

Surrender

By

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INT, A CORNER STORE, DAY

Jasper, 24, cute, casual and fresh faced, picks up a packet of bread rolls and glances toward the till, where, ALICE, 23 and very pretty, is at work. She catches him looking and gives a big, friendly smile. He smiles back shyly, then looks away, embarrassed. After picking up a couple more items, he gets into the line. A stand of Valentine's cards is nearby. He looks at a card sadly, then up at Alice again. Once more, she smiles, and he looks away. His turn comes. He approaches the till. Alice's eyes sparkle.

ALICE

No Valentine's card for me, then?

Jasper's lips move as he struggles for a response to her flirtation. He's clearly delighted...but before he can speak, as if compelled, his hands go up into an "I surrender" pose. He fights it, but can't stop them or keep them down. Stammering out an apology, he's forced to abandon his groceries and leave. Once outside, his arms subside. He unlocks his bicycle, glances back at the store and rides off sadly.

INT, A FLAT, DAY

KAT, 22, adorable, sits on a sofa with her friend HEATHER. Heather's relaxing, but Kat keeps looking anxiously toward the front door.

HEATHER

What you need to do, Kat, is convince yourself that no matter what happens on the date, you won't like him. Then you'll be fine.

KAT

But you said I would like him.

HEATHER

Well, you will, but you have to get over...you know. Look, why don't you pretend there's something horrible about him at first. Like, his face is covered in peanut butter.

Kat tries to imagine this. There's a knock on the door. With an anxious glance at Heather, Kat answers it. At the door, RILEY, 24, smiles handsomely and holds out a posy of colourful gerberas. Kat takes them with a delighted expression which turns to horror as she struggles with herself, then, as if compelled by an outside force, drops the flowers and slaps him across the face. Dismayed, Riley backs off.

KAT

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry...

Riley runs off. Kat shuts the door, picks up the flowers and turns to Heather sadly.

KAT

I like peanut butter.

EXT. A PUB. EVENING

From across the street, we see Jasper outside the pub, reading a window poster advertising a Valentine's Night speed dating event. Two pretty girls, IRENE and GRACE, come by. They stop and we see them chatting animatedly to Jasper. He's is clearly struggling, and inevitably, his hands go up in the I surrender pose once more. The girls are disconcerted. They awkwardly take their leave. As they go, Grace looks over her shoulder.

GRACE

Poor Jazza. I'd have thought he'd have got over that by now...

Behind them, Jasper stands with his head down, his arms slowly subsiding. But he's distracted from his misery when Heather appears, almost dragging a reluctant Kat into the pub. Jasper and Kat's eyes meet for a moment before Heather successfully gets her in the door.

INT. PUB. EVENING

The Valentine's Night speed dating event is in full swing. We see Heather drag Kat to a table, then a montage as she meets several young men. The first two she's clearly not interested in. The third she's starting to smile at...until she's compelled to slap him.

CUT TO:

Later, after the event is finished. Kat sits alone, slumped over a cider at the bar. She's obviously depressed. She looks up listlessly, and sees Jasper sitting across the room, equally sad. Again, their eyes meet. In despair, she looks down into her cider again. Suddenly we hear Jasper's voice - he's come over to Kat.

JASPER (O.S)

Don't give up.

Kat looks up and sees Jasper. He's holding out a pink gerbera, taken out of a vase in the pub. It's instant love and she's drawn irresistibly out of her seat to face him. Her struggle begins - but at the very moment she goes to slap him, his hands come up in surrender and her slap is blocked. They smile into each other's eyes. They kiss.