

"10"

written by

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FADE IN:

1 INT. BEDROOM - DAY - 1996

1

MICHAEL (late 70's) grey hair, his body is giving out, his voice is soft and weak, he lays in bed propped up with some pillows. A nasal cannula in his nose.

The HOSPICE NURSE walks into the room followed by CAROLINE (40's) ANGELA (14), RYAN (11) and KATIE (7).

HOSPICE NURSE

Michael, you have some visitors.

Caroline pulls a chair up along side the bed, reaches for his hand and holds it. He smiles at her.

CAROLINE

Hey dad. How are you feeling?

MICHAEL

Oh, I'm alright. Tired.

CAROLINE

Yeah?

(pause)

I've brought the kids with me.

KIDS

Hey grandpa.

MICHAEL

You're all getting big.

Caroline looks around, and notices a box on a shelf.

CAROLINE

Dad.

Pointing to the box on a shelf, she stands and walks to it.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

What's that? I remember seeing this growing up, but you were always so protective of it.

Michael looks over where she is and his voice comes to life.

MICHAEL

Oh that? Bring that here.

She takes the box over to Michael as he rests his hand on it.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 Let me tell you about this box.
 (beat)
 Your mother had just passed...

FADE TO:

2 **INT. FUNERAL HOME - AFTERNOON - 1955** 2

MICHAEL now younger (mid 30's), dressed in a black suit, stands next his daughter CAROLINE (5) and the casket of his wife ALISON (30's).

People approach them and pay their condolences, they hug them or shake their hands. They touch Caroline's shoulders or pat her head. Michael is emotionless, the weight of everything still hasn't hit him.

3 **EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - 1955** 3

Michael sits in his car at a redlight, lost in thought as the light shifts from red to green. Headlights of the car behind him reflect off the mirror onto his face, he is unphased.

HONK!

Michael snaps out of it, looks in the back seat, Caroline is still asleep. He drives away.

4 **EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT - 1955** 4

Michael pulls into the driveway, Caroline is still asleep in the back seat. He picks her up in his arms, holds her tight and makes his way towards the house.

5 **INT. CAROLINE'S BEDROOM - 1955** 5

Michael pulls the covers up over Caroline, and she slowly wakes up.

CAROLINE
 Daddy?

MICHAEL
 Go to sleep, sweetheart, it's ok.

CAROLINE
 I want mommy.

MICHAEL

I know sweetheart, I do too. Mommy
will always be with us, right?

Caroline nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Yeah, cause remember mommy's an
angel watching over us now.

CAROLINE

Daddy?

MICHAEL

Yeah sweetheart?

CAROLINE

I don't want mommy to be angel, I
want her to come home.

Michael tries to fight back tears and not lose it. He musters
a smile and nods his head.

MICHAEL

Get some sleep baby girl.

He kisses her on the forehead and quickly walks out of the
room and shuts the door behind him. He folds over, losing it.

6 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1955**

6

Michael lays in bed awake. The door to his room creaks open
and he looks over, Caroline stands in the doorway.

CAROLINE

Mommy?

MICHAEL

Come here sweetheart.

She climbs up on the bed and cuddles up next to him.

CAROLINE

I miss mommy.

MICHAEL

I know baby.

He turns his head away from her, covers his face and holds
his breath doing his best not to sob and her hear him.

7 **INT. HALLWAY - MORNING - 1955**

7

Michael stares at a family portrait as tears stream down.

MICHAEL

You said forever, you promised me.

(beat)

Now what am I supposed to do?

(beat)

What am I supposed to say?

DOORBELL RINGS, he wipes away the tears and walks to

8 **INT. FRONT DOOR - 1955**

8

Michael opens the door, as FRANK (30's) skirts away to his black sedan. As he reaches his car he looks back at Michael and with a half smile he gives a nod to Michael. Michael looks at him confused, he looks familiar but he doesn't know why.

Michael's attention redirects to the package sitting on the front step at his feet.

9 **INT. LIVING ROOM - 1955**

9

Michael sits on the couch, places the package on the coffee table and opens it.

Inside the package is a wooden box with an envelope on top. He picks up the envelope, opens it, and reads the card.

ALISON (V.O.)

Michael, my love. I wish I could walk through that door, kiss you, and tell you everything will be fine. My heart aches for what you must be feeling. But know that I love you deeply and cherish every moment we had together. I know you are probably thinking: Can I go back and change something? The answer is no. But if you could go back for a moment would you?

