

WE GOT AN A

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

JEFFREY, 40'S, a suit in a vehicle, his daughter beside him.
REENA, 7, plays with a jump rope, dangling it out the window.

It falls from her grasp, swinging like a snake in the wind.
The fake snake lands atop a sign: ASPARAGUS FOR SALE

Reena, mouth agape, gets her dad's attention. He spins them
back, jets out quick to grab the rope, but something is way
off in his world.

That sign, the rope, or both make him stop. He takes it down.
His engraved "J" ring glints in the sunshine as he touches
the sign in a soft moment before walking on, his shadow on
the ground in a beam of light that shrinks to:

INT. SENIOR'S HOME/ROOM - NIGHT

The bottom of a door. It sweeps open to a dimly lit quiet;
disturbed by the CARE AID who enters to see ancient CHARLIE
HIGGS awake in his bed, his ball cap on.

CARE AID

Mr. Charlie Higgs, are you storing
up your sleep meds again?

Charlie's unyielding eyes face her for a showdown.

CHARLIE

I take them. They just don't work.

The Care Aid opens his side drawer. Pushes around the random
contents, empties a box of Smarties. Zero.

CARE AID

You're getting good.

CHARLIE

I've always been good.

The Care Aid exits. Charlie waves her off "get lost". His
eyes close. He drifts:

CHARLIE'S DREAM:

EXT. ASPARAGUS FARM - DAY

The field has YOUNGER CHARLIE HIGGS, ball cap on, and his son, Jeffrey, early 20s.

CHARLIE

Farm's not in your blood? Bin good enough for generations till you.

JEFFREY

It is what it is, Dad. You can't make a zebra into a horse.

CHARLIE

Go. I don't wanna see you no more.

Jeffrey tries to speak, but can't. Charlie points his chin up sharply "piss off" he needn't say.

INT. CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

The CHAPLAIN, peers through the window then back at Charlie.

CHAPLAIN

Ecclesiastes. Nothing new under the sun. Your story. Not new, Charlie. I can only recommend you call him.

CHARLIE

I still think I was right. He should have stayed. The farm collapsed because of him.

Charlie shakes his head though, in argument with himself.

CHARLIE

Maybe. Thanks.

He gets up to leave. The Chaplain reclines, sighs.

INT. FRONT OFFICE - NIGHT

NIGHT CLERK and Care Aid at desk, ticking boxes on a chart, entering into a computer.

NIGHT CLERK

Why do you think he doesn't want to take his night meds?

CARE AID

Truth? I think he's storing them. Plans a quick exit.

NIGHT CLERK

Hm. Got a call from his son. Plans
a visit with his granddaughter.

CARE AID

I never knew he had a son.

INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY

Seniors around tables. Some play board games. Not Charlie.
Alas, he sees: Jeffrey and his granddaughter, Reena.

LATER:

JEFFREY

No, I should be sorry. Maybe if I--

Charlie shakes "no", puts his hand on Jeffrey's shoulder.
Mimes: "Get us a shot". Jeffrey, a sneaky "aha". Leaves.

Charlie to Reena as he writes on a paper.

CHARLIE

So, math is the problem? Let's see.
Ya know the 9 rule? Every 9 times
table adds up to 9. $2 \times 9 = 18$
 $8 + 1 = 9$, $3 \times 9 = 27$ $2 + 7 = 9$ and so on.

Reena beams at the knowledge as a CRASH initiates a
thunderstorm yielding precious-

INT. ROOM - DAY

Rain on the window. Charlie and Jeffrey drink secret shots.
Reena plays jumprope, this time actually jumping with it.

Jeffrey skims Reena's homework paper. Gives a thumbs up.

REENA

Grandpa, WE got an A!

JEFFREY

A for Asparagus. Dad, something
happened today that made me think
about goin' back to farming.

Charlie squints, not able to think what, but it's good.

FADE OUT: