

Your Golden Years Await

by

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INT. JIM AND NORA'S HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

JIM (late 60's), lies in bed, asleep. The plump frame of his wife, Nora (late 60's), beside him, she snores softly.

A CALENDAR hangs on the wall. Every day for the month of June has been crossed off...until Saturday the 20th -- An ornate, delicately written CAPTION over the month reads: "Your Golden Years Await".

An alarm BEEPS, Jim awakens, switches it off before his wife even stirs. The clock radio reads 8:00AM.

Jim approaches the calendar on the wall. He glances over at Nora before facing the calendar again -- A slightly reserved look transforms into a smile, a content one.

He picks up a PEN attached to the calendar with a length of string and marks the Saturday with an identical cross to the rest.

A bottle of MEDICATION is on the dresser, "Cardio Core". Jim picks it up.

He looks once again on the "Golden Years" caption, nods to himself.

EXT. SMALL TOWN - CONTINUOUS

Life begins gradually with the start of a new day. The pale, morning sun casts shadows and light over the town. Some townsfolk are already up, walking about.

INT. JIM AND NORA'S HOME - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jim fills a glass tumbler with water.

STAIRS/HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Jim reaches the bottom of the stairs. A set of new looking GOLF CLUBS lie against the wall in the corner.

KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Jim sits at the table reading the NEWSPAPER -- Steam rises from his cup of tea, two slices of toast lie on a plate. Jim examines the page in front of him.

EXT. JIM AND NORA'S HOME - MINUTES LATER

Jim closes the front door of his terrace house. He walks in the direction of the town.

STREET - MINUTES LATER

Jim salutes a couple of WOMEN (60's) across the street. They smile brightly back at him.

MRS. KEATING

I hear today is the first day of
the rest of your life, Jim.

JIM

(laughs)
Yeah, so the wife keeps telling
me.

CUT TO:

Jim slows down outside a TRAVEL AGENCY. He looks in the window at various CRUISE HOLIDAY advertisements.

EXT. THE LITERARY CIRCLE BOOKSHOP - MINUTES LATER

Jim lifts up the set of shutters to his shop, "The Literary Circle" -- It's a relatively quiet street, similar old style shop fronts flank either side.

Jim acknowledges another passer-by as he fumbles with a set of keys.

INT. THE LITERARY CIRCLE BOOKSHOP - LATER

Jim's assistant, CHRIS (30's), well built, stacks some books into a box. "All books - €3.50" written on it. Jim stands behind the counter, sifts through stock sheets.

Classic 1930's jazz plays lightly overhead -- Two other people occupy the shop, browsing.

The small shop is only about a third stocked -- Old, dusty, half-filled or empty shelves are all that are left of the "Fiction" "Biography" and "Romance" sections.

A number of boxes and baskets piled with books are situated around the place -- Stickers detailing reduced prices and special offers stuck to the sides of them.

Jim and Chris work in silence -- Jim takes a moment, looks around his establishment; the sparsely populated shelves, a neglected desk and chair sitting in the corner, some cobwebs hang from the ceiling, cling to the lighting.

Chris takes off his sweater, throws it on the desk...It falls onto the chair.

Chris's attention is caught by a home-made SIGN on the ground, just inside the counter. He picks it up, it reads: "Closing Down SALE Today - Saturday 20/06/09 - Everything Must Go."

CHRIS

You forgot to leave this out.

JIM

Oh, Nora got one of her brainwaves during the week to make it up...I don't know...didn't think it was really necessary.

Jim glances around the quiet shop.

JIM (CONT'D)

Anybody who cares, knows already.

CHRIS

It'll do no harm. You never know who might be passing.

Chris leaves down the sign, walks back to the box. Jim's eyes linger on the words "Everything Must Go".

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Two junkies, PETER and EDDIE (both mid 20's), rough appearance, shuffle down the street, strained faces.

PETER

We need to do something, man...I'm really startin' to suffer here.

EDDIE

What'd you have in mind?

PETER

I dunno...I'm not going back to the city for awhile anyway, that's for sure.

A middle aged WOMAN, well dressed, walks in front of them.

Peter eyes on her handbag like a hawk -- She turns to cross the road, noticing the two guys a few paces back -- She looks ahead straightaway, crossing in a hurry.

"The Literary Circle" is on the other side -- Jim emerges, inside the window, leaving out the "Everything Must Go" sign.

Peter forgets the woman, watches Jim instead.

PETER (CONT'D)

You see that...? The old man looks to be hanging up his boots.

Eddie follows Peter's gaze.

EDDIE

We could pay him a visit.

Peter turns to Eddie, smirks, revealing stained teeth.

INT. THE LITERARY CIRCLE BOOKSHOP - AFTERNOON

Jim stands behind the counter -- Chris and a customer chatter inaudibly over a book Chris holds.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- A) A staggered flow of customers come and go.
- B) Most are well wishers -- They shake hands, give cards, reminisce with Jim.
- C) Jim's smile grows wider with each person, grateful of their support and thanks.

