

SWEET ON YOU

When Irene, a semi-lonely senior citizen, unleashes her temper on the silver fox moving in across the street, she devises the perfect plan to apologize.

INT. HOME DINING ROOM- DAY

IRENE, an elderly woman, sits at the head of a long table. In front of her is a homemade cake with two candles: a seven and a five. She is wearing a shirt displaying a cat playing with a ball of yarn and lavender sweatpants. People stand around her singing "Happy Birthday". Once finished, the group walks around and mingles. EDITH, a young woman, stands behind Irene with her arms around her.

EDITH  
Happy Birthday, Grandma!

IRENE  
Thank you, darling, but I don't see what's to celebrate.

EDITH  
Oh come on, birthdays are fun!

IRENE  
Maybe for you, but for me it's just a reminder of why my bones hurt.

Light music begins to play in another room and outbursts of laughs and hollers are heard.

EDITH  
Let's go dance with everyone! You love this song!

IRENE  
You go on, I'm going to step outside for just a moment.

Edith hesitantly walks out of the room, glancing back at Irene. Irene slowly stands up and walks out the door.

EXT. SIDEWALK- DAY

Irene leans on her mailbox. MOVERS load moving boxes out of a large van and into the house next door.

Irene notices weeds growing along the sidewalk and leans to pull them out. She follows them along until she is in front of the house with the MOVERS walking by. She abruptly stands up and clashes with a handsome elderly man, ROBERT, carrying a large box. He drops the box and Irene topples to the ground, he immediately reaches out a hand but she waves it off. Once Irene is upright Robert bends to pick up the box and its contents.

IRENE

Excuse me, you could've knocked my head off!

ROBERT

I'm so sorry ma'am, I didn't see you.

IRENE

That's quite obvious, and don't ma'am me I'm not your mother.

ROBERT

(chuckles)

No, but I can hear the resemblance.

The elderly man closes the box back up and stands upright. Now looking eye to eye he seems to realize that Irene is in no joking mood.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I'm Robert, I'm moving in next door. You must be my new neighbor.

IRENE

I'm Irene, and I sure hope you'll be more careful in the future.

ROBERT

I will! I promise I meant no harm. Now I better set this down before I pull something!

(Earnestly)

It was nice to meet you.

Irene watches him intently as he walks away with the box. Her look of anger fades to one of bashful remorse

INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

Irene is pacing her living room, cleaning up the aftermath from the party. Edith lounges lazily in a reclining chair in the corner of the room, occasionally pointing to party shrapnel that evades Irene's view.

EDITH

Grandma you have a crush!

IRENE

That's ridiculous I'm not a child. I just said I feel bad for my temper.

EDITH

Face it lady, you're swooning.

IRENE

And you're delusional.

EDITH

You've been talking about him every minute since you walked through the door. You know, I bet screaming in his face really stole his heart, you player.

IRENE

I did not scream, just...spoke loudly.

(Irene lets out an exasperated sigh)

He was so polite and I just flew off the handle. Now it will be so awkward whenever we see each other getting the mail.

EDITH

It's okay it happens to everyone, you should just go apologize and I'm sure he'll forgive you.

IRENE

I don't know if I should. What if he thinks it's odd that I show up at his house?

EDITH

Why would he?

Irene pauses her cleaning to stand in front of an elegant full length mirror that's hanging on the wall. She tugs uncomfortably at her clothes.

IRENE

I look so old.

EDITH

That's probably because you're old.

IRENE

Well, I know, but I don't have to dress like it.

A moment of silence while Irene glares at her reflection and Edith observes with a look of sympathy.

EDITH  
(changing the topic)  
Lets watch T.V.

Without waiting for a response Edith flicks on the T.V. and flops onto the couch facing the T.V.

Irene slowly tears her gaze from the mirror and sits on the couch next to Edith. A WOMAN on the T.V. sashays around a kitchen and dramatically adds ingredients to a mixing bowl.

WOMAN ON TV  
Oh boy! My Johnny will be so pleased when I deliver this special pie! He will certainly forgive me for sleeping with his brother!

Canned laughter erupts from the T.V.

EDITH  
This is garbage. How cliché can you get?

Irene has a moment of realization and slowly turns to Edith.

IRENE  
Honey, go get my recipe book.

EDITH  
Oh no, you can't just copy this crappy T.V. show's apology. Just use your words. I'm begging.

