grows louder. On the computer desk is her dad's illustrated journal. She flips open a page to discover many gemstone illustrations. The WAKA WAKA's subside.

DAPHNE

My dad knew look, Ruby stones!

The Gang looks at the journal, there are notes scribbled on the page.

DAPHNE

He had the comics and must have studied them over and over again. Look here, he writes that the old lady was cryptic, gave the message "Find the way with the Ruby Stones." But there is no path in the game with ruby stones. But it def sounds like maze solution fodder.

Julian flips the comic book over.

JULIAN

Rubies are the gemstones on this game's prize chalice. Not surprising that it is part of the theme. They're on all the cover art.

SIMON

Not just the cover but every where in the inside too.

Simon reaches for the comic from Julian. He flips through the pages and notices something odd for the first time.

SIMON

The gems stones appear on every damn page. Blue sapphires, green emeralds, and red rubies.

Simon starts to show the group.

SIMON

The gems line up on the borders of each page. One color gemstone on each of the four sides of the page. But they alternate per page, look.

KATIE

You're right, each page the gemstones move around but there's no distinct pattern to it. And the ruby is never on the bottom.

DAPHNE

Find the way with the ruby stones. Dad was on the right track. the rubies on the page are the directions of the maze. None on the bottom, or heading south, cause otherwise you would exit the maze.

JULIAN

So these shirts really do have some kind mystic powers, right?

DAPHNE

Oh yeah.

They rush over to their stations paused at the MAZE SEQUENCE.

Daphne and Katie man the controls, Simons reads the comic book pages over Julian's shoulder. With a few screen changes they exit the maze.

They cheer and celebrate. Simon high fives Julian. Daphne follows suit and high fives Julian, but they end up connecting hands. Daphne and Julian linger on their hand hold.

KATIE

We're into some uncharted territory now, folks!

Daphne and Julian separate.

DAPHNE

What?

KATIE

The game, no one has been this far.

DAPHNE

Alright, let's do this.

Daphne cheers them on. After a beat, Julian lets out a yawn. It's a contagious yawn and the others catch it too.

INT. STATION WAGON - LATER

Julian snoozes in the back seat of his CAR.

INT. UNIT 115 - NIGHT

Katie is curled up on the BEAN BAG CHAIR fast asleep, which leaves Simon and Daphne the only two awake. They moved themselves off the chairs and sit on the floor, shoulder to shoulder, leaning back on a couple of boxes. Daphne works the joystick in frustration.

DAPHNE

There's no finding this fourth elemental stone, we've checked every space in the dungeon. How is this guy carrying all this stuff anyways?

SIMON

Video games almost never worry about how much you can carry, it's a whole mechanic they actively choose to ignore.

DAPHNE

It's time to ignore this game for a while.

Daphne pauses the game and searches through a pizza box for the last slice. She offers it to Simon, but he waves it off.

DAPHNE

So why were you all covered in mac and cheese the other day?

SIMON

Now you want to know?

DAPHNE

I don't know, just seemed at the time it wasn't something you were really going to want to talk about.

SIMON

That's pretty true.

(MORE)

SIMON (CONT'D)

I kinda lost my temper over this scholarship thing, they had a funny way of telling me I was rejected with an embossed certificate.

DAPHNE

Strange, that's one way to deliver bad news. Imagine having them write it on a sheet cake, that would be even better.

SIMON

The thing is I was banking on that money to get me into school next year. My dad was laid off from the the gazette a few months ago, not many journalists are surviving the end of print. So I really don't want him to be pressured to pay for my schooling.

DAPHNE

A golden chalice might be just what you need then.

SIMON

No kidding, that's why I jumped at the chance for the money. But who knows, I need to relax and maybe just enjoy the moment, not worry so much. The game was about the money but being around you and everyone, now it feels a lot more than just that.

DAPHNE

Well, aren't you going to ask me about my time with the Vice Principal?

SIMON

You slapped a girl in the middle of the cafeteria, everyone was talking about it.

DAPHNE

Yipes.

SIMON

You can own the hallways now, everyone thinks you're a psycho bad ass.

Daphne lets out a SIGH.

DAPHNE

I wish it was more nuanced than it is, she did say the wrong thing but I was the jealous one. She is Julian's current girlfriend.

Simon GASPS.

SIMON

You're telling me that's not nuanced? I always got the vibe that you broke it off with him anyways.

DAPHNE

Not so much, it's a bit foolish but I pressured him into going to the homecoming dance.

SIMON

I didn't know you were the homecoming dance type...

