

My earliest memory of video games is of my brother playing *'Prince of Persia'* on an MS-DOS PC. I was around five years old and of course, my brother being five years older than me, never let me play, forcing me to watch behind his shoulder as he maneuvered the protagonist through the dungeons to find the princess. A few years later, a Polystation, the rip off version of a Playstation, was gifted to me, and I would spend most of my after school hours playing games like *'Super Mario Bros.'*, *'Olympics'*, *'Duck Hunt'*, *'Mortal Kombat'*, etc. Duck Hunt was my favorite, mostly because I could engage with the game by pointing and shooting at the screen.

But when the word *game* comes into mind, I immediately think of the board game *'Monopoly'*. Ever since I can remember, every Friday night, the entire family would gather around the Monopoly board and try to bankrupt each other. As a child, I always teamed up with my father and tried to figure out the game as the grownups played seriously. If the game ran long, I'd get lost in my imagination with the game pieces and hotels and houses. Thinking back, I now recall how prominent the board was in my imaginary play. Sometimes I'd tilt it upside down and make a tent with it for my dolls. At other times, it acted as a wall for my makeshift dollhouse.

By the time I turned eight, I had started playing the game as an individual with the same earnestness as the others, with my go-to game piece being the iron. My parents encouraged me to be the Bank hoping it would help me understand how to handle money in the future. Being the Bank worked in my favor since whenever I was beginning to lose, I could conveniently replenish my resources. Of course, it was only until much later that I figured out that my family always knew of my duplicity.

From my teenage onwards, the game became a more serious affair with the first one to be bankrupt, having to wash the dishes over the weekend and the monopolist being able to pick the family movie. If the competition were between my brother and me, we would up the wager to make things more interesting.

Looking back, I now realize how a simple board game has helped me be frugal and intelligent with my resources. It has also bolstered our family's bond. Up to this day, we keep the tradition alive when the whole family gets together and dust off our old faithful monopoly board and have the time of our lives.