

Where the Heart is

Written by

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INT. SMALL LIVING ROOM - DAY

LIZANN, 6 or 7, eyes moist with tears and brow creased with a concentration frown, places a spiral glass ornament on the Christmas tree she kneels at.

LIZANN
(slight accent)
Is she okay here?

DAD, 30s, also crying, nods his approval.

DAD
(thick Polish accent)
Yes, she love it, can see all the
room and wonderful decorations.

Lizann tries on a tentative smile.

LIZANN
Really?

Dad joins her by the tree and gently takes the ornament in his palm, turns it to examine the smoky constellation shape at its heart.

DAD
Ashes in glass means always be here
to love her favourite time.

LIZANN
She loved Christmas the best. Just
like me.

Dad nods.

LIZANN (cont'd)
I miss her so much.

DAD
Will be here, watch over you always.

Dad sets the ornament to spin on its string. It catches the light as it turns and sends kaleidoscopic beams of light flitting over every surface.

LIZANN
(awestruck)
Magic.

DAD
She always be so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They hug tightly and admire the lights as they frolic across the walls and ceiling.

EXT. SMALL TERRACE HOUSE - DAY

The area around the house is litter-strewn, cracked pavements, and burnt-out cars. Everything reeks of poverty and despair.

The garden is covered in snow, looks pristine in comparison to the surroundings.

Two youths approach the house, hoodies pulled up to hide their acne-ridden faces, jeans torn and trainers tattered.

ADAM, 15, permanent sneer and wild eyes, kicks the garden gate open.

ADAM
Bang on the door.

DAZ, 14, sheepish but easily led astray, nods in agreement.

DAZ
Now?

ADAM
No, next week.

Daz laughs, nervous and timid.

Adam stoops down to scoop snow into his hands.

ADAM (cont'd)
Then I'll pelt him with this.

He holds up his newly formed snowball, adding a few stones for good measure.

DAZ
Gotcha.

Adam looks at Daz expectantly.

ADAM
Duh, go on then.

Daz shuffles forward and taps on the door.

ADAM (cont'd)
Smash it one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Daz bangs on it harder and then retreats behind Adam.

Adam juggles the snowball between his hands.

DAD (O.S.)

Hello?

The door rattles as security chains and bolts are pulled back, then it opens.

Dad steps into the doorway.

The snowball flies through the air and smacks into Dad's surprised face.

DAD

Hey!

ADAM

Now fuck off back to Poland!

DAZ

Yeah, we won Brexit ya pikey.

Dad steps out of the house, rage on his face and fists balled tight.

DAD

Here home now, you leave alone.

He steps forward, blood running from the cut on his cheek.

The pair step back and retreat from the garden.

DAD (cont'd)

Do not come back.

Adam laughs.

ADAM

You can't stop us, it's our country
you asylum seeking cunt.

Dad steps nearer.

Adam grabs Daz by the arm and they run off down the street.

ADAM (cont'd)

(over shoulder)

We'll be back.

Dad watches them retreat and then trudges back into the house, slams the door behind him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark save for the lights twinkling on the tree and reflecting off the small pile of presents beneath.

The muffled sound of breaking glass is followed by an arm, wrapped in a towel, coming through the now broken window.

Adam pushes the sharper shards out of the way and squeezes his way into the room.

ADAM
(whispers)
Get in here.

Daz follows his leader and steps gingerly over the glass and into the room.

DAZ
Now what.

ADAM
We'll give 'em a Christmas Eve to remember.

Adam throws a spray can to Daz and sets to spray painting the walls with slurs and insults.

Daz follows suit and takes time to spray the tree too.

The lights on the tree flicker.

Bright, dim, bright again, pulsing.

DAZ
What the fuck?

ADAM
Dun't matter, nearly done.

The lights continue to pulse like a heartbeat.

Adam drops his jeans and pisses up and down the tree.

ADAM (cont'd)
Fuck em.

The constellation ornament begins to turn.

The tree lights shine through the spinning glass and once more the kaleidoscope of colours dance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHADOW

Never.

Adam and Daz are dragged by their feet into the air.

SHADOW (cont'd)

Come.

They dangle there held at the ankles by the Shadow.

SHADOW (cont'd)

Again.

The pair drop like stones, hit the floor with a thud.

SHADOW (cont'd)

Go!

They stumble over each other in their hurry to get back through the broken window.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The Christmas tree is upright, the walls clean of graffiti, window whole again. No evidence at all of the previous night's visitors.

On the floor are presents, neatly laid out, many more than had been there before.

There's also a bottle of Jubrówka Bison Grass Vodka with a small bow tied around the top.

LIZANN

(to Dad)

Thank you Ojca

DAD

Someone else to thank too I think.

He points to the ornament.

LIZANN

Thank you, Matka.

Dad raises the bottle and tips it towards the tree.

DAD

You remember favourite.

The ornament spins briefly and lights dance over the smiling faces of father and daughter.