DAPHNE

I like dances. My mom has pounded it to me not to miss out on high school experiences, they'll be gone before you know it, rah rah rah. So senior homecoming I felt with all my heart I had to go. Julian agreed to be my date and we were all coupled up for the event. We shopped for Julian's tux together. And I had a dress not left over from easter pasts, but one real gorgeous ball gown, something you'd imagine a Ginger Rogers would wear dancing with Fred Astaire. Then the day before the dance, Julian's band lands their first paid gig. The two of us fought and Julian chose the band. I went stag to the dance anyways not wanting to miss out. I hit the dance floor and for a moment didn't care at all. The first slow dance came on and Tony Ferdinand asked me to dance. We talked the whole night, cracked jokes, and danced every slow dance after that.

(MORE)

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

The moment felt right and we
kissed right on the dance floor.

Simon is repulsed.

SIMON

Tony Ferdinand? He's a total goon.
On an eighth grade field trip he
peed in a kid's backpack on a
dare. It was devastating for
everyone involved. Everyone's
parents had to be called to pick
us up.

DAPHNE

Hey! Tony was looking super cute
that night and currently NOT
urinating in backpacks. He said I
was the prettiest girl at the
whole dance, and he had me
believing it. The romance was cut
short anyways, cause Julian showed
up to homecoming. He used all his
sway to push the bands gig to
another night at the last minute.
And he saw me with Goon Ferdinand
and that was that.

SIMON

That's harsh.

DAPHNE

So I've been on a whole let me
escape town and run off to Paris
kind of mood. See the world
through my camera shutter.

SIMON

That's why you were selling off
everything left and right, for
some escape money?

DAPHNE

Basically, and a replacement
camera lens, otherwise it's hard
to do that see the world bit.

SIMON

But what about not missing your
precious high school moments?
spring break, graduation, prom?

DAPHNE

Yeah, with who?

SIMON

You got us right here, the rest of the Wizards. We can be part of each other's high school anytime, I would like that.

Daphne reaches over and puts an arm around Simon's shoulder, then follows up with the other arm to give him a good hug. She gives Simon a friendly peck on the cheek. Simon is over the moon but frozen up.

DAPHNE

You don't know how badly I needed to hear that. Thanks.

SIMON

Uh, no problem.

JULIAN

You all make any progress?

Simon, lighting quick, picks up the controller and points to the screen.

SIMON

Yeah, a little bit...

Simon unpauses the the game.

JULIAN

Cool, let me get in on that.

Julian slides in and reaches out for the controller. Simon passes off the joystick and slides over.

EXT. MONTGOMERY STORAGE - NIGHT

A strong wind sweeps through the storage lot. Signs on the fences RATTLE back and forth, a lock chain KNOCKS about on a unit. A bolt of lightning and the CRACK of thunder.

INT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Katie lowers the unit's ROLL DOOR to half height to block out most of the strengthening WINDS. Heavy DROPS OF RAIN hit the pavement.

KATIE

This is coming in pretty fierce. That lightning was a hell of a 7:00AM wake up call.

Katie walks back over to the set up, Daphne is back at the helm in an intense session of gaming.

KATIE
You guys! Look how far you made it. What's going on with the progress?

SIMON
Hurry over, Daphne found the egg!

Katie sidles up to the game unit, Daphne works the joystick.

JULIAN
Does she have to fight the eagle now?

SIMON
I don't know.

START GAME VISION

Daphne controls the Wizard sprite. On the screen, she pulls the EGG from her inventory. The egg floats above her Wizard's head and SPARKLES. The EAGLE flaps its wings, and text scrolls onto the screen "Thank You!". The eagle disappears and in its place is left a PIPE INSTRUMENT and a GLOWING STONE.

KATIE (O.S)
Another instrument.

DAPHNE
And an elemental stone!

SIMON (O.S)
Rush back to the Dark Tower's gate.

The Wizard traverses screen after screen as it rushes to its digital destination. An ominous GATE has FOUR COLORED PADLOCKS with RUNE SYMBOLS. Three colored locks have been opened. Daphne uses the elemental stone in her inventory and the glowing rock flashes on screen unlocking the last padlock.

END GAME VISION

The gang watches with intensive stares when suddenly another lighting strike and thunder CRACK hits from the outside. They all jump out from their seat as the lights brown out for a second but recover.

JULIAN
That sounded really close.

DAPHNE
Yeah, you jumped.

JULIAN
We all jumped.

The PITTER PATTTER OF rain intensives as it PINGS off the metallic storage unit roof.

SIMON
Look! The game.

The video game plays on as the GATE animates and swings open. The Wizard progresses forward to the DARK TOWER and enters. The tower's foyer has SEVEN PEDESTALS and a STONE MARKER.

KATIE
Read the stone engraving over there.

Daphne does just that. A text pops on to the screen "May the winds guide you on your way to the sky chalice."

JULIAN
Do we have to go somewhere else in the game? Where there is wind?

KATIE
Do we have to ride that pegasus again? Did we miss something there?

