

A Note from the Author

Dear Reader,

Thank you for downloading the enclosed teleplay, A Golfer on Probation. I drafted this script between November 2014- January 2015, and finalized the product you see here in March 2015.

The enclosed script, A Golfer on Probation, is a speculative script- or spec script. This means this script was not solicited by any network or production company. Rather, this was my first attempt at writing a script for a television episode. I had taken an adult learning course on writing for sitcoms. Fascinated by the idea of writing for a TV show, I decided to try my hand at writing material that, if acted out, would occupy approximately 23 minutes of time.

I chose The Goldbergs as the basis for my script. At the time I decided to write a spec script, the second season of The Goldbergs had just began to air. A newer TV show is better source material for spec scripts as the material in the spec script can become quickly outdated.

I entered this script into the 2014 Austin Film Festival Screenplay competition. It- went nowhere. In a competition that receives hundreds of entries, I knew my chances of making it past the first round was slim, but I was curious to see how I'd fare. The feedback I received was something to the effect that plot was primarily driving my script, and I needed to capture more of the "heart" of the characters.

I generally keep an open mind with constructive criticism. But I did not take the criticism as well in this case. I remember feeling defeated, as though hours of work on a piece that I genuinely found fun and was proud of, was dismissed in the blink of an eye. I've yet to write another script.

I recently dug out the hardcopy of this teleplay from my files. Years later, I still disagree with the feedback I received from the competition. But- that's the beauty of any creative endeavor. What's "good" or "bad" is subjective. Reading through this again, I feel this is at least good enough to share as a piece of short form humor writing. But I'll let you decide!

If you are/were a fan of the actual TV show The Goldbergs, I'm optimistic you can envision the episode playing out. If you've never watched the Goldbergs, I hope the script gives you a flavor of who these characters were.

Please enjoy the "show".

-Nicole

THE GOLDBERGS

"A Golfer on Probation"

Written by

Nicole Nixen

COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

ERICA sits on a stool in front of a blue backdrop and smiles.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
In the '80's, we didn't have social
media to define our image. We had
the yearbook.

SFX: We hear the click of a camera.

Erica stands up, exits the photo set.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Cool photo equaled lots of
autographs from classmates.

BARRY enters from the opposite direction, sits on the stool.
He flexes his biceps while gritting his teeth.

SFX: We hear the click of a camera.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Barry's photo equaled a pristine
yearbook with one "have a nice
summer".

INT. GOLDBERG LIVING ROOM - DAY

Barry sits on the couch watching TV.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
I wanted my yearbook photo to be
cool. But, nature had a different
vision for my photo.

ADAM runs into the living room and points at his own face.

ADAM
Barry, how do I get rid of this?

BARRY
I'm a jock. We don't get zits.

ADAM
You had a red spot the size of a
basketball on your face last week.

BARRY
That was a hickey.

ADAM
On your nose?

BARRY
You've had zits before. Why are you
freaking out now?

ADAM
Picture day! I can't be a pizza
face in my yearbook photo!

BARRY
Stand on your head. The blood rush
pushes out the zits.

ADAM
Really? Let me try.

Barry holds Adam's legs as Adam does a handstand.

BEV enters the living room.

BEV
What's going on?

Startled, Barry lets go of Adam. Adam falls to the ground.

BEV (CONT'D)
Oh, my poor baby!

Bev rushes to Adam, still on the ground, and embraces him.

ADAM
Ow! Your arm is rubbing my zit.

Bev jumps up, grabs Adam's hand and helps him up.

BEV
A zit? I'll get the hemorrhoid
cream and a cold compress.

ADAM
No, not the frozen Brussels
sprouts!

FADE OUT.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. OUTDOOR TRACK - DAY

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
It was March, nineteen eighty
something, and my brother Barry
became the athlete he always
envisioned himself to be.

