

CLOSING THE DISTANCE

by

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FADE IN:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

JUDGE CHRISTINA, 50s, with short brown hair sits at the front of the courtroom flipping through pages of a file. RACHEL MCLAREN, 40s, a social worker with blonde hair that goes to her shoulders stands before Judge Christina.

RACHEL
(whispering)
There has to be something we can do.

Judge Christina looks up.

JUDGE CHRISTINA
I wish there was. But with her being legally an adult, the system can't do anything to find her a home.

RACHEL
She doesn't need a home. She needs someone to look after her.

Judge Christina looks over at the bench behind Rachel to see ALEXA COLLINS, 18, with long dark hair wearing a black button up shirt and a black skirt sitting on a bench staring at the floor.

JUDGE CHRISTINA
Alexa.

Alexa ignores her.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD - NIGHT

Rain pours from the sky as a blue sedan drives along an empty road.

ALEXA (O.S.)
(yelling)
I hate you so much.

INT. COLLIN'S SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Alexa, wearing a black hoodie and black jeans, sits in the back beside her brother, DILLON COLLINS, 5, with blonde hair. JACK COLLINS, 45, with short brown hair, Alexa's father, sits in the drivers seat while DEBORAH COLLINS, 40, long blonde hair, Alexa's mother, sits in the passenger seat. Deborah turns around to look at Alexa.

DEBORAH
(yelling)
How can you be so selfish? It's
like you don't even want to be
apart of this family.

ALEXA
(yelling)
Well maybe I don't.

JUDGE CHRISTINA (V.O)
Alexa?

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Alexa looks up to the judge.

JUDGE CHRISTINA
I'm going to look into getting you
financial assistance to help with
your living situation.

Alexa eyes move towards the ground.

JUDGE CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry there isn't anything more
I can do for you.

RACHEL
Thank you Judge.

Rachel walks over to Alexa. Alexa stands up and the two walk
out of the courtroom.

INT. RACHEL'S CAR - DAY

Alexa stares out the window while Rachel drives through the
city. Rachel looks over at Alexa and places her hand on top
of hers. Alexa looks down at Rachel's hand.

RACHEL
It's going to be okay. I'll make
sure they take care of you.

Alexa looks back out the window.

EXT. ALEXA'S HOME - DAY

Rachel's black coupe drives down the driveway stopping in
front of a garage connected to the side of the house. The
passenger's door opens as the engine cuts off. Alexa gets
out of the car shutting the door behind her. She walks up
the pathway to the front porch. Rachel gets out of her car.

RACHEL

Do you want me to come in?

Alexa pulls out a set of keys and unlocks the front door.

RACHEL

Alexa?

ALEXA

I'm fine. Thanks Miss Rachel.

RACHEL

If you need anything...just give me
a call.

Alexa walks into the house.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Alexa shuts the door behind her. She stands in a dark hallway. Alexa looks over at a playroom to her right where she sees toy cars and building blocks scattered across the floor. Alexa walks up the staircase in front of her.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

At the top she turns down the hallway and peaks into a room on the right and sees race cars and Transformers on the floor. She turns around and walks into the room across the hall.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A teddy bear lays on a nicely made queen sized bed. Alexa walks over to a nightstand on the left of the bed where she picks up a picture frame holding a photo of her parents.

ALEXA (V.O.)

(yelling)

Why couldn't you just leave me
alone?

Alexa closes her eyes as a tear falls down her cheek. She lays down on the bed and places the picture frame next to her. She grabs the teddy bear and squeezes it tightly as she cries hysterically. A picture of Dillon holding the teddy bear sits on the nightstand in front of her.

DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. COLLIN'S SEDAN - NIGHT

Rain falls on the windshield as Deborah yells at Alexa.

DEBORAH

Just once can you at least try to
act like you like us?

ALEXA

I just wanted to stay home. I don't
see what the big deal is.

DEBORAH

The big deal is that this was a
very special night and your father
wanted to share it with his kids.

ALEXA

I don't know why. It's your
anniversary.