SIMON
I don't know, feels like this is the final destination in the sky temple, it all leads to the Dark Tower. That's how it is in the comic.

DAPHNE
We have all these instruments, thirteen of them but only seven pedestals here. But it feels like that's what we are suppose to do.

START GAME VISION

Daphne uses the sprite to approach a pedestal. She selects from here inventory the HARP. The Wizard places it on the pedestal and it makes a soft melodic BLIP.

SIMON (O.S.)
Nice, that obviously did something. Place the rest of them.

Daphne does so. By the time the SEVEN INSTRUMENTS are placed, a loud ERROR BUZZ emits and the instruments disappear back into the Wizard's inventory.

END GAME VISION

KATIE

That was not the correct combination.

Daphne enters a few more combinations but nothing works. The gang slumps back in heavy contemplation. The storm BANGS and wind HOWLS from outside.

SIMON

I feel like mother nature is trying to tell us something, there's plenty of howling wind blowing from the outside.

JULIAN

I use to play the clarinet.

Simon and Daphne shoot Julian a confused look. Katie smiles.

KATIE

It's true.

You can see Julian making the connections in his head.

JULIAN

Use the clarinet, the flute, the pan pipe.

SIMON

I think I get it, go for it. Add the saxophone and the trumpet.

Daphne starts maneuvering the Wizard.

DAPHNE

What is it?

JULIAN

They're wind instruments, you need to use air, blow on them to play.

KATIE

Yes, they're seven of them.

They crouch even closer as Daphne rushes to place the instruments upon their pedestals.

The SIXTH is placed and then the SEVENTH... KABOOM! A LIGHTING STRIKE hits closer than ever before. The storage unit lights FLASH bright and fade out. The gaming machine powers down. One of the girls lets out a frightened YELP. It's pitch black except for the light creeping from the morning dawn that has arrived outside.

SIMON
Everyone okay?

They all affirm.

EXT. UNIT 115 - DAY

Simon lifts the storage gate up higher and takes his first look at the new day. The storm has let up for the time being, though RAIN WATER still RUSHES down the GUTTERS and DRIPS off the roof. The morning light is doing its best to break up the storm. A soft CRACKLE of thunder in the distance.

INT. UNIT 115 - DAY

Simon returns to the gang around the computer screen. They stretch and shuffle about their lair. Katie examines the computer.

KATIE
It doesn't look fried or anything,
just a power outage.

DAPHNE
What about the game?

KATIE
The emulator does periodically
create save states. We might have
lucked out.

The power returns, lights FLICKERS back on and Ms Pac-Man machine BOOTS UP with pleasant TONES.

JULIAN
Not bad, we survived.

SIMON
So who was the screamer?

DAPHNE
Not me, sounded like Julian.

JULIAN
Yeah, right.

KATIE

The computer is booting back up,
it will be just a couple of
minutes...

The sound of SHATTERING GLASS interrupts the group. It's followed by a clanging metal THUMP.

The group springs to action and rushes outside to investigate.

EXT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

With another SMASH and CRACK, a field hockey stick connects with the the headlight of Julian's Station wagon.

The wizard crew comes to a halt as they rush out of the unit.

Lurching over the STATION WAGON is an out of breath CRYSTAL.

JULIAN

Crystal, what are you doing to the wagon?!

CRYSTAL

I'm making the outside as ugly as your insides.

Crystal takes another WHACK at the hood. Leftover rain droplets spectacularly BLAST into the air upon impact. It leaves a good DENT in the hood.

JULIAN

Stop that right now!

CRYSTAL

Thought I wouldn't find out, huh?
But I found your little secret
hiding spot, and I saw you in
there with her.

JULIAN

You got to chill out, there's an explanation.

Crystal SWINGS at the station wagon while delivering her sentiments.

CRYSTAL

Relationships --
(whack)
Are all about --
(whack)
Communication.

She holds off for a minute, tames back her hair.

CRYSTAL

You run off in the middle on the night and then all of sudden you say you got to stay out all night to go over song writing with Denny. I went over to Denny's and got his confession.

DAPHNE

What the hell is she talking about?

JULIAN

Denny was SUPPOSED to cover for me last night.

Crystal tears up.

CRYSTAL

You stayed the night with her? I can't...

Crystal drops the field hockey stick and runs off.

JULIAN (under his breath)

Fucking Denny.

SIMON

I don't think she even noticed us.

Katie jabs Simon in the side. Julian steps to go after her. Daphne grabs his arm.

DAPHNE

Forget about crazy over there.

JULIAN

Get off, I need you to stop messing with my life.

Julian dips away from Daphne's hold. Daphne crosses her arms insecurely. Julian removes his HAWAIIAN SHIRT and holds it out to Daphne, who takes it back.

