

IN FLORE

Written by

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In front of the white picket fence of an idyllic suburban home, BRIARLY, 10, a short, round-faced, rosy-cheeked girl in a school uniform, slings her backpack over her shoulder.

She's green as a flowers stem, with grassy hair and leaves on her skin. A single, long BLADE OF GRASS sprouts from the top of her head.

She looks to down the sidewalk, waiting.

Behind her, DAPHNE, 15, equally green, same uniform, walks down the garden path, and tousles Briarly's hair. Briarly shakes off Daphne's hand and sticks her tongue out at her.

Daphne playfully sticks her tongue out at Briarly. Daphne has a HUGE PINK GARDEN ROSE sprouting from the top of her head.

As Daphne walks away down the sidewalk, ZAHARA, 10, same uniform, bigger hair, bounds toward Briarly from the opposite side. A plump GREEN BUD sprouts from her head.

Zahara stops and quickly brushes Briarly's hair back into place with her hands. They hustle away down the sidewalk.

Briarly and Zahara joyfully walk through an idyllic neighborhood. MUSIC PLAYS.

Every teen and adult has a FLOWER SPROUTING FROM THEIR HEAD: daisies, roses, or bluebells.

Neighbors chat over fences, soccer moms power walk, elders get their mail, teens walk with their noses in their phones.

Other elementary schoolers walk on the sidewalk, each of them sporting a little bud like Zahara.

Preschool kids play with toys in their yards. These children have the same long blade of grass that Briarly has.

Briarly and Zahara goof along the sidewalk until they reach the school yard. They enter the big school gate. SCHOOL BELL.

TITLES: 'IN FLORÉ.'

4 **INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

4

Kids, all with little buds, CHATTER and file into the classroom. TEACHER, a slight woman with bluebells on her head, writes on the board.

Briarly, the shortest student, takes her seat in the front row. Zahara sits two rows back off Briarly's shoulder.

Behind Briarly, CAMILLA, 10, looks at Briarly's bud-less sprout and GIGGLES with two other girls.

Camilla reaches up and quickly twirls Briarly's sprout around her finger, then snaps back the curl with a TWANG.

Briarly YELPS. Camilla and friends LAUGH. Zahara frowns, leans forward, and SMACKS Camilla's friend upside the head.

Teacher TAPS the board with a ruler.

As the class quiets, Briarly curls into herself, embarrassed. She gently THUNKS her head down on the desk.

Zahara looks at Briarly sympathetically, but her face twists, and she SNEEZES. The light around her goes a shade more golden and her EYES GO WIDE.

Around Briarly, kids OOH, AHH, and TITTER. They leave their desks and crowd around Zahara. As Teacher brushes past her, Briarly lifts her head to see the crowd.

Briarly weaves into the crowd of students. As she reaches the center, her eyes widen. Golden light pours over her face.

Zahara sits in the middle, cheeks red. A big, BRIGHT ZOHAR SUNFLOWER blooms on her head; the class's first bloomer.

Briarly is dumbfounded. Teacher shoos kids to their seats.

Zahara gingerly touches her new flower.

Briarly, last to be shoo'd, stares at Zahara in disbelief.

5 **EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF BRIARLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

5

A crescent moon hangs over Briarly's home.

6 **INT. DAPHNE'S ROOM - NIGHT**

6

Daphne sits at her vanity and sculpts her large rose. She trims it narrower and sticks green FLORIST TAPE at the base.

Next to the mirror, magazine pictures of women sporting petite, crimson, tea roses. Among them, a polaroid of a slightly younger Briarly and Daphne posing with their GRANDMA, who has the most perfect little tea rose of all.

Daphne traces her finger along the shape of one of the magazine roses, then tries to trace the same shape along her own. She trims and tugs and tapes.

The door behind her SOFTLY CLICKS open, and Briarly's head pops in. Daphne doesn't look up.

In the mirror, Daphne nearly has the tape exactly how she wants it when her CELL PHONE RINGS, she startles. The tape unsticks. She gets up from the vanity in frustration.

In the mirror, Briarly pops her head up, snatches the florist tape, and ducks back down again.

7 **INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

7

Briarly stands against the wall outside the classroom doorway. She wears a cute little knit hat. She takes a breath and removes the hat to reveal a LUMPY, OBVIOUSLY TAPE BUD.

She starts to turn into the doorway, but stops at the sound of girls' LAUGHTER down the hall. She frantically pulls her HAT BACK ON and looks around.

Camilla and friends approach, laughing and gesturing over their heads: A fist that pops into outstretched fingers, like a big flower. They pose, mockingly, with their 'big flower.'

Zahara appears beside Briarly, Briarly JUMPS and protectively shoves her into the classroom.

8 **INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

8

The bell rings, kids CHATTER and take their seats.

Briarly sits. Camilla reaches towards the hat and slowly tries to tug it off, but Briarly swiftly pulls it on tighter.

A boy behind Zahara flicks her sunflower. Startled, Zahara clutches her flower and scowls at him. He makes the same rude gesture as Camilla, palm over his head.

Briarly, on seeing this, emphatically raises her hand.

Teacher obliviously writes on the board.

