

EXT. GOLDEN ACRES NEIGHBORHOOD - AN AUTUMN SUNSET

McMansions everywhere. A suburban oasis for elitist professionals, trophy spouses, and trust fund kids.

Some scramble to be the first fully decorated for Halloween.

The narrow road banks in front of the Bauer's brick home.

INT. BAUER'S HOUSE - EVENING

In the FOYER, REGGIE (74), a selfless, self-made millionaire, rips apart the junk drawer in the display hutch. Pivoting spryly in his orange sweater and khakis, he screams upstairs.

REGGIE
You're killing me, Barb!

UPSTAIRS, BARB (75), an elegant, sophisticated woman with a dignified air, yanks a wax strip from her upper lip.

BARB
(hiding her pain)
Give me one second!

Snacks and K-cups fly as Reggie scours the kitchen counters.

REGGIE
(yelling up)
Just tell me where the tickets are,
it's almost go time!

Reggie rushes into the PANTRY, yelling up the dimly lit, strikingly steep back stairs. Barb sifts through her jewelry.

BARB
(yelling downstairs)
They're either in the mail
organizer or the old rolltop desk!

REGGIE
You still use the old rolltop?

BARB
Sometimes! I'll be right down!

REGGIE
(softening slightly)
Don't miss it! I need you for luck!

The closed rolltop desk is in the office ahead. Crimson and gold lottery tickets gleam in the mail organizer on the left, contrasting white bill and late notice envelopes.

Reggie spots the color and finds his holy grail.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
(Gotcha now)
Ahh.

Reggie snags the handful of tickets but leaves the bills.

In the LIVING ROOM, Reggie grabs the remote, pops the news on, and plops into the couch while commercials play.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Honey! You're gonna-!

Barb struts in, her white hair pinned up stylishly. She wears a flattering, navy turtleneck dress and a silver necklace.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Wowee! You look great! Wait, why do you look great?

BARB
I'm being honored at the Gala fundraiser for the Foundation.

REGGIE
If the Gala's tonight, I might have absolutely forgotten about it.

Barb sticks silver earrings in while looking in the mirror behind the couch.

BARB
No. It's in November. The same as it's been every other year since we started the event.

REGGIE
Right. So, the dress?

BARB
Ben is stopping by to take a photo of me for the Gala programs.

REGGIE
Benji's coming? When?!

BARB
In about 15 minutes.

REGGIE
Nobody ever tells me anything!

BARB
 (sitting, teasing)
 Like what month the Gala is in?

The attractive elders smile and kiss, clearly still in love.

The news returns from break. Lottery balls whirl in a turbine the size of STEVE CITRANELLO (48), the energetic anchor in a colorful plaid jacket.

Reggie hurls Barb off of him and races to grab the tickets. Barb straightens. They watch like their lives depend on it.

STEVE
 We're just about to draw the first number. Tonight's jackpot is worth an estimated six hundred forty eight million dollars. Got your tickets ready? Okay, here we go.
 (grabbing a numbered ball)
 The first number is...Eleven!

Steve reacts to each new ball as it falls into place.

Barb prays. Reggie flips through his tickets. An 11.

STEVE (CONT'D)
 Fifty six, Seventy Four, Sixty Seven, Two, and....

Reggie jumps to his feet. Barb frantically follows.

REGGIE
 (not believing it)
 Oh my God! Oh my God!

STEVE
 Nineteen.

REGGIE
 (sitting in defeat)
 Damn it!

BARB
 (sitting next to him)
 Did you get them all but the last?

REGGIE
 Got the first two then blacked out.

STEVE
 Congratulations if you have tonight's lucky numbers! Tune in n-

Barb turns the TV off with the remote. She consoles a crumpled Reggie on the couch. He drones a melancholic wail.

REGGIE

What are we gonna do, Babs?

BARB

We're going to sit down tomorrow morning over a fresh cup of coffee, and figure it out. Like always.

REGGIE

I love you.

BARB

I love you.

Reggie sighs deeply. A moment later, a knock on the door. Reggie skips forward, a total shift in energy. Barb smiles. The front door flings open as Reggie extends his arms.

REGGIE

BENJI! Get in here!

BEN (33) a nerdy man with glasses, curly hair, and a camera that's strapped over his striped polo, which is tucked into his cargo shorts, gets wrapped up by his father.

BARB

Hi, thank you for doing this.

BEN

No problem. You look nice.

Barb hugs Ben. Reggie is beaming.

REGGIE

Come in! Where are you shooting these pictures of your gorgeous mother? Balcony? In front of the fireplace? It's a little dark out now but you know I'm very proud of the garden.

BARB

It's just a headshot, dear.

BEN

Do you guys have any bare walls in this house or are they all blocked by old paintings and family photos?

BARB
Easy, smart-mouth. We like our
antique photos and paintings.

BEN
Oh, really? I couldn't tell by the
dozens of them hanging in here.

BARB
Hey!

REGGIE
The guest bedroom has blank walls.

Ben and Barb look to each other in confirmation.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - EARLY NIGHT

The camera captures a great portrait of Barb.

INT. KITCHEN - 9AM THE NEXT MORNING

Credit reports, stock portfolios and banking info are spread
across the table. The stack of bills from the mail organizer
sits to the side, opened and read. Barb rubs her eyes. Reggie
refills her coffee mug and sits.

BARB
When did this get so bad?