Julian picks up the field hockey stick and shakes off the rain water. He tosses it into the back seat of the wagon. Julian sits back into the driver seat and avoids eye contact with the gang. He starts the car, turns, and in a flash is out of the storage lot.

Daphne walks towards the exit where Julian just drove off.

SIMON
Where are you going?

DAPHNE
I need to take a moment, you all.

SIMON
Julian blew it, you don't need
that guy.

DAPHNE
I think I do.

Daphne wanders off and disappears around the corner of the storage unit.

Simon looks on but Katie pulls him back inside the unit.

INT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Simon picks up the most harmless object in the room and tosses it against the wall.

SIMON
What the hell was all that?

KATIE
A passionate lover's quarrel?

SIMON
Meh, I like Julian but he doesn't
treat her worth a damn.

KATIE
You like her, don't you?

Simon is shocked by Katie's forwardness. Simon feels caught.

SIMON
I don't know, maybe she likes me.
I felt like I was the hero, for
once, I got to beat the big bad
guy, save the princess, win the
game. But again the princess is in
another castle. Well, I made that
dorky real quick.

KATIE
I saw her kiss you last night.

SIMON
I don't think it meant a thing...

Simon sees a tear roll from her eye.

SIMON
What is it?

KATIE
It's nothing.

Simon steps closer to Katie.

SIMON
Come on.

KATIE
I'm not the princess.

She laughs between her tears.

KATIE
God, I can't believe I said that even though it's a trope driven by the male fantasy gaze. But I figured, maybe some day, we could come around to it, you knucklehead.

SIMON
I didn't, but 7th grade summer camp... you called it off.

Daphne steps back into the storage unit with regained composure. Putting a halt on the conversation.

KATIE
I'm gonna go.

Katie grabs her LAPTOP BAG and gives Daphne a hug. But before Daphne can say a word, Katie ducks out.

Daphne and Simon stand in silence for a moment.

DAPHNE
That looked pretty harsh too.

SIMON
No, it might be just the opposite, bittersweet.

Before Simon can elaborate further, a shadowy figure stands behind Daphne. Simon looks past Daphne at the person.

DAPHNE
What is it?

EXT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Arms crossed and in her Sunday's best.

MRS. CHAMBERS

DAPHNE!

Daphne and Simon step out into the sunlight. Daphne is in utter shock.

Her mother and Ted in his Sunday church outfit. He leans on the FAMILY MINIVAN, upset but letting Mrs. Chambers run the show.

DAPHNE

What are you doing here, mom?

MRS. CHAMBERS

Do not even begin to question what it is I'm doing. You're causing some kind of ruckus with the storage people, causing destruction on private property. They were gonna call the cops but unfortunately for you they called me first. After this you're gonna wish you were thrown in jail instead.

She looks to Simon.

MRS. CHAMBERS

And who is this? What are you doing with my daughter? Give me your parents' number!

DAPHNE

Stop, Mom! Simon, just go.

SIMON

Okay, just let me grab my bag...

Simon gathers his things and steps away as Mrs. Chambers continues.

MRS. CHAMBERS

Get in the car, you are not to step foot here again.

DAPHNE

I heard the phone message, the junk haulers, you were going to throw it all away. This is my dad in here, this is not junk, it's all beautiful.

(MORE)

DAPHNE (CONT'D)

 It's Dad and you were boxing it up
 and tossing him away all over
 again!

Daphne has tears in her eyes.

Mrs. Chambers, too emotional to speak anymore, turns to Ted. She walks over and buries herself in his arms. Ted opens the car door for his wife. He shuts the door and turns to Daphne in a kind voice.

 TED

 Kidido, it's time to go home.

Ted walks over and hugs Daphne. Daphne's arms hang for a beat but then reciprocates the hug even harder.

He gestures to the car for her to go too. Ted picks up the lock off the unit and rolls the door down with a SHUDDER and a CLANG.

INT. SIMON'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Simon plays a round of games in front of his TV. It's DONKEY KONG COUNTRY and with a few jumps and a strike from the level boss, Simon receives a 'game over.'

Simon flops on to his bed and stares up at the ceiling. His mind wanders. He looks over to his CLOSET.

Simon slides off the bed and vigorously digs into far reaches of his closet shelves. He finds a SHOE BOX. Inside are a bunch of pictures, ticket stubs, and lapel pins. He digs through deeper and finds a FOLDED UP ENVELOPE.

With envelope in hand, Simon snatches up a jacket and leaves his room.

EXT. SIMON'S HOUSE - DUSK

Simon crosses the end of his driveway and makes a hard right.

What's left of the puffy rain clouds look golden across the sunset sky. Silhouetted, a person walks towards Simon.

The two stop dead in their tracks as Simon is halted by Katie.

 KATIE

 Hey.

 SIMON

 Hey back, I was coming to see you.

