

Baucis and Philemon

By

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A clock on the mantelshelf ticks, next to a wedding picture from the 1940s.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

PHILEMON (90) pours water from a kettle into a teapot and stirs it. He puts the lid and a tea-cosy on the teapot, puts it and a tea-cup on a tray.

PHILEMON (V.O.)  
To my darling Valentine.

He writes in a CARD.

He puts it in an envelope, puts that on the tray and shuffles out of the kitchen with it.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Philemon pauses at the bedroom door.

A NURSE (30) sits next to the bed. She smiles at him.

BAUCIS (90) lies in bed, eyes closed, frail arm and hand on the eiderdown. Her fingers tremble.

PHILEMON  
(loudly)  
Cup of tea for you, sweetheart!

Baucis's eyes flicker.

Philemon puts the tray down on the bed.

NURSE  
I'm afraid it's water only.

Philemon looks stricken. He slumps into an armchair.

PHILEMON  
You have it, then.

NURSE  
Thank you. Shame to waste a good  
cup of tea.

She sips the tea, picks up the card.

NURSE (CONT'D)  
Shall I open this?

Philemon shrugs.

She opens it.

The picture on the front is of two old oak trees, their branches entwined.

NURSE  
(to Baucis)  
To my darling Valentine from your  
secret admirer of sixty years.  
That's so sweet!

PHILEMON  
I've never forgotten a Valentine's  
day. Don't suppose there'll be a  
sixty-first.

His eyes fill with tears.

PHILEMON (CONT'D)  
We've never been apart in all that  
time.

NURSE  
You look so tired. Do you want to  
lie down?

She stands and holds the covers back. Philemon takes off his slippers and lies down next to Baucis.

The Nurse covers him up. Philemon sighs. He turns to face Baucis. He links his fingers through hers.

The Nurse leans and kisses his forehead. Then she kisses Baucis's forehead.

Philemon closes his eyes.

The Old Couple lie together, their fingers entwined like the branches of the oak trees.

The Clock ticks... and then stops.

FADE TO BLACK.