

Nextdoor

written by

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Blaring alarm sounds are going off.

ALEX (V.O.)

My name was Peter Wieder, and today
I ended the world.

INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT

SUPER: January 31st, 2050- Universe Prime

Alarms continue blaring. ALEX (early 40s) JEREMY (Late 80s) in the center of a particle accelerator which is spinning rapidly. There are dials hitting their maximum, and numbers rapidly growing on screens.

JEREMY

What the hell is happening Peter?

ALEX

Exactly what I told you might
happen.

Papers around the room start floating around the room. Then mugs of coffee. Then desks and chairs. Even Alex started floating. All the lights flickered until eventually reaching a brightness so bright that the bulbs blew out.

JEREMY

Can you make it stop?

ALEX

Maybe, but I'd like to be able to
focus for these last ten seconds.

Everything stopped. The alarms still blare, but most of the lights return (although dimmer), and everything that was floating fell back to the floor.

JEREMY

You did it!

Jeremy stumbled over to Alex and put a hand on his shoulder.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Good job, son.

Jeremy pats Alex's shoulder and walks away laughing. The look of terror fails to leave Alex's face.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Okay everyone. I know we just had a
good scare, but we're getting
closer. I can feel it.

At the center of the particle accelerator, a small black dot appears. Jeremy squints at it.

JEREMY (CONT'D)
 Alex, what's this?

ALEX
 The end.

Alex runs to the nearest computer and types away.

JEREMY
 What's going on Alex?

ALEX
 Just a second.

The black hole in the middle begins growing.

JEREMY
 Come on Alex.

ALEX
 I told you this would be too
 dangerous, and you didn't listen to
 me so just give me a second!

Alex grabs his satchel off his chair and walks hastily across the lab and tosses different gadgets, a notebook, and a sack of money into his satchel.

JEREMY
 (sigh)
 We don't have much time.

ALEX
 I'm perfectly aware of that.

The black hole is sucking in chairs, metal linings, and people in white lab coats.

Alex straps a contraption over his mouth and nose, there is a tube connecting the contraption to a canister. Alex jumps over the guard rails and jumps through the black hole.

INT./EXT. BLACK HOLE - INDEFINITE

Pure darkness. Not just in color, but in sound and feel too. It is impossible to see or hear anything. Alex is somewhere in there, but he has no clue.

EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY

In the middle of an old, run-down town, a rift of absolute nothing opens and Alex falls out.

Alex takes a moment to look around the barren street before coming to his feet.

Alex walks over to a nearby newspaper stand and grabs a paper.

SUPER: October 2nd, 2008- New Universe

INT./EXT. BUS - EVENING

Alex sits, headphones in, on a crowded bus. He is writing in a notebook.

ALEX (V.O.)

I knew I shouldn't have built that black hole, but Jeremy promised me so much... Either way it's not worth it now, he's dead. The whole universe is.

The pen stops moving for a moment. Alex looks out the window into the familiar dark sky. The pen resumes.

ALEX (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But now I'm stuck in the year I was born with no way to get home, besides waiting. I can only hope to change the future somehow but I don't exactly want to kill baby me.

The hairy man next to Alex slumps onto Alex's shoulder in his sleep. Alex pushes him the other way.

ALEX (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'll figure something out. I grabbed a Mission Impossible style face-mask so I won't get recognized as my younger self, and I got a fake I.D with my new Name: Alex.

EXT. THEA'S HOUSE - DAY

Alex knocks on the door to a nice but fairly run-down house.

THEA (19) opens the door with baby PETER (2 months) in her arms.

ALEX

Hi, my name is Alex, I just bought the house next door and thought I'd meet my new neighbors.

THEA

It's nice to meet you Alex, I'm Thea and this-
(she lifts peter)
-is Peter.

ALEX

Aww, isn't he adorable. Y'know I'm great with kids, I'd love to watch him sometime.

THEA

That's not necessary... Well I am pretty overworked... I'll let you know.

Alex and Thea continue talking as Alex's voiceover resumes.

ALEX (V.O.)

It took some convincing but eventually I got the job of Peter's babysitter.

INT. ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alex sits alone in a large but empty room. Solely furnished by the desk that he is sitting at with his pen and notebook.

ALEX (V.O.)

Hopefully with this position, I'll be able to teach him things like: don't build weapons of mass destruction to evil businessmen named Jeremy.

Alex lets out a large yawn and stretches. He closes the notebook.

INT. THEA'S HOUSE - EVENING

SUPER: December 25th, 2013- New Universe

Alex, Thea, and Peter (now 5), sit around a Christmas tree with ugly sweaters and unwrapped presents.

ALEX

Okay I think that's all the presents, did you have a good Christmas bud?

PETER

Yes! Yes, this was the most awesome Christmas ever. Thank you Alex.

Peter runs up to Alex and gives him a big hug.

ALEX

Aww, well I'm glad you liked it.

PETER

Oh wait, I forgot about one present.

Peter speeds off to another room. Alex gives Thea a confused look, but she's just as confused as he is.

Peter walks back in with a piece of paper in his hands.

ALEX

Is this for me?

PETER

Yes it is.

ALEX

Thank you very much Peter. But where's Thea's card? I know I like to spoil you, but she's your mother.