KATIE

Yeah me too.

Simon reaches into his pocket. He holds out the FOLDED ENVELOPE. She takes it.

SIMON

I wrote you a letter at camp that I never had the chance to give to you.

Katie opens the envelope and unfolds the paper inside. She reads through it quickly but it's an intense couple of seconds for Simon. A blushing smile crosses her face and she looks up to Simon. He easily gets lost in her eyes.

KATIE

Do you want to be my boyfriend?

Simon nods.

SIMON

Of course.

Katie smiles, leans in, and KISSES Simon. He returns the kiss. They part and hold hands as they face each other.

KATIE

I liked that.

Simon smiles back.

KATIE

What do we do now?

SIMON

Time to catch you up to speed.

KATIE

Oh, what's that?

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daphne sits up in bed, her hair a mess.

She looks out the window just in time to see the bus drop off kids coming home from school.

Daphne reaches for the REMOTE and hits the play button. Daphne watches the tape of her dad at her 1st grade birthday.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY -CONTINUOUS

From the hallway Mrs. Chamber peaks through the crack in the door. For a moment she watches with Daphne as the HOME VIDEO plays on the television. Her heart sinks.

INT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

There's a knock at her door, Daphne doesn't answer. Her mom walks in.

MRS. CHAMBERS
Can I talk with you?

Daphne quickly works the remote to shut off the TV. She turns to stare out the window.

MRS. CHAMBERS
I'm not here to yell or lecture,
I'm just want to be Mom.

Daphne doesn't stir.

MRS. CHAMBERS
I forgot about that home movie.
Your sixth birthday. I loved being
camera operator, so many moments
to capture and remember. I always
had a good eye for the frame, you
got that much from me. And your
dad would have so much fun playing
with you all, he was the biggest
kid there.

Daphne turns to her mom, legs crossed. Daphne reaches for a pillow and places it in her lap. Mrs. Chambers sits at the front of the bed.

MRS. CHAMBERS
I apologize for hiding the storage
locker from you, I now truly do
see how that was wrong for me to
do.

Daphne feels the sincerity from her mother.

DAPHNE
You do?

MRS. CHAMBERS
But it's more than that. Your
father, George, I loved him very
much and still do.

(MORE)

MRS. CHAMBERS (CONT'D)
We've talked about the divorce with you, we always knew separation would be the best for us two, we married young and were not very compatible after all. But you were always our treasure that made it real, proof of that love.

DAPHNE
You broke his heart and let him pass away alone.

MRS. CHAMBERS
George got sick very quickly and kept it to himself, he decided to fight the cancer on his own. He was so strong willed but bullheaded, like you can be, when it came down to it. He broke my heart keeping his struggle hidden for so long. And I hid it from you but I struggled and still do with your father's passing.

Daphne reaches out for her mother's hands.

MRS. CHAMBERS
The storage unit was too overwhelming. It was a monument I held for years, I kept paying month after month of rent despite the hardship. Then one day I opened it up and decided I didn't want to be haunted by those boxes anymore, I felt ready to move on. And that was the deciding point.

DAPHNE
But it's not just boxes. I saw ,and my friends saw what amazing stuff it all was. It is Dad.

Mrs. Chambers lets out a small laugh.

MRS. CHAMBERS
Those friends, they're quite the trouble makers.

Daphne cocks her heard.

MRS. CHAMBERS

I went back to the storage depot today, I didn't know what I was going to do. The cute nerdy boy and girl beat me to the junk haulers. They paid up the storage unit's rent for the next month.

DAPHNE

How did they do that?

MRS. CHAMBERS

I don't know, but that just made me realize more that something special was going on. They told me you were trying to do the right thing, no booze, no running around, anything illicit, something about preserving George's legacy.

DAPHNE

Something like that.

MRS. CHAMBERS

You put me in a tough spot. Oh, you are so still grounded but you can work it off.

From her pocket Mrs. Chambers pulls the storage key with its dangling SPACE INVADERS KEY CHAIN. She hands it to Daphne.

MRS. CHAMBERS

They're your keys now, but just for the next month of rent. Go through your father's items. You can't keep everything. You can't keep even a tenth of it. But if you know where it should go, I think your father would trust your decision.

Daphne hugs and squeezes her mother tight.

DAPHNE

Thank you.

MRS. CHAMBERS

And no more fighting in school.

DAPHNE

No promises.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DAY

Daphne walks to the curbside with a TRAVELLER CUP OF COFFEE in hand.

A half a block later she stands in line with a group of YOUNGER TEENAGERS. A SCHOOL BUS lurches to a stop and Daphne and the teenagers board.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Same as it ever was, the bustling cafeteria at the high school's lunching hour.

Daphne steps into the main corridor and searches the crowd. Excited, she finds her target.

