

A HEART SHAPED LOCKET:

The silver chain slips through the fingers of a young female hand in slow-motion, gently tumbling as it falls -

down...

down...

down...

- disappearing into the emptiness of a dark void.

FADE IN:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A small group of FAMILY and FRIENDS has gathered at a funeral.

MICHELLE, (12) stands next to her mother looking across the grave to the FAMILY of the deceased, apparent by the chairs they sit in while everyone else stands. There, Michelle sees ANNE (also 12), standing next to Anne's mother.

MINISTER

I am the resurrection and the life.

Anne's eyes find Michelle.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

They look across the grave at each other.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Forasmuch as the spirit of the departed has returned to God who gave it, we therefore commit his body to the ground.

Anne's attention shifts back to the casket.

MINISTER (CONT'D)

Earth to earth, ashes to ashes,
dust to dust.

As the casket of the deceased is slowly lowered into the grave.

The service ends and the mourners wander away from the grave, Michelle and Anne among them.

EXT. CEMETERY - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The small group mingles and bestows their condolences on the immediate family.

Michelle looks to Anne who stands with a blank tearless expression next to her mother.

After everyone has gone, Michelle walks up to Anne and puts her arms around her. They embrace.

CLOSE ON - ANNE:

A strange smile comes across her face, as Michelle hugs her. It is an odd kind of smile, between mischievous and evil, as if in her own way, she has somehow gotten what she wanted.

INT. COUNTRY FARM HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A small upstairs bedroom, with an angled ceiling and a dormer window, slightly ajar. The partially drawn curtains move with the night breeze.

Young Anne and Young Michelle wearing pajamas, lie beside each other on the bed, beneath the covers.

Young Anne seems to be lost in her thoughts.

Young Michelle stares at the ceiling. Her eyes move to the swaying curtains.

YOUNG MICHELLE

Do you miss him?

Young Anne hesitates to reply.

YOUNG ANNE

--No...

Closing her eyes.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

I'm glad he's gone.

YOUNG MICHELLE

I still miss my dad.

Squeezes the locket around her neck in her hand.

YOUNG ANNE

But he didn't die. Your mom and dad just got a divorce.

Michelle rolls on to her side facing Anne.

Anne stares back up at the ceiling.

YOUNG MICHELLE

Do you think he's in heaven?

YOUNG ANNE

I think he's in the place where he belongs.

Michelle ponders the thought, while tears roll from Anne's eyes.

Michelle sits up, undoes the locket from around her neck and places it around Anne's neck.

Anne looks down at the small silver heart shaped locket.

Anne opens it, and it begins to play a musical chime.

Inside the locket are two tiny photographs. One picture is of young Anne, and in the other half of the heart, a photograph of young Michelle.

Anne closes the locket. The music stops. Anne looks to Michelle.

YOUNG ANNE

Thank you...

Anne squeezes the locket in her hand and smiles.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

I'll wear it always.

Anne kisses Michelle, then lies back down, taking hold of her hand.

YOUNG ANNE (CONT'D)

Promise me something, Miki.

Michelle looks into Anne's eyes.

YOUNG MICHELLE

Anything...

Anne squeezes Michelle's hand.

YOUNG ANNE

Promise me that we'll always be best friends forever.

YOUNG MICHELLE
You know we will, Anne.

YOUNG ANNE
No... You have to say it, if you
want it to be real!

YOUNG MICHELLE
We'll always be friends.

YOUNG ANNE
Best friends..?

YOUNG MICHELLE
Best friends.

YOUNG ANNE
Promise?

YOUNG MICHELLE
I promise...

YOUNG ANNE
Forever?

Michelle looks at Anne.

YOUNG MICHELLE
Forever...

Anne takes Michelle into a hug.

YOUNG ANNE
I love you Miki.

Anne kisses Michelle.

Anne reaches over and turns out the light on the night table
beside the bed, and then lies back down next to Michelle,
clutching the locket in her hand.

Michelle stares up at the ceiling, contemplating the meaning
of forever.

The curtains move gently with the breeze.

DISSOLVE INTO:

DREAM-STATE - ANNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As if in a dream, the upstairs of the house is empty. Moving
from room to room, the images seem to fall in and out of
time. There is an airy empty silence.

IN THE HALLWAY:

The shadows of the banister leading to the stairs seem to crawl up and down the walls.

SUDDENLY:

The distorted sounds of Young Anne's FATHER yelling.

STAIRWELL:

On the stairs appears Young Anne, running. Chasing behind her, belt in hand, is Anne's father.

TOP OF THE STAIRS:

Almost tripping over her nightgown, Young Anne stumbles on the steps. Crawling on all fours, she manages to regain her footing, running into her -

BEDROOM:

- with her father only a few steps behind, yelling.

Anne cowers in the corner of the room.

Her father towering over her, belt in hand, screaming at her in a monstrous distorted voice, as he beats down on her with the belt.

Anne curls up into a ball on the floor, crying.

Then he leaves...

FROM OUT IN THE HALLWAY:

He slams the bedroom door shut, with her inside.

BEDROOM:

With the crash of his fist against the wall, his shadow disappears from beneath the door.

The angry sound of her father's screams is replaced by the sound of Anne's frightened whimpers.

