

~~25. AMERICAN RETIREMENT FILM.~~
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25. MIAMI BEACH FILM.

617-536-1166

FRONTLINE:
My Retirement Dreams

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Shots of palm trees and Miami exteriors.
My name is Marian Marzynski.

Marian driving in car
I am on assignment for "Frontline," dispatched to a territory no one likes to visit: our old age.

Miami retirement communities
So, of course, I am in Florida, the holy ground of retirement in America.

Elders party, woman sings
I came to this country twenty five years ago and tasted American success. Now I am approaching sixty and wonder: what is the American Dream for the old?

Woman sings, audience listens
In a culture where new is better than old and youth better than age, we don't hear much from our elders, except where there is a scare about the future of Social Security or Medicare.

Marian driving in car, Miami exteriors.
Retirement under Florida's sun attracts all kinds of Americans: the rich, the poor, the rest of us.

And as for myself? I like Florida. But I am not sure I like the idea of retirement. out

Marian on the boat
What kind of journey will it be? A new beginning or just the end?

END PROLOGUE

Sunrise over Miami Beach
Title:

My Retirement Dreams

Marian applies Grecian formula in front of bathroom mirror.
I've read a lot of books about retirement. One of them started this way: "No matter how much Grecian Formula you put on your hair, America is graying." Twenty five years from now, one of every five Americans will be over sixty five.

Marian exits to condo balcony.
The projections are that an army of thirty five million baby boomers will join me in my retirement. So here, on the northern edge of Miami Beach...

Marian walking on boardwalk

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Alex fox

...where most retirees are Jewish Americans from the Northeast, I am briskly marching into my future.

Marian walking with other people

Marian: *Do you want to walk with us? We show you how to walk nicely. Since when you are retired?*

Woman: *Since when am I retired? A year ago!*

Woman 2: *I walk five miles every single day, seven days a week.*

Marian: *Ok, just what do you do with your hands. Just tell me what is the correct way of walking. Like this? Long?*

Woman 3: *All your energy, frustration. Your heart pumps. Boom boom boom boom boom.*

Marian: *Some people would say that retirement is the end of life.*

Man 2: *Nah, its not the end.*

Marian: *No? I am thinking about whether I should I retire or not? I'm gonna be bored. I'm gonna be depressed? I want an answer for this question.*

Marian walks with a young man

Trainer: *Usually forward and backward helps to propel you forward.*

Actually, a few of those questions were already answered for me. Some years ago I was brainwashed into a healthy lifestyle...

Marian enters Pritikin Center.

... at Miami's Pritikin Longevity Center. As an alumni I visit my teacher and cheerleader, Barbara Uddel.

Barbara and participants

Barbara: *What is the definition of retirement and what does it mean to you? Chaim, what does retirement mean to you?*

Chyam: *Death.*

Barbara: *Death? Did he say death? Could you like, give a little more Chyam?*

Chyam: *I will give it to you. As long as person, man or woman, are capable of producing and building, he should never stop.*

Woman: *Retiring at 65. That mindset is archaic because we now have longevity and so we are younger that we were, than our counterpart a generation ago. Much younger.*

Man: *Retirement is a very personal word. For me its like marriage, its like love, its like divorce, it's like religion, sex, politics. Its personal for everyone.*

Pritikin Band plays

My dream about retirement is a return to basics, when stripped of titles, honors and obligations, we can enjoy life's simplicity. I shared this idea with Louis Schoer, when I met him on the beach.

Marian and Louis on the beach.

Louis spends summers in New York, winters in Miami. He has the look of a professional retiree.

Marian: *How is it? How is this spectacle of retirement?*

Louis: *The spectacle of retirement is rather disappointing, I felt lost, and I still do at times and I feel like I should have a destiny, some place to go. I think we were put on this earth to something constructive, and constructive for me was work work work work.*

says I
Marian: *But people envy you, You are the last happy generation of retired. You benefit of the GI Bill, you made money, you can go on cruises, you can buy yourself all the pleasures.*

says Louis,
Louis: *Yes, we did all those pleasures, went to the islands, traveled through Europe, traveled through the Orient. But that's only temporary. How do you keep your mind going all the time? That's the important thing. You can fall asleep but the mind keeps going. You get up the following day and what do you have? You have the same routine. You've got to watch the clock. What time is breakfast? What time is lunch? You know life is very strange, its never what you planned for. You keep going, that's it.*

we will make shorter later

Marian driving in car to school.

"To keep your brain spinning, sign up for classes at Florida International University," said Louis. It was a good tip.

Marian walking to class.

In their catalogue I found a class preparing young people for retirement, taught by Dr. Tim Patton, a baby boomer.

Tim Patton teaching class.

Tim: *The Geezers. OK? How many geezers do we have out there? Gimmie a guess. A lot is a nice general ball park. (laugh) Yea, we have a lot and we're getting more. What we have right now is about roughly 35 million of them and within 20 years there will be about 75 million of them. The boomer group is the other side of the equation because this is the group that is going to overwhelm the whole American system especially in health care. How much right now is being spent for the health care of Americans?*

Student: *One trillion?*

Tim: *And you know who's consuming it? 90% is going for the geezers. What's gonna happen when we get that age, when I get that age? We won't have it if we keep spending it like that.*

Marian at the Faculty Meeting.

I soon found out that Tim Patton's agenda for the boomers is larger than health care. I went to hear him again at a faculty meeting.

Tim: *We don't want to retire, we don't want to age, we don't want to get old. We want to be us. We're baby boomers. We've always been what we consider to be the normal age in America. And so it's not so much any more that we're retiring as this pleasant end to a long working career. It's now also we're gonna be retiring because we're gonna get kicked out of the jobs we have so we best damn be prepared for it to survive a long time. And it's not just now retiring, having these wonderful years to play a few rounds of golf, go to early bird dinners, and kick off. That we might have 20 to 25 years of retirement and that's a scary proposition.*

Marian driving through condo complexes.

The boomers are worrying about retirement. But the geezers are actually doing it. They may have more answers for my questions.

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After much research I concluded that *seniors* geezers live in condominiums. I know this blanket statement may offend those who don't, but television is known for exaggeration. **I came here to meet Bernie Cohen,** *a CBS-TV veteran who*

spe Bernie explaining *WB* speaker announce system in condo.?

his invention:

A CBS News veteran who retired some 25 years ago, Bernie moved to the Admiral's Port building and ventured into condo broadcasting.

Bernie's condo broadcasting headquarters.

Bernie: *Each building has its own channel 32. Now what happens is this. Everybody can see that and to entice them we let them know when the mail is in but putting up a little sign up there.*

Marian: *Ohhh.*

Bernie: *So they know, they don't have to come down to find out.*

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cont

For
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Bernie and Marian looking at tv.

Bernie: *I think her name is Bernice.*

Marian: *And the man?*

Bernie: *His name is Jimmie. I know quite a lot of them. He is my 89 year old assistant. He is known as our poet laureate. I'll bring him right in.*

Bernie introduces Jules to Marian.

Jules: *We three came from Brooklyn to Admiral's Port. A condo we bought, for pleasure we thought. It never did happen like fools we were caught, three slaves we've turned out to be. On Monday we're off to Wyn Dixiwe, on Tuesdays we're shopping for fish and on Wednesdays we're cleaning the toilets oh god you don't know it was never our wish. Our wives play canasta three evenings a week, to no one they speak, it's action we seek. Our neighbors ignore us, they say we are weak, our life's just a sham, no one gives a damn, we're coming home Brooklyn we're yours. (laugh)*

Marian: *So he's 89 and you are?*

Bernie: *I'm going to be 80 this year.*

Jules: *He's a teenager.*

Bernie searching through videotapes.

Bernie: *Halloween party, '92.*

Bernie and Marian watching videotape.

Bernie: *That's 5 years ago! My God.! That's what hurts, when I begin to play these things and people look at that and 19, 20 people have passed away. I'm looking at one of em, John, he passed away. Doc Wallek is still going, he's 88. Arthur Share, they're still alive thank God. She just lost her husband, Naiomi, she's 92 now. He died, Cal Asby. She died, that's the Docs wife, she died about 6 months ago, right here.*

Marian in elevator.

4/09/3
I've learned a lot of condo gossip from Bernie One story was about a woman who was a nervous wreck when she recently moved from Long Island to start her retirement in Miami.

Marian in Judith's apartment.

Her name is Judith Korson.

~~Marian: So is it beautiful?~~ *I ask her. She answers*

~~Judith: It's a magnificent apartment. It's a beautiful apartment. I love it. I'm very comfortable here. Umm, it's grand, it's spacious, it's what I'm used to from being in a house which I've lived in for many many years.~~

~~Marian: What's missing here?~~

~~Judith: My daughter. My family. I have a connection with that area. After all that was my home for many many years.~~

~~Marian: Is retirement a bad word?~~

~~Judith: I feel as though it's it's an ending. It's almost like a waiting period and I don't like that feeling.~~

Judith and Marian around kitchen table.

Judith: *As I was doing it I was happy, but at the same time I was frightened out of my wits. Yes! Because Judy what are you doing? It is, I mean this was going to be a big big move for you and its permanent! And I don't like to think in terms of permanency.*

Judith and Marian walk to elevator.

