

Nana's Attic

Writer # 24-DE03-W15

An avaricious man suspects someone defrauded his senile grandmother but, in his search for missing assets, discovers something more valuable.

FADE IN:

INT. QUINNS' KITCHEN - DAY

VALERIE QUINN, an attractive, fit woman, early 40s, in stylish yoga attire, is cooking breakfast in a state-of-the-art kitchen. TOBY, her 13-year-old son, trudges in. Valerie ruffles his hair and kisses the top of his head.

TOBY

Please don't ever do that at school.

VALERIE

I know, I know Toby. No public displays of affection. It could destroy your street cred.

SCOTT QUINN, Valerie's husband, a fit, attractive man, early 40s, in business casual, holding a laptop bag and his phone, rushes in, opens the fridge and grabs a Red Bull.

SCOTT

Breakfast smells great, hun, but I gotta rush. As Nana's conservator, I have to meet with her attorney about her accounts.

TOBY

Don't forget about the basketball game Saturday, Dad. 4:00. If we win, we go to the playoffs. You're coming, right?

Scott doesn't look up as he scrolls on his phone.

SCOTT

What? Sure. Yeah. Gotta run.

Scott gives Valerie a quick kiss and hurries out.

TOBY

He won't be there, will he? Something 'always comes up'.

INT. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

DAN FLORES, Nana's attorney, sits behind his desk across from Scott. Scott signs the final document and hands it to Dan.

SCOTT

Because it's taken a few months for me to become my grandmother's

conservator, I imagine there's a lot of cash just sitting in her accounts that needs to be invested.

DAN

I'm not sure what you were expecting, Scott, but there's only *one* account now with just enough to adequately pay for her care. That's it.

SCOTT

What?! That's impossible! Before my grandfather died, they sold the chain of stores they'd built up from nothing for a fortune!

DAN

She started liquidating assets shortly after your grandfather died. She still owns her home, though. That will go to you.

SCOTT

Dan, I'm trying to wrap my head around this. Do you think she just gave all that money to charity?

DAN

I doubt it. No charitable deductions were taken on her tax returns.

SCOTT

Something's fishy about this.

INT. QUINN'S FAMILY ROOM. - NIGHT

Scott is pacing. Valerie watches, concerned.

SCOTT

Nana wouldn't just get rid of my inheritance without telling me. Something else is going on here. Someone scammed her. I'm sure of it.

VALERIE

I don't know, Scott. Until this sudden onset of dementia, your grandmother was a smart businesswoman.

SCOTT

I'm going to go through her house with

a fine-tooth comb. Then, I'm going to talk to Nana. She has moments of lucidity. Maybe she'll be able to give me some useful information.

VALERIE

You owe her a visit anyway.

SCOTT

It's just so hard. That nursing home is depressing. I mean, don't get me wrong. The people are great, the place is nice, but seeing her like that...

VALERIE

I know. But when your parents died, she took you in. She was your rock even though she had just lost her son. Now, it's time for you to be her rock.

SCOTT

I was counting on that money.

VALERIE

Why? We have plenty of money and more stuff than we know what to do with.

SCOTT

You can never have too much money, Valerie. Money talks, and when it talks, people who matter listen.

VALERIE

Do you hear yourself right now? What happened to the man I married who would have been happy in a shack on the beach?

SCOTT

He grew up and faced reality, Val. The reality of private school tuition, country club dues, mortgages...

VALERIE

We could downsize...

SCOTT

You don't get it. You have to show the world that you matter. To do that, you need money and fancy things. It's part of the game.

VALERIE

Sometimes, I feel like you and I are looking at the world through different eyes. Life's about more than money, Scott. You need to slow down, occasionally turn off your phone, and take a look at what's happening to this family. Your son needs you. I need you.

SCOTT

So, you wish we were poor? I doubt it.

VALERIE

That's not what I'm saying. But this obsession with wanting more money -- it's unhealthy. If you knew you were going to die tomorrow, would you spend the day acquiring more things? Or would you make sure you didn't miss your son's basketball game?

Scott gets up and kisses Valerie on the cheek.

SCOTT

This is becoming a ridiculous conversation. I have a busy day tomorrow. Let's go to bed.

VALERIE

I love you. You know that, right?

SCOTT

I love you too, Val.

INT. MEMORY CARE FACILITY - NANA'S ROOM - DAY

Scott enters. Nana, her only jewelry a silver bracelet, sits in a chair, a much-loved Bible in her lap. NANCY, one of the caretakers, is brushing Nana's hair.

NANA

Scotty-boy! What a nice surprise!

NANCY

It's remarkable. Mrs. Quinn may not remember what a brush is for, and sometimes it seems like her left hand doesn't even know what her right hand is doing, but she never forgets you.