(beat)

So this my love is my final, parting gift to you. Forever in my heart, your loving wife.

Michael lays the card on the table and pulls the old wooden box out. He pushes the cardboard box onto the floor and sits the wooden box on the table as he looks it over curiously.

Michael opens the lid of the wooden box and looks inside. There is an old key, a key hole, and a white display with the black number "10". He leans back, thinks for a moment, picks up the key, puts it into the hole, and turns it.

FLASHBACK TO:

10

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - NIGHT - 1946

10

Michael (20's), changes a tire on the side of the road. He pauses for a moment, confused.

Alison stands behind him on the side of the road unbeknown to Michael.

ALISON (O.S.)

Michael, we're going to be late to the dance.

Michael immediately spins around.

MICHAEL

Alison?

Alison stands there hands on her hips. As Michael slowly stands in shock.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

How?

Michael grabs her and pulls her close to him, then lets go, steps back, and holds her face.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Tell me this is real.

ALISON

(nervous chuckle)

Are you ok? You look like you've seen a ghost.

MICHAEL

Oh my God, you're here.

Michael pauses and looks around, not daring to let go of her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Where's Caroline?

ALISON

Who?

MICHAEL
Caroline, our daughter.

ALISON
(worried)
Michael, you're scaring me.

Michael turns and looks around.

MICHAEL
Did I die too?

ALISON
(appauled)
Excuse me? This isn't funny.

MICHAEL
You died, but you're here , so did
I?

Michael turns around and everything is black, Alison is gone,
the car is gone, just blackness.

ALISON (V.O.)
I know you are probably
thinking: Can I go back and change
something? The answer is no.

BACK TO PRESENT

11 **INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING (LATER) - 1955** 11

Michael wakes up on the couch with a jolt. He looks around
the room and rubs his eyes. There's the box on the coffee
table with the lid closed. He opens it and the indicator
inside the box displays "9".

12 **EXT. GRAVEYARD - AFTERNOON - 1955** 12

Michael kneels beside a fresh grave. It's raining, and a
mixture of water and tears stream down his face as he pounds
the ground with his fists.

13 **INT. KITCHEN - LATER - 1955** 13

Michael leans on the counter, drinking a bottle of water as
he looks into the living room at the box on the coffee table.

14 **INT. LIVING ROOM - 1955** 14

Michael looks the box over for a moment, opens it and holds up the key. Inserts the key into the hole and turns it.

FLASHBACK TO:

15 **INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - AFTERNOON - 1947** 15

Michael drives on an old county highway, passing cars as fast as he can. He finally catches up with the car he was chasing and flashes his headlights at it.

16 **INT. ALISON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS** 16

Alison is in her car when Michael's car comes speeding up behind her, flashing his lights. She is clearly distraught. She pulls to the shoulder. Michael follows.

17 **EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - CONTINUOUS** 17

Michael jumps out of his car and runs up to her's. He flings open her door and squats down next to her.

MICHAEL

Come with me.

ALISON

To Tuscon?

MICHAEL

Yes, to Tuscon.

ALISON

No, I have the job at the museum.

MICHAEL

I can't live my life without you. I did it during the war, and I said I'd never do it again.

She touches his arm reassuring him.

ALISON

It'll be fine. We weren't meant to be.

MICHAEL

No! We ARE meant to be.

(beat)

Marry me.

ALISON
 What just like that? One minute
 you're telling me you're moving to
 Tuscon. We're over. Now it's marry
 me?

MICHAEL
 I love you, I do.

ALISON
 I love you too, but I can't.

MICHAEL
 (interrupting)
 I don't care. I don't care about
 any of it, if it's not with you.

ALISON
 I don't,

MICHAEL
 (interrupting)
 I'll give up everything, because
 nothing else matters.

ALISON
 Michael.

MICHAEL
 I love you.
 (beat)
 Marry me.

Alison gets out of the car and they embrace and kiss.

BACK TO PRESENT

18 **INT. LIVING ROOM - 1955**

18

Michael slowly wakes up on the couch. He opens the box
 sitting on the coffee table. The display says "8". He grabs
 the key and looks at it.

FADE OUT:

19 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1955**

19

Michael sits on the edge of the bed, it's quiet, and he's
 alone. He opens the box, the display reads "6".

MICHAEL

All these plans we had for our
life, things we were going to do.

