

BLESSING

FADE IN:

INT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - DINING ROOM - DAY

ADEL, 70s, sits alone, cup of coffee in hand. She takes a sip, immediately spits it back into the cup.

WARREN, 70s, slides into the seat across from her.

WARREN

That bad?

ADEL

I've always liked the smell. Taste, not so much. My husband told me you have to get used to it. But, I still don't get it.

WARREN

Yet, every day I see you try.

She shrugs.

Warren nervously fiddles with a napkin.

WARREN

Listen -- I -- uh -- I paid off the van driver -- got him for the night. I was wondering -- if -- maybe -- you might want to go to the Olive Garden tonight? With me. Endless breadsticks.

ADEL

(shakes her head)
It's Valentine's Day.

WARREN

That's kind of the point. See, when a guy -- that's me -- likes a gal -- that's you -- sometimes they eat breadsticks together. And, sometimes, they do it on Valentine's Day.

ADEL

I don't like breadsticks.

WARREN

Garlic cheddar biscuits, then. The bread choice is negotiable.

ADEL
(stands)
I can't.

WARREN
(stands to meet her)
I know you've had it rough this year. How about, as friends? Think about it -- please. I'll wait by the van. 4:30. Just in case.

ADEL
I'm sorry.

She walks away, leaving Warren by himself.

Another WOMAN, 70s, sweeps in.

WOMAN
There you are.

She hands him a box of chocolates.

WOMAN
Happy Valentine's Day.

WARREN
That's very nice. Thanks.

The Woman bounces out of the room, giddy with her success.

Warren tosses the box onto a nearby table, where it lands next to a pile of others just like it.

INT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Adel admires a black and white photo: a YOUNG ADEL, 30s, in a beautiful little dress, alongside a handsome man, YOUNG JIMMY, 30s.

She looks at an inscription on the back of the photo: OUR FIRST VALENTINE'S DAY.

YOUNG JIMMY (O.S.)
So, he asked you out?

Adel spins to see Young Jimmy, sitting on the couch.

ADEL
I didn't say yes.

YOUNG JIMMY
You should.

She sets the photo on the table, settles next to Jimmy.

ADEL

I knew you'd come today.

YOUNG JIMMY

I told you. First day we met. I'd never spend another Valentine's Day without you.

He stands, pulls her up to him.

Young Jimmy embraces Young Adel, they sway to a song no one else can hear.

YOUNG JIMMY

Tell me about this guy. He better be awful. We're talking nose hair -- one, long eyebrow that extends from ear to ear. And definitely no sense of humor. He better not be funny.

YOUNG ADEL

He's hideous. I can barely look at him.

YOUNG JIMMY

That's my girl.

He spins her, pulls her back in.

YOUNG JIMMY

You still have the dress?

YOUNG ADEL

I do.

YOUNG JIMMY

You should wear it.

YOUNG ADEL

I'm not going, if that's what you're implying.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

Young Jimmy lets go of Young Adel.

Adel (Young Adel is gone) answers the door, to see: Warren, holding several boxes of chocolates.

WARREN

A minute?

ADEL
(waves him in)
I'm not a big fan of chocolate.

WARREN
These? Oh, no. Seems every corner I
turn, I'm handed another box.

ADEL
You're a popular man.

WARREN
One of only sixteen in the
building, so, not sure it says much
about me.

Young Jimmy approaches.

YOUNG JIMMY
Humble. Nice.

Warren sees the photo on the table.

WARREN
Your husband?

ADEL
Yes. Jimmy.

Young Jimmy circles Warren, though, of course, Warren can't
see him.

YOUNG JIMMY
(looks him over)
No horns, so, he's got that going
for him.

WARREN
He's a looker.

YOUNG JIMMY
Excellent taste. But, we knew that
already.

WARREN
Look, I'm sorry if I came on too
strong down there. It's just -- you
know how it is. Life's short. But,
I really don't want to pressure
you. You tell me when you're ready.
IF -- you're ready.

YOUNG JIMMY
Oh, Babe. I like this guy.

ADEL

It's not you. I hope you know that.

There's another knock at the door. Adel answers. MILDRED, 80s, holds out a box of chocolates.

MILDRED

I heard Warren was here.

Adel takes the candy.

MILDRED

(evil eye)

Don't eat it. It's for Warren.

ADEL

Got it. For Warren.

Adel closes the door.

YOUNG JIMMY

This guy's more popular than a chocolate fountain at a Kansas City brunch.

Adel hands Warren the gift.

WARREN

I'm sorry.

Another KNOCK at the door. Adel answers. It's Mildred, again.

MILDRED

Did you give it to him?

ADEL

I promise.

WARREN (O.S.)

Got it right here. Thanks, Mildred.

Mildred peeks around.

MILDRED

It's chocolates.

WARREN

Yes, thank you.

MILDRED

Alright then.

Mildred turns down the hall and Adel closes the door.

WARREN
Again. Very sorry.

ADEL
Oh, no. It was nice to see Mildred
care about something other than
pudding.

There's another KNOCK at the door. Adel sighs, heads to
answer it.

Warren hangs his head.

Young Jimmy is gone.

ADEL
(opening the door)
Yes, he's here --

She stops cold as a huge bouquet of roses fills the doorway.

A DELIVERYMAN pokes his head around.

DELIVERYMAN
Adel?

Adel nods, takes the flowers.

Warren stands, heads for the door.

WARREN
I should go. I didn't realize --

ADEL
No, they're not -- I don't --

DELIVERYMAN
I been waiting to meet the woman
that inspires a man to order
flowers a whole year in advance.
(to Warren)
I bet you're an accountant.
(to Adel)
Those guys. Planners, I tell 'ya.

Adel glances at the note.

ADEL
They're from Jimmy.

DELIVERYMAN
(to Warren)
You ain't Jimmy? That's awkward.

Adel closes the door on the Deliveryman.

WARREN

This feels like a private moment.

Warren reaches for the door.

WARREN

You're a lovely woman. I hope you call me sometime.

He leaves.

She reads the card.

OLDER JIMMY, 70s, slips in next to Adel, puts his arm around her, pulls her tight.

OLDER JIMMY

Happy Valentine's Day to the most beautiful gal I ever met. I miss you so much. You put the spark in my world.

Adel wipes tears from her eyes.

OLDER JIMMY

We'll be together again someday. But, I want you to be happy today. So, please, find someone that makes you happy and share that spark with them. Love, Your Jimmy.

She looks up from the card. Jimmy is gone.

INT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Adel opens the closet, surveys her clothes.

EXT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - DAY

Warren stands by the community van. He holds several more boxes of chocolate.

A DRIVER sits, waiting.

WARREN

Chocolate?

The driver gladly accepts.

WARREN
Here, take 'em all.

The front door to the community opens and out walks Adel, wearing the same dress from the photo. Though, now we can see the color: vibrant red.

WARREN
You look amazing.

ADEL
(re: the dress)
I hope you don't mind. It's kind of a Valentine's Day tradition. It was Jimmy's favorite.

WARREN
Well, I can see why.

He helps Adel into the van.

WARREN
So, did we decide on a bread?

ADEL
Cheesecake Factory has a nice pumpernickel.

WARREN
Pumpernickel it is.

The van pulls away.

FADE OUT.