Nancy exits. Nana reaches out to hold Scott's hands. He sits.

NANA

I'm so glad you're here. Can we go home now? Papa must wonder where I am.

SCOTT

Nana, I really need you to focus. Can you do that for me?

NANA

I'd do anything for you, dear boy, you know that.

SCOTT

A lot of your money is missing, and I'm trying to find out what happened to it.

NANA

Are you taking me home now? I'm worried about my roses.

SCOTT

Nana, I could really use that money. There are lots of opportunities out there, but to play with the big boys, you need lots of capital.

NANA

Money. Moths and vermin.

Scott shakes his head, frustrated. He stands and kisses Nana on the cheek. She tugs anxiously on her bracelet.

SCOTT

I'm sorry, I need to go. Love you.

NANA

Moths and vermin.

Scott's phone rings. Sees it's Val and speaks softly.

SCOTT

Hi, honey... No, nothing helpful. When I mentioned money all she said was 'moths and vermin'. ....You're right! There were a lot of moths and rats in her attic.

(starts to get excited)

Maybe Nana is trying to tell me that

she hid the money in the attic! I'm on my way to her house right now.

INT. NANA'S HOUSE - PRESENT DAY

Scott enters Nana's musty home where family pictures line the walls and a layer of dust is on the furniture. He approaches a picture of him, as a young boy, with his parents.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. NANA'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK

18-year-old Scott enters.

SCOTT

Nana? It's me. Mom told me you needed help with some lightbulbs.

Scott then sees Nana on the ground, at the end of the hallway, holding her phone. Scott rushes over.

SCOTT

Nana, what's wrong?! Are you hurt?

Nana wraps her arms around Scott, holding him tightly.

NANA

Scotty-boy, your parents were in a fatal car accident....They're gone.

SCOTT

(in shock)

No, there must be some kind of mistake. Graduation's this Saturday. They wouldn't miss my high school graduation...

They hold each other and sob.

NANA

We are going to get through this with God's help. Will you pray with me?

SCOTT

(loses it)

Pray? Are you kidding me? Pray to this all-powerful, all-knowing God who let my folks die tonight? They were good Christians who trusted Him completely. Why didn't He protect them?

INT. NANA'S HOME - END FLASHBACK

Scott angrily wipes his tears away and climbs the stairs to the attic.

INT. NANA'S ATTIC - DAY

Scott enters. There are cobwebs everywhere, piles of boxes covered in dust, and the noise of rats scurrying. Moth-eaten old throw blankets are draped over a few boxes. Rusty tools are on an old table. Scott's smartwatch shows 9:30 am.

DISSOLVE TO

Scott's watch shows 10:30 am. The boxes have been opened and papers are strewn on the floor. Scott slowly stands, groans, and rubs his aching back.

SCOTT

Nothing. What a waste of time. Nana,  
what have you done with that money?

(he looks up)

Maybe that God you put so much faith  
in could help me out a little here.

Suddenly, a slim ray of sunlight shines through the rafters and glints off a small, silver box hidden on a high beam. Scott climbs on the table and brings the padlocked box down. He grabs rusty wire cutters from the table, cuts through the lock, and opens the box. Inside are pictures of people of various ethnic and racial backgrounds, all of whom are smiling with an arm around Nana. Many photos are taken in front of a soup kitchen.

INT. QUINNS' KITCHEN - NIGHT

Valerie is helping Toby with his homework at the table.

TOBY

Mom, do you remember when I was  
little, and Dad coached all my teams?

VALERIE

Of course.

TOBY

Why doesn't he want to spend time with  
me anymore?

VALERIE

Your dad loves you very much, Toby. He

just has a lot going on.

TOBY

Whatever. I'm going to bed.

Toby walks toward his room, shoulders slumped. We hear his bedroom door close. Scott bursts in the door, excited.

VALERIE

Scott, we need to talk.

SCOTT

Sure. But first, great news. You know those pictures I found? The guy who runs the soup kitchen identified five of those crooks, and I found out where they work. I'm gonna confront them tomorrow before my client meeting.

VALERIE

But tomorrow's Saturday, Scott.

SCOTT

This is important, Val. I need to expose these frauds and recoup my money.

VALERIE

You mean Nana's money.

SCOTT

At this point, same difference.

INT. BACK OFFICE OF AUTO REPAIR SHOP - DAY

JOE ARNOLD, tattooed forearms, is behind a desk working. A clock on the wall shows 11:00am. Scott enters.

JOSEPH

Can I help you?

SCOTT

Actually, yes. Does the name Cara Quinn ring a bell?

Joseph shakes his head, bewildered.