JIM AND NORA'S HOME - KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Nora potters around the kitchen, making dinner. The table is prepared for an occasion -- Fancy table clothe, candles, napkins, multiple types of cutlery lined up at either side of both places.

An ENVELOPE sits in the middle, propped up against the salt and pepper -- "To my loving, retired husband".

THE LITERARY CIRCLE BOOKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

The place is quiet, Jim and Chris are behind the counter.

JIM

We haven't been away in so long.
It'll be nice to treat her for
once...heaven knows she needs it.
I'm going to tell her tonight.

CHRIS

Oh, an excuse for an extended
dirty weekend away? Under the
pretence of an "overdue holiday".
(laughs)
The sun, sea and sand might get
her in the mood, eh?

JIM

We're actually going on a
cruise...for three months, so...
(winks)
Plenty of time for that.

Both share a laugh -- The JINGLE over the door rings, MARY
(early 30's) walks in. She carries what looks like to be a
gift-wrapped BOOK.

Jim's face brightens at the sight of her.

JIM (CONT'D)

Mary, this is a nice surprise.

MARY

A surprise? You thought I wouldn't
come see you on your last day?

Mary spots the baskets and boxes overflowing with books.

MARY (CON'T)

Sad to see this place go, that
damn online shopping, huh?

JIM

Ah, I got more than my share of
good years out of it, time to move
on.

MARY

The town won't be the same. It'll
be missed I tell you.

Jim looks around the shop.

JIM
I think you'll manage just fine.

Mary steps near the counter, holds out the present.

MARY
Remember Nora looked after me and Francis when we were young? You used to read to us?

JIM
Of course...You were always that little bit more enthusiastic about it than your brother.

Mary smiles, Jim takes the gift from her.

JIM (CONT'D)
What's this?

MARY
Open it.

Jim methodically removes the paper, not tearing a single strip.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It was one of the first things you read to us...

The last of the wrapping is taken off.

MARY (CONT'D)
I rang Nora a few weeks ago asking was there anything in particular you lost or misplaced over the years...that you never got back.
(beat)
This was the first thing she mentioned. One of your all time favourites she said.

Jim's face creases with emotion. He murmurs something to himself -- Mary and Chris look on as Jim gently rubs his hand over the front cover, obscured from view.

JIM
...It's the original publication.
The same one I used to own.

MARY

I couldn't just get you any old copy, Jim. I'd to do a bit of digging to resurrect that...Bless that online shopping, eh.

Jim smiles, nostalgia courses through him as he leafs the worn pages. He's nearly overcome with emotion but stops himself in time.

JIM

I remember buying this at one of the stalls, when the old market used to be in town...God, I must have only been twelve or thirteen...Lost it years ago.

Jim studies the book, nods -- His melancholic eyes scan the shop. He straightens himself.

JIM (CONT'D)

This means the world to me, Mary. Thank you so much.

Jim leans over the counter, hugs Mary. She beams happily, a little swept away by the moment also.

MARY

I'm glad you like it.

JIM

I do...I do...Reminds me how much I'm going to miss this place.

Jim lets her go.

He grasps the book tightly in both hands, a prized possession.

JIM AND NORA'S HOME - KITCHEN/HALLWAY - EARLY EVENING

Pots simmer on the stove. The CLOCK on the wall reads 5:45. Nora takes off her apron.

She reaches for the car keys on the hallway table.

THE LITERARY CIRCLE BOOKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Chris stands near the entrance. He takes one last look at the shop before opening the front door.

CHRIS

Well, that's that I
suppose...You'll be down at
O'Connor's later?
(smiles)
I'll buy that retirement drink
I've been promising you for years.

JIM

(grins)
I'll be there.

Chris turns to leave.

JIM (CONT'D)

You can leave the latch off, Nora
should be here any second.

Chris obeys, exits the shop. Jim looks at the clock, its
5:50. He wipes down the counter with his open palm, drops
the last of a few books lying around into one of the boxes.

He sits down at the old desk, looks around his shop in
silence, taking it all in -- He shuffles on the seat, pulls
Chris's sweater from under him. He leaves it on top of the
desk.

He gets up again, approaches the counter, picks up Mary's
present.

The shop door opens slowly, Peter and Eddie appear. They
see Jim, back turned. They both creep in -- The JINGLE
sounds.

Jim half glances, more interested in the book. He points to
the desk.

JIM

It's over there.

Peter and Eddie exchange glances, they approach Jim.

JIM (CONT'D)

I was just thinking actually--
(turns around)
We should--

Jim recoils, startled -- Eddie rushes, knocks him to the
ground.

Eddie gets on top, leans on Jim's chest. He produces a
KNIFE, holds it inches from his face.

