



Fruit Tarts And Muffins

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‘Come on, be serious! You can’t like everyone; no one does. It’s unnatural.’ Trish argued as she closed the fridge door, arms filled with carrots, beef, flour. She grabbed an onion and some garlic and started peeling.

‘There is good in everyone. You just have to look for it.’ Christian insisted.

‘I don’t buy it. People are mean out there; half of them are psychos. Can you pass me the cooking wine?’

‘White or red?’

‘Red, dear, thank you.’

‘If they’re mean it’s only because they’re hurting. If you give them a chance, if you talk to them... All it takes is a little kindness for them to open up.’

‘Could you grab some laurel leaves from the drawer?’

‘How many do you need?’

‘Three. Thanks. And you’re wrong. Some people are just nasty, plain and simple.’ She raised her hand to stop him from arguing.

‘No amount of sweet talking can change them.’

‘You underestimate kindness. Even the simplest of acts, even a smile can make a difference!’

She shook her head. It was a waste of time; she would not convince her gentle husband, whatever she said. She grabbed the knife and resumed slicing the onions. He came closer, looking over her shoulder at the ingredients on the counter.

‘Is that? Are you making—’

‘Yes, Boeuf Bourguignon with rice, your favourite.’

‘Excellent! We’ll need some bread then, a baguette would be lovely. I’ll go to the bakery while you finish cooking. Should I get some sweets as well?’

‘Yes, get some small fruit tarts or muffins, whichever you find.’



Christian whistled gaily as he closed the front door and made his way down the stairs. He knew the bakery would be busy at this time of day, but he’d welcome the banter with his neighbours. When he reached the street, he was grinning; the thought of his favourite food made his belly gargle with yearning, his mouth salivate with anticipation.

The smell of baking bread had engulfed the whole street. A queue had formed outside the bakery. He joined in, greeting the known faces with a smile, a little wave. When the old lady from across the street arrived, he let her pass in front, as any gentleman would. She glared at him, silent, and took his place.

‘Such a lovely day, isn’t it?’ he enthused.

She gave him a quick glance before turning her back to him, deliberately ignoring him. She was not the friendliest, but one day, he knew, she would warm up to him.

‘How is your granddaughter? Does she like it in London? Such a charming and clever young woman.’

She exhaled loudly without bothering to answer.

‘Have you heard the news about the park? They’re planning a whole refurbishment of the playground. It was time, truth being told, it was crumbling and becoming dangerous for the little ones. They will plant new trees as well and replace the benches. Won’t that be lovely?’

They moved forward, getting inside the bakery.

‘I could take you there if you wanted to go for a stroll. I’d be happy to drive you if it’s too much of a walk for you...’

He craned his neck towards the sweets stands, anxiously checking their content.

‘I hope they still have some fruit tarts or muffins. At this time, you never know what you’ll find.’

She moved forward to place her order.

‘I’ll have my usual bread, but give me a good one this time. Properly cooked... yes that one should do. I had to throw away yesterday’s. It wasn’t edible. And give me all the fruit tarts and muffins you have left as well.’

She paid, turned around, lifted her head to look him straight in the eyes, smirked, and left without a word.