PETER

She got her card this morning after I woke her up.

ALEX

Look at you being thoughtful.

THEA

He's my little angel.

Thea takes a sip of her coffee.

PETER

Well I'm gonna go play with my toys now. Merry Christmas Alex.

Peter grabs a handful of hot wheels and wobbles to his room.

THEA

(to alex)

Thanks.

ALEX

Pardon?

THEA

Thank you. He wouldn't get Christmases this nice if you weren't here.

ALEX

Oh I'm sure you'd make them plenty special.

THEA

I'm just so happy to see who he's becoming and a lot of that is because of you.

ALEX

Well I'm always here if you need anything.

Peter comes back in the room with hot wheels taped to the bottom of his shoes.

CUE MONTAGE: GROWING UP

--Alex pushes the bike that Peter is sitting on (it has no training wheels).

--Alex talks to the CAR MECHANIC while Thea sits in her damaged car.

--Thea enters her dark house in crappy work clothes to find Alex and Peter asleep on the couch with the TV playing.

--Peter gets handed back a test with "100% :)" written on it.

--Alex teaches Thea how to tie a tie.

--Alex, Peter, and Thea sit around the dinner table and laugh together.

END MONTAGE: GROWING UP

INT. ALEX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SUPER: May 30th, 2027- New Universe

Alex, now wizened quite a bit, is writing in his notebook once again, although he is now on one of the last pages.

ALEX (V.O.)

In my timeline, today was the worst day of them all. It is truly my biggest regret, and the thing that led me to where I ended up.

INT. THEA'S HOUSE - MORNING

SUPER: May 30th, 2027, Universe Prime

Alex(18) has his backpack on and is heading out the door, when Thea stops him.

THEA

Hey hun, are you ready for your last day of school.

ALEX

Yes, mom. And it's not even a real day, I'm just going one last time while I still have my Canva premium account.

THEA

Oh you're my little genius. I'll miss you so much when you're gone to college.

ALEX

Yeah I know, I'll miss you too.

Alex heads toward the door again but Thea stops him.

THEA

And I've been meaning to ask, since you'll be leaving soon.

ALEX

(sigh)
What is it?

THEA

Would you want to go for a drink after school?

ALEX

I don't drink.

THEA

Give me a break, I know that you don't just collect the cans.

(beat)

So do you want to go? It'd mean a lot to me. I know that I've been busy your whole life and we never got to talk much but this'd be the chance to fix that.

ALEX

Um sure. I'll see you then.

Alex heads toward the door and makes it out.

INT. CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

Alex sits in a crowded classroom, and plays on his dying phone. There's an old TEACHER at the front of the classroom that seems to be doing the same.

A bell rings.

Everyone rushes out the door.

TEACHER
 (yelling)
 Okay everyone, enjoy your summer.

INT. BAR - AFTERNOON

Thea enters a bar and sits down.

She texts Alex.

THEA (SUBTITLE)
 I'm at the bar, a little early but
 I'll see you soon.

Thea waves down the bartender to get a beer while she waits.

EXT. SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

Alex exits the doors of the school and heads to his car.

While fiddling with his keys he hears a voice call out to him, it's Jeremy Beef.

JEREMY
 Hello there. Are you Peter Wieder?

ALEX
 Yes sir, I am... and you're Jeremy Beef, of Tradeoff... How did you know my name? And why are you here?

JEREMY
 I've had a team of people searching for the brightest high schoolers in America, and you son, are the brightest of them all.

ALEX
 Really? Wow that's amazing.

JEREMY
 I'd love to have a meeting with you today, before my plane back home leaves.

ALEX
 I'd love to but I-

Alex looks down at his phone with a text from Thea. The phone dies in his hands and he puts it in his pocket.

ALEX (CONT'D)
 Yes. Yes, I'd love to meet with you today.

JEREMY

Brilliant! Well let's hop to it then.

INT. BAR - EVENING

Thea sits in the bar, the beer she got is empty, she checks the time. 5:00. She waves down the bartender to get another beer.

Now this mug is empty. She's slouched in her seat. She checks the time. 5:30. 6:00. She looks at her texts to Alex. She's sent several unread messages from him. 7:00. 8:30. 9:45.

INT. ALEX'S HOUSE - EVENING

SUPER: May 30th, 2027- New Universe

Alex sits at his desk writing once more.

ALEX (V.O.)

My mother took her life that night.
And since I lost her to Tradeoff.
It'd be stupid not to take the job,
right? I would've taken that
interview and lost her for nothing
otherwise... But I don't think
Peter will make the same mistake.

Alex looks at the crudely drawn Christmas card that Peter gave him, then up at his once barren walls, now filled with pictures of him, Peter, and Thea.

ALEX (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Dear Peter, I know that you won't
make the same mistake as me,
because I know that you are better
than me. But that also means I can
feel myself fading away.

Alex's left arm starts fading. It doesn't turn to dust or decay, just wisps that dissipate into the air.

ALEX (V.O.)

Dear Thea, these truly are the last
words I'll ever write because I can
feel myself fading away.

Alex's back fades away.

ALEX (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You were my family once, and you
became my family again. I love you
and Peter so much.

The only thing left of Alex is his hand that fades away with the pen still in hand.