

BLUE

Written by

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INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door swings into a neat and well furnished apartment. MICHAEL, 28, tall, haggard looking but handsome, leaning heavily on a cane in his right hand, stands in the doorway and surveys the living room.

The living room is small but orderly with a place for everything and is decorated in pale but warm, neutral tones.

He enters slowly and drags a rolling suitcase after him. He stops to look at a framed photo on the wall. Michael and a young woman, LYDIA, 27, long dark hair, pretty, smile happily.

As he stares at the photo a haunted look comes over his face.

SFX
Screeeeeeech CRASH.

The sounds of a car crash echo around him.

He turns away from the photo; his stoic face crumples with pain.

He shuffles through the apartment; his steps become more halting, his expression darkens the further he gets into the apartment.

BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bedroom decor matches the living room, but it is cozier. Everything is organized and the bed is neatly made.

Michael stands at the foot of the bed and looks around the room, slowly taking everything in. He puts the suitcase on the bed and sits down next to it.

He pulls his cell phone out of his pocket, dials, and puts the phone up to his ear. It rings a few times before going to voice mail. A deep voice is heard from the phone.

AUGUST
(Recording) You've reached August,
leave a message and I'll get back
to you.

Michael hangs up the phone and dials again. This time the line connects. ALICE, 57, Michael's mom, answers cheerfully.

ALICE
Hello!

MICHAEL

Mom.

ALICE

Michael! Your father and I just checked in to our hotel in Dubai! You got home today, right?

MICHAEL

Yeah, I just got home.

ALICE

Are you all right?

Michael takes a moment to answer, picks up a string of beads laying on the night stand next to him and absently runs it through his fingers.

MICHAEL

No. Everything is still here.

ALICE

Oh, honey, I thought Lydia's parents would -

MICHAEL

They didn't.

Michael's fist tightens around the beads and he looks like he's on the verge of tears. Alice is quiet on the other end of the line.

ALICE

Michael, I'm sorry. I wish we could be there to help...

MICHAEL

It's fine. You've had this trip planned. I can take care of myself.

ALICE

I know you can. You've always been a trooper but it's all right to want help. I'll call your brother. He'll come help you.

Michael looks stricken.

MICHAEL

No, that's okay. I can take care of it.

ALICE

Are you sure? Your father and I
will be home in a week! You could
come stay with us for a while.

MICHAEL

Maybe.

ALICE

Think about it -- the bus is here!
Take care, dear!

The phone clicks off. Michael stares at it before he collapses onto the bed. He rolls over and presses his face into one of the pillows, Lydia's pillow. He sobs into the pillow.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Michael paces the room with a rough limp. He holds a woman's sweater clutched in his hands. He presses it to his face and breathes deeply before he throws it across the room in an explosive fit of rage.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Michael lies in bed with Lydia. The light is intense and dreamy. They are both sleep-tousled. She touches his face and laughs softly.

MICHAEL

I miss you...

Lydia's lips move but no sound is heard.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Michael wakes suddenly on the bed in a nest of Lydia's clothes. His cell phone rings; the caller ID reads "August". He silences the phone and drops it on the floor, and falls back into the pile of clothes.

EXT. CONVALESCENT HOME PARKING LOT - DAY

A sign for Pasco County Convalescent Home sits out in front of the building.

INT. CONVALESCENT HOME LOBBY - DAY

The lobby is decorated to look like a comfortable sitting room. A few residents are scattered around reading.

Michael walks up to the office window. A pleasant looking NURSE, 31, sits inside typing at a computer. She looks up as he approaches.

NURSE

Michael! How are you?

MICHAEL

Well.

NURSE

It's only been a few days. How's the leg?

MICHAEL

It's keeping me upright.

The nurse chuckles.

NURSE

Here to visit Helen?

Michael nods.

NURSE (CONT'D)

She was in the living room complaining about the fabric softener a little while ago. It's good that you two are close.

Michael smile is almost genuine.

MICHAEL

She got me through the worst of it. I owe a lot to her.

The nurse smiles at him and he heads off down one of the many hallways branching off the main lobby.

INT. REC ROOM - DAY

RESIDENTS play well-worn board games on tables. Shelves hold art supplies and books. Crudely made Christmas decorations hang around the room.

Michael enters, walking with his cane towards HELEN, 70, who sits near the windows.

MICHAEL
Hey, old bat.

HELEN
Whippersnapper. It's been a while.
What brings you back here?

Michael struggles to lean down and hug her, leaning heavily on his cane, but manages. He slumps into a chair near hers and leans his cane against his leg.

MICHAEL
Just a few weeks. Thought you could use some company.

HELEN
I could. Louie won't let me play Scrabble with him anymore and with you gone there's no one worth talking to.

She gestures toward LOUIE, 75, an older gentleman sitting at a nearby table playing Scrabble with another RESIDENT, 74. Helen reaches over and pats Michael's knee.

HELEN (CONT'D)
So what's eating at you, Skip?

MICHAEL
I'm fine.

HELEN
Mhmm.

She stares him down.

MICHAEL
Lydia's stuff is still in the apartment.

HELEN
Lydia? Your fiance?

Michael nods.

MICHAEL
I thought someone would've taken care of everything before I got back. Her stuff is still all over the bathroom. All her clothes were in the closet. Jesus, Helen, her pillow still smells like her!

They both sit quietly. Helen is calm and poised, Michael is lost and disheveled.

HELEN

If there's one thing I've learned in life, it's that people leave. Be it willingly or otherwise, they will always leave. It's inevitable, and you can either let it break you or you can embrace it, learn from it, and move on.

Michael does not acknowledge her and instead stares off into the distance.

HELEN (CONT'D)

I know it's not exactly what you want to hear right now, but it's the truth.