Marian: *You know what Bernie Cohen is telling me now? That this condo is getting so old that they run out of ideas of things to do.*

Bernie and the gang sits around the pool.

The old timers like Bernie counts on newcomers like Judith to energize the condo.

Bernie: *The standard joke here is "he's not good looking, he's not rich, but he drives at night." He's a good catch. That fella who wrote that poem "my tribe may it increase," our tribe is not increasing.*

Woman 1: *Many of the people are simply too old to partake in any social things. If they get through the day they're a happy person.*

Bernie: *Caterers want to see a hundred people guaranteed. We can't do that any longer. We don't know if we're gonna get 50 or 80 of 90.*

Woman 2: *We try all the time. And you see who comes down. Here we are. Two big pools and here we are. Bernie they're home before 9:00.*

Jules: *We drew big crowds for deck parties! Big Crowds.*

Woman 2: *But Jules after you served them they went home.*

Bernie: *No. No.*

Woman 2: *We were a handful that stayed. You know, be honest if you're gonna talk.*

Woman in swimming pool

What I saw at Admiral's Port worries me. The old, so isolated in retirement, don't they need the young to survive?

Marian drives on South Beach

Who said that the seniors must live in peace and quiet? I think about it while cruising South Beach, once a notorious oasis of old age, today an around the clock celebration of youth. What a symbol of our segregated society. I need my retirement to be louder...I should stick with the boomers.

Tim on golf course.

Tim: *That was a yes shot only because we had three no shots before that.*

I asked Dr. Tim Patton to tell me more about his prescription for retirement.

Tim: *Ok 1. We're gonna have to stay far healthier, because we cannot afford the cost of health care. So coming out and just enjoying, finding ways to reduce stress and stay a little bit more fit and healthy is not what the other generation was concerned with because they didn't know all of the problems they were gonna have.*

Marian: *So they are costly.*

Tim: *Very costly. Aww Jeeze.*

Marian: *Because they are not in shape.*

Tim: *Well, not only are they not in shape, and have lots of chronic diseases, but they have this certain demand on the system that says the system is responsible for paying for them. That they're costly because they would rather go in for bi pass surgery than change their diet. Um, because, in their mentality, that's what the health care system does. It fixes you when you're broke. In the new generation, we don't wanna get broke. We don't want to have to have somebody come and fix us. We want to stay as healthy as we can.*

Tim and Marian walking on course.

Tim: *I think having leisure and recreation activities becomes ultra important. What do you do if you don't have something to do? Do you become one of these angry old retired*

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Marian entering Pritikin Gym.
At the Pritikin Longevity Center I exercise with the boomers.

Boomer 1: ~~I look at my parents, you know they started work at 20, they wanted just to get to 65, to get their pension. That's not the type of life that I want. You know when I'm finished working, whatever it be, at 55, 65, I wanna live the remainder of my life, and that's why I'm here at Pritikin. Because I'm a statistic waiting to happen. My mom died at 43. Ahh, both grandparents severe diabetics. Grandfather died with emphysema. I wanna live the remainder of my life.~~

and at 65 they've got

I want to

the name

be healthy

I join them on the treadmill.

Boomer 2: ~~The more you're interested in growing personally, the more you're interested in learning about how to be a better person, the more you become healthier.~~

4/11/11

Marian on treadmill.
From boomers to geezers and back, I am commuting between my body and my mind.

Marian driving to Tim Pattons home.
Tim Patton invited me to his home at a new development where almost everyone is a baby boomer. His father is visiting.

Tim's home.
Marian: Dad from Youngstown, Ohio.
Dad: Right right right.
Marian: So is the geezer name a bad name or a good name?
Dad: Who told you I was a geezer. (laughter)
Tim: There are some things you don't need to tell a person.
Dad: You think I am?
Tim: A geezer?
Marian: I am in the middle. I am 60. I am not a boomer and I try to be geezer but I'm not quite there.

Discussion around Tim's kitchen table.
Marian: Tell me your routines. Describe it.
Dad: Of course I don't know if every day was the same...but basically the same. She always, we always woke up, we're early people, early in the morning. I mean we're awake 5:30 or quarter to 6.
Tim: Why do people who are retired get up at 5:00?
Dad: Because they go to bed early.
Tim: What do you have to hurry into the day to do nothing?
Dad: Well...
Tim: It's an inconceivable idea to wake up and not have any plan of what to do for that day or the next day...
Dad: Well I've been doing fine for about 5 years and it don't bother me one bit. I'm tellin' you the truth.

Geezers and boomers. Is is and old feud between fathers and sons or the beginning of a new American dream? : no more retirement at 65, stay in shape, keep working, just change gears.

