

LATE BLOOMERS

Original Screenplay

by Marc Serhan

Rough/First Draft

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A quaint, slightly weathered building. The sign "Green Meadows Community Center" hangs proudly above the entrance. A slow but steady stream of SENIORS make their way inside.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER / MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The décor is a mix of comfort and time-worn charm. Tables and folding chairs are arranged against a wall.

EDNA WHITMAN (75), silver-haired and an air of quiet determination, enters. Her observant eyes scan the room as she offers warm, yet somewhat reserved greetings.

EDNA
Morning, Joan. How's that knee
holding up?

JOAN
Same old, Edna. And yourself?

EDNA
Can't complain. Well, I could, but
who'd listen?

She laughs softly, takes her seat at the head of the table.

The BOOK CLUB MEMBERS' faces is a mosaic of life stories; the chatter, a blend of mundane topics -the weather, health...

Edna's attention drifts to the window, contemplative.

MAGGIE SIMMONS (73), vibrant and with a mischievous sparkle, leans in, whispering to Edna.

MAGGIE
Ever think there's more to life
than this?

Edna turns, a flicker of excitement in her eyes, a silent acknowledgment of shared feelings.

EDNA
(*whispering back*)
Every single day.

LATER

The room is quiet except for the occasional shuffle of pages or a polite cough. Each member has a copy of "Pride and Prejudice" in front of them.

Edna, at the helm, surveys her friends with an encouraging smile. She taps her notepad, filled with handwritten notes.

EDNA
So, what did everyone think of
"Pride and Prejudice"? Mr. Darcy's
character development, thoughts?

The members nod politely, offering surface-level observations. "Well-written," "A classic," "Enjoyable".

EDNA (CONT'D)
(leaning forward, earnest)
Indeed. But what did the story make
you feel? Did it evoke personal
experiences? Struggles...?

The members exchange hesitant glances in silence.

CLARA DAVIS (72), a wise and composed former literature professor, breaks the silence.

CLARA
It's... challenging to see yourself
in a story so distant from our own
time. But the themes are universal,
aren't they?

EDNA
Definitely! Love, pride, prejudice...
Are all universal and timeless.

Maggie, ever the spark, chimes in with a twinkle in her eye.

MAGGIE
Makes me wonder about our own
prejudices. Maybe we're more like
these characters than we think.

A murmur of agreement stirs a flicker of engagement sparked by Edna's and Maggie's observations.

BEVERLY (73), her hands clasped tightly in her lap, raises a hand. All eyes turn to her. There's a tremble in her gesture, a visible overcoming of usual reticence.

BEVERLY
I think I saw a bit of myself in
Elizabeth. Not in the romantic
sense, but... her determination to not
just... accept what's expected of her.

Silence follows Betty's admission, a collective intake of breath at the rarity of her contribution.

EDNA

That's wonderful, Beverly. It's exactly those connections that bring stories to life. Anyone else?

The question hangs in the air, an open invitation. Slowly, another member, LEONARD (74), the group's only male member, nods, emboldened by Beverly's bravery.

LEONARD

Well, if we're being honest, I've faced my fair share of prejudices. Not proud of it, but it's the truth.

The atmosphere in the room shifts palpably into a moment of unity and engagement.

Maggie stands, a playful glimmer in her eye, turns to the group with a theatrical flair.

MAGGIE

You know, our readings have been a bit... tame, don't you think? With all this talk about experiences and feelings. Why don't we write our own book for fun? Something... daring!

A beat of silence, the room erupts in laughter and a chorus of mock protests: "Maggie!" "Oh, please!" "Imagine that!"

Edna, however, does not join the laughter. Her gaze is fixed on Maggie, a spark of curiosity ignited. The idea, outrageous as it may seem, has struck a chord.

EDNA

Maggie, that's... certainly an idea. But, are we really considering this?

As Edna's underlying approval sinks in, they exchange glances, the jest suddenly not seeming so far-fetched.

Clara leans in, amused yet prudent.

CLARA

She said 'daring', Edna. Are you suggesting we venture into... writing erotica?

MAGGIE

Why not? It could be an adventure, something to really shake things up!

EDNA

Hmmm... Let me think about it.