DEBORAH

Because he loves you. But you
wouldn't know what that is.

Deborah turns around back into her seat.

JACK

Deb...you didn't have to say that.

DEBORAH

I'm sorry but she doesn't act like
she does.

DILLON

I love you mommy.

Alexa gives a disgusted glare at Dillon.

ALEXA

(angrily)

Shut up.

Deborah unbuckles her seatbelt and turns around.

DEBORAH

Do not talk to your brother like
that.

ALEXA

Oh of course. Always protect little
Dillon.

DEBORAH

I've had it with you.

ALEXA

(screaming)

And I hate you.

Jack turns his head to Alexa and raises his voice.

JACK
That is enough.

Two headlights shine through the driver's door as a truck smashes into the side of the sedan.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Alexa wakes up panting heavily. She jumps out of the bed and runs into the master bathroom. She rushes to the toilet, opens it up and vomits. Alexa flushes the toilet as she wipes the sweat off of her forehead.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, MAIN FLOOR - MORNING

Alexa, wearing a black shirt with dark blue jeans, runs down the stairs. The phone rings. She grabs her jacket off the coat rack beside the front door. The phone stops ringing and goes to voicemail.

DEBORAH (O.S.)
Hi you've reached the Collins'. We
aren't here right now...

Alexa leaves the house.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Leaves fly from the ground as a group of little kids run through them laughing and screaming. Alexa sits on a swing slowly rocking herself back and forth. A little boy, THOMAS GREENE, 8, with short blonde hair, walks up and sits in the swing beside Alexa. Thomas looks at Alexa.

THOMAS
Hi.

Alexa ignores him.

THOMAS
I'm Thomas. What's your name?

Alexa turns her head away from him. Thomas starts to swing slowly.

ALEXA
(to herself)
Alexa.
(to Thomas)
My name's Alexa.

Thomas starts to swing higher.

THOMAS

Why are you by yourself Alexa?

Alexa stops rocking herself and looks down at the ground in silence.

ALEXA

Why aren't you playing with those kids?

THOMAS

They won't let me play with them.

ALEXA

How come?

THOMAS

Because my mom and dad aren't around.

Alexa looks at Thomas.

ALEXA

Where are they?

THOMAS

In heaven.

Alexa's eyes turn watery.

ALEXA

Oh.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

Thomas slows down on his swing and jumps off.

THOMAS

Do you like hot chocolate?

ALEXA

Huh?

THOMAS

Do you want some?

ALEXA

I don't know kid. Shouldn't you stay with your group?

Thomas slides his feet through the pile of leaves.

THOMAS
They don't care if I go.
(beat)
Nobody would miss me.

Alexa stands up.

ALEXA
Yeah...I'd love some.

Alexa and Thomas walk off through the leaves.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Alexa and Thomas walk down a quiet sidewalk. Thomas runs ahead a little.

THOMAS
(excited)
This is it. This is it.

Thomas runs up to the counter of a beverage truck. Alexa trails closely behind.

MAN
What can I get ya?

ALEXA
Two hot chocolates please.

The cashier grabs two cups and pours hot chocolate into them.

MAN
That'll be three dollars.

Alexa reaches into her pocket and pulls out three dollars.

MAN
Thank you.

Alexa grabs the two cups and gives one to Thomas. The two walk to a nearby bench and sit down. Thomas stares at Alexa while she takes a sip from the cup.

THOMAS
Well?

ALEXA
It's really good.

Thomas smiles and drinks some of his.

THOMAS
It's the best.

Alexa smiles. The two sit in silence drinking their hot chocolate. Thomas puts his cup down on the bench and starts swinging his legs back and forth.

THOMAS

Am I gonna see you again?

Alexa stares across the street.

ALEXA

I don't know.

THOMAS

I'll be at the park tomorrow...if
you want to come.

Alexa looks at Thomas and smiles.

ALEXA

That sounds nice.

Thomas looks at Alexa and smiles. Thomas stands up.

THOMAS

I gotta go. But I'll see you
tomorrow.

Thomas starts to walk off. Alexa smiles and waves.

