

Stolen Flowers

Laura Lee Ecobelli





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STOLEN FLOWERS

By

Lora Lee Ecobelli

CAST

AZALEA JACKSON: A woman, aged 50-60

CORA THOMPSON: Azalea's older sister

SCENE I

Spring, shortly before dusk. The sun is just starting to fade into a soft gold. A rural dairy farm in upstate New York. In the distance, there is a faint hum of a tractor plowing.

(Azalea Jackson sits on her front steps folding laundry. Her older sister Cora Tompkins is engrossed in a romance novel. A shopping bag rests on the floor next to her. All of life's hardships mold their faces, but Cora has at least attempted to take better care of herself. Azalea slowly pulls out several small packets of flower seeds from underneath her laundry basket, turning her back so her sister will not see what she has. A small smile of anticipation overcomes her as she reads the packets.)

CORA: *(without lifting her head from her novel)* What have you got there Zel?

(Azalea, realizing she's been caught, tucks them back into her laundry basket.)

AZALEA: Nothing.

CORA: *(playfully)* Oh, really? Lemme see. *(She grabs the seeds.)* Well, well, will ya lookie here. Flower seeds! Seems like my baby sister wants to play the rebel again.

AZALEA: What Chuck don't know won't hurt him.

CORA: No, but it might hurt you.

AZALEA: I'm fine.

(Cora takes out a small pot of flowers from her shopping bag.)

CORA: You know, I was debating on whether or not to give you this at all today, but now that I see you're hell bent on pushing somebody's buttons, I figure, well...what the heck.

AZALEA: Oh, Cora, thank you. They're beautiful!

CORA: It's better than nothing, I guess.

(Azalea places the plant in a sunny spot and gazes at it wistfully.)

CORA: I was lucky I even got over here at all today. My grand babies were like little monkeys all morning. I bribed the baby sitter to come over before I normally leave for work. I told her she could make one phone call to her boyfriend if she didn't talk long. I have to save my minutes. You know that girl was over there faster than a five dollar whore!

AZALEA: Ah, what would you do without your bribes?

CORA: Hey, survival honey, survival. I made it all the way to the bottom on bribery. So don't you go knocking it!

AZALEA: How are the kids? You got full custody now?

CORA: Yeah, with Jake on probation and Shanna in rehab for the 4th darn time the judge didn't even flinch. I'm happy about it but I gotta get me a better job. These night shifts are killing me.

AZALEA: I'm glad you came over today. I've missed you.

CORA: I missed you too kiddo. You know yesterday I gave that idiot babysitter money to shop and she came back with the worst crap. Cheetos and Twinkies and stuff like that, then she had the nerve to serve them Sloppy Joe's with Velveta cheese! Of course the kids loved it. Now they're spoiled forever. They're never gonna wanna go near tofu again.

AZALEA: Thank God!

CORA: Yeah pretty pathetic huh? What about you. You okay?

AZALEA: Fine. *(pause)* Looks like we might get some rain. Hope he gets the plowing done.

CORA: Uh huh...

AZALEA: And the alfalfa, won't get off to a good start unless we get a good drenching.

CORA: Yeah, yeah. You know, you really should read more.

AZALEA: What sappy romance novels? No, thank you.

CORA: Why not? It will take your mind off farming for once. Who cares anyway? Just one more reason for him to be in a bad mood.

AZALEA: Farming isn't just his livelihood, Cor. It's his pride and joy.

CORA: Wish you could convince him to stop using all those damn pesticides and go organic. It's the only money left in farming now any ways. Maybe start growing designer garlic or something.

AZALEA: Ha! That would be the day!

CORA: I'm telling you, hormone free, unpasteurized milk is where it's at. They get six dollars a gallon at the heath food store.

AZALEA: He's afraid his production will go down if the cows get sick. We've got two hundred head now and more calves on the way.

CORA: You have to be struggling honey.

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