

Defense Man

25-DE04-W20

A high school hockey star battles temptation.

FADE IN:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

A desolate, sparsely-treed horizon has a frozen, snow-covered lake in the foreground. Whistling across the lake, the wind tosses up swirls of snow. Panning back, a pickup, not far from shore comes into view. A young man sits inside.

INT. PICKUP - DAY

BRENT (16) breathes heavily, deep in thought, eyes closed. He straightens up, eyes on the rear-view mirror.

BRENT  
Where is she?

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: "FIVE DAYS EARLIER"

EXT. SCHOOL - PARKING AREA - DAY

Brent and MARTY (16) head toward Brent's pickup. Brent is a tall, strapping young man, dwarfing wiry Marty - a quirky sort of fellow. AMBER (9), innocent, cute and clever, stands by the pickup, arms folded, with a grin.

BRENT  
Hey 'Ambience' - everything cool?

AMBER  
'Amber' is fine! Did you tell him?

MARTY  
Me? Tell me what?! What?!

Amber and Brent exchange smirks.

MARTY (cont'd)  
COME ON!

BRENT  
Yesterday I got a call from the  
Burtle Creek Bisons.

MARTY  
No! No way! Juniors?! You?!

AMBER  
Oh yeah; he'll turn a few heads. Be  
eligible for the NHL draft next year.

BRENT  
Don't you start! Come on, get in.

MARTY  
Man, I'm like so pumped for you!

After a high-energy high five, Brent hops in the truck.

INT. CHURCH - FELLOWSHIP HALL - NIGHT

About eight high school students, including Brent, Marty, JANICE (16) and CORRINA (16) sit in a circle. PETE (32), the youth pastor leads a prayer. He finishes.

PETE  
Drive safe, now. Icy roads out there.

They all stand up, chat, and mill about.

Janice adorns herself with a warm, sincere smile and a bubbly attitude. Her modest dress stands in contrast to Corrina, in tight clothing that accentuates her captivating curves. Her sultry lips are matched with penetrating eyes - a seductive appearance Marty especially just drinks in.

MARTY  
Future hall-of-famer, right here!

Brent reacts - gives Marty a solid elbow in jest. They scuffle a little. Corrina keeps her eyes glued to Brent.

JANICE  
So happy for you! You finally did it!

BRENT  
Leaving Saturday morning.

CORRINA  
That's so soon!

MARTY  
Gotta let him go. Too good for us common folk. Best defenseman in the league. I mean, ya never see anyone deke their way around this phenom.

They laugh. Then, Corrina locks in eye contact with Brent.

CORRINA  
We need more time to plan something real special for you before you go.

Brent blushes. Janice and Marty eye each other warily.

INT. SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - PE CLASS - DAY

Brent is cranking out sit-ups. Marty holds his legs.

MARTY  
Obvious to everyone except you, it  
would seem. She is so into you!

A whistle blows. They change positions on the floor.

MARTY (cont'd)  
Everyone sees it. Ask Janice. I mean,  
you like her, right?

BRENT  
Maybe not as much as you do.

MARTY  
Hey. Woah woah.

He stops doing sit ups for a second, then resumes.

MARTY (cont'd)  
Her eyes are on you, man. So what -  
you gonna ask her out or something?

BRENT  
I don't know ...

MARTY  
You ARE interested, right? Yes? No?

BRENT  
She's been coming to youth group for  
a few months now, but I don't think  
she's a Christian yet --

MARTY  
Hey - no! Ya can't talk like that!

BRENT  
Maybe I'd regret it in the --

MARTY  
Regret? Let me tell you about regret.

Janice and Corrina are stretching on the other side of the  
gym. Corrina glances at Brent, smiles.

MARTY (cont'd)  
She's looking at you now, isn't she?

BRENT  
Uh ... yeah.

MARTY

My advice - you get a chance, any chance with a sick babe like that, you take it. No regrets!

A long whistle sounds. Brent, up on his feet, runs off. Marty turns, ogles Corrina for a second, lowers his head and sighs. He pulls himself up and jogs across the floor.

INT. ICE HOCKEY ARENA - NIGHT

The game is on. Brent's hometown team vs. their division rival. About 30 fans take in sights and sounds - whistles, shouts, skates carving out ruts and sticks slapping the ice.

Amber sits in a front row seat next to a friend. She watches Brent. He stands up tall and strong to block an opponent from entering the goalie's crease. She cheers.

AMBER

No one gets in the goalie's face when Brent's out there on defense. No one!

Janice and Corrina sit farther back. A whistle stops the play. Janice turns to Corrina.

JANICE

Brent's amazing. Marty too.

CORRINA

You think he likes me?

JANICE

Brent? I'm not sure ... probably.

CORRINA

Really? Janice, you're not jealous, are you? I honestly didn't mean to --

JANICE

No, no way. But I think you ought to know that he's a Christian, like me.