Barry, far ahead of competitors, jumps a hurdle, knocks it down. As competition passes him, Barry gets up, kicks the hurdle and hurts his foot.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
After Barry was kicked off the
track team for unsportsmanlike
behavior toward the equipment, he
discovered his true calling.

EXT. PUTTING GREEN - DAY

Barry is in putting stance. He taps the ball, the ball goes into the hole. Barry punches his arms in the air.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Golf suited Barry. It gave him a
way to channel his anger under a
facade of quiet concentration.

MR. MELLER walks up to Barry.

MR. MELLER
Goldberg, that is the second game
we've won thanks to you.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Finally, Barry lived up to his own
hype, complete with a cheerleader.

JESSICA, dressed in a cheerleader uniform runs up to Barry and smiles. Barry pops the collar on his polo shirt, picks up his golf bag. She latches onto his arm; they walk off the course.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
However, as quick as satisfaction
came for Barry, it crumbled even
faster.

INT. GOLDBERG KITCHEN - DAY

Bev removes cookies from the oven. MURRAY and Barry enter the kitchen.

BEV
How was the game?

MURRAY
Great. Barry shot three under par.

BARRY
And I scored Jessica Fish's number.

Barry holds up a note. Bev snatches it from Barry's hand.

BARRY (CONT'D)
What the hell?

BEV
I just got off the phone with your history teacher, Mr. Stevens.

BARRY
Then you know I flunked my history test. Don't worry. I get a re-take.

BEV
According to Mr. Stevens, you've had two weeks to re-take the exam.

BARRY
I need to read the chapter the test covered, but I've been busy.

BEV
Yeah, busy hitting gophers.

BARRY
I play golf, not whack-a-mole.

BEV
I saw *Caddyshack*. I know how golf is played.

BARRY
You know nothing about golf.

BEV
I know that a cosmonaut is a Russian astronaut, not an astronaut who attended beauty school.

MURRAY

You wrote that on your test? Well,
for a moron, it's a good guess.

BEV

It gets better. Grades were due
this afternoon. His "F" is on
record.

BARRY

Oh, that's it?

MURRAY

Moron, you're on academic
probation. You can't play golf now.

BARRY

No! Golf has made me a babe magnet.

BEV

That's all you care about? What
about your future at Penn State?

MURRAY

Face it, Bev, his best shot at a
college degree is through the mail.

BEV

No son of mine is getting a mail
order degree.

BARRY

Wait a minute, let's hear dad out.

MURRAY

You do realize you can't attend
keggers through the mail.

BEV

Barry, to make up for the exam, Mr.
Stevens wants you to write a paper
about the moon landing.

BARRY

Write a paper? I suck more at
writing than I do at taking exams.

BEV

That paper is your path back to the
putting green.

Barry paces in front of the kitchen counter, grabs the plate
of cookies and exits.

BEV (CONT'D)
Barry, get back here. Those are
oatmeal raisin cookies and we're
all out of the pink stuff.

INT. BARRY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Barry sits at his desk, stares at a book. He wears headphones
and bops along to music.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Determined to get back on the golf
course, Barry spent Saturday holed
up in his room.

CLOSE UP ON: BARRY'S BEDROOM DOOR.

The doorknob jiggles. The door opens.

Bev walks in, holding a plate of carrot sticks. She
approaches Barry, taps him on the shoulder. Startled, Barry
jumps in his seat.

BARRY
How did you get in here?

BEV
I jimmed the lock.

BARRY
Of course. I'm just working on the
most important assignment of my
life. Why should I expect privacy?

BEV
I thought you could use a snack.

BARRY
Carrot sticks?

BEV
We're out of chips.

BARRY
Out of comfort food. Even better.

BEV
Have you started writing your
paper?

BARRY
No, I'm still reading the chapter.

Bev pulls up a chair.

BARRY (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

BEV

Helping. You should start with the political reasons behind the space mission.

BARRY

What does politics have to do with the moon landing?