(beat)

We were going to grow old together.
Now I'm just growing old alone.

(beat)

And this bed is empty without you.

He grabs the key, puts it in the key hole and turns it.

FLASHBACK TO:

20

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING - 1949

20

Michael is asleep. Alison slides her hand over his shoulder and onto his chest as she pulls herself close to him, he snuggles into her, still not fully awake. Alison pulls herself up and kisses him on his cheek.

ALISON

I love you.

Michael opens his eyes, she nuzzles under his arm and lays her head on his chest. He wraps his arm around her and takes a deep breath, just taking it all in.

MICHAEL

God, I loved this.

ALISON

Yeah? Me too.

(beat)

Lock this one away safe in the
memory bank?

MICHAEL

(chuckles)

The memory bank, yeah.

ALISON

And when we are old, senial and
can't remember anything one of us
will tell the other these stories.

They kiss.

MICHAEL

These are definitely the ones I
want to keep.

(beat)

These are the ones I can't forget.

Michael looks at her, wondering if he should say this.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
This, and when the baby is born.

Alison sits up quickly, surprised.

ALISON
How did you know? I was going to
tell you tonight.

Michael smiles at her.

MICHAEL
And she'll be a beautiful girl,
just like her mommy.

ALISON
Whatever *that* name is, that's what
we'll name her.

MICHAEL
Caroline.

ALISON
Really? You know that right off the
top of your head. I'll have to
check you on that.

MICHAEL
Check it.

ALISON
Anyway it doesn't matter because we
agreed a boy first.

MICHAEL
Hey, it's out of my hands.

Alison grabs her pillow and hits him with it.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Beautiful and stubborn, just like
her mamma.

He grabs his pillow and hits her back, all out pillow fight.

BACK TO PRESENT

21 **INT. MICHAELS HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - DAY - 1968**

21

Michael opens the door and enters the house, thirteen years have passed since Alison's funeral and Michael shows his age, his hair has turned grey and his eyes look tired.

MICHAEL
(yells)
Caroline?

CAROLINE (O.S.)
I'm coming dad.

Caroline steps out into the hallway, she's eighteen now and beautiful. She slings a backpack over her shoulder as she walks down the hallway.

MICHAEL
Hey sweetheart. I've got the car packed. You got everything?

CAROLINE
Yeah.

Caroline kisses her dad on the cheek.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
Thanks dad.

Michael opens the door.

MICHAEL
I'll walk you out.

22 **EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS - 1968**

22

Michael and Caroline stand at the car. They embrace, then he reaches into his pocket and pulls out a necklace with a key charm on it and holds it up.

MICHAEL
This was your moms. She would say, the best memories are locked away in the heart, and love is the key that unlocks them.
(beat)
She wanted it passed to you, when the time was right, and I can't think of a more right time.

He puts the necklace on her neck, she grabs the charm and looks at it.

CAROLINE

It's beautiful.

They embrace again and then Michael grabs her face and kisses her on the forehead. He opens the door to the car, as Caroline gets inside and starts it.

MICHAEL

I'm proud of you sweetheart.

CAROLINE

I love you dad.

MICHAEL

I love you too, baby girl.

He taps the hood and waves as she pulls out of the driveway.

23 **INT. MICHAELS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - 1968**

23

Michael grabs the box off a shelf and sets it down on the coffee table in front of him.

MICHAEL

Well baby she's off to Baylor, she says she's going to be a curator just like you.

Michael sighs and opens the box the display reads "4".

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

We were supposed to send her off together.

Michael grabs the key, inserts it into the hole and turns it.

CUT TO:

24 **INT. ALISON'S OFFICE - DAY - 1951**

24

Alison sits in her office at the museum. Artifacts and antiques are on the walls. She sits at her desk looking over the box and the key, then pauses to make a note.

Michael KNOCKS on her open door, holding baby Caroline in his arms. Alison looks at him and puts the key away, closes the box, and pushes it to the side of the desk.

ALISON

Hey my loves!

MICHAEL

Hey momma, we wanted to stop by and surprise you.

He points to the box on the desk.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What's that?

ALISON

That, is an artifact that we just got in. It's called a Baruch box.

MICHAEL

What's a Baruch box?

Alison takes Caroline from Michael's arms. She answers Michael but talks to Caroline in a playful, baby voice.

ALISON

(to Caroline)

It comes from an ancient tribe known as the Baruch, yes it does. And there's a lot of lore around it, yes there is. Really fascinating stuff, yes it is.