CORRINA

I know that.

JANICE

And it's not common for a Christian to date a non-Christian.

CORRINA

Why? I don't understand. Not gonna run out and steal something or --

JANICE  
That's not what I --

CORRINA  
hurt anyone! What's wrong with me? Am  
I that bad of a person?

Corrina's hurt feelings show. Janice is stumped. She struggles. Words don't come.

CORRINA (cont'd)  
Anyway, I gotta go. Nature calls.  
Watch my things?

Corrina makes her way to the concession area. Janice glances at her purse. It is partly open. No one is watching. She puts two fingers into the bag, opening it a tiny bit more. Something catches her eye - a condom! She closes the bag.

INT. ICE HOCKEY ARENA - WOMEN'S RESTROOM - NIGHT

From the POV of a stall with its door barely cracked open, Corrina is visible, standing at the sink. She holds a make-up kit and doctors her face, adding lipstick and perfume. She tidies her hair and then vainly stares at herself, as if captivated by her own beauty. She turns and walks away.

The stall door opens. Amber steps out with a somber face.

EXT. ICE HOCKEY ARENA - PARKING AREA - NIGHT

Brent throws his hockey equipment in the box of his pickup, then he starts the engine. Amber sits inside, shivering. Outside, Brent scrapes ice off the windows. He smells something - perfume. He turns in surprise.

BRENT  
Corrina! What are you --

CORRINA  
I'm really sorry. My car won't start.  
Would you mind coming to take a look?

BRENT  
Sure. Okay. I'm no mechanic, but ...

He gestures to Amber to wait inside. He and Corrina head to  
HER DAD'S MINIVAN

He gets in. Corrina sits in the passenger seat. He turns the key. The engine rolls over but won't catch.

CORRINA  
Do you think it needs a boost?

BRENT  
Let me try something first.

He pumps the gas five times, then waits. She stares at him with warm, sparkling eyes, her top teeth touch her soft, pouty lower lip. Their eyes meet. Brent looks away first.

BRENT (cont'd)  
I'll try again.

He turns the key. It starts! Corrina heaves a sigh.

CORRINA  
Before you go away on Saturday, I  
have something I want to give you.

BRENT  
Oh, you don't have to --

CORRINA  
Close your eyes, okay?

Brent shrugs and closes his eyes. Without warning, she plants a full-lip kiss on him. Brent, obviously startled, sits still for two seconds. They kiss again.

BRENT  
I should - I should really ...

CORRINA  
You have to go, I know. Your sister.  
But now you know how I feel.

BRENT  
Yeah, I ... I guess I do.

Corrina giggles and smiles. Brent nods, returns to his

PICKUP

The door opens. Amber sits inside with big, confused eyes.

BRENT  
Car wouldn't start.

AMBER  
So it's going now?

BRENT  
Yeah, it's going.

Amber notices a speck of red lipstick on Brent's face. She conceals her reaction to it. Brent puts the truck in gear.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Our group of four stands by the entrance, chatting. Others file by. Finally, Brent waves good-bye and jogs toward his pickup. Janice, Marty and Corrina continue to talk, but Corrina can't look away from Brent. He's inside the truck.

She tears off in his direction. Janice and Marty look at each other with concerned faces. Marty grits his teeth in envy. Janice shakes her head in dismay. Corrina arrives at

BRENT'S PICKUP

CORRINA

I'm really sorry about last night! I was afraid maybe you'd hate me now. I didn't want to do anything wrong --

BRENT

No no. It's okay. It was ... nice.

CORRINA

I thought so too.

Her face glows; her eyes are like lasers. Brent gulps.

CORRINA (cont'd)

I want more. What I mean is, I want to see you again. Before you go away.

BRENT

I'll see you at school tomorrow.

CORRINA

No, just you and me. When we kissed, I felt something. I want that again.

BRENT

I ... I've never had a girlfriend before, so I'm --

CORRINA

I know a place we can meet. Way out of town. We can be alone and talk about whatever, and we can ...

BRENT

Well, I sort of might not be able to make it then. I told Amber I'd --



CORRINA

Just you and me, middle of nowhere,  
doing whatever we feel like doing --

BRENT

I - I have to go. I'll - think about  
it, Corrina. I - I have to go.

He puts it in gear and zips away. Corrina bites her lip.

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - LOCKER AREA - DAY

Brent takes books out of his open locker. He closes it.  
Janice is standing right there, serious face.

BRENT

Hey. What's up?

JANICE

Brent, hi. You know, I was ... could  
I have a word - about Corrina?

Brent crosses his arms and furrows his brow.

JANICE (cont'd)

We talk, so I know things about her.

BRENT

And?

JANICE

She's been coming to bible studies,  
sure, but that's it, really. Her mind  
seems to be - elsewhere.

BRENT

What does that mean?!

JANICE

I think you sort of know, right? I  
see the way you two are together.