BEV

How much of that chapter have you read?

BARRY

A paragraph and a quarter.

BEV

This is going to take awhile. That's okay. I'll skip Jazzercise.

BARRY

That isn't necessary.

BEV

Think of me as your coach. Writing the outline is your warm up exercise.

BARRY

Please stop with the sports analogies.

BEV

Then let's get started.

Erica storms into Barry's room holding an opened envelope. She points at Bev.

ERICA

There you are. What did you do?

BEV

What's the matter, honey?

ERICA

I got another rejection letter from *Reader's Digest*.

BEV
That's it, I'm cancelling my
subscription.

ERICA
I'm not upset about the rejection.
I'm upset that you keep sending in
my work without my consent!

BEV
How could I resist? You wrote so
many sweet little stories about
colorful unicorns.

ERICA
I was twelve and going through a
"My Little Pony" phase.

Bev and Erica continue to argue. Barry slams his book shut
and walks out of his room.

INT. GOLDBERG KITCHEN - DAY

POPS enters with a grocery bag, Barry grabs it from him.
Barry pulls out a big bag of pretzels and tears open the bag.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Unable to progress with his paper,
Barry tackled the snack food
situation.

BARRY
Pops, you're a lifesaver.

Barry shoves a handful of pretzels in his mouth.

POPS
I still don't understand why this
was an emergency.

Murray enters the kitchen.

MURRAY
Are those pretzels?

Murray reaches out to grab a pretzel from the bag. Barry
grabs the bag away from Murray.

BARRY
Get your own. These are mine.

MURRAY
What am I supposed to snack on?

BARRY
Mom cut up carrot sticks.

MURRAY
I can't eat carrot sticks with
beer. Give me those.

BARRY
Just try to get them, big man.

Murray and Barry struggle for control of the bag.

POPS
There are plenty of pretzels. Stop,
or I'll call Bev in here.

Murray and Barry freeze. Pops takes the bag.

POPS (CONT'D)
I'll divide this bag into two
bowls, and you both get pretzels.

Adam walks into the kitchen.

ADAM
I thought I rid this house of all
things salty.

Adam grabs the bag from Pops and throws it in the trash.

BARRY
No, not my precious pretzels!

Barry fishes the pretzels out of the garbage.

ADAM
No salt! Salt gave me this zit!

MURRAY
You're the reason we're out of
chips?

BARRY
These touched leftover broccoli. I
can't eat these.

ADAM
You have no trouble eating dumpster
donuts from the Waffle Hut.

BARRY
Yeah, but I've never had broccoli
spores land on my donuts.

MURRAY

We can rinse them off and add salt.

BARRY

Forget it, this is a lost cause.
But I can fix Adam's zit.

ADAM

Really?

BARRY

I'll give you a black eye, and no
one will notice your ugly red zit.

Adam runs out, Barry chases him. Murray picks up the bag,
sniffs it, shrugs, and eats pretzels.

INT. BARRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bev is doing aerobics to music as Barry reads his book.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

I escaped Barry, but Mom planted
herself in Barry's room to make
sure he didn't kill me.

BARRY

Tell me again why I can't listen to
my music?

BEV

Because you're easily distracted.

BARRY

You said you were skipping
Jazzercise.

Bev stops exercising and turns down music.

BEV

I can help you, and work out at the
same time. See, I'm already done
with my aerobics.

SFX: The PHONE rings. Bev answers.

BEV (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello? Barry can't come to the
phone right now.

BARRY

It's for me? Give me the phone.

Barry reaches for the phone. Bev swats his hand away.

BEV
(into phone)
I'm sorry, my handsome snuggle bug
is working on an important report.

Barry stares at Bev, stunned at what he just heard.

BARRY
Oh my God. Give me the phone.

BEV
(into phone)
I'll tell him you called. I'm sure
his schedule will be wide open next
weekend.

Bev hangs up the phone.

