

ALWAYS

Declaration of Love Project

Character:

Dad. Any age.

SFX: Ocean waves. No seagulls or beach crowds, only the crashing of waves.

SFX: At first two or three people speaking, low volume, we can barely make out their words. Then we hear more, 10 voices, 40, building to the murmur of a crowd. (This can be a single voice multiplied, or a cacophony of many voices) As they begin to fade, one voice is singled out, as if from a void.

Dad: You were five.

Your actual birthday was on a Wednesday that year, so your party was that Saturday. You were mad for two whole days; said that we were skipping your birthday and you hated us for it. I never would have said so at the time, but you put us through so much hell Thursday and Friday that we were nearly on the verge of cancelling everything. (laughs) By the time Saturday arrived, you'd just about forgotten the whole thing.

A baseball bat, which was your most favorite toy. For a week.

SFX: Waves crashing

When you were seven, one of your classmates said something so mean to you that you decided to yell at her house when we drove past. She lived in our neighborhood, so that was pretty much that entire September.

You never let us know what she said. But it really must have been something.

SFX: Waves crashing

The bicycle accident when you were twelve ... that was terrifying. Mind you, not from your injuries exactly. Your leg healed and as far as I know, you never ended up with any lasting scars, but that was the first time it seemed like... there's just so much protection that can be given. And it's never quite enough.

But, you healed. And begged for another bike.

In time, a car.

You'll never know how grateful I was that you seemed to make good decisions behind the wheel. I don't need to know the truth about what I didn't know about your driving at that age and I'd like to keep it that way. As much as possible. (laughs)

SFX: Waves crashing

Graduation.

Moving into your first dorm room. The way your eyes got big when you saw how small the room was.

The spring break camping trip during, was it your sophomore year? Then coming back to campus and changing majors. Twice.

Your face at graduation.

SFX: Waves crashing

The jingle of keys in your pocket as you walked down the hallway to your first apartment.

Loving. Heartbreak. Loving again, and asking for advice. Dismissing advice and just making your own brave choices.

Apartment after apartment after apartment.

Love. Big, big love.

SFX: Waves crashing

Every moment. All of them, even the ones you've long forgotten. Maybe especially those? There was never a time without. Never.

Always.

SFX: Waves crashing and fading to silence.