SCOTT

Maybe this will help jog your memory.

Scott places the photo, of Joseph and Nana, on the desk.

JOSEPH  
You mean Grace?  
(suddenly concerned)  
Has something happened to her?

SCOTT  
(confused)  
No, she's fine. You know her as Grace?

JOSEPH  
Yeah, Grace Adriel.  
(suddenly leery)  
And who are you?

SCOTT  
I'm her grandson.

Joseph stands and surprises Scott by warmly shaking his hand.

JOSEPH  
Your grandmother saved my life.

SCOTT  
What are you talking about?

JOSEPH  
Came home from Afghanistan with PTSD  
and became a homeless addict. One day,  
about 15 years ago, I'm in a soup  
kitchen, and a woman walks in, with a  
basket of cookies, plops right down at  
my table, and hands me one.

SCOTT  
(tries to trip him up)  
What kind of cookies?

JOSEPH  
She called them her trinity cookies.  
Delicious, right?

Scott nods, stunned.

JOSEPH  
Before I knew it, I was telling this  
stranger my life story. The next day  
she came again and handed me a Bible.  
'I want to make a deal with you,' she  
said. 'I'll do my best to help you get  
your life back on track, if you agree  
to read this book every day.' I

agreed. For some reason, I believed she could help me. And she did. First, she got me in a rehab program for vets. Then, when I got clean, she got me a job with this auto repair shop. Five years ago, I bought the business.

SCOTT

Did my grandmother pay for your rehab?

JOSEPH

I don't know. But when I bought the business, I learned that Grace had paid my salary when I was first hired, so that the owner would take a chance on me. I had no idea, and I never got to show my appreciation, because it was like she disappeared. I'm so glad you came in. I'd love to do something for her, thank her properly.

SCOTT

(dazed)

I'll see what I can do.

JOSEPH

Also, please tell her I kept my end of the bargain. I still read that Bible every day. It's changed my life.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. DAYCARE - AFTERNOON

Scott exits a store, pulls out his phone which shows 2:30 pm. He calls Valerie.

SCOTT

Just met the last person on the list, Val. It's incredible. Each person, same theme. Nana, known by them as Grace Adriel, got each of their lives back on track in exchange for a promise to read the Bible. Curious, I looked up the name 'Adriel'. It means 'follower of God'. I was so wrong, Val. This wasn't a scam. It was a one-woman humanitarian mission. And I never knew.

INT. MEMORY CARE FACILITY. NANA'S ROOM - DAY

Scott enters. Nancy greets him at the door. Nana is sleeping.

NANCY

Oh, Mr. Quinn. We were just about to call. Your grandmother has been so distressed since you left. She kept screaming, 'Money. Moths and vermin', tugging at her bracelet, and asking for you. She had to be sedated.

Nancy exits. Scott takes off Nana's bracelet and looks at it carefully. The inside is engraved with the words 'Matthew 6'. He picks up Nana's Bible and turns to Matthew 6.

SCOTT

...when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets...do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy...but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...

INT. NANA'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK

Nana and ten-year-old Scott are making cookies.

SCOTT

Wouldn't it be cool to find buried treasure, Nana? All that gold!

NANA

What would you do with the gold?

SCOTT

Tons of stuff. I'd buy the new Super Mario game, Air Jordans and that cool bike I showed you the other day. What would you do?

NANA

Hmm. I guess I'd want to do something with it that would last a long time. An eternity.

SCOTT

Nothing lasts an eternity, Nana.

NANA

Treasures stored in heaven do. And I  
already have a treasure map.

Nana reaches for her Bible and holds it up.

INT. MEMORY CARE FACILITY - NANA'S ROOM - END FLASHBACK

Scott, teary, puts down the Bible and gets down on his knees.

SCOTT

God, I know you haven't heard from me  
in a while because I was angry. Angry  
because you were taking people I loved  
before I was ready to say goodbye.  
But, Valerie was right. I was looking  
at the world through unhealthy eyes.  
You've given me more blessings than I  
can count, and I should be looking at  
ways to use those blessings to fulfill  
the plan you have for my life. Like  
Nana did. Any money I have is just a  
vehicle, a gift from You, to help  
fulfill that purpose.

His phone pings. He looks down. It's 3:30. He calls Valerie.

SCOTT

Save a place on the bleachers for me.  
I should be there in 20 minutes  
....Nope, the meeting wasn't  
cancelled. I just realized I have  
something more important to do.

Nana stirs. Scott sits and places the bracelet on her wrist.

SCOTT

Thanks for the clue, Nana. At last, I  
found the treasure. The one that lasts  
for eternity.

Nana looks up and smiles.

FADE OUT.

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