Tim: We can go through a whole list of your friends from the Blairs to the Corbets all the way down the line and God bless em all they're not in nearly as good shape financially and physically as you are. And mentally most of them are baskets.

people who lives in a condominium and yells at people about parking in their parking place. Get a life, get out.

Tim says the geezers worked one job, saved for retirement and now drain public health care dollars. Boomers are opportunity seekers, job switchers, and big spenders. They challenge 65 as retirement age. They must stay healthy to be able to work longer. Tim's agenda is that public funds must be used for preventive health care of boomers today, so, tomorrow, they will cost less and enjoy more,

Tim putting.

Marian: *What's the situation here huh?*

Tim: *Well, I'm putting a long way for par but I can make that. The whole idea is that every hole has so many strokes your supposed to complete it in.*

Tim driving away in cart

All this talking about fitness reminds me that I need a hobby for my retirement. I have none.

Marian driving in golf cart.

Phil: *I can take 5 minutes to show you the swing and you're gonna have to talk your lifetime to learn it.*

I turn to Phil Fargiano who has shown thousands of retirees the nirvana of golf.

Phil gives Marian golf lesson.

Phil: *So we wanna stand tall, do a Japanese hello. We're bending right from the hips, so if you take your club here and put it next to your lower spine you're bending right from the hip, bending forward. When this goes back, the club head goes back...*

Actually I had a bad attitude about this dumb game.

Phil instructing Marian

Phil: *I just happen to have this device right here..*

My thoughts are wandering. The future of Social Security, cuts in Medicare, what happened to universal health care plan, why did we kill it? t hell with retirement, I want to be a boomer.

Marian: *Well let me understand. The idea is that the distance between my arms and my ball here are the same all through.*

Phil: *See, watch your head there, move back. Move away from me a little. Your chest moves back, and it pivots your weight on your right leg around in a circle. On your downswing, it comes back around pivoting around in a circle, hitting the ball.*

Marian attempts to hit ball.

Golf is not for thinkers I conclude.

Marian: *Two.....Three.....nothing.*

Phil: *Stop. Remember that stays down, you're in here.*

Another explanation is that I am out of shape.

Marian hits the ball

Phil: *Beautiful Mario!*

Judith's condo balcony.

Back at the Admirals' Port condo Judith waits for her brother Herbert to arrive from New York.

Marian: *When he will come there will be a lot of hugging...*

The reason Judith was so nervous about retiring was that Herbert was supposed to move with her, but changed his mind at the last minute.

Judith: *And then he'll go... just like that, just like that, just like that!*

Now, she hopes, he will reconsider his decision.

Marian: *This is a Lincoln, this is a Lincoln. And the man that is in this Lincoln is your brother!*

Herbert getting out of the car

Herbert: *You know what traffic I hit? Senor!*

Judith: *How you feel Herbie?*

Herbert: *If I tell you, I had such a rough trip...*

Judith: *Did you sleep?*

Herbert: *My stomach, my head, just the thoughts of making changes.*

Judith and Herbert walking down the hallway.

Herbie's retirement has been a bitter one. "He lives in the past," Judy told me, "he thinks he had a life and it is all over."

Judith's apartment.

Herbert: *I tell you the wallpaper has to go.*

Judith: *Herbie Herbie look up.*

Herbert: *I used to have that in my bedroom for the girls I used to bring up. That doesn't open, its a couch*

Judith: *No it opens.*

Herbert: *Oh my god...Oh yea.*

Marian and Herbert in the hallway

Herbert: *Each one of our travesties...*

Herbert did well in the textile business and thought he had a wonderful family. But he divorced 20 years ago, retired soon after and concluded that life failed him.

Herbert: *It killed me, It destroyed me. My incentive for my business was rough. Ah, I couldn't function as good. It's in my head and I'm trying to get it out...*

I am beginning to understand that the real problem of retirement is not just money and health, but the mind and the spirit.

Marian walking to school

I decided to sign up for a different kind of class at the Elder Institute. It is called "Writing Your Memories."

Writing seminar.

Betty: *It's midnight and I suppose I should go to bed, but why? I'm not tired. There's lots of programs on late night TV. In fact I feel like having a little snack. Maybe I can hop in the car and take a ride to the Rascal House for some motza ball soup. You know what? This is a good time to do a little laundry. At this hour nobody will be using the washing*

↓ we will make it shorter!

machines in our building. And when the clothes are cleaned and dried I'll put a lot of cream on my face and nestle down in a nice bubble bath. Maybe I'll be sleepy by then, but if I'm not, it's OK, no matter how late I go to bed, I can sleep as long as I want in the morning. I'm no longer bound by time and schedules. A prisoner for more than 50 years has earned her freedom from labor. It's called retirement.