IRENE  
I've already had the idea. It's in motion and there's nothing you can do to stop it.

EDITH  
You didn't even have the idea! You just stole it from the freaky T.V. lady!

IRENE  
But it's perfect! Who can resist baked goods?

EDITH  
When's the last time you baked something?

IRENE  
I bake all the time.

EDITH

Lies. You haven't used your kitchen since the stone ages.

IRENE

And you burn box mac and cheese, so lets put our heads together and hop to it, shall we?

INT. KITCHEN- DAY

Edith and Irene stand together in the small kitchen both wearing flour coated aprons. Irene's apron reads "Nice Rack" with a printed rack of ribs below, Edith's displays printed abs across the front. In front of them lies a gorgeous pineapple upside-down cake, just like mama makes.

EDITH

It's beautiful.

IRENE

I think that was harder than birthing your mom.

EDITH

Was mom also a little dented on the right?

(she pokes one side of the cake)

IRENE

Nope. The left.

They stand there for a moment admiring their work.

EXT. SIDEWALK- AFTERNOON

Irene stands anxiously on the sidewalk holding the cake. She paces in front of the door and looks around as if waiting for someone to come and deliver the baked good for her. But no one comes. So she uses her elbow to ring the doorbell, being careful not to tip the cake.

After a moment Robert open the door, he's wearing jorts and an "I Heart New York" shirt.

ROBERT

Well Hi!

(slightly sarcastic, but not fully)

Here to yell at me again?

IRENE

No, I-um- I brought you this cake.  
To...apologize. I wasn't very kind  
when we met, and I'm sorry.

Robert's face displays a look of shock and then softens, but before he can speak Irene interjects.

IRENE (CONT'D)

It was my fault too, I wasn't  
paying attention. I was just in a  
crappy mood because it's my  
birthday and nothing says bummer  
like getting older.

ROBERT

It's your birthday? You should come  
in and we can share this. It will  
be an apology cake and birthday  
cake.

IRENE

Well...if you insist.

Robert takes the cake and opens the door wider as Irene hesitantly steps inside.

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN

Robert swipes various newspapers and packaging into one of the many cardboard boxes on the floor and sets down the cake on the counter. He begins walking around, making a cup of coffee as they talk.

ROBERT

Thank you for bringing this. I know  
we didn't get off on the best foot  
but I appreciate a heartfelt  
apology...especially one that  
involves dessert.

IRENE

(smiling softly)  
It was my pleasure.

ROBERT

Do you live alone over there?

EDITH

Yes, but my granddaughter Irene  
visits often. She's a wild one but  
keeps me young.

ROBERT

That's lucky! I wish my grandkids visited more often. My son rarely comes to this side of town, except holidays.

EDITH

So you live alone then?

ROBERT

Yes, my wife passed when my son was in college. Many years ago.

IRENE

Oh...I'm so sorry.

ROBERT

No need for another apology today, it's just the way the world works.

IRENE

My daughter's father was never really in the picture to begin with.

ROBERT

That must have been hard on her, both of you.

IRENE

We've always been independent ladies. We take care of each other.

ROBERT

That's very respectable.

They both take a moment to soak in all the information shared. Robert grabs two plates, he then opens a drawer and pulls out a knife to cut the cake.

ROBERT (CONT.)

Shall we cut this baby open?

IRENE

We shall.

Robert cuts into the cake and lays the knife sideways to pull out a piece. But when he lifts the knife, batter spills out the side.

IRENE

Oh no.



ROBERT  
(chuckles slightly)  
It looks like it wasn't baked all  
the way through!

IRENE  
I'm so sorry!

ROBERT  
Don't worry! I understand how  
difficult it is!

IRENE  
What do you mean by that?

ROBERT  
Well-I just meant-it can be hard to  
do this kind of thing by yourself  
and-

IRENE  
Excuse me but I am doing alright by  
myself.

ROBERT  
Oh! Well yes of course I didn't-

IRENE  
And I'm sorry that it isn't perfect  
but you have no right to criticize  
me. You don't even know me!

ROBERT  
I feel like we at least know each  
other a little bit.  
(He laughs uncomfortably)  
After all, we are neighbors!

IRENE  
I can't believe I came over to  
apologize! I shared the details of  
my life with you and...and...You're  
laughing at me!  
(tears begin to well in  
her eyes)  
I wish I had never come here.