Alison kisses Michael. He eyes the box. Alison nuzzles Caroline.

Frank knocks on the door, he walks in with some papers.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Come on in. Frank this is my husband Michael.

(beat)

Frank is a conservator here at the museum.

Frank and Michael shake hands.

FRANK

Nice to meet you.

MICHAEL

Same here.

Michael points to Alison.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

She must keep you busy.

FRANK

She keeps things interesting that's for sure.

(beat)

Anyways, I just wanted to drop these off.

Frank puts the papers on Alison's desk.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Do you want me to take a look at the Baruch box?

ALISON

Um, not right now, I'll bring it over to your office a little later.

Frank nods and excuses himself. Alison returns her focus to Caroline.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Hey sweetheart, are you having fun with daddy today?

FADE OUT:

25

INT. BEDROOM - AFTERNOON - 1996

25

Older Michael lays in his bed, with the box next to him closed. Caroline is still holding his hand, Katie sits on the edge of the bed.

The HOSPICE NURSE walks into the room.

HOSPICE NURSE

How ya doing Michael?

MICHAEL

(sighs)

I'm tired.

HOSPICE NURSE

Well why don't you get some rest.

CAROLINE

Yeah dad take a nap, we'll be right out in the living room, we aren't going anywhere.

Caroline leans over and kisses Michael on the cheek, Angela and Ryan follow suit.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

I love you, dad.

MICHAEL

I love you too, baby girl.

ANGELA

Love you grandpa.

MICHAEL

I love you too, sweetheart.

RYAN

Love you grandpa.

MICHAEL

I love you, buddy.

Caroline, Angela and Ryan makes their way to the door.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to Katie)

Hey sweetheart.

He caresses her cheek, holds her chin, and looks her over.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

You're a spitting image of your
grandma Alison. Did you know that?

KATIE

You tell me that everytime grandpa.

MICHAEL

Oh? Well then it must be true.

Nurse puts her arm around Katie and leans down next to her.

HOSPICE NURSE

Katie, why don't we let grandpa get
some rest. OK?

KATIE

Alright.

Katie kisses him on the cheek.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Bye grandpa.

MICHAEL

I'll see you later, sweetheart.

Katie walks out of the room, pausing to look one more time at her grandpa from the doorway.

HOSPICE NURSE
Can I get anything for you? Some fresh water or anything?

MICHAEL
No, I'm fine thank you.

The nurse reaches down for the box. Michael puts his hand on top of it stopping her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
You can leave it.

HOSPICE NURSE
Alright. I'll be right out there if you need anything.

Michael nods to her. She exits the room, and shuts off the light on her way out. A bedside lamp illuminates Michael and the box.

He places the box on his lap and opens it, pulls pictures out and lays them off to the side. Michael reaches in and pulls out the key and looks at it one more time. The display shows "1", Michael puts the key into the hole and turns it.

FLASHBACK TO:

26 INT. PARK - AFTERNOON - 1948

26

Alison (30's) sits on a blanket underneath a shade tree. There is a picnic basket with finger foods, and fried chicken. Alison smiles at him and they kiss.

MICHAEL
You know what?

ALISON
What?

MICHAEL
From the moment I laid eyes on you I knew I was going to marry you.

ALISON
So you don't regret it.

MICHAEL
Not for a million years.

ALISON

Good, cause you don't have a choice.

Michael pushes the hair away from her forehead as he caresses the side of her face.

MICHAEL

Let's do this forever.

ALISON

I'm game.

MICHAEL

I don't ever want to be without you.

ALISON

You never will be.

Michael smiles at her and they kiss.

BACK TO PRESENT

27 **INT. BEDROOM - DAY (LATER) - 1996**

27

Michael lays in his bed, the box rests open on his lap, the display shows "0". The pictures and letters are at his side.

Michael has a smile on his face, he exhales one long last time and his body relaxes.

Katie stands in the doorway looking in. She walks into the room quietly and stops along side the bed.

KATIE

(whispers)

Grandpa?

She closes the lid on the box and picks it up. Sits on the chair next to the bed, rests it on her lap and re-opens it.

Inside of the box, the key is in its place and the display reads "10". She picks up the key and looks at it, puts the key in the hole and turns it.

CUT TO BLACK:

KATIE (V.O.)

(excited)

Grandpa!

ROLL CREDITS