EDDIE

Don't fuckin' move.

Peter stands over them.

PETER

Now, pops, we're just gonna make a little withdrawal from here, ok.

Eddie leans harder. Jim feels the strain, short of breath.

JIM

Whatever I have is in the till...Its open...take it.

Peter darts for the counter -- The register tray is ajar, Peter pulls it open -- Only a few notes make up the days earnings. He takes them out hurriedly, gathers some coins.

PETER

Shit, is this is all you've got?

Jim struggles to breathe under the weight of Eddie -- Peter comes out from behind the counter. He sees the boxes of books, special offers and bare shelves.

PETER (CONT'D)

Alright, fuck it, let's get outta here.

Eddie puts the knife against Jim's cheek, Jim turns his face away, breathes heavily.

Suddenly, the front door pushes opens...Chris appears.

CHRIS

I forgot my--

Chris stops dead when he sees the two -- Eddie with the knife to Jim's cheek, Peter a few feet back, stuffing the money into his pocket -- They freeze also.

Silence -- Chris eyes both, stands fast.

PETER

There are two of us, hero...don't try and get in our fuckin' way.

Eddie brings the knife in front of him, poised. The two look a little shaken however, intimidated.

Chris, unfazed, doesn't even flinch.

GASPING -- Jim clutches his chest, WHEEZES, struggles for air. Eddie glances down at him, gets to his feet, hastily.

EDDIE

Fuck!

Chris and Peter look on. Jim's panting exacerbates.

Chris rushes towards Jim, kneels down by him -- Peter and Eddie look at each other, see their chance and rush out the door.

Jim, rigid, strives to get his breath.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Peter and Eddie run up the street -- They bolt across.

A CAR comes towards them, its Nora -- She brakes, skids, both guys roll onto the bonnet, crash off the front window.

Nora's eyes go wide with fright as she watches the two land hard on the street.

INT. THE LITERARY CIRCLE BOOKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jim's palpitations quickly subside, turn to a wily grin. He winks at Chris.

Chris's tense expression slackens. He shakes his head, laughs.

CHRIS

You had me going there.

JIM

Just in case you did decide to be a hero. I was watching you...you weren't going to budge, were you?

Jim sits up, brushes himself off. He looks towards the door and then to Chris -- A sigh of relief escapes his lips.

INTERCUT - STREET/CAR - CONTINUOUS

Peter and Eddie get to their feet, a little dazed but seemingly unhurt.

Peter eyes Nora menacingly, advances quickly towards the car.

Eddie brandishes the knife again, Nora gasps, flicks the locks.

PETER

Get the fuck out, now!

Peter tries the door, bangs on it furiously. Eddie puts the knife to the window. Nora lets out a short scream, petrified.

Peter flips, frantically kicks the car and elbows the window repeatedly which doesn't give way. He roars in frustration.

Nora clutches her chest, fights for breath.

PETER

Jesus Christ! What the fuck is wrong with people around here?!

EDDIE

C'mon, let's go!

Eddie conceals the knife, both takeoff up the street.

Jim and Chris appear at the shop door -- Jim spots their car in the middle of the road.

Nora has turned pale, eyes glazed. She forces out short, heavily laboured breaths.

Jim looks in the window, panic stricken -- Tries the door, locked -- Peter and Eddie sprint away without looking back, disappear out of sight.

JIM (O.S.)

Ring an ambulance, quick!

Jim tries another door before stepping back, despairing. He kicks a window, no use. Chris has the phone to his ear, he sees Jim at a loss.

The "Everything Must Go" lies inside the front window.

The sound of glass SMASHING is heard.

FADE OUT.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Chris drives, his reddened eyes stare straight ahead.

Jim sits in the passenger's seat looking vacantly out the window at the passing buildings.

He clutches Mary's gift tightly. The wrapping paper partly covers it.

INT. JIM AND NORA'S HOME - HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

The front door opens. Jim appears, closes the door behind him. He pauses in the hallway momentarily before breaking down.

The set of golf clubs as they were, by the stairs.

LIVING ROOM - SAME

The newspaper lies open on the coffee table.

The property page is open, featuring local and surrounding area premises for sale -- Jim's shop is one of them.

KITCHEN - SAME

The table remains set for an occasion, the unopened envelope as its centerpiece.

BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jim enters. He puts down the book on his bedside press.

The bottle of heart medication sits on Nora's bedside press, her name is printed on the prescription label -- A drop of water is left in the glass tumbler beside it.

Jim approaches the calendar -- The crossed out days as before, including Saturday -- The pen dangles from the attached string.

The title of the book is exposed on the press, "Robinson Crusoe". It's bound in the original print cover, a first of its kind.

Jim sits on the bed, expressionless. He glances up at the calendar -- "Your Golden Years Await"

FADE OUT.