BARRY
That better not have been a girl.

BEV
It was. She had a weird name. Fish?

BARRY
That was Jessica. She's the only
girl in school who'll be seen with
me in public.

BEV
If this girl is so hot for you,
she'll be around next weekend.

BARRY
You can't promise that! Not after
you made me sound like the biggest
dork on the planet!

BEV
You're jittery without comfort
food. I'll bake more cookies.

BARRY
You know what I need? Peace and
quiet.

BEV
That's what I've given you all
evening. I've made sure no one
bothered you while you study.

BARRY
 Are you kidding? You've been the
 biggest bother to me today.

BEV
 I'm such a bother to you? Let's see
 how well you do on this paper
 without my help.

Bev exits. Barry goes back to reading. Bev peeks her head in.

BEV (CONT'D)
 If you still haven't made progress
 on that paper by tomorrow, I'm back
 in here.

MURRAY (O.S.)
 (Shouts) We're out of beer now?

Barry puts his hands on his head and screams.

EXT. TREE HOUSE IN GOLDBERG BACKYARD - NIGHT

Barry, wearing a backpack, climbs up a ladder to the tree
 house.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
 Peace and quiet were difficult to
 find inside the Goldberg house, so
 Barry tried the outdoors.

Barry pops his head into the tree house. Erica is making out
 with a FRATERNITY GUY wearing a fraternity jacket.

BARRY
 Whoa, when did the tree house
 become a motel?

FRATERNITY GUY
 Hey. What's up?

ERICA
 Barry, go away!

BARRY
 No, I need to hide.

ERICA
 You're not hiding out here.

FRATERNITY GUY
 You should help your frat brother.

BARRY
What did he just say?

ERICA
That I should help my frat brother
since we're at my coed frat house.

Barry spots a beer can.

BARRY
I see we're enjoying dad's beer, or
should I say the fraternity's beer?

FRATERNITY GUY
Is dad the president of the frat?

BARRY
You could say that. We also have a
house mom you should meet.

FRATERNITY GUY
Too bad I didn't know about this
frat before I pledged.

BARRY
You pledge yourself for life to
this frat, and there is no escape.

ERICA
Barry, get out.

BARRY
No, I need a quiet place to read.
Should I summon the rest of our
fraternity to settle this?

ERICA
You can sit in my room and read.
Mom thinks I'm at Lainey's house.

FRATERNITY GUY
Lainey house? That's a weird name
for a frat.

INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Barry sits in Erica's room reading his history book.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Barry read the chapter in his
history book. But, Barry didn't
have a clue how to start his paper.

BARRY

What did Mom say? Start with the political stuff. How should I know how the astronauts voted?

Barry notices papers stuffed in an accordion folder on Erica's desk.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Look at all these reports: JFK, global warming, the moon landing.
(a beat) Moon landing!

Barry pulls the report out of the folder. He looks toward Erica's open window.

SFX: We hear the sound of beer cans clanging.

Barry walks toward Erica's window and listens to the commotion outside.

MURRAY (O.S.)

Someone is out here. Who is that?

FRATERNITY GUY (O.S.)

Hey, it's house dad.

MURRAY (O.S)

My beer!

Barry runs out of Erica's room with Erica's report.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. BARRY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Barry sits at his desk furiously writing. Bev peeks into Barry's room, smiles, and exits.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Barry spent Sunday copying Erica's
paper. This convinced Mom she could
leave him alone to focus on my zit.

MONTAGE OF BEV APPLYING ACNE TREATMENTS ON ADAM

Bev sticks tomato slices on Adam's face. The tomatoes slide off.

Bev dabs toothpaste on Adam's zit.

Bev wraps a hot towel on Adam's face. Adam pulls off the towel and yelps.

Bev dabs more toothpaste on Adam's zit. Adam touches his head and feels toothpaste. As he touches his hair, it sticks straight up.

