

FLOWER PATCH

Written by

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INT. LIVING ROOM - OVERCAST

MAE, a woman in her early 30's sits on a sofa. Her arms wrapped tightly around her legs, her chin rest upon her knees. MAE's eyes are a bloodshot red and her nose is runny. She takes a sip of hot chocolate from her flower-crested mug and wipes her nose on her knitted jumper sleeve.

She watches through a frosted window as DAVID, A man in his early 30's digs deeper and deeper into the ground. He digs a small patch at the end of the garden, but in front of the neatly colour coded row of flowers that run the entire length of the back fence.

DAVID clambers out of the hole, strikes the shovel into the ground and wipes his hands on his jeans. As MAE looks on, her eyes start to glisten with tears once more.

DAVID glances over to MAE with a look of sadness.

By DAVIDs feet rests an object completely wrapped in blankets. DAVID gently lifts the lifeless object in his arms.

MAE pre-emptively wipes the tears from her cheek as DAVID steps down into the hole holding the object. He places the object onto the damp clay floor with the upmost caution then heaves himself out the hole once more and grabs the shovel. MAE turns her back to the frosted window as DAVID shifts the mounds of earth back down inside the hole.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK GARDEN - LATER

Rows of back gardens all link shoulder to shoulder. Each garden maybe five metres wide and not much longer. Every identical house connects to the last forming a wall of concrete stretching almost endlessly into the distance or as it is more commonly called, a council estate.

DAVID stands arms-crossed staring down at his hard work, but in his head, he is somewhere far away.

MAE approaches with a mug in each hand. A nudge on the shoulder brings DAVID back to reality. MAE holds out the steaming beverage.

DAVID

Oh, thanks.

MAE doesn't answer. DAVID takes the drink. They both take a sip; A silence hangs in the air.

DAVID (CONT'D)
What do you think?

MAE
I think...I think it's all we can
do.

A meticulous dog shaped grave has been carved into the soil by their feet. Each individual paw has its own path of freshly dug soil. Every feature has noticeable contour, the mouth slightly agape, the ears perked up.

MAE yanks the shovel from out of the nearby grass.

MAE (CONT'D)
It's a good spot. He'll always be
watching, close-by, Y'know.

DAVID sighs. MAE starts to tear-up.

MAE (CONT'D)
David.

DAVID
Yeah?

MAE
I miss him.

DAVID hugs MAE.

DAVID
I miss him too. But it's like you
said, at least he'll always be
close.

MAE
I know.

DAVID
Come on, it's cold out.

DAVID heads toward the back door. MAE remains at the grave.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Mae.

MAE is oblivious.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Mae, are you coming inside?

MAE

Oh, no. I'm just gonna stay out here for a bit.

DAVID

Okay, but don't stay out too long, it's getting cold out... Mae?

MAE

Yeah, I know, I won't.

DAVID heads inside. The sky starts to cloud over.

INT. KITCHEN - DAYS LATER

DAVID sits at the table clacking away on the laptop with one hand, He takes a phone call with the other. A muffled voice crackles over the phone.

DAVID

Yeah, it sucks but we'll get through it.... No, I know mum, I know, I appreciate that you're calling but we'll both be fine.... How is she?.... Oh she is fine. Definitely taking it harder than me.... No, what are you talking about.

While talking, DAVID types on the laptop-

"Unused dog food available, Free if you are willing to pick up/no delivery"

DAVID (CONT'D)

.... What no, Of course, She's not doing great right now but.... Look mum, I know you and Mae don't always get along but.... No, Stop. We're not talking about that now.... No, we're not.... Not having it.... look I'll talk to you later.... Okay.... Yes I know, I love you too. Bye.... I know.... Yes, you're just trying to help.... Okay....Bye Now.

DAVID sighs and places the phone down on the table. He gazes over to the window.

EXT. BACK GARDEN

MAE claws her way through a patch of weeds nestled between the rows of flowers. The sun beats down on MAE's face as she wipes the sweat from her forehead.

As MAE inspects the row of flowers, she notices several of the flowers have started to wilt. Poking about in the soil she finds no clear reason as to why.

MAE moves over to the grave and starts to trim the grass around the grave with a pair of scissors. She notices a small weed has started to sprout from the soil right in the centre of the grave. MAE plucks the weed with her bare hands and doesn't think much more of it.