MICHAEL

What should I do, Helen? I can't sleep. She's in my dreams. I can't eat. I see her around the apartment. I've started talking to her. Am I going crazy?

Helen is quiet. She looks out the window.

HELEN

They had her funeral while you were in the hospital, right?

Michael nods.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Then you never really got to say good-bye. I'm not a doctor, but maybe it's how your brain is coping with the sudden absence. Maybe you just need to say good-bye?

MICHAEL

(Angrily) How am I supposed to do that? How is there closure for something like this?

Helen takes his outburst in stride and waits for him to calm down.

HELEN

That all comes with time.

Michael's hands clench into tight fists on the arms of the chair. He takes a deep breath and then relaxes them.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Pack her things up; start fresh.
You don't have to get rid of them.
When my husband died, it was hard
to get rid of anything, but I
couldn't look at it. Putting
everything away helped.

The two sit in silence for a bit.

MICHAEL

Thank you, Helen.

Helen smiles comfortingly.

HELEN

Anytime, Skip.

INT. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM - MORNING

Michael stands in front of the sink, lost. His hair is a mess and his face is stubbly. A few days have passed.

The counter is covered in feminine products. He picks up a bottle of lotion and sniffs it. He winds his arm back to dash it on the floor but pauses and sets it back exactly where it was.

He turns and leaves the bathroom.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bed is ruffled and stripped. The closet doors are open and the closet is empty. Women's clothes are strewn across the floor and piled on the end of the bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He has set up camp in the living room. The couch looks slept on. Dirty dishes and take out containers sit on various surfaces; most of the food on them is untouched.

His cell phone rings. The ID reads "August". He continues through the apartment as though he can't hear it. His limp is still noticeable. The cell phone stops ringing momentarily, but starts up again.

Michael sits heavily on the couch. Phantom recollections of Lydia move around him performing various tasks.

They pace while talking on the phone, read on the couch, dance, work at the desk, etc.

MICHAEL

Please. Stop...

He picks up Lydia's pillow from the couch and buries his face in it.

LYDIA

Michael, what are you doing?

Michael lifts his head slowly, Lydia is crouched in front of him so their eyes are level.

MICHAEL

No. You're not real.

Lydia scoffs.

LYDIA

Of course not, but I'll ask you again, what are you doing?

MICHAEL

Mourning your loss.

LYDIA

Ah, bull shit. Quit wallowing. *

MICHAEL

I'm sorry, but I don't think a creation of my grief can really tell me not to wallow after the death of the love of my life.

LYDIA

That's sweet, but you're not dead. I am. You have a life to go live. Call your brother back.

Michael shoves the pillow aside and laughs bitterly.

MICHAEL

And what would the point of that be? What is he going to do? What can anyone do? What's the point of living a life without you in it? You were everything and now there's nothing!

He stands briskly. The room is empty again, Lydia has disappeared.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Nothing. Exactly.

EXT. GRASSY FIELD - DAY

Michael and Lydia, lay on a blanket in the grass. The light is dreamy and bright.

Lydia is on her back; her head rests on Michael's stomach. Michael has one hand behind his head and absently strokes Lydia's hair with the other.

LYDIA
You can't keep doing this.

MICHAEL
Mhmmm.

Lydia sits up and kisses him gently. He watches her and when she gets up and walks away he doesn't get up to stop her.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Michael stands amid stacks of boxes. Most of the apartment has been ransacked. Surfaces that once held decorations are noticeably barren.

LYDIA
You're packing me up?

Michael tapes up another box, writes "Lydia" on the side of it and dates it. Lydia sits on the couch and watches him intently.

MICHAEL
For now.

LYDIA
Good. That's good.

MICHAEL
Yeah...

A knock on the door interrupts the conversation. Michael stares at the door confused. The knock sounds again.

AUGUST
Michael, I know you're in there. I can hear you talking. Open the door!

Michael stares at the door with a deer-in-the headlights look. The knocking continues.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Look, I understand if you don't want to talk right now, but you can't shut everyone out forever. At least talk to Mom. She's worried about you.

LYDIA

You shouldn't push them away. They need you as much as you need them.

Michael ignores them both and instead goes into the bedroom, shuts the door behind him and climbs back into the pile of clothes and blankets.

INT. - BEDROOM - MONTAGE

Michael does not leave the bedroom. He hides under his pile of clothes and blankets and ignores the world.

ALICE (V.O.)

Michael, it's been weeks. We're worried about you. Please call-

His phone continues to ring throughout and although he always checks it, he never answers it.

AUGUST (V.O.)

Hey, we just want to make sure you're okay, man. Call somebody-

The ID flashes through an endless loop of "August", "Mom", "Dad".

His voicemail fills up and then the phone rings continuously.

He snatches up the phone and tries to silence it but in doing so jams the volume button. The volume is at max and he can't change it. The phone continues to ring.

MICHAEL

Lydia?

Lydia doesn't appear.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Lydia! Talk to me!

The ringing begins to overwhelm him. He yells and chucks the phone across the room, shattering it.

The silence is deafening. Michael breathes heavily. He curls up on the bed and cries, huge, desperate, body-wracking sobs.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'm not ready to get over you.

The screen of the phone lights up under the spiderweb of cracks and a soft, distorted ring echoes through the room.

Michael gets up, wipes at his face as he hiccups and goes to pick up the phone. He stumbles, as the room seems to distort, lengthening beyond the norm. The phone appears impossibly far away and he struggles to get to it in time. His leg gives out and he collapses to the floor. He pulls himself closer to the phone. When he reaches it the ID reads "Lydia".

He tries to pick up the call and it connects. Through the static he hears a voice.

LYDIA

(Warmly) Hey, handsome.