Bev pulls a ski mask over Adam's face. Adam, with the ski mask on, shakes his head to show disapproval.

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bev is smearing white goo on Adam's face.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Mom had a lot of homemade remedies
for acne. But none of them worked.

Pops walks by the entrance to Adam's room and sees Bev smearing the goo on Adam's face. He enters Adam's room.

POPS
Why are you transforming my
grandson into a meringue pie?

BEV
It's an acne treatment.

POPS
Why all the fuss for one pimple?

ADAM

So I won't be immortalized in the yearbook with a zit.

POPS

Does smearing goo on your face really work?

BEV

According to the magazine article I read, egg whites dry out acne.

ADAM

Whoa. You've never treated your face with egg whites?

BEV

Of course not. Do you see pimples on this face?

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

To be honest, it was impossible to notice flaws on my mother's skin under her many layers of make up.

ADAM

So you don't know if it'll work.

BEV

It can't hurt. Unless you have a skin allergy.

ADAM

Oh my God! I can't believe I trusted you with my face!

POPS

Adam, go wash off that gunk.

Adam darts out of the room.

BEV

That was unnecessary.

POPS

I disagree. I don't think piling food on Adam's face is going help. It might make his skin worse.

Adam runs back in the room.

ADAM

Now I have a rash on my cheeks and this zit just grew bigger! You fed it!

POPS

Let's go to the drug store and ask the pharmacist for advice.

Pops puts his arm around Adam and shakes his head at Bev. Adam and Pops exit Adam's room. Bev walks to the doorway.

BEV

(Shouts) That rash is a sign Adam's skin is detoxifying.

INT. GOLDBERG KITCHEN- DAY

Erica pours herself a glass of water as Bev puts away groceries. Barry enters the kitchen.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)

Barry promptly turned in his paper on Monday and came home with news.

BARRY

Guess who's off academic probation?

ERICA

That kid with the facial tick?

BEV

Barry, you turned in your paper? I wanted to review it.

BARRY

No need. Mr. Stevens read the first page and asked me to read it aloud to the class tomorrow.

ERICA

Yeah, to demonstrate how not to write a paper.

BEV

No, it's a new initiative to build public speaking skills.

ERICA

Like Barry needs encouragement to make an ass of himself in public.

BARRY
I'll remember that when I'm in the
PGA schmoozing with Jack Nicholson.

ERICA
You mean Jack Nicklaus, you idiot.

BEV
Does this mean you'll be at golf
practice tomorrow?

BARRY
No, Mr. Stevens won't give me a
grade until I read my paper in
class.

SFX: The DOORBELL rings.

MURRAY (O.S.)
Barry! Door! Now!

BARRY
That must be my date.

BEV
Is it the girl who called on
Saturday? I've got to meet her.

BARRY
Mom, no. You've said enough to her.

BEV
Come on Barry, just let me say hi.

Murray enters the kitchen.

MURRAY
Barry, didn't you hear me? You've
got a visitor.

BARRY
I heard, but Mom wants to meet her.

MURRAY
Bev, leave the boy alone.

BEV
I want to see what she looks like.

MURRAY
Barry, run.

BARRY
What?

MURRAY

I said run! Go meet your girl.

Barry runs out of the kitchen.

BEV

Don't you dare block me Murray.

MURRAY

Just try to get past me.

Bev runs and Murray jumps in front of her. Bev struggles to get past Murray.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Erica, get my shin guards.

EXT. GOLDBERG FRONT PORCH - DAY

Jessica stands at the front porch. Barry opens the front door and steps outside.

BARRY

Hey, babe. Ready for some whack-a-mole action at the arcade?

JESSICA

No, I have to bail on our date.

BARRY

Why?

JESSICA

I have a book report due tomorrow.

BARRY

Just throw something together.

JESSICA

Unlike you, I can't whip up a paper overnight. (Lowers voice) Of course, if I had help...

