

Edwin and Maudey

by

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FADE IN:

INT. EDWIN'S AND MAUDEY'S WORKROOM - DAY

Music boxes, metal toys, quilts and butterflies, gathered over a lifetime, tell their silent stories from the walls and lovingly arranged shelves of the cozy room.

Somewhere in his 70's, **EDWIN** peers through a magnifying glass. Though hunched over at his work table, the old man still resembles a boy in his curiosity.

Edwin's liver-spotted hands appear gigantic as they gently unfold a tissue, exposing a PLAIN BUTTERFLY.

His loving hands turn the butterfly so he can appraise it from every angle.

MAUDEY (O.S.)

Is it a good one?

Maudey's voice crackles a little. She's asked him this a million times in about as many years of marriage.

Edwin smiles. Doesn't take his eyes off the butterfly.

EDWIN

It's a good one.

MAUDEY, also 70's, doesn't look up from her quilting chair. She just smiles as she stitches the corner of an applique quilt.

MAUDEY

I'm glad.

Without her glasses, she squints. Her poor eyes and arthritic hands make it difficult to do the fine stitchwork.

Edwin chuckles.

EDWIN

They're on your head.

Maudey reaches up. Pats the top of her gray head. Sure enough. She retrieves her glasses and slides them on her face.

MAUDEY

What's it called?

Edwin carefully sets the butterfly on a piece of cotton batting.

EDWIN
Heterogenea shurtleffi.

MAUDEY
Easy for you to say.

Edwin straightens as best he can.

EDWIN
The common name is grey-streaked,
hair-brained Maudey. Very rare.

He chuckles as he shuffles to an alcove.

MAUDEY
Are we funny?

Edwin chuckles again and Maudey smiles.

Every inch of alcove wall space is covered by display boxes filled with moths and butterflies. Each specimen is labeled with its Common name, Species, Phylum and Order.

MAUDEY (CONT'D)
Lots of bugs in the ointment all
these years.

EDWIN
Yep.

Edwin knows his collection by heart. Without looking up, he reaches. Takes down a box with space for one more large specimen.

MAUDEY
Which is your favorite?

Edwin shuffles back toward his table with the box. Stops to pat Maudey's shoulder on the way.

EDWIN
This one.

Maudey clucks and smiles. Shakes her head as her gnarled fingers sew the final stitches in the fabric of the quilt.

Edwin sits down at his work table and raises the lid of the box.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Every day's been a good one, hasn't
it.

With tweezers, he picks up the Plain Butterfly with care.

MAUDEY

It has.

Edwin gently places the Butterfly in the open space of the box. Turning it just so, he eases a pin through the gray abdomen and secures it to the box.

EDWIN

Just a few bumps in the road.

Below it, he adheres a hand-written description - *Heterogenea Shurtleffi*.

MAUDEY

Some more bumpy than others.

Edwin straightens his work table.

He closes and secures the lid and rises. With both hands he carries the box to its space on the wall. Labors to hang the wire on the nail.

His work finished, he pats the box, then turns to Maudey.

EDWIN

Ready?

Maudey cuts the thread with a small scissors and returns it to her sewing box. She smooths her hand over the finished quilt, then looks with love at her husband.

MAUDEY

Mm, hmm.

Edwin helps Maudey from her chair.

Maudey smiles at Edwin as he gathers her quilt in his arms. She leans heavily on him as they walk to the door.

Looking back at the tidy room, Maudey switches off the light.

INT. EDWIN'S AND MAUDEY'S STAIRWAY - DAY

Edwin guides Maudey to the top of the stairway. She holds tight to Edwin, grasps the railing with her other hand.

EDWIN

I've got you.

Maudey carefully takes a step.

The stairwell walls are lined with PHOTOGRAPHS. Each step the couple takes reveals another chapter in their life together.

- Wedding pictures of their parents.
- Edwin as a baby.
- Maudey as a child.
- Young Edwin in his Military Uniform.
- Young Maudey.
- A baby.
- Their son in grade school.

Maudey touches the face of the Little Boy in the photo. Gives her husband a sad smile.

MAUDEY

He was such a sweet boy.

Edwin's eyes tear up.

MAUDEY (CONT'D)

Do you think he'll be there?

EDWIN

I do.

-- A beach somewhere. Edwin's and Maudey's names are written in the sand.

They reach the bottom of the stairs.

Maudey looks back up the staircase - how far they've come.

Edwin switches off the light.

EXT. EDWIN'S AND MAUDEY'S FRONT PORCH - DUSK

Evening nips at the air. A light wind rustles leaves on the boulevard trees.

Two well used rocking chairs grace the porch. Still carrying the quilt, Edwin helps Maudey settle in her rocker.

With great care, he opens the quilt, spreads it across her lap and kisses her forehead.

EDWIN

You good?

She nods.

Certain his wife is comfortable, Edwin opens the screen door.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
I'll get the cocoa. Be right back.

The screen door bumps the door jam.

Maudey closes her failing eyes. Her hands travel the stitches on the quilt - the time, the love, the sorrow.

The screen door opens. Edwin carries two cups, holds one out to his wife. He pulls the second rocking chair near Maudey's and settles into it.

Maudey picks up part of the quilt. Spreads it over Edwin's legs.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Is it hurting much?

Maudey pats Edwin's hand. Shakes her head.

MAUDEY
Not today.

EDWIN
Did you take your medicine?

Maudey laughs a little. Shakes her head. They both smile at the irony.

Edwin removes a flask from his pocket.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Are you sure about this? No second thoughts?

MAUDEY
I'm sure.

Edwin splashes a little in each cup.

They lock eyes and clink their cups together. Maudey sniffs at hers and they each take a sip.

MAUDEY (CONT'D)
You turned off the kettle?

EDWIN
Always do.

She nods as they take another sip.

MAUDEY

Would you do it all again?

Edwin smiles at her. Takes her hand in his and kisses it. Both seem a little drowsy.

EDWIN

You bet your boots I would.

Maudey's eyes tear up a little.

MAUDEY

I'm going to miss you. I'm going to miss you, my sweetheart.

Edwin nods. All his love for his wife is contained in his smile.

EDWIN

I've got you, Maudey- for always.

Sleepy, they both lean back in their rockers. Keep watch over each other until their eyes close. Eventually the chairs stop rocking.

A new bud flutters from the trees. Lands soundless on the corner of the quilt, where Edwin's and Maudey's initials are connected by two embroidered butterflies.

A soft breeze ruffles the boulevard trees. Shimmering leaves dance on branches reaching forever to the sky.

FADE OUT.