

EARLY LOVE

Written by

Jennifer Mulligan

Ottawa, Ontario  
613 266 9511  
jennifer.a.mulligan@gmail.com

FADE IN:

OVER BLACK

A woman's voice, soft, a whisper. This is LARA.

LARA (V.O.)  
I love you, Max.

THEN --

It's a DREAM. Colours come up and fade. It could be a sky,  
or maybe clouds.

FADE IN:

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

YOUNG LARA, 8, cute in a summer dress, plays with YOUNG MAX,  
9, who's showing Lara how to build an elaborate sand castle.  
We never see Max's face, only from behind.

MAX (V.O.)  
I met her when I was nine.

MONTAGE of Lara and Max doing kid things --

HIDE AND GO SEEK

TAG

MAX PUSHES LARA ON THE SWINGS

Again, we only see Max from the back.

MAX (V.O.)  
I was the new kid at school that  
year. My parents moved around  
alot. She was the only person who  
talked to me.

MONTAGE OF Max and Lara --

SHARING A SANDWICH

SITTING IN A CLASSROOM TOGETHER

WALKING HOME TOGETHER

MAX (V.O.)  
We were best friends.

Max, only ever from the back. His face is always hidden.

MAX (V.O.)  
Even then, I didn't want to spend a  
minute without her. I'd make up  
excuses to see her.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

MAX, 18, sits on a leather chair. Scruffy, he's totally distraught. He plays with a WEDDING RING on his finger.

He has a huge scar that runs down the side of his face. He hasn't shaved in days. His eyes are bloodshot.

A kindly female THERAPIST sits across from him.

MAX  
(with his head down, sad)  
I didn't know then that I loved  
her. Her smile, her face, the way  
she laughed at my corny jokes.  
(beat)  
She never once teased me or made  
fun of me. She was always just  
nice, you know?  
(beat)  
I never had to pretend, and she  
knew when I was.  
(beat)  
She'd call me on it.  
(mimics Lara)  
"Max, you can't fool me so why are  
you trying?"

He covers his face with his hands.

He cries and can't stop.

THERAPIST  
Let it come.

Max continues to cry. It's awkward but necessary.

He rubs his eyes.

MAX  
I don't know what to do.

THERAPIST  
You don't have to do anything  
except what you're already doing.

MAX

I miss her. Every minute.

INT. MAX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

It's a guy's room. But, there are a few candles lit.

Lara sits on Max's bed, cross legged, facing him.

She touches his scar, and runs her fingers along it. Max closes his eyes. She caresses his cheek.

MAX (V.O.)

I didn't have enough time with her.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

THERAPIST

You gave more of yourself to her  
than most people ever give to  
anyone.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Beside the monkey bars, Lara, in a simple white dress, and holding a bunch of wild flowers.

She faces Max, who's in a dark suit.

They look far too young to be getting married.

A MINISTER stands between and behind them.

We see a small group of people on chairs.

MINISTER

Max, do you take Lara to be your  
wife and partner for life?

MAX

I do.

MINISTER

And Lara, do you take Max to be  
your husband and partner for life?

LARA

I do.

LATER - MONTAGE of MAX AND LARA --

THEY EXCHANGE RINGS

THE DANCE TOGETHER

MAX  
(whispers in Lara's ear)  
This is the happiest day of my  
life.

THEY FEED EACH OTHER CAKE

MAX (V.O.)  
And the saddest. But I kept that  
to myself.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Max takes a tissue from the box on the table.

MAX  
She knew I loved her, right?

THERAPIST  
She did.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Max walks in. Lara stands up.

Max gives her a bear hug.

Lara's parents, JIM, 50 and MIRANDA, 45, stand up.

Max pulls away from Lara, but keeps one arm around her  
shoulders. He shakes Jim's hand.

A DOCTOR walks in.

MONTAGE - CONTINUOUS

LARA GETS BAD NEWS.

LARA SHOCKED; MAX HOLDS HER.

IN THE HALLWAY, JIM AND MIRANDA TALK TO THE DOCTOR

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

MAX  
When she got sick, my whole world  
turned inside out.

THERAPIST

And?

Max begins to cry again. SOBS. He can't stop.

MAX

I wanted her to live.

(beat)

I only had a six weeks.

FLASHBACK MONTAGE OF LARA --

IN HOSPITAL AND LOOKING WEAK

(THE CALENDAR CHANGING TO THE NEXT MONTH)

THEIR WEDDING DAY - MAX AND LARA LEAVING THE CHURCH

(THE CLOCK ON THE WALL TICKING AWAY SECONDS)

LARA LOSING HER HAIR

UNCONSCIOUS IN BED

THERAPIST

A short time.

MAX

(screams)

Six weeks!

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Max sits on the ground and looks at Lara's tombstone.

LARA (BRUCE) MURPHY

1995-2012

A PRECIOUS LIFE TAKEN TOO SOON

SHE LOVED AND WAS LOVED

There is an open spot for MAX's name with only his birth year.

Max touches the stone with his fingers.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

He slams his fist on the side of the chair.

MAX

I had to love her a whole lifetime.

THERAPIST

You loved her from the moment you  
both met. That was a lifetime.

Max shrugs and sighs. Not good enough.

MAX

Now what? What do I do?

THERAPIST

What's the feeling?

MAX

Loss. My heart is gone. I'm  
eighteen and I'm afraid.

THERAPIST

Love is risk. You loved her  
knowing that. At least maybe your  
heart did.

MAX

I know.

THERAPIST

Lara is still with you.

MAX

I don't think I can go it alone.

THERAPIST

That's why I'm here. To make you  
see that it's possible.