BARRY

Did you say you needed help?

JESSICA

Oh Barry, you'd be willing to help me? You're awesome.

Jessica gives Barry a peck on the cheek. She opens her backpack and digs around before pulling out a paper.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Here's the assignment. Meet me at
your locker in the morning.

Jessica rushes off.

BARRY
(Shouts) But tomorrow, we're on for
whack-a-mole, right?

INT. ERICA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Barry sneaks into Erica's room and rifles through the stuffed
accordion folder on her desk.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Barry, smitten by his admirer, was
determined to make Jessica proud.

BARRY
Ow!

He pulls his hand out; a mouse trap is attached. Erica runs
in.

ERICA
I thought you were on a date.

Barry struggles to pry the mousetrap off his hand.

BARRY
My date was cancelled. Now, can you
help get this thing off my hand?

ERICA
Stand still.

Erica pries the mouse trap off of Barry's hand. Now freed,
Barry waves his hand around.

BARRY
Why the hell did you do that?

ERICA
In case Mom tries to send my work
to *Reader's Digest* again. What were
you doing with my folder?

BARRY
I just wanted to read your paper
about the moon landing. You know,
to compare notes.

ERICA

You didn't take my paper and pass it off as your own, did you?

BARRY

Of course not!

ERICA

Are you sure? If you did, that would be a very bad situation.

BARRY

You're just mad because you're grounded for stealing dad's beer.

ERICA

At least my date didn't cancel on me.

BARRY

Bravo, Erica. You kept a date by convincing Pi Beta dumb ass that our wacko family is a rowdy frat.

Barry storms out of Erica's room.

INT. GOLDBERG LIVING ROOM - DAY

Adam paces around the living room. Murray relaxes in his recliner while reading the newspaper.

ADAM

Why isn't Pops here yet?

MURRAY

Did you two have plans?

ADAM

No. My rash finally cleared up, so Pops is bringing me acne cream.

MURRAY

I had bad skin when I was your age.

ADAM

Really? How did you deal with it?

MURRAY

I was too busy surviving to worry about it.

ADAM

At least your yearbook photos were in black and white.

MURRAY

You're not the only kid with zits. Stop stressing about it.

Barry runs into the living room.

BARRY

Hey, nerd. Help me with something and I'll make your zit invisible.

ADAM

Really? Okay!

Barry and Adam run out of the living room.

MURRAY

Or keep taking advice from the other morons in this house until your face falls off.

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Adam sits at his desk while Barry flips through a stack of paper. He looks at a paper, shakes his head and throws the stack of papers on the desk.

ADAM

I don't understand how my old book reports are helping you with, what exactly?

BARRY

You don't need the details of what I'm doing. I can't believe you haven't read *Jane Eyre* yet.

ADAM

That's on the big kid reading list.

BARRY

Yeah, but you're a nerd. Don't they make you do reports on grown up books?

ADAM

No. But I have a book report on *Johnny Tremain* from the fourth grade. Would that work?

BARRY
Well, they're both books about a
person with a first and last name.
It's better than nothing.

Adam shuffles a few things on his desk and produces the
Johnny Tremain book report.

ADAM
Here it is.

Adam hands Barry the report.

BARRY
I can't use this. The words are in
all caps like a kid wrote it.

ADAM
Hello? A kid did write it.

BARRY
How long would it take you to re-
write this?

ADAM
About an hour.

BARRY
Replace the words "Johnny Tremain"
with "Jane Eyre" throughout the
report.

ADAM
Before I write it up, give me your
miracle cure for this zit.

BARRY
Oh, so that's how it's going to be?

ADAM
Do you even have a miracle cure?

BARRY
I didn't exactly say it was a cure.
I said I could make it disappear.

Barry grabs an adhesive bandage from his pocket.

BARRY (CONT'D)
Here.

ADAM
A bandage?

BARRY
It'll cover up your zit.

