

Txt msging

by Jake Barnes

Imagine her surprise when he called her. After all those years. She almost dropped her cigarette. "Who?" she asked. "Jimmy," he replied. He said he had quit the Air Force after twenty-five years. Worked in mapping for awhile, then quit that, too. And oh by the way, got a divorce. He was thinking of driving down from Colorado to see her. "Oh, by the way, do you smoke?" he asked.

She ripped the cigarette from her lips and stubbed it out. "Not anymore," she said.

It was like something out of Hans Christian Anderson. They had been sweethearts in high school, but her protective father kept them apart. He did everything he could to discourage the young lad. Eventually Jimmy joined the Air Force. Flora joined a touring water ballet group. They each married others. She had two husbands. One she buried, the other she divorced. She went to work for the post office. Now she was retired.

Forty years later he was still her Romeo, she his Juliet. He paid her a visit, went back, sold his home, then rejoined his sweetie and moved right in. Two years later they were man and wife. They traveled, took a class at the senior center, enjoyed their retirement. They both liked to watch movies on TV.

Then age began to catch up with them. Jimmy had a wonderful memory. He had almost total recall. And then he didn't. He became cranky, out of sorts. Flora had her own troubles. She began to forget things. Alzheimer's? Perish the thought.

After their class on Thursdays they joined several other students and the teacher for lunch at Panera's. They enjoyed the outing. The others were old, too. For some reason, that was comforting. It was a lively bunch. They told stories. Where else in today's world could you find people who still *talked* to each other? Everybody else was texting. They all agreed that the world was changing, and not for the better either.