ALEXA

Bye Thomas.

Thomas walks down the street back towards the park.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, MAIN FLOOR - EVENING

Alexa walks into the house and hangs her jacket on the coat rack. She walks into the room on her left.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A couch sits against the back wall with a small table to the side of it and an answering machine resting on top. There is a red light flashing from the answering machine. Alexa walks over to it and pushes the play button. She sits down on the couch.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Hi Alexa. It's me, Rachel. I was
just calling to see if everything
was alright. I know you're going
through a tough time but just
wanted to let you know that I'm
here for you. So if you ever need

(MORE)

RACHEL (O.S.) (cont'd)
anything or just want to
talk...please, don't hesitate to
call.

Alexa lifts up the house phone and scrolls down to recent calls where she sees Rachel's name. Alexa puts the phone back and lays down on the couch slowly drifting to sleep.

DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. COLLIN'S SEDAN - NIGHT

Blood drips from Alexa head. She looks up slowly and sees her mom and dad not moving. She turns and sees the back door dented in. Dillon sits in his car seat not breathing. Alexa looks back to the front of the car.

ALEXA
(scared)
Mom?
(beat)
Dad?

Alexa turns her head to Dillon.

ALEXA (CONT'D)
Dillon?

A light shine through Alexa's window.

OFFICER (O.S.)
We got one. Quick bring the
stretcher over here.

Two men pull the door off the car. Alexa starts to fall out. The officer grabs her.

OFFICER
Hey. Are you okay?

Alexa starts crying and screaming.

ALEXA
Please save them. Please. Please.

Alexa passes out.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, MAIN FLOOR - MORNING

Alexa, wearing a navy blue hoodie walks to the front door. She hears the phone ringing in the living room.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alexa walks over to the phone and picks it up.

ALEXA

Hello?

RACHEL (V.O.)

Hey Alexa. It's me Rachel. Are you busy?

ALEXA

I'm actually getting ready to go out. Mind if I call you later?

RACHEL (V.O.)

Not at all--

ALEXA

Alright I'll talk to you later.

RACHEL (V.O.)

Oh okay. Bye.

Alexa hangs up the phone and exits.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Alexa walks through the park and sees a group of young kids screaming and yelling over by the swings. Alexa squints and sees Thomas in the center of the group on the ground. Alexa runs over and pushes the kids away from him.

ALEXA

(worried)

Hey are you okay?

Thomas nods his head. Alexa turns to the crowd of kids.

ALEXA

Get out of here. Go. Get.

The kids stay still and start to shout and yell. Alexa stands up and glares at them.

ALEXA

(sternly)

I said go.

The kids grow a frighten look on their faces and run away. Alexa turns around and helps Thomas up. She brushes the dirt off of his jacket.

ALEXA

Why were those kids messing with you?

THOMAS

They told me to get off the swing and I said I couldn't.

ALEXA

Why couldn't you?

THOMAS

I was saving it for you.

Alexa kneels down to Thomas and smiles.

ALEXA

Hey...let's get out of here.

Thomas smiles. Alexa stands up and the two walk off.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Thomas pulls Alexa's arm and guides her along a green field while Alexa covers her eyes with her other hand.

ALEXA

Are we there yet?

THOMAS

Almost just no peeking.

ALEXA

(giggling)

Okay okay.

Thomas stops walking.

THOMAS

Okay. You can open now.

Alexa opens her eyes and sees two tombstones with the names "Richard Greene" and "Mary Greene" written on them.

ALEXA

Are these your parents?

Thomas bends down and brushes the leaves away from the tombstones.

THOMAS

Yeah. This is my secret spot. Nobody can bother me here.

Thomas turns around and looks at Alexa.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

If you want...this can be your spot too.

Alexa sits down by Thomas and smiles. Thomas turns back around and looks at the tombstones.

THOMAS

Hi Mom and Dad. This is my friend Alexa.

Alexa's eyes start to tear up.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

She helped me today when other kids were being mean to me. She's really nice.

FLASHBACK

EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD - NIGHT

A blue sedan drives through the pouring rain.