REGGIE
Remember six years ago when we
decided to use some of our
portfolio to pay off the mortgage
and get that upstairs addition?

BARB
When the stock market crashed?

REGGIE
WHO COULDA KNOWN!?

A beat. They have clearly fought about this a thousand times.

BARB
(calm)
Regardless, I thought our
investments were caught up

REGGIE
(softening)
They are, mostly. That isn't the
heart of the issue.

BARB
Well then... Why are we broke?

REGGIE
With the crash then inflation we've
nearly maxed out our credit cards.
Even liquidating the portfolio
won't cover it after taxes.

BARB
Well, I hoped it would never come
to this, but there's always-

Reggie never misses an opportunity to make Barb smile.

REGGIE
I won't let you sell your body. If
anyone has to, it should be me. I'm
the one who got us into this mess.

BARB
First, you're disgusting. Second,
we both know who'd bring home more
in that line of work.

REGGIE
That's the truth. I married a fox.

BARB
Flattery doesn't pay the bills.

REGGIE
You're right. Sorry I interrupted.
What were you suggesting before?

BARB
What if we sold the house?

REGGIE
Not possible.

BARB
Why not!? Did you take out a second
mortgage or something?

REGGIE
No! And that's not an option
either, for the same reason.

BARB

Which is?

REGGIE

This piece of shit house wouldn't pass an inspection! It's a Goddamn deathtrap, and we both know it.

BARB

Oh come on, that can't be true.

REGGIE

Between the exposed wires and leaky roof in an unfinished addition, to the broken stairs in the pantry, or ooh, let's finally test if we can fill the tub upstairs without crashing it onto the couch, eh?

BARB

Okay so, sell the stocks, repair the house, then sell the house and pay off the credit cards.

REGGIE

Honey. After repairs and capital gains on the sale, we wouldn't be able to buy even a small house for what we paid for this in 1981.

BARB

Sounds like you've talked with Ted about this.

REGGIE

Ad nauseum. He has no ideas, other than claiming bankruptcy.

BARB

Some accountant. And if we do that?

REGGIE

We may be able to keep the house. It depends on the cost to fix it.

There's a knock and all too common shout at the front door.

VIOLET (O.S.)

Yooahoo!! Bauers! You won't believe what is happening now!

Barb and Reggie share a look. Barb rolls her eyes.

REGGIE
I'll get rid of her.

BARB
Fat chance.

REGGIE
Give me two minutes. Trust me.

Barb sips her coffee with a flat expression as Reggie exits.

FRONT DOOR

VIOLET (83), a nosey, forward, town gossip who feels few have the right to live in Golden Acres, stands ready to explode with rumors. She always wears a pop of Violet color.

VIOLET
Reginald! Where's Barbara?
(starting to step inside)
You'll never guess who they've
allowed to purchase the Rios home.

Reggie attempts to dissuade Violet to no avail.

REGGIE
You know, Violet, Barb is feeling
off today. She's got a headache.

VIOLET
Oh that poor woman. Let me just say
a quick hello and I'll get out of
her hair. Plus, you must hear!

KITCHEN

Barb hears the conversation and subsequent footsteps toward her. She covers the financial papers.

VIOLET (O.S.)
Barbara! Where are you, darling?
I've got terrible news.

BARB
I'm in here, Vi!

Violet barges in and immediately starts yapping. Reggie mouths "I'm so sorry" behind her with a frown.

VIOLET

Oh, honey. Reginald said you were sick but you look terrible. I'll run and grab you some Alka-Seltzer.

Barb looks to Reggie who shrugs as he sips his coffee.

BARB

Oh, that's so kind. But that's okay. I think the coffee's helping.

VIOLET

I really shouldn't, but that coffee smells scrumptious. I will stay for a cup, thank you, Reginald. Two sugars, splash of cream.

Reggie is confused before realizing she wants him to pour it.

BARB

A quick cup before we have to get some work done this morning.

VIOLET

Of course, of course. I just had to tell you about our new neighbors.

REGGIE

(under his breath to Barb)
Oh boy, where is this going?

VIOLET

I'd never typically judge people without getting to know them first, but this time--

REGGIE

Violet. Who bought the house?

VIOLET

Two nineteen-year-old influencers! Can you believe that? The audacity.

REGGIE

What's the problem with that?

VIOLET

You want to live with the riffraff?

BARB

What makes them riffraff?

VIOLET

Umm, hello! They're nineteen!

BARB

And? Reggie started his company at nineteen. Was he riffraff?

VIOLET

(with a sigh)

Listen. There was a time when only respectable professionals could live in Golden Acres. Like you, Barbara, you were a doctor!

REGGIE

Still a doctor. That title doesn't go away when you stop practicing.

BARB

(trying to sympathize)

I think times are changing, Vi. And I think there are more changes on the horizon. For all of us.

VIOLET

(finishing her coffee)

Well I hope you're right about that! I'm going to the HOA to see if we can enact age limits.

BARB

I think that's illegal.

VIOLET

I'll have my husband look into it.

REGGIE

(inside joke with Barb)

Right, Larry. Where's he been? I feel like we never see him? Ever!

VIOLET

Oh you know, Larry!

REGGIE

(quickly to Barb)

Do we?

VIOLET

(continuing without hearing Reggie)

He's always away on business!

BARB

So impressive to travel like that even in his eighties.