Katie sits at her typical lunch table with Tim and Pete. Katie sees Daphne and stands to greet her.

KATIE

You survived the suspension,
congrats!

DAPHNE

I've been looking for you guys all
day, sorry we didn't swap cell
numbers. Where's Simon?

PETE

I.N.S. like a gangster!

TIM

We miss him.

DAPHNE

You two are a trip aren't you?

PETE

Yes?

KATIE

Ignore them.

They slide down a couple of seats away from Pete and Tim.

DAPHNE

My mom told me everything about
what you did at the storage unit.
Wait, no, I don't know everything.
How the hell did you pay off the
junk haulers?

KATIE

Simon and I kind of worked out a plan. Is it a great one? No. But did it work? Yes. We... pawned the chalice.

DAPHNE

WHAT?!

This startles a few lunch tables but they go about their business post haste.

KATIE

Hear me out, Simon knew trouble was a brewing and in an inspired moment of brilliance when he left the storage he swiped the chalice. We thought about our next move. We needed cash fast. Figured we had to pay off the junk haulers, the storage unit, and other stuff. We have thirty days to claim the chalice back from pawn. I got some tutoring gigs coming up and Simon will work some extra Blockbuster shifts.

DAPHNE

How much did you get for the chalice?

KATIE

Two grand.

DAPHNE

Only two grand!

KATIE

We took what we could get and it was more than enough.

DAPHNE

You guys don't have to work it off, I'll figure something out for the payments.

KATIE

There wasn't much left but we spoke with Julian, we offered to pay for his damaged headlight and all with the extra cash. He wouldn't take it. So we have a little bit of chump change.

Daphne frowns. She looks around.

KATIE
He's not here.

DAPHNE
I don't blame him, it's Wednesday
and he knew I was back today,
think he's going to be dodging me
from now on.

KATIE
That's a bummer. Are you ready for
some more bad news?

DAPHNE
What now?

KATIE
According to the internet feed,
the Wizard Quest has been solved.
With the eBay photos it was enough
and this team figured out the maze
and got to the end screen.

DAPHNE
Even the instruments?

KATIE
That's the thing, we had it
partially right. The order was
important for the placement of the
instruments, there was a harmonic
scale or something. Sounds like
some news outlets interviewed them
and will be picking it up the
story tonight. Damn, we tried
really hard.

DAPHNE
Cheer up, I got some good news.

Daphne reaches from her bag and produces the STORAGE UNIT KEYS.

DAPHNE
If you're up for it, time to round
up the gang, we got some good work
to do.

EXT. STORAGE UNIT 115 - DAY

The DODGE CARAVAN stops in front of the unit. Simon exits from
the driver's side. Katie and Daphne follow.

SIMON
It's still in one piece.

Daphne unlocks the unit and rolls up the door.

KATIE

We are going to keep the box of
Hawaiian shirts, right?

DAPHNE

Of course. I found an organization
that will take most of this stuff:
The National Video Game Museum.
It's a traveling exhibition for
all the gaming conventions but
they're fixing to settle down and
open a proper museum. They would
be honored to have my dad's
collection. Although I might keep
a few items.

SIMON

Can I have Ms. Pac-Man?

DAPHNE

Not a chance.

A car approaches. It's the STATION WAGON with duct tape over
the bashed headlight. Julian steps out. Daphne looks to Katie
and Simon.

KATIE

You told me to round up the gang.

DAPHNE

I didn't mean...

Katie and Simon scoot inside and Julian steps up.

JULIAN

I heard the bad news and then the
good news. About the game and the
storage unit.

DAPHNE

Word seems to get around.

JULIAN

I, uh, don't blame you for
anything. And I said the wrong
things in a time of major
distress. I do want you to
continue messing with my life.

Julian offers out his hand once again.

JULIAN

Howdy, partner.

DAPHNE
Howdy, partner.

JULIAN
I hope I can earn back my Hawaiian
shirt status with the group.

DAPHNE
Oh, that's a tall order, friend.

Daphne escapes into the storage unit.

JULIAN
I am definitely keeping the Warped
Tour pass now.

INT. UNIT 115 - CONTINUOUS

Daphne and Julian join Simon and Katie. Katie sits in front of
the COMPUTER STATION. She boots up WIZARD QUEST.

DAPHNE
You're jumping back into the game?

KATIE
I wanted to see what the end
screen was like.

JULIAN
The end of the game?

SIMON
We should see it for ourselves, we
were pretty close.

Katie strikes a few key strokes and the game comes back to
life.

KATIE
The save state held up on the
emulator. We are back at the
instrument pedestals.

Indeed the WIZARD is back on the screen, standing before the
DARK TOWER'S PEDESTALS.

JULIAN
So you were telling me the order
mattered, right? Some kind of
musical scale.

Daphne steps in and takes over the joystick. As she takes
control...