Pushing herself like a crab into a corner, she pulls her knees up, wrapping her arms around herself. Tears stream down her face. Frightened and alone, she stares up at the window.

DISSOLVE BACK
TO:

INT. ANNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUING

Anne stares out the window at the darkness beyond. She turns to look at Michelle, asleep on the bed. There is sadness in Young Anne's eyes.

Anne takes into her hand the silver heart shaped locket that hangs around her neck, and squeezes it; staring at a nowhere point in the distance.

LONG SLOW
DISSOLVE INTO:

A PASSAGE OF TIME - TEN YEARS LATER

EXT. LARGE METROPOLITAN CITY CENTER - DAY

The hustle, bustle and noise of big city morning rush hour as everyone makes their way to work.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Swerving in and out of traffic, riding a bike is a GROWN-UP ANNE.

Now ten years later, Anne has grown into an attractive, physically fit, young woman. A small backpack hangs from her shoulders, and a audio headset is clipped to her ears. She rides without a care weaving thru the cars and commuters all vying for the same piece of pavement.

Anne still wears her hair in the same innocent bob style cut, and except for the passage of years, she resembles the same little girl.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

In the sea of rushing PEDESTRIANS stands an attractive GROWN UP MICHELLE, her long blonde hair tied back in a ponytail.

Camera in hand, Michelle seems oblivious to the goings on in her surroundings, as she visualizes through the camera's viewfinder, the concrete images of the city's architecture that is all around her.

MICHELLE'S POV - CAMERA VIEWFINDER:

An image of a skyscraper as seen through the viewfinder of Michelle's camera.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Impatient, Anne jumps her bike onto a sidewalk filled with pedestrians and maneuvers around the traffic stopped at the light.

MICHELLE'S POV - THRU CAMERA VIEWFINDER:

Focusing through her camera, Michelle is unaware of Anne, speeding in her direction.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Michelle steps back in the path of Anne's bike, and the two collide, sending them both crashing to the ground.

For a moment they are both stunned.

MICHELLE

ARE YOU CRAZY?! What the HELL were
you doing?! WHY DON'T YOU LOOK
WHERE YOU'RE GOING?!

Sitting up on the ground.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)

You could have killed me!

Michelle looks for her camera.

Anne's sits on the ground with her bike on top of her. The headset she was wearing, has slipped across her face. Both of them look almost comical, splayed out on the ground.

ANNE

(laughs)

I'm sorry. I didn't see you.

MICHELLE

What do you mean you didn't see me!
I was standing right there in front
of you!

(looks to Anne)

And what the hell is so funny?

ANNE

Nothing...

Anne's straightens out her music headset.

ANNE (CONT'D)

It's just that...

A smile comes across Anne's face, recognizing Michelle.

ANNE (CONT'D)
Miki?--Is that you?! I can't
believe it. It's really you?!

Michelle stands up.

MICHELLE
Anne?!

Realizing who she sees standing in front of her.

ANNE
God! Are you all right?

MICHELLE
I think so.

She looks around for her camera.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
But my camera's probably fucked!

Picking it up from the ground.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

She reaches to help Anne up off the ground.

MICHELLE (CONT'D)
I haven't seen you since...

ANNE
It's been a long time.

Anne now straightens herself out.

ANNE (CONT'D)
So, how have you been?

By the look on her face, Michelle is so surprised to see Anne after all these years that she is at a loss for words.

MICHELLE
Fine...
(changes thought)
I tried writing you a number of
times--but you never answered..?

ANNE
You know me... I was never any good
with letters.

(MORE)

ANNE (CONT'D)
But now that I'm here, you can tell
me all the things you wrote.

She stands there for a moment, and looks at Michelle.

ANNE (CONT'D)
It sure is good to see you. You
look great.

The two girls just stand there and look at each other.

ANNE (CONT'D)
So...

Anne picks up her bike.

ANNE (CONT'D)
What do you wanna do first?

MICHELLE
First?

Michelle looks down at her camera.

ANNE
You're not busy are you?

Michelle thinks a moment and then smiles.

MICHELLE
No. It's just that...

ANNE
Great! Then hop on.

Michelle looks at Anne's bike.

MICHELLE
On that?!

ANNE
Sure! Why not?

MICHELLE
Are you nuts!

Michelle looks at Anne sarcastically.

ANNE
Okay...

Anne takes hold of Michelle by the arm.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Then we'll walk.

MICHELLE

Walk! Walk where?!

ANNE

Well the least I can do after knocking you over, is buy you a cup of coffee. Besides, you were gonna tell me what you wrote in all those letters.

Anne pushes her bike with one hand, as they walk along.

MICHELLE

By the way, don't you need a license to ride one of those?

ANNE

No silly... it's only a bike.

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFÉ - DAY

Anne and Michelle are seated at a small sidewalk cafe and bistro.

Anne wears her music headset around her neck. Her small backpack hangs on the chair.

Michelle has her camera in hand, still checking to see if anything is broken, as she fidgets with the buttons and dials.

Anne watches, curious.

ANNE

So, when did you become interested in photography?

MICHELLE

Back in high school.

ANNE

Wow..!

MICHELLE

I got my degree in photo journalism last fall, and now I spend most of my time shooting ads for a local tourist magazine.