BRENT

Gonna lecture me now, mom?

JANICE

I'm not telling you what to do, okay?  
... I like her and everything. She's  
my friend. But just so you know,  
she's NOT a Christian, okay? She's  
not even close --

Marty and a couple friends excitedly rush up. Brent  
immediately reacts, thrilled to escape Janice's grasp.

MARTY

This is the man! Moving up to the big leagues. Whoever they got playing net is gonna love a protector like this. Standing on guard at the crease.

Marty executes a mock military salute. Brent jostles with them and laughs it up too. They bounce their way down the hall. Before Brent is out of earshot, Janice shouts:

JANICE

You can guard a goalie, but can you guard your own heart?!

Janice turns, rushes away. Brent's face goes pale.

INT. BRENT'S HOUSE - AMBER'S ROOM - DAY

Amber is sniffing; eyes are moist. Brent's head is low.

AMBER

But you said we could go! I never thought you'd ever break a promise!

BRENT

I'm sorry, Amb. My friends suddenly planned something for me. I had to --

AMBER

Friends, huh? How many? Which ones?

BRENT

A few.

AMBER

One for sure.

A guilty look is on Brent's face. He can't hide it.

AMBER (cont'd)

I know you like her. But I wish you wouldn't. It doesn't seem right even to me, and I'm only nine.

BRENT

I don't know what you're --

AMBER

You kissed her, didn't you?

BRENT

What?

AMBER  
When I was little, you'd tell me  
about having Jesus in my heart. Who's  
in your heart?!

No answer. She runs off in tears. Brent flops down onto  
Amber's bed, fixes his eyes on the ceiling.

PETE (PRE-LAP)  
A lot of people in the church don't  
even want to talk about lust.

BEGIN FLASHBACK - BRENT AT BIBLE STUDY

INT. CHURCH - FELLOWSHIP HALL - NIGHT

8-10 young people sit. Pete sizes up the small crowd.

PETE  
But Jesus talked about it. He wants  
us to take it seriously. We can't let  
lust take up residence in our hearts.

Brent looks across the room. Corrina is swiping away on her  
smartphone. She smirks a little; she's not paying attention.

END FLASHBACK

Brent grits his teeth, silently screams. He punches the air,  
stomps around, runs his hands through his hair. With beady  
eyes and nostrils flaring, he defiantly stares out the  
window at blue sky.

FADE TO:

INT. BRENT'S PICKUP - AT LAKE - DAY

Return to the very first scene. The snow-covered lake is  
visible from inside the pickup. Brent is deep in thought.

BRENT  
Where is she?

The door opens!

AMBER  
Were you looking?!

BRENT  
Now why would I want to watch my  
little sister go pee behind a tree?

AMBER  
Why indeed?

BRENT  
Ready to go?

AMBER  
You gotta carry the heavy stuff.

They get out, look inside the box and exchange grins.

EXT. LAKE - ON THE ICE - DAY

Two fold-up chairs sit on the ice about 200 feet from shore. Two fishing rods with tackle boxes are nearby. Brent drills a hole in the ice with an auger. Amber watches gleefully.

AMBER  
This is the part I like the best.

BRENT  
You like - this?

AMBER  
Don't you think it's amazing, in a place like this, where everything seems dead, that suddenly water gushes up? Then, out of the water, comes LIFE. Fish live down there!

BRENT  
You think a lot for a nine-year-old.

The auger slips down and water surges to the surface. Amber jumps around with joy; Brent bursts into laughter.

Time passes. They are in chairs, holding fishing rods.

AMBER  
I'm glad your friends didn't make you break a promise. Everything's cool?

BRENT  
Cool? Everything's freezing!

Laughter - they are both shivering in the cold.

AMBER  
What happened?

BRENT  
I ... I took care of it.

Brent gazes out at the barren lake, then up at the blue sky.

CORRINA (PRE-LAP)  
So your answer is 'no?'

BEGIN FLASHBACK - CONVERSATION WITH CORRINA

EXT. SCHOOL - PARKING AREA - DAY

Corrina, with a red face, near tears, leans against her minivan. Brent looks her in the eye. She looks away.

BRENT

No, Corrina, my answer is 'wait.'

CORRINA

I don't get it. I thought you --

BRENT

I do have feelings for you. But if you could see inside my heart, you'd know - that I have to wait. Sorry.

Her face of pain is gone. She makes sporadic eye-contact with Brent until a smile breaks out, though twitchy.

CORRINA

I'm ... I'm gonna try to wait too.

Tears begin to form. She wipes them away with one hand, and softly touches Brent's arm with the other.

END FLASHBACK

BRENT

We'd better catch something now. We promised mom supper.

AMBER

So you're just here for the fish?!

BRENT

I'm here for the 'Ambience.'

The hugest smile imaginable fills Amber's face.

FADE OUT