FADE TO:

EXT. BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

MAE, DAVID and several friends mingle amongst each other. MAE chats with her friend SARAH next to a small barbecue.

SARAH

Are you working tomorrow?

No answer... SARAH snaps her fingers.

MAE

Huh?

SARAH

Am I that boring? Are you working any shifts tomorrow?

MAE

Oh, I honestly haven't checked yet.

SARAH

Well text me when you look. What were you looking at?

MAE

What? I don't know.

SARAH

Staring at David?

MAE

(jokingly)

God no, I already see way too much of his face.

SARAH

You two make me jealous. How are you two not married yet?

MAE

It's just not for us?

SARAH

What does that even mean? How long have you two been together?

MAE

Well, we got Alfie for our second anniversary...so I guess it's just over seven years.

SARAH

Seven years and still no ring. How?

MAE

We've got this far just fine. Why shake things up.

SARAH

I don't get that at all. Oh, I mean't to say, I'm so sorry about Alfie by the way. He was the sweetest dog. Must have been hard.

SARAH comforts MAE with a pat on the arm.

MAE

It was, but I guess That's what you sign up for when you get a dog, but it still doesn't make it any easier.

SARAH

Do you think that means it's time?

MAE

Time for what?

SARAH

You know.

SARAH takes another sip.

MAE

(realisation)

Oh no, I'm not ready for that. A dog is one thing, But-

SARAH interrupts.

SARAH
Come on, you can't put it off
forever.

MAE
I can and I will.

DAVID leaves one conversation on the other side of the garden
behind and heads toward the pair.

SARAH
And what does David think of that?

MAE
(Under her breath)
Sarah, don't.

SARAH waves DAVID over.

SARAH
David, we were just talking about
you.

DAVID puts his arm around MAE.

DAVID
Oh, really? I don't like the sound
of that.

MAE
Don't worry about-

SARAH cuts in.

SARAH
So, when are you two gonna pop a
kid out?

A moment of silence.

DAVID
I, uh... We haven't really
discussed it.

SARAH
Haven't discussed it? Come on, you
must have talked about it. Why not?

MAE
Sarah please.

SARAH

What. Surely your parents must push this all the time. I know mine do and I'm still single.

DAVID

They do and we say the same shit we're saying here.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

DAVID and MAE get undressed on either side of the bed.

DAVID

Don't you think maybe it's time we did discuss it?

MAE

I've told you from the start and I'm telling you again. No.

The pair lay down and pull up the covers.

DAVID

Can you at least tell me why?

MAE

I've told you before, there doesn't have to be a reason, I just don't want them. You can call me selfish or whatever, but I don't want to devote 20 years of my life to someone who might hate me anyway. Now can I go to sleep?

MAE switches her bedside lamp off and turns away from DAVID. DAVID switches his lamp off soon after.

DAVID

Just for the record, I think you'd make a great mum.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

MAE waits by the counter as the coffee machine grinds away. Her eyes drift up through the window and shock washes over her face.

EXT. BACK GARDEN

MAE stumbles towards the back of the garden unsure as to whether she is even conscious yet. The entire row of flowers along the garden are dead. Every flower has curled in on itself. The sea of colours now reduced to a wave of brown.

However, the once barren patch of soil over the grave has been transformed into a beautiful patch of flowers whilst still holding its perfect dog shape. MAE stands stunned in silence.

Then-

MAE
(Shouts)
DAVID!

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK GARDEN - MOMENTS LATER

DAVID stands hands on hips poking at dead flowers with his feet. MAE stands at the colourful grave chewing her fingernails.

MAE
What do you think?

DAVID
What do I think. I don't know. You know more about flowers and shit.
What do you think?

MAE
I don't know.

DAVID
Do you think we should move it?

MAE
Are you talking about him?

DAVID
Yes, Him, should we move him?

MAE
I don't know, it honestly looks nice. I think I like it...

DAVID
Even so, this can't be good right?
For the soil. It might be a
biohazard.

DAVID picks up a dead flower and crumples it in his hand.

MAE
Let's just leave it, see what
happens. I like it.

DAVID
Are you sure? I'm really not sure
about that.

MAE
Look, we can just leave it and
Whatever happens then it's on me.

DAVID
Fine, I mean... Fine, It's on you.