She has the Wizard sprite drop an instrument on to the first pedestal. A HIGH TONE BEEPS from the game console.

SIMON
I hear it now.

JULIAN
It's probably just your basic C
major scale, seven notes worth.

KATIE
Dough, Ray...

SIMON
Egon!

Daphne and Julian don't get the reference.

SIMON
Ghost Busters 2...

Katie rubs Simon on the back. You can't win them all.

Daphne orders the instruments accordingly, with the placement of the last instrument the seven note C Major scale repeats true.

The gang is motionless, eyes wide on the computer screen.

START GAME VISION

Daphne once again reality warps and transforms into the Wizard.

The INSTRUMENTS fade away, leaving on the center pedestal a SPARKLING ITEM. Suddenly the Wizard sprite holds aloft the GOLDEN CHALICE.

TEXT FLOATS in magnificent BLOCKS above her. The upper text reads "Congratulations adventurer, you have completed the Wizard's Quest." Followed by the lower text that reads "Call upon the Wizard to claim your prize!"

END GAME VISION

The crew nearly blinks in unison as they stare at the basic 8-bit blocks of text and victorious Wizard.

JULIAN
We did it, the end of the Wizard's
Quest!

They all cheer and high five, but by the next second, the moment doesn't sit right with Daphne.

DAPHNE

That's it?

KATIE

Yeah, that's what I saw posted on the forums, this is the end screen for the game and no more.

DAPHNE

But what about the prizes, how was someone supposed to get that chalice?

She TAPS on the screen.

SIMON

The contest had a write-in portion to determine the winners. In the original you had to decipher the comic code and send it in. Then later they had so many entries there was an essay portion describing why you deserved to be part of the winners. I looked over the comic and it doesn't look like Atari had any form ready to go just yet for this. I was banking on us just being first to solve it and then reaching out.

DAPHNE

That doesn't feel right at all.

KATIE

We had all the clues, but maybe it was just not finished yet.

DAPHNE

All the clues...

Daphne dives into the marked WIZARD QUEST CARDBOARD BOX. She retrieves a copy of the COMIC BOOK.

DAPHNE

You're telling me there's nothing in here, my dad knew this was important for a reason. No one else has this information. He just didn't have the game in his possession yet. He didn't have the order of the clues.

KATIE

There's no user survey that was printed, no mail in address.

JULIAN

It solved the maze, and it had the eagle's egg, and all the instruments.

Simon snatches the book from Daphne's hands.

SIMON

Maybe there is something to the order of the clues. The games always ended ordering the clues. All the instruments are now lined up in the game. They all show up in the comic.

JULIAN

What's happening?

KATIE

Simon's on to something.

SIMON

What's the first instrument?

DAPHNE

The flute.

Simon flips through the pages.

SIMON

Okay, the flute, that's on page eighteen. What's next?

DAPHNE

It's, um, a pan pipe?

Katie slides over to the white board and jots down the numbers.

SIMON

That's on page zero. Next?

DAPHNE

A saxophone looking thing.

SIMON

Damn it, that's on the title page too, marked page zero. Repeating zeros doesn't make much sense. Wouldn't think to have repeating clues on the same page...

KATIE
Eighteen, Zero, Zero.

Silence for a beat.

DAPHNE
One-eight-hundred, it's a phone
number!

The gang springs to life as they jot down the rest of the sequence. An one-eight-hundred phone number appears on their piece of scratch paper.

KATIE
Daphne, you dial it.

Daphne punches the numbers into her cell phone, after a moment the receiving end begins to ring... and ring... and ring...

It picks up to the sounds of RAGING WINDS. Then a THUNDER STRIKE.

ANSWERING MACHINE
Congratulations adventurer, you
have completed the Wizard Quest
Sky Temple. You have fought
bravely and deserve a heroes
tribute. Announce thy name, age,
phone number, and mailing address
at the beep.

BEEP!

Daphne BLURTS out her information at a speedy pace and hangs up the phone.

The group stares on at her.

DAPHNE
Anyone else want to give it a go?

The group celebrates. Simon and Katie can't help but give each other a kiss. Daphne notices the kiss.

DAPHNE
Whoa! When did this happen?

KATIE
It's a thing now.

SIMON
This is going to big news, not me
and Katie dating, but the Wizard
Quest.

DAPHNE

Jinkies.

INTERCUT SCENES

EXT. MONTGOMERY STORAGE -DAY

Local news **CORRESPONDENT** covers the storage unit.

CORRESPONDANT

Four teenagers uncover the truth
to a twenty-five year old video
game legend.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DAY

The NEWS BROADCAST TEAM photographs Daphne with her mother and Ted on the steps of their front porch. News headline reads "Local teenager solves ultimate gamer mystery." Daphne holds up the ORIGINAL GAME CHALICE.

