

EXT. FARMING COMMUNITY, UPSTATE NEW YORK - ESTABLISHING

Lush rolling hills surround a quaint farming community. A winding rural road leads to the Village of Hobart. Charming homes with colorful flowerboxes line the few blocks that comprise Main Street.

EXT. JUDITH'S HOUSE - DAY.

JUDITH, late 50's, striking woman with bright eyes, snips blooms from the garden and carries the basket into the house.

INT. JUDITH'S HOUSE - DAY.

Judith stands at the kitchen counter and arranges flowers in a vase. EDIE, early 60's, Earth mother in Birkenstocks, tromps through the back door.

EDIE

You'll never believe it! Eleanor stood me up again last night.

JUDITH

Why wouldn't I believe it? A promise from Eleanor is like a promise from a teen to abstain from sex. Briefly sincere but ultimately empty.

EDIE

Hank Trumball invited her to the Fish Fry.

JUDITH

I can't believe he's dating already. His wife is barely cold. Coffee?

Maggie nods and Judith pours coffee for both of them. They sit at the kitchen table.

EDIE

Well, he is a good-looking man. I'm sure he won't be single long.

JUDITH

Certainly not long enough to figure out how to do his own laundry or prepare his own meals.

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The front door SLAMS loudly.

JUDITH (cont'd)

In the kitchen, Maggie.

MAGGIE, early 60's, vivacious, curvaceous, woman with a big hair-do, breezes into the kitchen. Judith moves to get another cup of coffee.

MAGGIE

Here it is ladies! Our next adventure.

Maggie grips several brightly-colored brochures that she proudly places on the table.

EDIE

A Singles Cruise?! Are you crazy?!

MAGGIE

A Senior Singles Cruise. No one under 50. Men and women on the open sea, gettin' inspired by the motion of the ocean.

Judith sits and gives Edna a serious look.

JUDITH

Count me OUT. It's been about 40 years since my last date. I don't even know what to do anymore.

EDIE

Me either. I am not desperate enough to go on a singles cruise.
(beat)

Yet.

MAGGIE

Listen here. We all take turns choosing the vacation. Judith, I went on your snooty East Coast Museum tour without complaining.

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CONTINUED: (2)

JUDITH

What's to complain about?

MAGGIE

I looked at thousands of naked men but didn't touch a single real one!

EDIE

There were lots of men on MY vacation.

MAGGIE

Amish men. Married Amish men. The tour was lovely Maggie but the only men I saw getting excited were looking at plows. I want a shot at a real, live breathing man.

Maggie puckers up and motions pulling a man into her. There's excitement in her voice and spring in her step.

EDIE

Well, you know there are only 487 people in all of Hobart. I was reading the Census Bureau report last night ...

Maggie looks quizzically at Edie.

JUDITH

Eleanor stood her up. Date with Hank Trumball.

Maggie nods knowingly.

EDIE

(cont)

... and it says 19.3% of the households in Hobart have a woman as head of the house. No man present.

MAGGIE

That's us. No man present.

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CONTINUED: (3)

JUDITH

No dirty socks in the corner. No one waiting for me to cook and clean up after him.

EDIE

No one pretending to listen when they don't really care.

MAGGIE

And NO sex. Ladies, I'm not searching for a husband. I'm just looking for a little fun.

(beat)

You can stay in your rooms if you like. We all agreed. It's my turn and this is my choice!

Judith scowls and Edie salutes.

EDIE

Aye-aye cap'n.

JUDITH

New Horizons Cruises ... for the active senior ...

INT. JUDITH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A warm fire glows. Judith is curled up in a wing back chair, reading a novel. She is distracted by the sound of voices outside. The door opens. CARTER, 3, beautiful blue-eyed boy dashes across the room. KYLE and LIZ (30's, yuppie-ish couple follow).

CARTER

Gramma.

He reaches for her. Kyle lifts the boy into Judith's waiting arms.

JUDITH

Uff-da. How's my big boy?

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KYLE

I hear you're going on a cruise.

JUDITH

Word travels fast. I'm going under protest.

LIZ

It might be fun. You might meet someone special.

Judith snorts.

KYLE

Why not give it a shot, Mom? I don't like the thought of you being alone.

She hugs her grandson.

JUDITH

I'm not alone. I've got my little man.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

Judith, Edie and Maggie shop for tour clothes. They hold up swimsuits, evening dresses and smart deck outfits. Maggie spins in a lovely dress posing like Marilyn Monroe over a vent. Judith rolls her eyes. Edie wraps herself in a tie-dye shawl and flutters her eyelids. Judith tries on deck shoes with non-skid soles.

CUT TO:

EXT. CRUISE SHIP - DAY

A sea of SILVER-HAIRED MEN AND WOMEN board the cruise ship. Some are flamboyantly dressed, some are nautically attired, and others are equally natty. Like a high school dance, people are checking each other out.

EXT. RAMP, CRUISE SHIP - DAY

Judith, Edie and Maggie board the ship. As they're walking, Maggie looks at the enormous vessel and starts to lose her balance and falls into TAJ MAHENDERAN, early 60's, Hindi with warm brown eyes. He catches her and props her up.

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TAJ

Forgive me for being so forward, Madam.

MAGGIE

If you weren't so forward, I'd be falling backward.

He smiles at her and nods slightly.

REXLEY CROMWELL, late 50's, distinguished, stuffy, Cruise Director greets them as they reach the deck. His ASSISTANT verifies their identities.

REXLEY

Welcome aboard ladies. The Winter Sun is honored by your presence.

ASSISTANT

Names, please.

MAGGIE

Margaret Burget.

EDIE

Edith Esperanza.

ASSISTANT

Welcome aboard ladies.

Rexley kisses each woman's hand.

JUDITH

Judith Whitcomb.

Rexley holds Judith's hand a little longer than is appropriate.

REXLEY

Ah, a proper British lady.

JUDITH

Whitcomb was my husband's name.

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CONTINUED: (2)

REXLEY

I would have sworn you were a citizen of the realm.

JUDITH

My parents were Brits. They emigrated to the United States when I was six.

REXLEY

A loss for the Motherland. Charmed to make your acquaintance Lady Whitcomb. I do hope you will dine with me one evening.

It's more of a statement than a question. He is clearly set on getting to know Judith more intimately. She is terribly uncomfortable and moves quickly to follow her friends.

INT. CABIN - DAY

As is true of most cruise ships, the cabin is quite small. They enter and drop their bags. Edie looks out the window.

EDIE

It's a little tighter than I thought it would be.

MAGGIE

All the more reason to get out and mingle.

JUDITH

Since this was your idea, Margaret, I think you should have to take the top bunk.

MAGGIE

We drew straws fair and square.

EDIE

How about we take beds in the order we come in. Last one in at night gets the top bunk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

All the more reason to stay out.

JUDITH

Or go to bed right after dinner.

MAGGIE

I say we unpack and relax by the pool.

CUT TO:

EXT. POOLSIDE - DAY

The women are in their smart new swimsuits and cover-ups. MEN and WOMEN swim and laugh all around them. Judith reads "THE STONE DIARIES" behind dark glasses. They're seated near the towel rack. Edie hands out towels like it's her job. A GREAT LOOKING MAN comes up.

EDIE

There you go. Perhaps you'll need two.

He takes both towels but barely looks at her.

JUDITH

Edie, what are you doing? This is your vacation!

MAGGIE

I agree, Edie. Let's go swimming or do something fun.

Maggie stands up abruptly and heads quickly toward the edge of the pool. She is looking over her shoulder instead of watching where she is going.

MAGGIE (cont'd)

Come on, Edith. Swim with me.

She steps into the path of a man who has nowhere to go. He knocks her into the pool. She sputters and emerges to find Taj looking at her in horror.

TAJ

Oh, Madam. Forgive me. Again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

My fault. Forgive me.

He assists her from the pool.

TAJ

Perhaps I could offer you beverage for my
clumsiness.

They walk toward the beverage bar. Maggie looks back and
them and smiles broadly. Edie gives her the "thumbs up."

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Judith and Edie sit at a table with two men and women who
appear to have "coupled up." The couples are canoodling
while Edie and Judith converse. Nearby, there is a table of
SIX WOMEN. Maggie enters arm-in-arm with Taj. Edie waves
vigorously at them.

INT. BINGO ROOM - NIGHT

The room is filled with women. Numbers are called and bingo
cards are marked. Judith and Edie mark their cards. It's
like any other Bingo group on dry land.

EXT. PROMENADE DECK - MAGIC

Judith and Edie look at the setting sun as they head toward
their cabin. Couples move about the decks.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Judith and Edie go to sleep in the lower beds. Judith looks
at the empty bunk above her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CABIN - DAY

Judith awakens to an empty bunk above her. Maggie scurries
into the room.

MAGGIE

Good morning ladies! Only five nights
remaining on your Sexy Singles cruise.

Edie rolls over.

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CONTINUED:

EDIE

You're awfully happy this morning.

MAGGIE

That's because I've had an awfully happy night. Oh the things I've learned.

Eddie groans.

EDIE

Don't tell me. I don't want to know.

MAGGIE

It would be better if you had your own experiences. So, to help you out ...

Maggie drops two forms on the bed. Judith picks them up.

EDIE

Senior Dating 101 ... Regain Your Dating Mojo ...

JUDITH

I don't think I ever had dating Mojo.

MAGGIE

All the more reason to take the class. It starts at ten.

JUDITH

I'm not going to a foolish dating class.

MAGGIE

I already paid for it and it wasn't cheap. What have you got to lose?

EDIE

Maggie ...

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MARILYN, 50's, attractive, white-haired woman stands to the front of the class.

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CONTINUED:

Two assistants, LAURA, late 40's, and SONIA, early 50's, sit at the registration table. Judith and Edie arrive in the last few minutes. Sonia registers Edie. Laura smiles warmly at Judith.

LAURA
(whispering)

Don't worry. It won't be so bad.

Judith grimaces in mock horror. She and Edie take the few remaining seats in the front.

MARILYN

The hardest thing about dating for seniors is that most of them haven't done it for so long. How many of you haven't been on a date for a couple of decades?

Most of the hands in the room go up, including Judith and Edie.

MARILYN (cont'd)

The other challenge is that some of us endured difficult relationships and are a reluctant to take that on again. How many of you married, raised a family and fulfilled your societal role?

Again, many hands go up including Judith and Edie.

MARILYN (cont'd)

Did you know that 56% of all women over 65 are unmarried?

JUDITH

I believe 55% of them are happier for it!

The room erupts in laughter and the tension breaks as women nod at each other.

MARILYN

In our generation, dating generally led to marriage but times have changed. We don't need to marry everyone we date anymore.

A few women cheer and call out from the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN ONE

Amen! Now you're talking!

MARILYN

Today, we're going to learn about how to get off the sidelines and back into the game. Other people are doing it, why shouldn't you? The age group with the highest percentage of new cases of HIV is the over 65, so it might embarrass some of you but we're going to talk about safe sex, too.

ANXIOUS WOMAN

Who remembers what safe sex is any more?

MARILYN

Do the things you learn today and you'll be beating the men off with a stick!

More cheers from the crowd.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLASSROOM MONTAGE - DAY

Women closely admire their faces in the mirror. Colorists drape women in colors that flatter their complexions.

MARILYN

You are competing with each other for the attention of a limited number of men. If you want their attention, you will have to regain your dating mojo! Let them see what you've got.

Women nod coquettishly at each other. They bat their eyes. They sashay from table to table. Judith and Edie look more attractive with the extra attention to make-up and coloring. Edie is looking more alluring, more confident. Judith is still pretty resistant. She looks downright irritated.

JUDITH

Why do we have to go through all of this?
What about the men?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARILYN

They're in a separate classroom.

LAURA

Learning how to listen. And not talk
about their previous wives.

WOMAN TWO

How about those dirty underwear?

MARILYN

We're not miracle workers.

Laughter all around the room.

MARILYN (cont'd)

Now, let's get reacquainted with our
bodies.

Judith looks terrified. Laura starts the music. Edie
clutches Judith to avoid getting another partner.

SONIA

Everybody find a partner.

MARILYN

Laura is the Cruise Dance Instructor.
You'll find a list of classes on the
table in the back of the room. Follow
her lead.

A brisk waltz begins. Laura and Sonia seem to float across
the floor. The other women move stiffly around the room.

LAURA

Relax and feel the music in your bones.
You remember how it was when you were a
young girl. She's still inside you.

MARILYN

Switch partners. Learn to respond to
something new, someone new.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The music changes to a slow, gentle song. Judith turns to find herself facing Laura.

MARILYN (cont'd)

You must open yourself to new possibilities. Try new things.

JUDITH
(under her breath)

But we're so old.

Laura is a skillful dancer. Judith finds it much easier to follow her lead. Her body is relaxing, responding to the rhythms of the music and another person.

LAURA

That's better. I told you it wouldn't be so bad.

Laura's voice is husky, suggestive.

MARILYN

That's it. Pretend this is someone you find yourself caring for, someone you want to be with. Let yourself go.

Judith's eyes close for a few moments. When she opens her eyes, Laura is gazing at her. The tension is rising between them. It's an ancient memory that is returning to Judith with a vengeance. There is color in her cheeks, her eyes are bright, her movements youthful. The music stops.

MARILYN (cont'd)

That's it. Now get that Mojo out there and use it to get what you want!

The women applaud and leave the room. Marilyn, Laura and Sonia are gathering their gear and tidying the room.

SONIA

When is the next group in here?

MARILYN

Fifteen minutes so we need to hurry.

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CONTINUED: (3)

Eddie is eager to leave but Judith lingers. She picks up a Dance Class Flyer.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Eddie is eagerly dressing for the evening.

EDIE

I want to go to The Disco Room after dinner.

JUDITH

Disco? I thought disco was dead.

EDIE

It's no more dead than we are. That's why they have two different Disco Rooms.

JUDITH

Eed ...

EDIE

Come on Judith, I'd do it for you. I can't go by myself.

Judith looks unhappy but weakens at the sight of her friend's face.

EDIE (cont'd)

If I find someone to dance with, you can leave. Okay?

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Judith and Eddie are seated at a table of eight. There are an equal number of men and women at the table. Eddie uses her re-discovered Mojo to flirt with a couple of the men at the table. FRANK, 60's, sturdy outdoor type with steel-gray hair and deep voice is particularly drawn to Eddie.

FRANK

The Heifer Project. I've never heard of it. How long have you been volunteering for them?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDIE

Over seven years. It's very exciting. One of the staffers in Senator Clinton's office is from Uganda. She got a goat.

STUFFY WOMAN
(ridiculing laughter)

A goat?!

JUDITH

Better to get a goat than behave like one.

FRANK

I grew up on a farm in Wisconsin. I showed my goats in the fair for 4-H.

EDIE

We're going to The Disco Room later. Would you like to join us.

FRANK

I'm not much of a dancer.

The Cruise Director approaches their table. He stands next to Judith.

REXLEY

The Disco Room. I'll be visiting that venue this evening as well. Perhaps you will grace me with a dance, Lady Whitcomb.

EDIE

We spent the afternoon dancing.

The Director drags his finger down Judith's arm. He is borderline lewd.

REXLEY

Ahhh, rediscovering our Mojo, are we?

INT. DISCO ROOM - NIGHT

Eddie dances her heart out with Frank who lumbers around the room. Eddie doesn't care, she's a wood nymph prancing around her own tree spirit. Judith hides in a dark corner of the room. Suddenly, she notices Laura on the dance floor. She moves from man to man, smiling engagingly at each of them. A voice startles her.

REXLEY

May I have this dance?

Judith acquiesces and takes the Director's arm. The move under the glittering disco ball. Judith does not move as smoothly with the Cruise Director. She's stiff and awkward.

REXLEY (cont'd)

Lady Whitcomb, you dance like an angel.

JUDITH

I didn't know angels danced.

REXLEY

Maybe you'll be a devil later.

JUDITH

Mr. Cromwell!

He chuckles and continues to move her about the floor. The song ends.

REXLEY

Would like something from the bar? White wine.

Judith nods and stands at the edge of the dance floor. Laura appears next to her.

LAURA

It looks like the lesson was useful.

JUDITH

He seems content with it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAURA

I'd be careful with him. Captain Crummy finds a proper British lady on every cruise.

JUDITH

I'm not interested in him. Have you found someone you're interested in?

The tension between them is palpable. Laura looks at the dance floor and answers evenly.

LAURA

Dancing with the guests is part of the job. It gets them interested in dance classes.

Then she turns and looks at Judith. Her eyes narrow and her head tilts. The look is hard to read.

JUDITH

So that's what it's all about. Dance classes.

LAURA

Well, I do have to pay the bills.
(beat)
And, yes, I found someone interesting on this trip.

Rexley returns with the drinks.

JUDITH

I'm sorry. I'm going to have to leave.
I'm not feeling well.

REXLEY

But my'lady --

She's gone before anyone can stop her.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Judith lies in her bed. The other two beds are empty.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

There are many couples scattered around the room. Love is in the air. About a third of the tables are all women. Judith eats alone.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

Judith peers through the window. Laura leads a mixed crowd in dance lessons. Dressed in a black leotard, Judith is aware of every movement the dancer makes. She leaves without being seen.

EXT. POOLSIDE - DAY

Judith reads her novel. Couples splash all around her. Edie and Frank wave from across the pool. Judith smiles. Her friend looks so happy. Shortly thereafter, Maggie and Taj sit down next to her.

MAGGIE

Howdy Stranger.

JUDITH

Stranger than most. Where have you been.

MAGGIE

Taj has been teaching me all about tantrism. It's quite inspiring.

She giggles and he nods shyly. It's hard to imagine him as a sexual God but he's keeping Maggie quite happy.

TAJ

Only one night remains on the cruise. Have you found nothing that stimulates your passion on this journey?

JUDITH

You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

He looks very puzzled.

TAJ

I do not understand about the dogs. I thought perhaps I saw a spark in your eye one day.

EXT. PROMENADE DECK - SUNSET

Judith strolls alone, heading for the bow of the ship. She stares at the setting sun.

LAURA

Don't jump. It's not that bad.

She touches Judith's arm. Judith visibly jumps.

JUDITH

It's worse than you can imagine.

LAURA

I've been doing the cruise thing for a long time. I can imagine quite a lot.

Judith is silent. She sways with the movement of the sea.

LAURA (cont'd)

Did I imagine what happened between us?

JUDITH

I have a son.

LAURA

I'm not interested in your son.

Laura leans in and kisses Judith. It's a sweet moment.

JUDITH

But, I never ...

LAURA

Me either.

JUDITH

My family ...

LAURA

They'll just think we're roommates.

FADE TO BLACK.