Irene snatches the dish of half-baked cake of the table and  
shuffles out the door as fast as possible, leaving Robert  
standing alone, surrounded by cardboard boxes.

INT. HOME DINING ROOM- AFTERNOON

Irene stands in the middle of the living room, waving her arms as she talks. Edith has reassumed her position on the recliner and watches her grandma with wide eyes. The cakes sits dejectedly on the coffee-table, its unbaked insides oozing onto the plate.

EDITH

So you didn't get lucky?

IRENE

He laughed in my face!

EDITH

Why would he do that?

IRENE

He said he wasn't surprised I couldn't handle it on my own.

EDITH

What a dick! I can't believe he said that!

IRENE

Well, he didn't say that exactly. But that's what he meant.

EDITH

Grandma...?

IRENE

He was insulting me! After we worked so hard!

EDITH

Grandma, what exactly did he say?

IRENE

He said "it can be hard to do this kind of thing by yourself".

EDITH

Oh my god, Grandma.

IRENE

What?

EDITH

He was flirting with you! You blockhead. So oblivious, you'd think you were a man or something.

IRENE

No, no. He was being mean...Right?

EDITH

Oh, lord.

Irene suddenly realizes her mistake and freezes. The color drains from her face and she sits heavily on the couch.

IRENE

Oh my. I've done it again. My temper ruined everything.

EDITH

This might've done it. I won't lie to you.

Edith stands and approaches Irene, gently placing a hand on her shoulder comfortingly.

Suddenly, the landline rings next to them. Edith and Irene look at the phone and then each other. Irene lunges for the phone and picks it up.

IRENE

Hello? Who is this?

ROBERT

It's...Robert, the neighbor with terrible manners.

IRENE

Oh..!How did you get my phone number?

ROBERT

You're granddaughter gave it to me.

Irene shoots a look at Edith who shrugs sheepishly.

IRENE

I'm so sorry, I know you said we didn't need any more apologies today, but this one is needed and-

ROBERT

No. It's not. I didn't mean to laugh at you. And you were right, I shouldn't have said that you needed help. But... If you decide you would like some, come over my house at 6:00 tonight.

The phone beeps. Robert has hung up. Irene sets the phone down and slowly look at Edith.

IRENE  
He...invited me over?

EDITH  
(screams with delight)  
Grandma! He's so into you! And you're gonna get some tonight!

IRENE  
Don't say that! He's probably inviting me over to lecture me on how awful I was.

EDITH  
Bull. He's into you.

Irene considers for a second and then gasps.

IRENE  
What will I wear?

EDITH  
(Eyeing Irene's outfit)  
Not that.

EXT. SIDEWALK- EVENING

It's 6:00 on the dot. Irene stands outside Robert's door in a pretty floral dress. She's wearing mascara. Irene takes a deep breath and rings the doorbell. Almost instantly it opens and Robert welcomes her in. Robert is still wearing his jorts.

INT. ROBERT'S HOUSE- EVENING

Robert leads Irene through his home, which is slightly more unpacked than when Irene had left. He strolls through with his hands in his pockets. Irene follows cautiously, careful not to disturb anything.

ROBERT  
I called you here to say i'm sorry. I haven't known you for very long, but I already know that you are very independent. You don't need my help, but, if you'll allow me...

Finally they step into Robert's kitchen. Robert stands next to the counter and turns to face Irene. He has mixing bowls laid out next to various ingredients, a large can of pineapple is set in the middle of the counter.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I'd like to help you make a proper  
apology cake, together.

Irene's face is one of utter shock and surprise. Then, her brow furrows as if she's preparing to launch into an attack. Irene looks at Robert and then at the counter, finally, her face softens and she smiles.

IRENE

That would be wonderful.

INT. ROBERT'S DINING ROOM

Soft music plays from a radio as Robert and Irene sit at the dining room table. In front of each of them is a plate of pineapple upside-down cake, perfectly baked. They laugh together.

IRENE

I don't believe you!

ROBERT

It's true, I was a karaoke king in  
my golden days.

IRENE

I've never been a singer, can't  
hold a tune to save my life. I used  
to dance though, I loved it.

ROBERT

What made you stop?

IRENE

I don't know. Time, I guess.

Robert pushes away his nearly empty plate and holds out a hand.

ROBERT

Care to dance?

As Robert begins to stand, the song from Irene's birthday party begins to play on the radio. Irene smiles at Robert and takes his hand.