Betty and Marian walking on beach.

Her name is Betty Sullivan, 69 years old. She worked as an administrator in a medical school.

Marian: *How much Betty needs to be happy?*

Betty: *Ahh it probably costs me about, um, maybe a thousand a month.*

Marian: *That's it? \$600 apartment and \$400 for the rest.*

Betty: *Right, yea to be happy.*

Marian: *So what are you talking about, so most people can afford it.*

Betty: *Well there are those people who are only getting say \$500 from social security or something.*

Marian: *What's your social security? What's your social security?*

Betty: *Mine is \$788 I think it is and then I have a small pension.*

Betty: *I think my main responsibility is just to keep myself...*

Marian: *Alive...*

Betty: *Alive and within my budget so that I don't over do it. And to keep healthy actually and to try to have a little fun but I've always had fun in my whole life. My philosophy was always live and laugh.*

Marian: *So what do you think about death?*

Betty: *I think differently about death than I did before. When it happens it happens you know. And but I think...I'm not so sure there is anything afterwards, that's what I mean. But whereas years ago I did. I was very philosophical and spiritual maybe about life here after. But now I'm not so sure so, I kind of think this is it, and this is heaven right here.*

Betty's apartment.

Marian: *Your colors is all green.*

Betty: *Yea cause I figured it is so small so I had to keep it simple. But you know they are fixing the balcony's out side so we can't use our balcony. They're putting new railings. And when my boyfriend comes over then I pull the bottom out.*

Marian: *And you move it. Otherwise it's... Yea well for the size of this.*

Betty: *I'm writing a chronology...*

Marian: *Had cosmetic eye surgery, had cosmetic eye surgery (laugh) at St. Francis hospital. I tell you I have those bags here. I mean how is it, is it make sense? Is it good?*

Betty: *You go in the office and they give you an injection and ... you have to stay wide awake without and anesthesia because you have to be talking to him while he's doing it. And then he takes these scissors and cuts away all the skin and you have these big holes. It's so gruesome.*

Marian: *But it's great now. So you had under and over. You had this also? Just once.*

Betty: *Oh this was the worst, that was terrible.*

Marian and Betty driving in car.

Betty: *I'm meeting somebody new. I met him and I'm gonna start seeing him because he's an active kind of a person and my, the boyfriend that I've had for like the last 12 years is like a couch potato. You have to have somebody different for all the things you like to do because there's not one person that wants to do everything that you want to do.*

Line dancing at the shopping mall.

She brought me to her line dancing class at the local shopping mall.

Betty and Marian dancing.

Betty told me that her seventeen years of marriage were good, but only while they were bringing up their seven children. Only after her divorce she realized that all the while, her life lacked freedom. For Betty retirement is an adventure.

Marian and Regina enter the Rascal House restaurant.

Another woman in my Florida life is Regina Blank, who I adopted as my Jewish mother. She and her friends like to go to Rascal House, the famous Jewish restaurant for the ultimate retirement's self indulgence

Regina: *So I start to mail the letter...*

For Regina, a Holocaust survivor, surviving this festival of cholesterol...is peanuts.

Serving food

In Regina I see my own mother who lived with us until she died at 82. Regina is 89, still a professional seamstress.

Regina's Bingo Hall

She has been a regular of this bingo hall of a quarter of a century.

Regina: *I don't go for the money. Even I sit home and sew I would make more money believe me. Just a I go to spend the time.*

Marian: *You're not dating Regina?*

Regina: *I tell you I buried two boyfriends.*

Marian: *You had...after you buried your husband you buried two boyfriends!*

Woman 1: *He's got to appeal to me, you understand?*

Marian: *What are you looking for?*

Woman 1: *Someone like you honey! (laughter)*

There used to be 200 players here. Now two dozen make a crowd.

Regina wins bingo

Marian in Regina's condo.

This is Regina's condo, built in the early 1970s and aging now. Although Regina has outlived most of her peers, her sewing customers keep coming and she likes feeling independent. But her family worries that one day Regina will no longer be able to care for herself and thinks she deserves a more comfortable life. So her granddaughter Amy is trying to talk her into moving to the famous Century Village, a luxury retirement community in the suburbs.

Regina's apartment.

Marian: *So Amy says that you should move out, right?*

Regina: *I don't want to move out, I am too old. What I am gonna... look for new friends.*

Amy: *Many of her friends have already moved to the same place, to Century Village.*

Marian: *So what are you telling her?*

Amy: *That she won't have to make new friends because they are all there already. It has security, it has transportation provided for her...*

Regina: *Just, it's, I'm too old to move. You think moving is so easy?*

Regina and Marian in the kitchen

4/16/1

4/16/2

4/16/3

4/17/1

HERE SHE PRESIDES
OVER A CARD
TABLE.

