

FADE IN:

EXT. BENBOW HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT LAWN - DAY (JUNE 1984)

Graduation Day. Blue sky, green grass, white chairs filled with WEeping MOTHERS and SMILING FATHERS. PRINCIPAL MILLER stands at the podium.

PRINCIPAL MILLER

...And so I present to you, our newest alumni, the graduates of Benbow High's class of 1984.

Enthusiastic applause as seventy-five fresh-faced graduates move their tassels from right to left, then file off the stage, hugging and shaking hands with family and friends.

The delicately handsome JEREMY makes his way over to fellow graduate CAROLYN, picking her up and twirling her in the air.

JEREMY

We did it! We're finally free! Free to enjoy the entire summer, just the two of us.

Jeremy sets her down, then holds his arms out, fingers threaded together, making a large circle. Carolyn hesitates.

JEREMY

Carolyn?

She looks at his arms sadly, then ducks into his loop and putting her hands together, loops her arms over his head so that she's inside his arm circle and he's inside hers.

JEREMY

That's better. I love you so much, I'm the happiest man alive. Hey, so, I was thinking that if your parents are cool with it, we could head out to the lake this weekend--

CAROLYN

--Oh, Jeremy, I'm sorry. I can't. My aunt's in town and --

JEREMY

--No biggee. We'll just go next week--

CAROLYN

--I took an internship in the city. It's a great opportunity, administrative assistant for a publishing house. I leave in two days.

JEREMY

But I already told Doc. Johnson that I'd work for him. Well, he'll live without me. I'm sure I can find something in the city--

CAROLYN

No, Jeremy, you need to stay here.

JEREMY

But San Francisco's five hours away, how will we see each other?

CAROLYN

Jeremy, please don't make this any harder. I'm sorry. I love you but I think it will be better for both of us if we stop seeing each other.

JEREMY

What are you saying? How can you do this? This is true love, you're just going to throw it away?

CAROLYN

Oh, Jeremy, we're going to fall in and out of love with so many people so many times.

Carolyn looks over at her FATHER GERALD who appears oblivious, her MOTHER DARLENE who looks horrified, and her AUNT NICOLE who proudly elbows her sister.

AUNT NICOLE

That's my girl.

DARLENE

What did you say to her?

Carolyn takes a deep breath and tries to sound cheerful as she continues to break Jeremy's heart.

CAROLYN

We're young, we're free, the world's our oyster and now's the time for us to dive into the tides of life and swim.

(Off his silence)

Don't worry, Jeremy, the whole world's full of love.

JEREMY

You're wrong Carolyn. It just seems that way now because we're in love.

(more)

JEREMY (CONT'D)

True love like this is once in a lifetime. You'll never find it again.

CAROLYN

You're being silly. That's just not true, you'll see.

Jeremy looks at her sadly and releases her from his circle.

CLOSE-UP on Carolyn's smiling, optimistic face.

TWENTY YEARS LATER...

INT. CAROLYN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE-UP on Carolyn's smiling face as she slowly wakes in her orderly and cheerful room, blindly patting the far side of her bed in search of RICHARD. Feeling nothing but mattress, she throws back the comforter to find a note.

SUPER RICHARD'S handsome face, speaking the words he's written:

RICHARD (V.O.)

My darling Carolyn...

Note in hand, Carolyn climbs out of bed, wrapping a robe over her red pajamas and stepping into her matching slippers.

INT. CAROLYN'S KITCHEN - SAME

Carolyn shuffles into her immaculate kitchen to turn on the coffee, smiling all the while at Richard's sweet nothings, then heads into the bathroom as she reads.

INT. CAROLYN'S BATHROOM - DAY

RICHARD (V.O.)

What a beautiful way to begin this day of lovers, to watch you sleep, your golden locks cascading around your peaceful face...

Carolyn glances up at her reflection as she brushes her teeth. Her hair sticks up at every conceivable angle.

RICHARD (V.O.)

Your dainty hand wrapped around my pillow as though you can't bear to live without me...

Carolyn spits and replaces her toothbrush -- there is no other toothbrush in the holder.

RICHARD (V.O.)
 'Twas devastating to pull myself away
 from your perfect beauty...

Carolyn inspects a slight blemish on her forehead.

RICHARD (V.O.)
 Leaving your bed so early on this
 morning of Valentines weighed heavily
 on my heart. But I'll be thinking of
 you throughout this difficult day
 ahead, every moment a monument to our
 perfect love...

Carolyn steps on the scale, doesn't like what she sees, stands on one leg. She dismounts, then stares in horror -- Richard's left a wet hand towel on the floor. She picks it up by the corner, touching as little of it as possible, and drops it into a laundry basket.

RICHARD (V.O.)
 And so, my most preciousness, I am off
 to my abode and then to the hospital,
 but I shall see you at Le Coeur Rouge
 at eight o'clock this evening. Kisses,
 Richard.

She reads this last part intently, inadvertently flinching when Richard makes slurpy kissing noises.

INT. CAROLYN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Carolyn pours herself a large cup of coffee and opens the refrigerator -- it contains little besides dozens of snack-size yogurts. She pops one open, chugging it like a soda. Done with breakfast, she takes a last look at the note.

RICHARD (V.O.)
 P.S. Wear something hot.

Carolyn opens a cupboard filled with folders and files the note under "Richard".

RUDY, her Umbrella Cockatoo, SQUAWKS in the corner, then imitates Richard's KISSING NOISES.

CAROLYN
 Any more of that and no breakfast for
 you.

Rudy falls silent and Carolyn fills his bowl with birdseed.

RUDY
 Love me, love me.