Maggie, triumphant, claps her hands together.

Around the room suddenly buzzing with the electric charge of possibility, there is a mix of reactions.

MAGGIE

Let's give Green Meadows something
to talk about, shall we?

Edna's eyes shine with barely concealed excitement.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - SUNSET

The book club members linger by the entrance, bathed in the sunset's golden light.

Edna stands somewhat apart, her gaze on the horizon, pensive.

Slightly-limping Joan (73) and BETTY (74) catch up with the rest of the group waiting for them, engaged in conversation.

JOAN

Sometimes, I wonder what it's like
to start something completely new
at our age.

BETTY

(chuckling)
'New' at our age? 'New' is a young
person's game.

The group slowly disperse, some heading to their cars. Maggie joins Edna and they walk together.

EXT. TREE-LINED STREET - TWILIGHT

Edna and Maggie stroll down a serene street. Their pace is leisurely, their shadows elongated on the pavement.

Maggie stops and turns sharply to Edna, a defiant sparkle in her eyes.

MAGGIE

I don't see why we wouldn't, Edna.
It's not about publishing that book;
it's about proving that we can still
surprise ourselves.

Edna, visibly wrestling with the concept, looks at Maggie, the twilight reflecting in her thoughtful eyes.

EDNA

But erotica, Maggie? At our age? What would people say?

MAGGIE

I've lived my whole life based on what others say? It's time for a change. Let's show the world we're more than what society expects us to be.

EDNA

(a resolve forming)

Maybe you're right. Maybe it's time someone broke the mold... in every sense.

MAGGIE

That's the spirit! Let's not go quietly into that good night.

They resume walking, determination mirrored in their stride.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL LANE - CONTINUOUS

Edna walks alone, wrapped in the quaint charm of peaceful Green Meadows. The laughter of CHILDREN playing in a yard nearby reaches her.

She stops, drawn to the sight of the children chasing each other, their laughter ringing clear. A ball rolls towards her; she picks it up and tosses it back.

CHILD

Thank you, Mrs. Whitman!

Edna nods and watches the children for a moment, then resumes her walk through the peaceful street.

INT. EDNA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The walls are lined with shelves of photographs and mementos. A candle burns in the middle of the table. Edna sits at a table, a collection of old photos spread out before her, each a window into her past.

Her hands pause over a photo of her younger self, full of life and laughter.

Her gaze shifts from the photo to the empty chair across from her, a silent resolve forming.

Turning to a notepad, she pulls it closer, ready to write. We linger a moment, watching her juggle with her memories, pen in hand, confronting the blank page. Slowly, we...

DISSOLVE TO:

LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The chairs are empty. The photos have all returned into the photos box sitting next to the open notepad on the table; the pen rests on the still blank page marked "Chapter One". The candle has considerably burnt down to a couple inches.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Two Seniors, MARION and GEORGE, stand by the produce.

MARION

(whispering excitedly)

Did you hear about Edna and her book club? They're thinking of writing...

(glances around)

...an erotic novel.

GEORGE

Really? - Well, who says fun is age-limited?

Their chuckles blend with the ambient noise.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A group of SENIOR WOMEN sit on a bench, knitting and chatting under the shade of an old oak tree.

SENIOR WOMAN #1

(scandalized)

An erotic novel, they say!!! What's got into them?

SENIOR WOMAN #2

(optimistically)

I think it's wonderful. Shows we're never too old to try new things.

INT. A SENIOR'S HOME - DAY

A Senior, VINCENT, discusses the news with his visiting DAUGHTER. His room is cozy, filled with books and mementos.

VINCENT

It's about time someone shook things up around here. Edna and her team might just start a revolution.

DAUGHTER

A revolution led by seniors? Now that, I'd like to see.

Their laughter fills the room.

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Seniors are gathered outside the Community Center, their faces alive with animated discussions, hands gesturing emphatically as they share thoughts and laughs.

EXT. EDNA'S HOUSE - DAY

A group of Seniors walks past the house and stops to whisper among themselves, shocked, pointing at the house.

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Members exit into the bright daylight, their animated discussions spilling out with them.

MEMBER 1

I hear it was Maggie Simmons suggested it?

MEMBER 2

It's outrageous, but... exciting!