This begins 4/17/1

Says Regina.

What would my own mother have said on the subject of a more comfortable life? "The only comfort I need is you," she would tell me.

Sitting around kitchen table

Regina: I'm afraid, another thing. My sister lived here in this apartment, then her husband passed away. The daughter insisted she should move to Arizona. When she moved to Arizona she was living in that new place, maybe three weeks, or two weeks and she died.

Amy: It's different circumstances. She had just come out of the hospital...

Marian: I know it's different but....there is an old saying that you do not move old furniture.

Regina driving to Century Village.

Amy arranged for Regina to tour Century Village which promises worry-free living for active elders and has been a big success in Florida.

Regina and Amy are met by a salesman.

Salesman: -Welcome to Century Village, Mrs. Blank. And this is your granddaughter Amy? Nice to meet you. Fine. We have a brochure here that I'd like you to hold onto. Thank you. OK Please come with me.

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Looking at Century Village model.

We have 13,000 people. We have 724 acres. There's 90 acres of water. You also have all of the amenities of the club house. Of belonging to over 70 clubs.

Salesman is showing the lobby

Salesman: First I'll show you are beautiful lobby.

"Would I want to be surrounded by 13,000 people of the same old age?" I asks myself. Of course not. I would feel cut -off from the real noises of life.

417/3

Salesman: And it has everything that you need over here. You'll have a lot of friends over here. As a matter of fact many people have met their wives over here, and met their husbands and this is the place if you want to meet someone this is a wonderful place. You'll be very happy over here. And there's many people to choose from. So why don't we, well let's step over here and I'll show you a few more things, OK?

But Regina is much older than I. Would she replace her own niche in life by this elegant isolated summer camp for elders?

Clubhouse.

Salesman: And over here we have a room where we have a piano in there, we have an organ, there are coral groups that meet here, and it's a very lovely place because if you want to learn how to play piano we will teach you.

Regina and Amy in model apartment.

Salesman: Over here you have your beautiful living room and it's a very lovely apartment, and it's uh something very attractive.

Poker room in Regina's condo.

Regina decided to stay in her old building. And when you see her back at the poker table with the condo's last mohicans, you understand why. They all lost their husbands here, they share a bond and fight the solitude by sticking together.

Woman 1: Wait a minute she hasn't put any money in, where are you goin!

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Woman 2: She said she did!

Woman 1: She checked and she bet!

Woman 2: I did not bet!

Woman 1: And I paid!

For Regina, there was no choice between old friends and new comforts.

Regina: You have a straight, I have a full house.

"What do I need two bathrooms for" ,she said.

Regina: Three jacks and two tens!

Marian, Judith and Herbert at Jai Lai.

Judy is still trying to convince her brother Herbert to stay with her in Florida. They share their best times at Jai Lai.

Judith thinking about her bets.

She is a cautious gambler.

Betting

Marian: *What are you doing? One?*

Herbert: *Two, four, eight.*

He is an emotional player. Herbert says he hates gambling. He calls it a make believe life void of feelings, but he keeps playing.

Jai Lai match.

Herbert: *Muto buene! Uno mas! Chula! Good boy! One took it.*

Marian: *I see I see. So now now now one, two...*

Herbert: *If one goes out I've got it. Uno mas! Cuve! Uno mas! Put him away baby! Chula! Chula! Oh you son of a gun.*

Marian: *You wanted three to win, and you wanted three to win, and where is three? Who is winning?*

Herbert: *Oh you jackass!*

Marian: *Who is winning!*

Herbert: *Oh you gave it away you bastard!*

Marian: *Three! And three lost it!*

Herbert: *Son of a...*

Marian: *Three lost it, so we all...*

Herbert: *We all lost*

Marian: *We all lost.*

Marian, Herbert, and Judith at bridge club. Judith plays

Judith plays bridge at the local club, but this not for Herbert. He wants out of his retirement, but cannot make new business connections. His savings are shrinking.

Marian and Herbert talking.

Marian: *Do you see yourself as an elder already, do you have this notion...?*

Herbert: *No I'm a youngster.*

Marian: *An aging youngster right?*

Herbert: *I still feel like I am a kid.*

Marian: *So at this age the attachment to what was before stops you from creating something new.*

Herbert: *Exactly.*

Marian: *And you still think about your family.*

Herbert: *Very well put.*

When I ask him what's missing in his life, he says "love". Live life, Judith tells him. It's gone, he answers.

