

NEWS POPS 2.0

Gavin Jasper

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE, KITCHEN -- DAY

BILLY sits at the kitchen table, eating cereal while propping up his head with his hand. He glares at the back of his box of Cocoa Puffs while looking incredibly bored. MOM walks in, looking worried.

MOM

Billy, what's wrong? Aren't you enjoying your cereal?

BILLY

I guess. It's just that I've been reading this stupid activity page on the back of the box and it's been the same maze and riddles for the last year. I'm bored.

Mom smiles and pulls out a box of cereal with "NEWS POPS" on the front. On the front is WOODY BERNSTEIN, a mascot in the form of a grainy black and white drawing of a reporter wearing a "PRESS" fedora, sitting at a typewriter. Mom gives a knowing wink and smile to the camera.

MOM

Then it's time for some good news!

BILLY

(unsure)

News Pops?

Mom removes the bowl of Cocoa Puffs from the table and replaces it with a bowl of News Pops, already mixed with milk somehow. She then moves the Cocoa Puffs box off the table and places the box of News Pops. Billy blinks, snaps out of it and looks at the back. We're shown a shot from over his shoulder where the back of the box is a block of text, not unlike a newspaper page.

BILLY

"Snow Storm Affects Gas Prices?"

Woody Bernstein animates from the front of the box, seemingly unnoticed by Billy and Mom.

WOODY BERNSTEIN

That's right, News Pops. The cereal that's not only nutritious, but

(MORE)

WOODY BERNSTEIN (cont'd)
 it'll stimulate your kid's mind. No
 repetitive activity pages and
 knock-knock jokes here. Each box of
 News Pops has the day's news to
 teach your little boy or girl about
 current events. A new issue every
 day!

As Woody says all of this, we see a front shot of Billy as he eats the cereal and looks at the back of the box. It's a montage, showing minor changes to the background that suggest days have passed, including Billy's clothes being different. In each time shift, we notice more and more opened boxes of News Pops sitting behind him in a pile on the counter, many of them spilling out their unfinished contents. In each subsequent shot, Billy appears more and more intrigued.

BILLY
 Whoa! 32 killed in a hotel fire!
 Four survivors horribly mangled!

We see Billy reaching into his box.

WOODY BERNSTEIN
 And that's not all. There's also a
 prize in each box.

Billy pulls out a newspaper circular and looks genuinely excited.

BILLY
 All right! A flyer for Payless!

Mom steps into the shot, smiling down at Billy.

MOM
 Plus it's filled with a strong dose
 of vitamin C and has the flavor
 that kids love. Isn't that right,
 Billy?

BILLY
 They took a picture of Beyonce
 walking out of her car and she's
 not even wearing underpants! Neat!

Mom jerks forward and removes the box from the table before storming off-screen. A jingle begins playing in the background.

CUT TO:

SIDEWALK -- DAY

NEWSBOY stands on the sidewalk, waving a box of News Pops in the air.

NEWSBOY

Extra, extra! News Pops part of a
delicious, balanced breakfast!

CUT TO:

INT. DANK ROOM

Two criminals stand next to a beaten man tied to a chair with duct tape around his mouth. One criminal punches him in the stomach and the other holds a box of News Pops next to the hostage while a third criminal takes a picture. He makes sure to point at the day's date, written on the box while smiling.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE, KITCHEN -- DAY

More shots of Billy reading and eating more as more boxes stack up.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT -- DAY

A man walks his dog over to a pile of boxes of News Pops laid out on the floor. As the dog lifts his leg, the man kneels down, smiles and gives the thumbs up to the camera.

JINGLE SINGERS

(singing)

News Pops! Stop the presses!
News Pops! It's the bestest!
News Pops! It's all the rage!
News Pops! The most important meal
is the front page!

CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE, KITCHEN -- DAY

DAD walks into the kitchen, noticeably angry. Billy is chowing down on his cereal while Mom stands behind him, patting his shoulder.

DAD

Hey! What's with all this unfinished cereal?! Don't you know that there are children starving in Africa?

BILLY

I sure do! Thanks to News Pops!

Mom smiles in pride. Woody gives the thumbs up.

BILLY

I also know that the president is a socialist monster who wasn't even born in this country!

Mom's smile becomes incredibly strained as she shifts her eyes. There's some silence as Woody coughs into his hand and turns back to his typewriter. The logo appears over the screen.

JINGLE SINGERS

(singing)

News Pops!

WOODY BERNSTEIN

(nervous)

Part of a fair and balanced breakfast.