

The Princess Bride by William Goldman © The Princess Bride Ltd. All Rights Reserved. A Video Game On A Computer Screen. The game is in progress. As a sick coughing sound is heard Cut To This Kid lying in bed, coughing. Pale, one sick cookie. Maybe he's seven or eight or nine. He holds a remote in hand, presses it, and the video game moves a little bit. Then he's hit by another spasmodic coughing, puts the remote down. His room is monochromatic, greys and blues, mildly high-tech. We're in the present day and this is a middle class kitchen, somewhere in the suburbs. Cut To The Kid's Mother as she enters, goes to him, fluffs his pillows, kisses him, and briefly feels his forehead. She's worried, it doesn't show. During this -- Mother: You feeling any better? The Kid: A little bit. Mother: Guess what. The Kid: What? Mother: Your grandfather's here. The Kid: (not overjoyed) Mom, can't you tell him that I'm sick? Mother: You are sick, that's why he's here. The Kid: He'll pinch my cheek. I hate that. Mother: Maybe he won't. The Kid shoots her an "I'm sure" look, as we Cut To The Kid's Grandfather bursting into the room. Kind of rumpled, But the eyes are bright. He has a wrapped package tucked under one arm and immediately goes to The Kid, pinches his cheek. Grandfather: Hey! How's the sickie? Meh? The Kid gives his Mother an "I told you so!" look. The Mother ignores it, beats a retreat. Mother: I think I'll leave you two pals. (And she is gone. There's an uncomfortable silence. Then) Grandfather: I brought you a special present. The Kid: What is it? Grandfather: Open it up. The Kid does. He does his best to smile. The Kid: A book? Grandfather: That's right. When I was your age, television was called books. And this is a special book. It was the book my father used to read to me when I was sick, and I used to read it to you your father. And today, I'm gonna read it to you. The Kid: Has it got any sports in it? Cut To The Grandfather. Suddenly passionate. Grandfather: Are you kidding? Fencing. Fighting. Torture. Revenge. Giants. Monsters. Chases. Escapes. True love. Miracles. Cut To The Two Of Them as the Grandfather sits in a chair by the bed. The Kid: (manages a shrug) It doesn't sound too bad. I'll try and stay awake. Grandfather: Oh. Well, thank you very much. It's very nice of you. Your vote of confidence is overwhelming. All right. (Book open now, he begins to read). The Princess Bride, by S. Morgenstern. Chapter One. Buttercup was raised on a small farm in the country of Florin. Dissolve To The story he's reading about, as the monochromatic look of the bedroom is replaced by the dazzling color of the English countryside. Grandfather: (off-screen) Her favorite pastimes were riding her horse and tormenting the farm boy that worked there. His name was Westley, but she never called him that. (To The Kid) Isn't that a wonderful beginning? The Kid: (off screen): (doing his best) Yeah. It's really good. Grandfather: (off-screen) (reading) Nothing gave Buttercup as much pleasure as ordering Westley around. Cut To Buttercup's Farm. Day. Buttercup is standing, holding the reins of her horse, while in the background, Westley, in the stable doorway, looks at her Buttercup is in her late teens; doesn't care much about clothes and she hates brushing her long hair, so she isn't as attractive as she might be, but she's still probably the most beautiful woman in the world. Buttercup: Farm boy. Polish my horse's saddle. I want to see my face shining in it by morning. Westley: (quietly, watching her) As you wish. Westley is perhaps half a dozen years older than Buttercup. And maybe as handsome as she is beautiful. He gazes at her as she walks away. Grandfather: (off-screen) "As you wish" was all he ever said. Buttercup: Outside, chopping wood. Buttercup drops two large buckets near him. Buttercup: Farm Boy. Fill these with water! As you wish. She leaves him staring after her. She has no hair, no hands, no feet. Grandfather: (off-screen) manages to look away as now her eyes start on him. Grandfather: (off-screen) That day, she was amazed to discover that when he was saying, "As you wish," what he meant was, "I love you." Dissolve To Buttercup in the Kitchen. Dusk. Westley enters with an armload of firewood. Grandfather: (off-screen) And even more amazing was the day she realized she truly loved him back. Buttercup: (pointing to a pitcher that she could reach herself) Farm Boy, fetch me that pitcher. He gets it, hands it to her; they are standing very close to each other gazing into each other's eyes. Westley: As you wish. (Now he turns moves outside.) Dissolve To Westley And Buttercup, outside his tiny hovel in the red glow of sunset. They are locked in a passionate kiss. The Kid (off-screen) hold it, hold it. Cut To The Kid's Room. The Kid: What is this? Are you trying to trick me? Where's the sports?-Is this a kissing book? Grandfather: (reading) Westley didn't re-wait, just wait- The Kid: -well, when does it get good? Grandfather: Keep your shirt on. Let me read. (reading again) Westley had no money for marriage. So he packed his few belongings and left the farm to seek his fortune across the sea. Cut To Westley And Buttercup. They stand near the gate to the farm, locked in an embrace. Grandfather: (off-screen): (reading) It was a very emotional time for Buttercup- The Kid (off-screen): (groaning) I don't believe this. Buttercup: I fear I'll never see you again. Westley: Of course you will. Buttercup: But what if something happens to you? Westley: Hear this now: I will come for you. Buttercup: But how can you be sure? Westley: This is true love. You think this happens every day? He smiles at her, she smiles too, throws her arms so tightly around him. They kiss. Then as Westley walks away, Buttercup watches him go. 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