Herbert: *I'm hoping that time will be on our side.*

Herbert is stuck in the unfinished business of his past, he cannot let go of his old life, so he cannot start the new one.

Herbert: *It takes time right? To learn to deal with the problems. You can get over almost anything if you have the patience and the time. Ahh baby.*

Will he come to Florida? No.

Marian walking in school corridor.

Herbert is not the only one among retirees, with a sense of being stuck or frozen, a stranger, a liminal figure.

Classroom.

Student 1: *I was forced to retire, and when I was forced to retire I came down here and put my hands up, what am I going to do? I had no hobbies while I was working, and I don't play cards, and I don't play tennis, and I don't do golf, and I don't do shopping, window shopping or shopping in stores, or go to luncheons. What do I do?*

Howard: *Ah you see I'm looking back too...*

Howard Salzman knows how to deal with those feelings.

Howard: *Do we not as older people, the elders sometimes look backwards and try to drop that paradigm so to speak...*

A salesman for 40 years, he then finished college and became the most inspiring coach of the retirees.

Howard: *I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not when it came to die, discover that I had not lived.*

He teaches a class at the Elders Institute called 'Think Tank.' Any subject goes.

Student 2: *I was always busy, making a living, doing my job, and suddenly that that stops. And it didn't happen over a long period of time, it happened when I did decide to retire. So I was at first frightened.*

Howard: *Frightened of the unknown.*

Student 3: *The most important thing is knowing what to do with your spare time because a lot of people just vegetate, and I was more interested in learning and getting more experience with life and doing all the kinds of things that I haven't been able to do because I was tied up in business my whole life.*

Howard: *Most of you here, I don't know what your assets are going to go to your children, are they not? And the figures are well into the trillions. Not the millions. Trillions and trillions of dollars are going to pop into these young people you know coming in. Is it not true.*

Student 4: *The problem with the current generation is they want immediate gratification. They don't want to wait as we waited, worked hard and accumulated a little money and and ... took everything in stride, as things came along we waited for it. They want everything*

that we, that it took us a lifetime to have, they want it at the early part of their lives without working as hard as we did.

to our children.

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Student 5: Our parents gave us more of love and wisdom. We have a tendency sometimes because maybe we're younger and we have more things that we do. We have a tendency to give more things that are material. Thank you I couldn't think of the word -- more material things than our parents gave us probably because we may be able to afford it more than they did but also because it makes it more convenient for us to do so and the kids have grown up to accept the fact that lots of times they, they expect these things.

Student 6: All the values that you're talking about that the children seem to lack is not their fault, it's our fault. Whoever has children like this, they failed to instill the values that we treasure. (we don't need to say: another student...)

Student: The values can still be taught. The values are different. I saw a movie yesterday in which there's a bad sister who won't take responsibility for her father, he dying father, and a good sister who gives her whole life. And I was the leader so I said 'Do you think the bad sister is bad?' And they said 'no.' And of course they did because the new attitude is you gotta live your life it's only once, and it's precarious, it's dangerous. So that we have to have new mores that will take care, perhaps eliminate a lot of the wildness that perhaps we've catered.

Marian and Howard walking on boardwalk.

Marian: Are we capable of doing this individually...

More than all the other experts and teachers I met in Florida, it was Howard Salzman who helped me learn to think about old age.

4/4/1

Howard: In the process of growing older you do become obsessed with yourself. You know, in the first place you're cut off from business, all the damn people around you. You know, your work and your friends and everything. These people, you know most of them come from up north, New York or something, and all of a sudden they're alone. You know what I mean? They have no job, they have nothing. Now what the hell else you gonna be obsessed with except yourself. Your only company is yourself and occasionally you pick up a friend or two. That's a critical thing. Then if you really want to engineer something you may wish to create a new style of living.

Marian: Right, and so then, in a sense, from an humanistic point of view retirement is this second chance for human beings.

Howard: You're hitting it right on the head. It's a second chance to live. To be a human being. Is it possible that our American economy has been such that it has separated us? You know, we're estranged from society, and estranged from each other. You know in the orient and other places like that comes the second chance when you stop working, 60, 65, whatever it is. You really are on the search. Search for enlightenment whatever you want. And you give your business over to the children, you give away your responsibilities, and you begin searching for, you know, answers and stuff. If you didn't learn how to live before you reach 65, it's very difficult to teach you how to live afterwards. That's one of the shortfalls of our education system. We're so technically, you know, oriented, that we didn't tell them how to be a human being, how to live, how to enjoy life. And suddenly the job ceases and there they are, now what do I do? You know, that's basically what it is.

In Howard I find a spiritual brother.

Marian in hallway of Betty Sullivan's condo.

