Minutiae

The 20th *Tom and Jerry* short is called "*Tee for Two.*" One minute and fifty seconds into the short, Tom dunks Jerry in a golf ball scrubbing machine. Fifteen minutes after I saw it for the first time, I was still fast-forwarding and rewinding, going through it frame by frame, just those 10 seconds.

Jerry's contorted face of concentrated discomfort.

Tom's giant toothless grin and lolling tongue.

The jerky rapid motions of the ball washer.

The excessive repetition and scratchy scrubbing noise.

Jerry's drunken face once Tom has finished.

Tom's prideful smile turned horrified grimace as Jerry spewed water in his eye.

And then I figured out that everything looked and sounded so much funnier when you turn it up to four times the speed.

The answer is "no" if you ever ask me if I missed something. That is not why I'm rewinding the movie, pausing the video game, or scrutinizing a page. It's because I believe the moment is something we need to talk about, "***I am your father,***" is a lot more than a well-delivered line. Everything is more than a well-executed moment. Every team project I've led is more than just my own best effort. When you build a relationship with a client it's more than just one good meeting.

You will never hear me say that a detail is meaningless. I chose to be a game designer because I loved every little thing about animation, and writing, and movies, and TV, and *especially* video

games. No detail is meaningless. Neither is any mistake. Every torn frame, typo, shallow mechanic, plothole, botched color scheme, and bit of spaghetti code tells us how to make something funnier, more dramatic, more touching, more enjoyable, more perfect. Perfection is the ideal. Perfection is there, in the difference between observant and obsessive. Perfection.

I've worked with a lot of people from different fields of expertise: programmers, artists, animators, educators, computer scientists, graphic designers, game designers, and producers. I've had a lot of clients: game designers, businessmen, professors, and entrepreneurs. I have been a lot of things: animator, artist, programmer, game designer, video producer, voice actor, writer, and critique (especially of myself). I have never been perfect, and that is always painful. I can tell I'm not perfect because I'm obsessed with the details.

The details have always been fun. The details are how we appreciate every well-delivered presentation, every well-led team, and every well-produced media. The details are how I grow. The details are how I innovate. The details are how I step it up. The details are how I reach for perfection.