

Old Spice Updates 'Mom Song' With a Modern Motherhood Twist



While toxic boy mom culture is a hot topic right now (thanks to Brooklyn Beckham's 821-word takedown of his famous parents), Old Spice delivered a satirical masterclass in how not to mother long before Posh Spice took to the dancefloor.

Its 2014 ad, "Mom Song," saw helicopter mothers literally clinging to their sons as they pursued romantic relationships, because Old Spice had sprayed their boys into men.

Twelve years later, Procter & Gamble's men's grooming brand is feeling more wholesome as it follows up "Mom Song" with an R&B anthem that offers a healthier perspective on mother-son relationships, as it promotes its new Swagger line of products.

"Mom Song 2:0: The End of Adolescents," created by Wieden+Kennedy Portland, builds on the idea that Old Spice has the ability to mature boys into men. Filmed in the style of an old R&B music video, the ad riffs off the aptly named R&B

group Boyz II Men and their 1992 hit “End of the Road,” rewriting the lyrics to essentially say: “I understand you need to live your life, but I’m still sad about it.”

The nostalgic commercial opens with the engine revving as a young man drives off with his lady. “It’s just me and you, girl,” he says, as the red convertible with the vanity plate ‘Bye Mom’ takes off with no backward glance.

A pained mother steps out from the garage, belting out: “We belong together, and you know mom’s always right. Why do you play with my heart? Why do you spray that Old Spice?” as neighboring mothers join in.

Throughout the heartfelt music video, the moms blame Old Spice for ushering their sons into manhood and thus taking them away, but they try to find solace in their loss.

Just like the original commercial, which featured music and lyrics by Bret McKenzie, one-half of the Kiwi musical duo Flight of the Conchords, music continues to play a central role. Yet “Mom Song 2.0” isn’t the first time that Old Spice has used music to explore awkward parent-child relationships since the OG anthem.

McKenzie returned for “Dad Song” in 2014 to lyrically compare the drastically different responses of moms and dads when Old Spice “sprays a man of their boy” in a similarly off-the-wall style. While moms continue to grieve emotionally, dads respond favorably, hoping their sons might soon find employment, while making plans for their soon-to-be-vacant bedroom.

Old Spice then returned to the mom-son dynamic in 2017 with a series of zany parody ads that made light of teenage boy-and-mom-targeted advertising.

“Beach Budz” opens as two mothers scoff at Old Spice’s over-the-top marketing stunt to attract boys (an octopus driving a

speedboat pulling a paragliding bear with the words, “Be a cool guy with Old Spice,” branded on the parachutes). The ad suddenly subverts itself as the pair overadvertise Old Spice to other moms buying it for their teenage sons.

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