INT. COLLIN'S SEDAN - NIGHT

Alexa sits in the back seat. Her mother turned around looking at her.

ALEXA

(yelling)

I hate you.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Alexa starts to cry. Thomas stops talking to the tombstones and turns to Alexa.

THOMAS

What's wrong?

Alexa tries wiping the tears away from her eyes.

ALEXA

Thanks for saying that, but I'm not a nice person.

THOMAS

Yes you are.

ALEXA

How can you say that...you don't even know me.

Thomas looks down at the ground and then back up to Alexa.

THOMAS
Because you noticed me.

Thomas jumps into Alexa giving her a hug. Alexa's eyes widen.

THOMAS
You're just like the hot chocolate
guy.

Alexa giggles with tears in her eyes as she gives Thomas a hug.

ALEXA
Thank you Thomas.

Thomas smiles. Alexa pulls away and wipes her eyes clear.

ALEXA
Hey...I better get going.

THOMAS
Will I see you tomorrow.

Alexa smiles.

ALEXA
Yeah. Tomorrow. Hot chocolate?

Thomas smiles with glee.

THOMAS
Yay.

ALEXA
(laughing)
Okay hot chocolate it is.

Alexa stands up and waves to Thomas. He waves back as Alexa walks away.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The front door opens and Alexa walks into the living room. She grabs the house phone and sits on the couch. The phone dials.

INTERCUT - ALEXA'S LIVING ROOM / RACHEL'S OFFICE - EVENING

Rachel sits at her desk typing on her computer. Her phone rings.

RACHEL
(on phone)
Hello?

ALEXA
(on phone)
Hi Miss Rachel...it's me, Alexa.

RACHEL
(on phone)
Hey Alexa, how are you?

ALEXA
(on phone)
I'm doing good.

RACHEL
(on phone)
That's good to here. Hey where were you heading off to today?

ALEXA
(on phone)
Oh. I was just going to the park. I needed a walk to clear my head.

RACHEL
(on phone)
Is everything okay?

ALEXA
(on phone)
Yeah, it just gets a little lonely here.

RACHEL
(on phone)
I bet.
(beat)
Hey if you ever need to get away you can always call me. We can grab some lunch or dinner or something.

ALEXA
(on phone)
That sounds nice. Thank you.

Rachel smiles.

RACHEL
(on phone)
You're welcome.

ALEXA
(on phone)
Hey Miss Rachel, if you don't mind I think I'm gonna call it a night. I'm really exhausted.

RACHEL
(on phone)
Okay. You take care of yourself.

ALEXA
(on phone)
I'll try.
(beat)
Good night.

Rachel smiles.

RACHEL
(on phone)
Good night.

Alexa hangs up the phone.

END INTERCUT

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Alexa walks over to a room at the far end of the hallway.
She opens the door.

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, ALEXA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Alexa steps over piles of black clothing spread out across her floor. She bends to pick them up and throws them into a laundry basket. She steps up and sees her floor and room are clean. She goes over to her bed, pulls the covers back, gets in and falls asleep.

DREAM SEQUENCE

EXT. MEADOWS - DAY

Alexa, wearing all white, stands on top of a green hill in a field of flowers. She hears laughter and turns around. She sees Dillon running up the hill and jumping on her.

ALEXA
Hey buddy.

Dillon laughs and smiles. Alexa turns her head and sees Jack and Deborah walking through the field of flowers towards them.

ALEXA
Mom. Dad.

DEBORAH
Hey sweetie.

Alexa's eyes begin to tear up.

ALEXA
I'm so sorry for everything I said.
(beat)
I didn't mean it.

Deborah smiles.

JACK
We know.

ALEXA
I miss you guys so much.

Deborah kneels down and embraces Alexa with a hug.

ALEXA
(crying)
Mom. I love you.

DEBORAH
I love you too Alexa.

Alexa wipes her tears away.

DILLON
Hey quit being a cry baby.

Jack and Dillon laugh. Alexa rolls on top of Dillon and tickles him. Alexa begins to laugh.