ADAM
But I'll have a big bandage across
my face in the yearbook. I might as
well wear a paper bag over my head.

BARRY
That was my next suggestion.

ADAM
Forget it. You're on your own.

Barry snatches the *Johnny Tremain* report.

BARRY
Fine. I'll remember this next time
you ask for my help.

Barry storms out of Adam's room with the *Johnny Tremain*
report.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Barry and Jessica stand by Barry's locker. He hands her the
paper and she pecks him on the cheek, then walks away.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
The next morning, Barry handed
Jessica my fourth grade book report
on *Johnny Tremain*.

Barry continues to stand in front of his locker when Erica
walks up.

ERICA
Was that Jessica Fish?

BARRY
Yeah, that's my girl.

ERICA
Barry, I never thought I'd say
this, but you can do better.

BARRY
No, I can't.

ERICA
Yes you can. Once, she dressed up
in a cheerleader uniform to cheer
on the chess club.

BARRY

She has a lot of school spirit.

ERICA

Don't you get it? She targets nerds without girlfriends so they'll do her homework. Well, she got it half right with you.

BARRY

If that's true, why would she pick someone on academic probation?

ERICA

Does she know you're on probation?

BARRY

No. But I did tell her I'm reading my paper to the class.

ERICA

I guess it's none of my business. Maybe she genuinely likes you.

BARRY

Actually, she did ask me to do her homework.

ERICA

I knew it. You did steal one of my papers.

BARRY

Don't worry, I gave her one of Adam's old book reports.

ERICA

Good. That folder contained decoys.

BARRY

What?

ERICA

Just in case Mom got past the mousetrap, I mixed together my poetry with old school reports.

BARRY

Why don't you just trash your poems?

ERICA

Because that's where Mom first found them.

SFX: The SCHOOL BELL rings.

ERICA (CONT'D)
I better go. Good luck reading your
paper in class.

Erica walks off.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Barry is standing in front of the class holding his report as MR. STEVENS gives the class a brief explanation.

MR. STEVENS
Before we begin today's lesson,
I've asked Barry to read his report
on the moon landing aloud to the
class.

BARRY
Thanks Mr. Stevens. When Neil
Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin set foot
on the moon, it was a pivotal
moment in history because...

Barry's expression changes to one of shock. He stands still and silent at the front of the class.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Barry didn't realize his paper was
one of Erica's decoys until he was
already reading his paper aloud.

MR. STEVENS
Barry, is everything okay?

BARRY
I can't read this. I think I've
gone blind.

MR. STEVENS
Just now?

The class collectively giggles.

BARRY
Yeah, my eyes are blurry. Maybe I
should read this tomorrow.

MR. STEVENS
I have a film scheduled for
tomorrow's class.

BARRY

Then the class won't hear this paper.

MR. STEVENS

Someone else can read your paper.

BARRY

No, only I understand how to properly convey the emotions behind the words.

MR. STEVENS

This isn't drama class.

BARRY

But, isn't the point of this to build my public speaking skills?

MR. STEVENS

Yes it is. Now, stop wasting my time and read the paper.

SFX: The FIRE ALARM sounds.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. BLEACHERS ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Barry and his classmates line up by the bleachers.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Barry! Barry Goldberg!

Barry looks around. He spots Jessica.

BARRY
Jessica, shouldn't you line up with
your class?

JESSICA
Forget that. I just read through
this book report you gave me.

BARRY
It's good, right?

JESSICA
It's terrible! I may not have read
Jane Eyre, but I'm pretty sure Jane
wasn't a boy with a deformed hand.

BARRY
Sure she was. It just wasn't a
major plot point.

JESSICA
If I turn this in, I'll get an "F".

BARRY
So, I flunked my last history test.

JESSICA
What? Aren't you a genius?

BARRY
What made you think I was smart?

JESSICA
I assumed golfers were smart. Also,
you can't be this socially awkward
and not be a nerd.

