

HEARTBEAT

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. FLORIST SHOP - DAY

DERIN, 20s, diffident and a little scruffy, watches the shop from across the road.

The sign on the shop reads CLOSED.

INT. FLORIST SHOP - DAY

MAISY, 20s, sits behind the counter of the empty shop, her face dour and in stark contrast to the bright blooms all around her.

MAISY
One, two, three.

KAREN (O.C.)
What are you doing?

MAISY
I can count my heartbeat.

Karen doesn't answer.

MAISY
Did you hear me?

KAREN, 50s, frailer than her years, shuffles out of the back room.

KAREN
Yep, heard ya. You told me last week too.

Maisy frowns.

MAISY
Did I say I could do it without checking my pulse?

KAREN
Yes, be hardly worth mentioning otherwise.

MAISY
Guess not.

She counts out loud, slowly. methodically.

MAISY
Four, five, six --

KAREN
Are you that bored?

Maisy stops counting, sweeps her arm round the empty shop.

MAISY
Aren't you?

Karen shakes her head.

KAREN
No, too busy to be bored.

The shop door opens with a tinkle of the old school bell attached to the door frame.

Derin, enters the shop.

DERIN
You are open?

Maisy reacts first.

MAISY
Yes, definitely... just a little
quiet today.

Derin reaches back for the door and grabs the Open/Closed sign.

DERIN
Says you are closed.

He grins.

KAREN
(scowling)
Explains why we're quiet.

MAISY
Sorry.

Karen dismisses her with a wave of the hand and returns to the back room.

DERIN
Sorry, did I drop you in it.

MAISY
Nope, I managed that all on my own.

Derin smiles, it's disarming.

Maisy blushes.

MAISY
So, how can I help you today?

DEVIN
Well, I need a bouquet.

MAISY
Great, who for?

DEVIN
Er...

Derin looks confused and embarrassed and shy, all at the same time.

Maisy steps in before the silence gets too awkward.

MAISY
You know, girlfriend would be something nice and romantic, Mum would be traditional blooms. A bereavement, something else entirely. That sort of thing.

DERIN
Yeah, sorry... what about for love?

He smiles that disarming smile again.

MAISY
Really?

He nods.

MAISY
Okay, and you want to give her...
sorry I don't want to stereotype...
it is a her?

DERIN
Yes, a recent acquaintance.

MAISY
Great, how romantic.

DERIN
What would you suggest?

KAREN (O.C.)
Roses.

MAISY
I've got this.

Grumbling from the back room. Maisy pulls the door shut.

MAISY
Sorry.

Derin laughs.

DERIN
Roses, perhaps a little cliché?

Maisy nods.

MAISY
Agreed, you need something a little more personal.

DERIN
That'd be great.

MAISY
Well, Orchids, Tulips, Carnations all indicate different aspects of love.

DERIN
Unrequited?

Maisy shakes her head.

MAISY
There's just one for that. Daffodils.

DERIN
Great, a tasteful bunch of them then.

Maisy looks crestfallen.

DERIN
Something wrong.

MAISY
They're a spring flower, they're out of season.

DERIN
Oh, no.

MAISY
We could go for something else?

Derin ponders.

DERIN
I don't think that would be right.

MAISY
No, but a second choice might still work.

DERIN
Would you want second best?

She shakes her head.

DERIN
Look, thanks for all your help,
I'll think of something.

He scuttles out of the shop, doorbell ringing as he leaves.

The back room door opens.

KAREN
Can I come out now?

Maisy nods.

KAREN
Where'd he go?

MAISY
He wanted Daffodils.

KAREN
You should have sold him something else.

MAISY
No, they wouldn't have worked.

EXT. FLORIST - DAWN

The shop is in darkness.

On the doorstep is a box, a card stuck to the top.

Lights inside the shop flicker on.

INT. FLORIST - CONTINUOUS

Maisy turns on the lights, sets to tidying flowers, adding water to bouquets and displays stands.

She goes to the door and turns the CLOSED sign to OPEN and spots the box outside.

She retrieves it and takes it to the counter.

Maisy opens the card on the box.

INSERT: Unseasonal greetings! X

She opens the box, puts her hand in and pulls out a string bag full of bulbs, daffodil bulbs.

Maisy counts her heartbeat.

MAISY
(faster than before)
One, two, three...

The doorbell rings above the door.

DERIN
Open?

MAISY
(faster still)
Four-five-six...

FADE OUT.

THE END