

I Dreamed I Was a Video Game

By Jake Barton

NOTES

Obsessions often come in many forms. They are defined as compulsory pre-occupations with a fixed idea or unwanted emotion. *I Dreamed I Was a Video Game* is a narrative poem and should most likely be performed by a male and be entered in Poetry Interpretation. With its free-verse style, however, a performer might choose to use this selection as a monologue and enter it in Dramatic Interpretation. In this dramatic, narrative poem, Jake Barton introduces us to a young man, whose obsession with video games blurs the lines between fantasy and reality. For years, authorities have pondered whether violent video games have been a factor and/or contributor to youth violence in America. *I Dreamed I Was a Video Game* is a hypothetical response to those accusations. It is imperative that the performer not give away the violent nature of the poem in the beginning of the performance. This poem will have a much greater impact on the audience, if, at the beginning of the performance, the narrator was to just show the pure joy and obsession this particular youth has with playing video games. Play it light at the beginning. Let the poem take on a darker tone as it progresses. Show the character's passion for talking about video games. A great piece of advice is this: Don't give away the ending at the beginning of the performance. Have the youth joyously obsess over the coolness of playing video games. The reality of what the narrator has done should only start to become evident towards the latter part of the poem. It will be up to the performer to decide when that emotional transition begins. This is definitely a performer's poem. There are so many choices to be made. Make good choices. The drama mask icons are simply visible to show the performer when to turn the pages in the manuscript.

Do I like video games?

Do I like video games?

Good question.

I love video games.

I live for video games.

Video games are my life.



In the beginning,
It was Pac Man, Centipede, and Asteroids—
All the old '80's stuff.
Asteroids—
Now, here is the game that shows you what real life is all about.

Asteroids.
You start in the middle.
You see everything around you.
All you have to do is just stand your ground.
All you have to do is just stay in the middle.
The middle is good.
The middle is safe.
In the middle,
You can see any danger coming your way.

From every angle,
Large asteroids are circling,
Taunting you,
Entering your space,
Invading your space,
But you are prepared to stop them.
You are prepared to defend your ground.
You are prepared to stay in the middle.



You are given a weapon.
You assume it is a gun,
But one can not be sure.
All you know is
Push a button
And something emits from you—
Something
Torpedoes out of you.
A trajectory object flies across the screen,
And you hope your aim is accurate enough.
You hope your aim destroys those
Large asteroids—
Those large asteroids that want to crush you,
To destroy you,
Those asteroids that do not care if you live or die.