MAE
That's okay, then it's on me.

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

MAE types away on a laptop, DAVID enters through the front
door.

DAVID
Hey babe.

DAVID kisses MAE on the cheek and sits down

MAE
How was work?

DAVID
You know, Same as always, It's
work. How about you?

MAE cuts in.

MAE
I'm not a spiritual person, right?

DAVID
(Laughs)
No, definitely not. What, why do
you ask?

MAE

The flowers. It's just weird. Isn't it.

DAVID

I hate to break it to you, but I think what's happening is a lot more gross.

MAE

Maybe, I just... I don't know.

DAVID takes MAE's hand.

DAVID

It would be nice but-

DAVID notices they're covered in dirt, then let's go.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Wait, why are your hands so dirty?

MAE checks under her fingernails.

MAE

I was just out in the garden.

DAVID

So, I'm guessing you're keeping the flowers.

MAE

For now, sure.

DAVID

What about all the dead flowers.

MAE

I've been wanting to change those for a while now anyway.

DAVID

Fine, But it's not him. It's just a grave.

MAE

Yes, I know that. I'm not insane.

DAVID

I know, that's not what I'm saying.

(Sigh)

Just remember. They're only flowers. That's all.

INT. KITCHEN - SOME DAYS LATER

DAVID unloads several shopping bags onto the kitchen counter carefully putting away every food item. Through the window MAE tends to the flowery grave.

EXT. BACK GARDEN

MAE gently pours the watering can with a smile on her face.

DAVID approaches.

DAVID
I could use some help inside.

MAE
What?

DAVID
The shopping, can you help with the shopping?

MAE
Of course. Just a moment.

MAE kisses DAVID. DAVID heads inside. MAE turns her attention back to the grave where the grass around the rim of the grave has started to turn brown and rotten.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The couple share a meal while the TV hums in the background.

MAE
(fed up)
Why do you do that?

DAVID
Because that's what couples do.
They talk.

MAE
But you're always so concerned
about the future. It's always
what's next, can't we just let it
be for a while.

DAVID
For three fucking years I've let it
be.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

For three years we've had the money to move out of this shithole but you said "let's not rush". I mean, do you want to live here forever?

MAE

It doesn't matter where we live as long as we are together.

DAVID

That's such a copout answer.

MAE

So you don't believe that.

DAVID

Don't do that. Don't turn this around on me.

MAE

I'm not turning anything around.

DAVID

Why are you so afraid of change?

MAE

I'm not afraid of change. What are you talking about? Okay, you want to move, what about our jobs.

DAVID

We can commute.

MAE

And our friends?

DAVID

None of our friends live nearby anyway.

MAE

What about our neighbours?

DAVID

What about them, which one would you miss?

MAE

What about Alfie?

DAVID

Our dead dog, what about him?

MAE
We can't leave him here.

DAVID
You want to dig him up and take him
with us?

MAE leans back into her chair.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. That was mean but we
can't stay here forever because our
dead dog is here.

MAE is silent.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You didn't even want the dog
anyway.

MAE
That's not true.

DAVID
It is, the only reason we got a dog
was because I got him as a surprise
present. If I had asked before you
would have shot it down in a
second.

MAE
Well, what's the point in getting a
dog if you know it's always going
to end up here.

DAVID
Well, we're here now. Aren't you
glad we did it?

MAE
Not right now I'm not.

MAE gets up to leave. DAVID grabs her arm.

DAVID
Why are you acting like you're the
only one going through this?

MAE
I'm not the only one, but it feels
like it.

DAVID lets go.

DAVID

I'm sorry, what do you want, do you want me to cry for you?

MAE

You're such an asshole.

MAE storms out the room.

EXT. BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

MAE sits cross-legged by the grave. She speaks to Alfie.

MAE

He means the best doesn't he.

No answer from the grave.

MAE (CONT'D)

I can't leave you here. Alone.
Someone still has to take care of
you.

MAE runs her hand through the grass by her feet. It crumbles like paper. The rot is starting to spread.

EXT. BACK GARDEN - MIDDAY

The sound of a car pulling up echoes over the garden fence. Moments later SARAH bursts in through the side passage.

SARAH

Mae, my god.

MAE lies on a sun bed reading a book about gardening. SARAH takes a seat next to her.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Where have you been, you haven't been to work in almost a week. You weren't answering your calls. I was worried.