MEMBER 3

They must have snapped their caps!

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Neighbors lean over a fence, sharing the news with a mix of shock and curiosity.

EXT. GREEN MEADOWS - EVENING

ESTABLISHING. A town abuzz. The tranquil, picturesque setting of Green Meadows drowned with the CACOPHONY of a multitude of OVERLAPPING animated conversations.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. EDNA'S DINING ROOM - EVENING

The Whitman family gathers around the dining table, a scene of domestic warmth and familiarity. Edna sits at the head of the table, flanked by JOHN WHITMAN (40), his wife LISA (35), and their daughter AMY (14).

The casual passing of dishes, the clinking of glasses, the flow of conversation around the table, all suggest a well oiled family gathering routine.

John, mid-conversation, sets down his fork, a mild concern crossing his features.

JOHN

This is rather uncharacteristic for you, Mom. Don't you think?

The table goes quiet, all eyes on Edna who meets John's gaze with a hint of defiance.

EDNA

Maybe that's exactly why I should do it. Call it a rebellion against society's conventions.

Amy nods in agreement while Lisa looks uncomfortable.

Edna sits upright, her posture exuding confidence.

EDNA (CONT'D)

This project is not just about writing a book. It's about proving that freedom of expression doesn't end at a certain age.

(chuckles)

It's also about challenging ourselves.

John listens intently, his earlier skepticism softening into curiosity. Amy leans forward with newfound respect and intrigue towards her grandmother.

AMY

I think you should do it, Nana.

EDNA

(softening, but firm)

I will, angel. We will! We have stories within us, stories that challenge the silent roles society has prescribed for us as elders.

They all sit in rapt attention as Edna's words resonate, sparking a visible shift in perception among her listeners.

JOHN

You really believe this book will
make a difference?

EDNA

Who cares? Just because we write a
book doesn't mean it gets published.
We're doing this for ourselves. - If
it's any good, we might give a public
reading. - Why not?

Varied reactions around the table: Amy's eyes are wide with
admiration, Lisa forces a smile, whereas John now shows a
grudging admiration.

AMY

(excitedly)

Nana, that's actually really cool.

Edna returns Amy's smile, then imitates her juvenile tone.

EDNA

(to Amy)

Of course it's cool! That's why we're
doing it!

EXT. EDNA'S HOUSE - MORNING

The sun rises, illuminating Edna's quaint house and the
meticulously cared-for garden that surrounds it.

INT. EDNA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Edna wakes, sits up, stretches, and offers the new day a
resigned smile. Obviously a familiar routine.

EXT. EDNA'S GARDEN - LATER

Edna, apron-clad, tends to her garden, her movements tender
and methodical, giving each plant a share of her attention.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Edna pushes a cart through the aisles, greeting shoppers with
a warm "Good morning" or the occasional small talk. Her
interactions are marked by kindness and a touch of reserve.

NEIGHBOR

Expecting rain again, Edna? Your
garden must be thrilled.

EDNA
Oh, you know, it has its moods.
Just like the rest of us.

EXT. EDNA'S NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

Edna walks home, her path intersecting with neighbors. The conversations are brief, pleasant, yet repetitive. A CHILD playing on the sidewalk waves to Edna who responds.

EXT. EDNA'S HOUSE - DUSK

The day closes as it began, in tranquility. Edna stands in her garden, looking out at the sky for rain-clouds.

EXT. GREEN MEADOWS PARK - MORNING

Edna and Maggie sit on a bench, a quiet corner away from the usual morning joggers and walkers.

Maggie watches Edna, sensing the internal debate raging within her. Edna holds a steaming cup of coffee, her hands wrapped around it, drawing comfort.

EDNA
(*vulnerable*)
I've never considered doing anything
like this before. It feels so daring.

MAGGIE
If anyone can lead us through this,
it's you, Edna.

Edna returns the smile, her posture straightening, on the verge to commitment.

EDNA
Alright. Let's do it. I can't
remember the last time I took a
risk, so, let's write our book.

Her hands, clasped tightly around her cup of coffee, slowly relax as she's made her choice.

MAGGIE
(*beaming*)
That's the spirit!

They stand together. We pull back to see them in the expanse of the park, walking towards the exit.