In Betty Sullivan a sister.

(start with this) 4/4/2

start here with end with this 4/4/2

Handwritten signature

Betty: I haven't seen you in such a long time.

Marian: What a colorful woman.

Marian in Betty's new apartment.

Betty: ~~It's in today's newspaper.~~ ~~It's still in today's newspaper, but I'm not getting any response on it so if I should do that again, I believe I would have to change the ad a little bit. And here's the personals and it's under 'Women Seeking Men.'~~ This is my ad. It says "Easy going gal would like to date happy go lucky gentleman. 65 plus. Ready for companionship and maybe more." I didn't put that sentence in, they did.

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Betty and Marian sitting at kitchen table.

Betty: ~~But I think of myself as the ex-cheerleader type. That's what I should put...~~

Marian: ~~Absolutely, I say.~~

Betty: ~~Ex-cheerleader kinda person.~~

Marian: ~~Ex-cheerleader searching for... still, we are, you are still sticking with 65 plus?, I ask.~~

Betty: ~~Yea.~~

Marian: ~~Oh, Ex-cheerleader searching for an ex football player,~~

Betty: ~~For an ex-football player. OK that's good.~~

Marian: ~~Now what's what's can be negative about, football player has to be playful certainly...~~

Betty: ~~No touchdowns! (laughter)~~

Marian: ~~So ex-cheerleader searching for ex-football player. I am bubbly, you must be funny, I read~~

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Geezers singing class.

I have found another new class: "Sing That Song Again" where seniors romanticize their past.

Geezers singing "Love and Marriage."

By now I am no longer just a reporter. I feel like an insider.

Marian in Howard's living room.

I told Howard Saltzman about my Sinatra experience.

Howard: *The older person is reliving the old experience. We're doing Frank Sinatra, we're going to the restaurant, we're seeing this show. What they did for 40 or 50 years. Do you wish to go... How about taking a trip to somewhere you've never been? You know what I mean? How about meeting people you you were afraid of. How about, you know, going into the ghetto, whatever, meeting strangers. How about meeting a stranger. There is a tendency with older people, particularly in the condominiums, to cluster. Once you walk into retirement you have to walk into a new age and a new life. You cannot drag the past into it. There are certain experiences you can't deny but you're looking for enlightenment so to speak. Here is a grand time of your life, 65 or whatever it is, and suddenly the world opens up and you must leave the past alone. All the past is going to do is torture you. So this poem would really hit on this. "There is a phoenix within us all that calls from the depths of our being. When we listen we hear 'continue on.' Physical limitations are but in invitation to another route. So make haste the royal bird readies itself for flight to heights you never dreamed of."*

Seniors dancing party at the Polish American club.

Betty: Are you a polka person?

Man: Yes...

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Betty: *How's about teaching me?*

Betty dancing

Betty had no answers to her personal ad. I had an idea. I invited her to the last Polish-American club, still offering an old fashioned dancing floor for seniors. Betty was bubbling.

Marian at the bar

One thing she didn't know was that I also invited Howard.

Betty and Howard dancing.

Betty: *Hi Sal. Is your name Sal?*

Howard: *Howard.*

Betty: *Hi Howard.*

Howard: *What's your name, Betty? Hi. Betty Sullivan*

~~Marian: Remember at the beach we were talking about retirement and old age being a liberation, a freedom. She is incredible at turning these things into a celebration of freedom. She really is like a little girl living in fairy tale. She wants to dance all day, she wants to do things.~~

Betty: *I like to think that life is dance, like this dance tonight, ~~what's what I~~ says Betty.*

Howard: *Life is a dance.*

Betty: *It is a dance.*

Howard: *It's the great dance that you're going to do until the very end when you take your final step into the coffin and you put your hand up and take down the lid.*

Betty: *And hopefully you can find a partner that you can dance with. When I was single I started to write a poem about getting married. And it started off, it started off like this, it started off 'In just a little while, catalillies will bloom along the aisle.' And then I got married and I never finished the poem. So now I'm divorced and I live alone and everything, so now I've got to finish the poem. So how do you suggest I finish it?*

Howard: *We'll do a duet on poetry. Let's see what we've got. Tender lips come close, that I may touch you. Let your soft breath through ...*

Howard: (reading poem) : *Tender lips come through, that I may touch you. Let your soft breath through, and become one with mine. That we may spend some time in the tender embrace of the moment.*

Betty, Howard, and Marian dancing.

My journey to the land of our second chances was coming to an end. The most important thing I learned is that aging is about living in time and it can be a joy, an illumination for the mind. Perhaps the Spanish say it best. Their word for a retiree is *jubilado* - jubilation.

What a great idea!

END