MAE

Sorry, something important came up.

SARAH looks at MAE spread out on the sun-bed.

SARAH

Yeah, super important. I can see that. Well, what? Should I be worried?

MAE

No, It's nothing serious. I just can't leave right now.

SARAH

Serious enough to skip work.

MAE

Yeah, sorry.

SARAH

Ok, luckily you're on good terms with Mark, but what am I supposed to tell him? When are you coming in?

MAE

I don't know.

SARAH

You don't know? Look I don't want to pry if this is a breakdown or whatever, but I can only cover you for another week and then the boss is gonna want to know what's going on.

MAE

That's fine. Thank you.

SARAH

Thank you? Okay, I'm covering your arse here. I don't know what this is but like, text me...okay?

MAE is silent. SARAH takes a step backwards.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I guess I'll see myself out.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

MAE chops vegetables on the kitchen counter. Out from the hallway comes DAVID. He tosses his keys onto the table and kisses MAE on the neck. DAVID sits down at the kitchen table.

DAVID

How was work?

MAE

Good.

The sound of the knife on the chopping board cuts through the silence.

DAVID
Good? My day was fine too.

MAE
Glad to hear it.

Silence.

DAVID
So, what did you get up to at work today?

MAE
Nothing exciting.

DAVID
Really, Are you sure?

MAE
I'm sure.

DAVID
Okay. Are you though?

MAE
What, why do you care all of a sudden?

DAVID
You know you can talk to me.

MAE puts down the knife and leans back on the counter.

MAE
What?

DAVID
What?

MAE
Yes what? What? Come on.

DAVID speaks in a hush tone.

DAVID
I'm not trying to start an argument.

MAE
Good, well neither am I.

DAVID
Good, I'll be blunt then.

MAE
By all means.

DAVID
Why aren't you going to work?

MAE
Did Sarah call you?

DAVID
Does it matter? Just tell me what's wrong.

MAE
Nothing's wrong.

DAVID
Obviously something's wrong.

MAE
I just need some time.

DAVID
Time for what? I want to help you.
If you're not gonna let me help you
then what's the point of this.

MAE
Point of what?

DAVID
You're doing it again. Picking out
words and making that the argument?

MAE
Point of what David?

DAVID
Point of talking with you, every
conversation feels like I'm walking
on ice.

MAE
And every conversation with you
feels like I'm already drowning.

DAVID
Do you know what.... I'm not going
to do this anymore. What do you
want?

MAE

I want you to just leave me alone.

DAVID sits stunned. MAE immediately regrets it.

DAVID

Fine.

DAVID stands up and grabs his coat off the back of a chair.

MAE

Where are you going? Wait, don't go, please.

MAE grabs DAVID's arm.

DAVID

There's always this thick cloud around you and it drags the air out of the room. You won't even let me help you. I'm sorry.

MAE

I really want you to help me, I do, But I just...don't.

DAVID hugs MAE.

DAVID

I'm going to stay at my parents. You can come to me whenever you want. I will be ready for you whenever you're ready, but you have to do it yourself.

DAVID kisses MAE on the forehead and leaves.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

MAE lies in an empty bed. She checks her phone. Several texts from SARAH. Zero from DAVID.

EXT. BACK GARDEN - MIDDAY

MAE waters the flowery grave. The surrounding garden is now completely brown. Every blade of grass shrivelled and dry.

MAE sits down crushing the dried up grass beneath her.

MAE

Maybe you're bad for me.

The flowers rustle in the wind. MAE looks down at her fingernails coated in dirt, then lets out a deep breath.

MAE (CONT'D)

I keep expecting you to look back at me.

MAE grabs her phone from her back pocket. A battery symbol flashes red. MAE chucks her phone down onto the grass.

MAE (CONT'D)

What am I doing, I'm talking to a patch of flowers right now. I wish I could just stay here forever, right next to you, I could look after you and things would be simple... But you're killing everything, and winter is coming soon...And then I'm going to have to watch you die again. So I think I can't do this anymore. You've already killed all this, and I can't help you kill anymore.

MAE plucks a single lily flower from the grave and heads inside the shed. The sound of a revving lawnmower echoes into the garden.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

Green grass covers the garden seen through the kitchen window. On the window ledge sits a lily preserved in a block of acrylic.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END