INT. AVGN BASEMENT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Youtube star Angry Video Game Nerd **JAMES WOLFE** covers a gaming review of Wizard Quest.

JAMES WOLFE

The video game crash of 1980's
rears its ugly head again with
this turd that wouldn't flush:
Wizard Quest The Sky Temple. The
fourth installment in this fecal
laden saga.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

Former Atari director Howard sits down for an in-depth news interview with national **REPORTER**.

HOWARD

I kept the 1-800 line open and
paid for years knowing there was
some magic still left in the game.

REPORTER

And we saw that magic happen with
the flood of callers coming in
with the re-discovery of the game.
Where does the legacy go from
here?

HOWARD

I think Atari Inc has some big decisions to make, I consider this contest very much alive and well. There's a crown to be won.

EXT. DAPHNE'S HOUSE - DAY

Daphne, Ted, and Mrs. Chambers are back at their doorstep with more reporters. Ted addresses the CROWD.

TED

We are working with Atari, Warner Communications, and the Californian Attorney General's office to review the contest rules and regulations. No injunctions have been filed yet on our part. But so far there is no statute of limitations and we have received full cooperation.

Daphne smiles and as photographers snap photos, she pulls out her own CAMERA and SNAPS photos back at them.

INT. GAMING HISTORIAN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Youtube star Gaming Historian **NORMAN CARUSO** wraps up another episode containing the history of Wizard Quest.

NORMAN CARUSO

...and the Wizard Quest may have wrapped up on the small screen. But the final competitions are underway, first being the contestant entrants of the Sky Temple call in, they will compete this spring for the golden chalice at convention space not far from Atari Inc Headquarters in New York City, New York. That's all for this episode of Gaming Historian, thanks for watching.

INT. BURGER TIME - DAY

Daphne sits at a booth with a CUP OF COFFEE. Julian slides into the other side of the booth.

JULIAN

Hey, so you're kind of big deal now but you still want to call random meetings at burger joints.

DAPHNE

This has been a long time coming, I wanted to apologize.

JULIAN

For what?

DAPHNE

I don't regret my actions or mean to take them back. But I could have been a better friend. After homecoming that didn't shake down well at all. And the way I was with Crystal, it was catty and mean.

JULIAN

It was. But I'm in the same lane, I could have been better too.

DAPHNE

I guess what I want to say is... I fricken' miss you.

Their hands meet in the middle of the table. Julian leans in and meets Daphne's lips as they share a kiss.

JULIAN

I missed you too.

Daphne smiles and shies away.

DAPHNE

You should try and ask me out sometime, I might say yes.

JULIAN

How about... Can I take you to New York?

Daphne shrugs and plays cute.

DAPHNE

I was hoping prom or maybe even Paris.

JULIAN

We can do that too, but I think we're going to like New York.

DAPHNE

Uh, yeah.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: New York City, NY

New York City buzzes with energy as all walks of life pass by on the sidewalk before the historic looking hotel.

The DODGE CARAVAN pulls up to the curbside BELL HOP. Out steps an excited Simon and Katie. Mr. Barnes, the driver, deals with the valet.

Not too far behind them, Ted and Mrs. Chambers pull up in their MINIVAN. Daphne and Julian, equally as excited, hop out.

INT. CONVENTION HALL - DAY

The convention hall is a BURST of 80's and video game culture. The main floor is composed of GAMING TERMINALS each with MONITORS and CONSOLE set up. There is an area for press coverage and space for spectators.

WIZARD QUEST COMPETITION BANNERS hang over head.

Our gang enters the convention and into the arena. This is their "Reservoir Dogs" moment as they strut forward, convention passes swaying, and their now trademark HAWAIIAN SHIRTS waving behind.

The foursome pause before the arena.

DAPHNE

It's anyone's game now.

SIMON

Let's make it our game.

The four have been placed at their terminals and the SPECTATORS settle in.

The HOST quiets the crowd and begins a countdown along with the viewing screen "3, 2, 1...QUEST!"

The player's terminals POWER UP and the WIZARD QUEST COMPETITION commences.

FADE TO BLACK

MID-CREDITS

EXT. FRISCO DISCOVERY CENTER - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE : Frisco, TX 2016

A line of people forms outside and wraps around the building of the Discovery Center. A BANNER in giant print declares "Grand Opening, National Video Game Museum.

INT. NATIONAL VIDEO GAME MUSEUM - DAY

Entering the museum, around the bend, past the SUPER MARIO SCULPTURE and the GIANT PONG MACHINE, we find the WIZARD QUEST EXHIBIT. Inside the glass display case are the FOUR GOLDEN CHALICES and a GOLDEN CROWN. Behind that is a large print copy of the 1984 photo Howard and George.

FADE TO BLACK