Zahara leans away from the boy. The girl in front YANKS on her petals. Zahara YELPS.

Teacher turns around. Zahara clutches her flower in pain.

Teacher plucks a pass from the board labeled 'Nurse' and holds it out to Zahara. Zahara, tears welling in her eyes, runs toward her, grabs the pass, and runs out the door.

Briarly jumps to her feet to follow her, but as she does Camilla snatches the hat from her head, revealing the mangled, lumpy, tape bud. Briarly freezes.

Slowly, Briarly turns to face Camilla and her classmates Small GASPS. SILENCE. Lead by Camilla, the class LAUGHS.

Briarly looks mortified. She hangs her head.

MATCH CUT TO:

9

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

9

Briarly and Zahara sit against a wall under a "NURSE" sign. They hang their heads. Briarly holds her ball of florist tape and Zahara has a bandaid on her petal.

KERFLOP. Briarly glances up.

Daphne slumps in the chair next to her holding an ice pack on her flower with one hand and a loose pink petal with used florist tape in her other. She avoids Briarly's gaze.

Briarly, horrified, turns to Zahara, who contemplates Briarly's hat in her lap. Briarly looks back and forth between her sister and friend, then SIGHS, defeated.

CLICK, CLICK of high heels approaching. Briarly looks.

Down the hallway strides, GRANDMA, a svelte, refined, old woman with a pristine, petite, RED TEA ROSE on her head and a Visitor Sticker that reads "Ruby Von Rogue - GRANDMA".

Briarly's face lights up. She nudges Zahara and Daphne.

Grandma stops and triumphantly produces a plastic gift card 'Ice Cream, \$25.' She beckons the girls toward her.

Briarly and Zahara smile and hop up from their chairs. Daphne reluctantly follows.

10

EXT. ICE CREAM PARLOR - DAY

10

Outside on a BUSY CITY BLOCK, the girls and Grandma sit around a table. Briarly and Zahara reach the end of their cones, and two paper dishes sit empty. Grandma pulls a thick photo album from her bag, and THUNKS it on the table.

The cover reads 'Von Rouge Family Photo Album.'

Grandma opens the book and points.

PICTURE: an old portrait of Grandma as a teenager with a TEENY-TINY BUD, labeled "Ruby, Age 16."

Briarly looks at Grandma and smiles, delighted. Daphne's eyes wander the pages.

A scrapbook spread of young Grandma and her small rose at graduation, on vacation, etc.

Daphne glances sadly at Grandma and her perfect rose. Grandma flips a few pages then stops.

PICTURE: a girl hangs upside down by her knees in a tree with a giant English rose dangling from her head. Grandma, 30s, spots her. Underneath, it reads 'Ruby with Viola, age 11.'

Zahara grins, delighted. Briarly's eyes wander the pages. Daphne looks bored.

Women of all ages, shapes, and sizes, with all manner of roses, smile reassuringly back at her.

Daphne's hand reaches across and flips the page. The next page is made up only of women with small roses.

PICTURE: A group of assorted aunties, each with very small rose, at a pink-coded baby shower, labeled "It's a Girl!"

Suspensions confirmed, Daphne nods, purses her lips, and look away. Briarly puts her hand on her shoulder, but Daphne harshly brushes it away.

Grandma, displeased, rises, and gives two sharp CLAPS.

11

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

11

Grandma leads the girls down the sidewalk. People of all builds with every kind of flower swirl around them.

Briarly and Zahara stare with delighted fascination at:

- A young man with cherry blossoms cruises by in a car.

- Twin teenagers with violets have a photoshoot on a stoop.
- A quirky person with an artichoke dances in the crosswalk.

As they hurry past a sidewalk trashcan, Briarly casually tosses in her ball of florist tape.

As more colorful city dwellers swirl around them, Briarly turns around to share her smile with Daphne, but her smile drops when she sees Daphne engrossed in her phone.

Briarly marches back to Daphne and grabs her hand, jolting her from her distraction. As Briarly pulls her along, she gestures broadly to the people around them.

- A woman with a giant cactus flower romantically strolls with her baby's breath husband.
- A tall woman with a purple allium walks her mossy dog.
- An old man with poppies sits peacefully on a plastic chair.
- A woman with a huge passion flower jogs by with a stroller.

Daphne smiles gently, in contemplation. They halt.

They look up at a billboard: 'Now In Theaters' over a woman with an ENORMOUS HOT PINK MEDALLION ROSE poses like Elle Woods on the Legally Blonde poster.

Daphne is taken aback. Her little smile grows into a grin.

Briarly forcefully hugs her. Daphne, caught off guard, hugs her back. Zahara hugs Briarly from behind. Grandma hugs Daphne from behind. They all smile.

The quirky artichoke person exuberantly dances by.

Briarly's yearbook pictures stack up. Each reads 'Briarly Von Rouge, Xth grade' from 5th to 12th:

Current Briarly, Briarly with a bud, Briarly with braces, Briarly with a new haircut, Briarly in an emo phase, Briarly mid-sneeze, Briarly with a bud barely beginning to sprout, and finally, senior-year Briarly with a cluster of little pink Polyantha Roses (Fairy Roses) atop her beaming head.