

Stutz Bearcat

By

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INT. 50'S ENGLISH PAWN SHOP - CLOUDY DAY

It's dark. A yellow glow cast by chandeliers reveals antiques scattered around in every possible corner of the store. There is barely room for a mouse. It is a sort of beautiful chaos.

CATRIONA, in her 30's, wearing a fawn jacket and brown hat, passes through the store slowly, absorbing her surroundings. Lagging behind her is ANNA, a blonde and grumpy teenager.

ANNA

Can we go now? Dad said he's coming home early tonight and you still have to cook dinner.

Catriona ignores Anna, walking past a table in the store where she sees:

The delicate figure of a Spanish dancer stands on a dusty table among other ornaments, silverware, jewelry, and old books.

Catriona's eyes smile at the magnificent poise of the dancer.

ANNA

You used to do Spanish dancing, didn't you?

Anna's hands grab the figure and Catriona expresses concern.

She tries to save the dancer while Anna takes a disinterested look and dumps it back on the table.

Catriona stays at the table while Anna moves on to a bookcase. Her eyes follow the train of objects until-

She freezes.

On the table sits a little CAR model - a beautifully preserved 1914 Stutz Bearcat. Shiny black and red paint covers the exterior with delicate gold curls embellishing the corners and velvet seats.

Slowly, Catriona steps forward.

Her eyes trace the edges of the car and she reaches to pick it up carefully. She frowns and turns it over, looking for:

Initials C. & E. mark the bottom of the car model.

Catriona stares at it open-mouthed.

She rushes from the table to the counter across the room, speechless, while Anna is still absorbed in an old book.

TELLER

Good day ma'am. Can I have a  
look at it, please?

Catriona holds on to the little car tightly and then slowly hands it over.

The teller gives the car a good look.

TELLER

1914 Stutz Bearcat, eh? Quite  
a beauty. That would be three  
pounds.

Catriona immediately reaches into her purse and places a few coins on the counter.

Anna walks in from behind, frowning at the little car.

ANNA

Dad doesn't like old cars.

Catriona quickly and carefully picks up the little car before Anna can get her hands on it.

CATRIONA

It's not for Dad.

Catriona turns and walks off. Anna follows.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

A desk is covered in little pots holding pens and pencils and picture frames filled with the faces of children and a happy-looking family.

In the center of the desk sits the little Stutz Bearcat. Catriona's hand is inches away from it, but not touching.

Catriona stares at the little car.

Eventually she picks it up, observing it gently.

Then she reaches for a letter opener and carefully starts fidgeting with the bottom of the car.

She wriggles the letter opener until something CLICKS. There is an opening in the black bottom of the car.

Catriona frowns.

She slips her fingers into the small opening and pulls out a folded piece of faded blue paper.

She stares at it for a moment and then slowly, hesitantly opens it.

Beautiful curly handwriting covers the page. Catorina immediately recognizes the writing.

CATRIONA

Eilidh?

Her hands eagerly grasp the edges of the paper as she begins to read.

EILIDH (V.O.)

I can honestly say I never  
bothered to care much about heaven  
because I could not comprehend how  
someone could live in eternity.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE:

A beautiful green field with long grass, dreamy sunshine and golden clouds. CATRIONA (18) and EILIDH (19) in colorful summer dresses, run and laugh playfully, carefree, in the field. The wind blows the grass in beautiful circles.

EILIDH (V.O.)

But the summer I spent with  
Catriona was one of the best times  
I had ever lived to experience.

On a farm road, the two young woman sit inside a real 1914 Stutz Bearcat. They laugh and joke, Eilidh pretending to be driving while Catriona hangs over the side of the car.

They turn to look at each other, smiling, like they are the only two people on earth.

Eilidh's hand reaches for Catriona's cheek and she leans in for a kiss.

EILIDH (V.O.)

Every day as soon as we parted,  
I went to sleep early, hoping that  
in my dreams I could experience  
our time together once more.

Catriona and Eilidh lie on the grass in the sun, eyes closed, peaceful. Eilidh holds the little car model in her hands close to her chest. Catriona holds letters in her hand.

EILIDH (V.O.)

I wished that I could stop time,  
that I could stay in that moment. I  
had never felt so enveloped in  
peace, in love, in joy, in trust,  
and all the things that only  
heaven can offer. And for the first  
time I understood infinity.

We see the growing expanse of the field of grass surrounding the two women as they lie on the ground.

EILIDH (V.O.)

The fact is, I am dying.

The image of the women starts to mix into a muddle of memories and slowly, very slowly fades to the blue hue of the page.

EILIDH (V.O.)

The doctor tried to explain it but  
all his talk didn't mean much to  
me. Honestly I think death sounds  
like an exciting adventure. I only  
hope that somewhere out there is a  
heaven where I can watch Catriona  
from the clouds - where I can watch  
her dancing in a beautiful long  
skirt with castagnettes and-

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

The end of the letter had been ripped off.

Catriona sniffs, her eyes red and a fountain of tears staining her face. She covers her mouth and closes her eyes, her face crumpling with emotion.

In the corner of her eye she catches a glimpse of her own reflection in the mirror. She slowly gets up and walks towards it.

Catriona faces herself and gently lifts up one of her arms and then the other, to poise like the little Spanish dancer from the antique shop.

Her reflection dissolves into an image of the young girl that was running in the field, only now she is wearing a beautiful long red skirt and her hands hold castagnettes.

Behind her in the reflection is Eilidh.

Catriona watches her from the mirror. She can feel Eilidh's breath on her neck.

She turns her head slowly until their eyes meet. They stare into each other's eyes. Catriona's hand reaches for Eilidh-

KID (O.S.)  
Mommyyyy!

And then it all disappears. It's just Catriona in the small, empty room.

Right ahead in of her is a framed family photo. The faces of her children and husband stare at her. Everyone in the photo is smiling, except Catriona.

KID (O.S.)  
Sally took my teddyyyy!

Catriona glares at their framed faces miserably and sighs. One more tear makes its way down her face.

FADE TO BLACK.