BARRY
Guess I proved you wrong.

JESSICA
I better find the AP English class.
After all, I still need a report.

BARRY
Wait, we can still date. I just
can't do your homework.

JESSICA
I really just wanted you for your
brain.

Jessica walks away. Mr. Stevens approaches Barry.

MR. STEVENS
Barry, in the excitement of the
fire drill, you dropped your paper.

BARRY
Thanks.

Barry reaches for his paper. Mr. Stevens hangs onto the
report.

MR. STEVENS
Not so fast. I read your report and
it turns out the rest of your paper
is poetry.

BARRY
Thank you.

MR. STEVENS
No, I mean it's literally pages and
pages of poetry.

BARRY
It got mixed up with my English
assignment.

MR. STEVENS
You write poetry about magical
unicorns?

BARRY
Yeah, totally.

MR. STEVENS
We're visiting the principal's
office once the fire drill is over.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Barry sits at a desk, and writes on a piece of paper. He scowls and erases what he wrote.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Barry couldn't produce a convincing lie when confronted about his paper. He confessed to cheating and was dropped from the golf team.

Barry scribbles down something else.

BARRY
How about this?

Barry stretches out his arm and hands his paper to someone we can't see.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Rather than suspend Barry for plagiarism, the school devised a humiliating punishment.

The shot widens to show he's handed his paper to Bev, sitting next to him.

BEV
This is a good beginning. Now, work on the next paragraph.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Barry reported for after school detention each day until his paper was complete and had the Beverly Goldberg seal of approval.

INT. ADAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Adam holds a mirror and examines his face.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
As for me, picture day was here, and that zit remained on my face.

Erica enters Adam's room.

ERICA
Staring won't make it go away.

ADAM
Thanks for the pep talk.

ERICA
I'm not here to depress you. I have
an idea.

ADAM
I'm not putting a bandage on my
face.

ERICA
Why would I tell you to stick a
bandage on your face? Let me look
at your zit.

ADAM
Okay.

Erica glances at his zit.

ERICA
Just what I thought. It's flat now.

ADAM
So?

ERICA
I can hide it with makeup.

ADAM
You want me to wear makeup?

ERICA
If a character in a movie had
chickenpox, would they cast someone
with chickenpox?

ADAM
No, they'd use make up. So, in this
situation, make up is just a prop.

ERICA
This will take a few minutes.

Erica applies concealer to Adam's face.

ADAM
Erica?

ERICA
Yeah?

ADAM
Tell anyone about this, and the
video of you lip syncing to Cyndi
Lauper gets unleashed.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Adam sits on a stool in front of a blue backdrop.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Thanks to Erica, I walked into that
photo session ready to take the
best yearbook picture ever.

SFX: We hear the click of a camera.

CLOSE UP ON: Adam's yearbook photo. Adam's eyes are wide open
and he has a goofy, exaggerated grin.

ADULT ADAM (V.O.)
Unfortunately, I was so preoccupied
with my zit, I gave no thought to
how I should pose for the photo.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

FADE IN:

INT. GOLDBERG KITCHEN -NIGHT

Murray roots through the fridge. Bev wipes the counter top.

MURRAY

Where's my beer? I just bought a six pack after work today.

BEV

Don't look at me. I didn't touch your beer.

Murray walks to the kitchen window and looks at the backyard.

MURRAY'S P.O.V. - THE TREEHOUSE ILLUMINATES WITH CANDLELIGHT.

Murray storms out of the kitchen into the backyard.

EXT. GOLDBERG BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Murray approaches the tree. Beer cans are strewn around it.

MURRAY

Erica, you face me right now.

Pops and a FEMALE COMPANION peek out of the treehouse.

POPS

Keep it down out there.

MURRAY

Pops? You're drunk!

POPS

No, I'm slightly buzzed.

MURRAY

Bev, get my chain saw. That tree is coming down.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW