

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Characters

COLIN: male, late 60s

DOROTHY: female, late 60s

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AT RISE:

The place: a public park.

The time: present day, a cloudy autumn evening.

COLIN and DOROTHY, a husband and wife in their late sixties, enter. Both are dressed appropriately for the chilly weather. They take seats on a bench.

COLIN is cognitively intact, while DOROTHY is in the throes of dementia.

DOROTHY stares straight ahead. COLIN looks at her.

	COLIN
Are you cold?	
	DOROTHY
No.	
	COLIN
'Cause if you're cold, I can give you my sweater.	
	DOROTHY
Ha!	
	COLIN
What?	
	DOROTHY
That's just silly.	
	COLIN
Why is that silly?	
	DOROTHY
'Cause I'm already <i>wearing</i> a sweater.	
	<i>(beat)</i>
What?	
	<i>(pointing to what she's wearing)</i>
Isn't this fuzzy thing a sweater?	

COLIN

Yes, it's a very lovely sweater.

DOROTHY

See?

I was right!

COLIN

Yes, darling.

You *are* right.

You *are* wearing a sweater.

And, if you'd like – if you're cold – you can wear my sweater on top of it.

DOROTHY

Well, I don't want to.

COLIN

That's fine.

You don't have to.

I just wanted to make sure you weren't cold.

DOROTHY

Well, I'm not.

COLIN

Good.

DOROTHY

But thank you for asking.

(beat)

Now can I ask *you* something?

COLIN

Of course.

DOROTHY

What's your name?

COLIN

My name?

DOROTHY

Yes.

COLIN
Colin.

DOROTHY
Colin.

COLIN
Yes.

DOROTHY
I like the name "Colin."

COLIN
Good.
I'm rather fond of it myself.
What's *your* name?

DOROTHY
(hesitantly)
Uh ... my name is –

COLIN
(gently, trying to help her)
Dorothy, right?

DOROTHY
Dorothy, yes.
(beat)
Dorothy and Colin.
Colin and Dorothy.
Rather a nice ring to it, don't you think?

COLIN
Yes.
Definitely.
A totally lovely ring.

DOROTHY
Y'know what?
Now that you mention it, the name "Colin" sounds very familiar.

COLIN
Does it?

DOROTHY

Yes, I think I knew another “Colin” way back when – when my waist was as thin as a movie star’s and my hair was as black as coal.
Though you wanna hear something funny?

COLIN

Sure.

DOROTHY

When I picture his face right now –

COLIN

Yes?

DOROTHY

It looks a little like your face –

COLIN

Hmm.
Interesting.

DOROTHY

Except much younger.

COLIN

(playfully)

In other words, a most handsome fella!

DOROTHY

Oh, yes!
Most handsome!
I think you would’ve liked him.

COLIN

Well, see that?
Now you know *two* “Colins” – a young one and an old one.

DOROTHY

Yes!
Two for the price of one!

COLIN

Exactly.
Two for the price of one.

Beat.

COLIN

Dorothy –

DOROTHY

Yes?

COLIN

What else do you remember about that *other* Colin, the young one?

DOROTHY

Nothing.
Why?

COLIN

(pointing to the surrounding space)

Do you remember this park?

DOROTHY

Not really, no.
Should I?

COLIN

How 'bout this bench?
Do you remember this bench?

DOROTHY

(suspicious)

Is that a trick question?

COLIN

No.
Not at all.

DOROTHY

(growing more upset)

'Cause to me, that sounds like a trick question!

COLIN

No, swear to God! – it's not.
This bench just brings back some memories for me, that's all.

DOROTHY

Does it?

COLIN

Oh, yes.
Some wonderful memories.

DOROTHY

That's nice.

COLIN

Yes.
It's very nice.
So I was just wondering –

DOROTHY

What?

COLIN

Does this bench bring back any wonderful memories for you?

Beat. DOROTHY regards COLIN.

DOROTHY

No.

COLIN

Oh.
Alright.

DOROTHY

Sorry.

COLIN

Whatever for?

DOROTHY

You sound disappointed.

COLIN

I'm not, though.
Not really.

DOROTHY

Are you sure?

COLIN

Positive.

You could never disappoint me.

Beat. DOROTHY regards COLIN.

DOROTHY

It's not polite to keep a secret, y'know – so you really should tell me.

COLIN

Tell you what?

DOROTHY

Some of those memories of yours.

The ones brought back by this bench, I mean.

COLIN

Well, if you really wanna hear them –

DOROTHY

I do.

COLIN

Then I'll be happy to tell you.

So here's the best one:

(beat)

I first kissed a girl here.

DOROTHY

When?

Earlier today?

COLIN

(laughing)

Oh, no.

A long time ago.

Like fifty years ago.

In fact, *exactly* fifty years ago.

On an evening very much like this one.

DOROTHY

Huh.
Was she wearing a sweater?

COLIN

Good question.
She was, indeed.

DOROTHY

Were you?

COLIN

Oh, yes.
Though when she kissed me back –

DOROTHY

Yah?

COLIN

That was all the warmth I ever needed.

Beat. DOROTHY regards COLIN.

DOROTHY

Your sweater that day –

COLIN

What about it?

DOROTHY

Was it blue?

COLIN

A dark navy, yes.
Why do you ask?

DOROTHY

I think I may have seen you.

COLIN

Really?

DOROTHY

Yes.

I'm actually quite sure of it.

You brought the girl some sweets – a little box of chocolates.

That's true, is it not?

COLIN

Well done!

That *is* true.

What else do you remember?

DOROTHY

It was cool out –

COLIN

Yes.

DOROTHY

And the girl –

COLIN

Do you recall her?

DOROTHY

She was pretty.

COLIN

The prettiest.

DOROTHY

With a waist as thin as a movie star's and with hair as black as coal.

Am I right?

COLIN

One hundred per cent.

DOROTHY

That girl – I wonder where she *is* right now, what she's up to.

COLIN

Well, believe it or not, I think I know.

DOROTHY

You do?

COLIN

It's an anniversary of sorts – and she's celebrating.

DOROTHY

Her wedding anniversary?

COLIN

No, not *that* exactly – but something nearly as sweet.

(beat)

The anniversary of first being kissed by the man who's loved her ever since – for fifty years, no less!

A lovely occasion to celebrate, don't you think?

DOROTHY

Goodness, yes!

She sounds like a very lucky woman!

COLIN

Oh, she is – and he's an even luckier man!

Beat. COLIN kisses DOROTHY on the cheek.

COLIN

Is it OK that I kissed you just now?

DOROTHY

I don't know.

After all, we just met.

I barely know you.

COLIN

Well, maybe I could see you tomorrow.

That way, you could get to know me better.

DOROTHY

Alright.

(beat)

Will you bring chocolates?

COLIN

I will.
A whole boxful.
As many as you'd like.
(beat)
You look cold?
Are you cold?

DOROTHY

A little, yes.

COLIN

If I give you my sweater, will you wear it?

DOROTHY

(re: COLIN'S sweater)

Huh.
It's navy blue – just like what's-his-name.

COLIN takes off his sweater and places it around DOROTHY'S shoulders.

COLIN

Right.
Navy blue – just like what's-his name.

COLIN takes DOROTHY'S hand in his. They share a loving look.

End of play.