JACK
It's time to wake up sweetie.

ALEXA
But I don't wanna go.

JACK
I know. But you have to.

Alexa smiles as a tear drops from her face.

ALEXA
I love you guys.

DEBORAH
And we love you.

Jack, Deborah, and Dillon start to fade away.

JACK
It's time to wake up.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. ALEXA'S HOME, ALEXA'S ROOM - DAY

The sun shines through Alexa window as she wakes up smiling.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Alexa sits on a bench in front of the beverage truck wearing a light blue jacket. A backpack sits beside her as she holds two cups in her hand. Thomas comes running down the sidewalk waving his hands. Alexa greets him with a smile.

ALEXA

Here you go buddy.

Thomas takes a sip.

THOMAS

Mmmmm. The best.

Thomas sits down beside Alexa.

ALEXA

I got something for you. Now close your eyes.

Thomas puts his cup down and then puts his hands over his eyes. Alexa reaches over to her backpack, unzips it, and pulls out a teddy bear.

ALEXA

Okay. Now open.

Thomas removes his hands from his eyes. His mouth drops open with a huge smile on it.

ALEXA (CONT'D)

This belonged to someone very special to me. I want you to take good care of him. Promise?

THOMAS

I promise.

Alexa hands the teddy bear over to Thomas. Thomas holds it while giving Alexa a hug.

THOMAS

I love you Alexa.

Alexa freezes for a moment and then smiles.

ALEXA

I love you too buddy.

The two get up and start walking down the street.

THOMAS

I got something for you too.

Thomas reaches into his coat and pulls out a piece of paper.

ALEXA

Oh what is it?

Thomas goes to hand the paper to Alexa when a gust of wind knocks the paper out of his hand. Thomas goes and chases it down when it rest in the middle of the street. Alexa looks over and sees a car coming around corner.

ALEXA

(yelling)

Thomas.

Alexa runs. The car turns the corner. Thomas is frozen as the car gets near him. Alexa grabs Thomas and throws him to the curb. A man and woman, JOHN and MARY LOWERY, in their mid 30s, run over to Thomas who is laying on the ground. Thomas stands up and turns around. He sees Alexa lying in the middle of the street. Thomas starts to cry. Mary turns him away and hugs him tightly.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

SUPER: "ONE MONTH LATER"

Thomas, John, and Mary stand in front of a tombstone. Thomas holds the teddy bear in one hand and a blue bag in the other.

MARY

Is this her?

THOMAS

Yeah. It's her.

Rachel walks up the hill and is startled to see other people by the tombstone. Rachel approaches them.

RACHEL

Hello.

John and Mary turn around.

JOHN

Hi there.

RACHEL

Did you two know her?

JOHN

Oh no sorry. We saw her save this
little man's life.

MARY

Was she your daughter?

RACHEL

No her parents died not to long
ago.

MARY

Oh wow.

RACHEL

Is that your son?

JOHN

He is now.

RACHEL

Do you mind?

MARY

No please.

Rachel walks over to Thomas and kneels down.

RACHEL

Hey there.

Thomas stands still holding the bear.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Did she give you that?

Thomas nods his head.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

She was a very nice girl wasn't
she?

THOMAS

The nicest girl in the world.

Rachel smiles.

RACHEL

I guess she was.

Thomas pulls a picture frame out of the blue bag. Thomas
hands the picture frame over to Rachel.

RACHEL

Oh this is lovely. Did you make this?

Thomas nods his head up and down.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

I bet she would've loved it. You miss her don't you?

THOMAS

Yeah, but I'm not sad.

RACHEL

Why not?

THOMAS

Because she's not alone anymore.

Rachel's freezes in shock as her eyes begin to tear. She smiles and hands the the picture frame back to Thomas. Thomas places the picture frame on Alexa's tombstone.

In the picture frame is a stick figure drawing of a man, a woman and a boy with the words "Dad", "Mom", and "Me" under them. Next to the boy is a drawing of a girl with long dark hair and "Alexa" written under it. At the top of the picture in big letters is "My Family".

FADE OUT.