BERYL

by

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INT. THE GERIATRICS UNIT OF A SMALL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Two very elderly women sit in armchairs beside each other.
One is BERYL, she is slumbering quietly, a blanket over her
knees. Her friend SUE reads by the light of a small lamp.
A young male care-worker, JOE, comes in to check on them.

                    SUE
          Who're you?

                    JOE
          I'm Joe. We did meet
          yesterday - I've taken over
          from Mark, remember?

                    SUE
          Shame. Mark was nice. Used to
          steal us Hobnobs from the
          kitchen. But no one lasts
          long here, the staff leave
          and the patients die. - Are
          you going to steal biscuits
          for us, Joe?

Joe is considering his reply as Beryl stirs beside them.

                    BERYL
          Is that you Bertie?

                    SUE
          Not again (loudly, to Beryl)
          That isn't <u>him</u>, Beryl.

Joe goes over and kneels beside her.

                    BERYL
          You used to take me dancing
          every Valentine's Day.

                    SUE
             (to Joe)
          She sometimes forgets that
          her husband is... you know.

                    JOE
          Oh, I see.

                    BERYL
          Can't you take me home? I
          hate it here, Bertie. I miss
          sleeping beside you, I miss

                    waking up to see your face. I
                    even miss the way you kick me
                    in the shins when you're
                    dreaming.

Beryl takes Joe's hands, he is a little disconcerted.

                         BERYL (CONT'D)
                    You remember the first time
                    we shared a bed? - Didn't we
                    have a lovely honeymoon..?
                    (He nods nervously) What was
                    your favourite part?

Joe is flustered, he turns to Sue who smiles encouragingly.

                         JOE
                    The... weather?

                         BERYL
                    Oh yes, all that rain! We
                    barely left the hotel room...
                         (Beryl leans in
                          toward him)
                    After all these years, do you
                    still love me Bertie?

                         SUE
                         (whispered)
                    Go on, please Joe.

Joe squeezes her hands gently and looks into her eyes.

                         JOE
                    I will always love you Beryl.

Beryl grabs his face and kisses him firmly on the lips. Joe
is wide-eyed and stunned, but allows her to do it. As soon
as possible he pulls away, backing out of the room.

                         JOE
                    Goodnight...then.

The two women wait until he has gone. Beryl turns to Sue
and they both smile, mischievous smiles.

                         SUE
                    I thought your husband's
                    called Peter.

                         BERYL
                    That's right. He is.