

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY FOUR - MORNING

BRUCEY & AMBER have an early morning game of one on one. They're evenly matched. Amber shoots more.

AMBER

I don't know. I feel like she should be up and running by now.

Shoot - miss. Brucey grabs the ball.

BRUCEY

You feel like? When was the last time a bunch of doctors doped you up and sliced into your belly? I seen it. Like a slasher flick.

AMBER

Mommy had four kids before she was thirty. It never slowed her down for a second.

He stops dribbling and holds the ball.

BRUCEY

Dude. Don't call her Mommy. You're thirty six.

She slaps the ball out of his hand and dribbles it around him. He doesn't engage the game.

AMBER

As long as I'm the only one talking to her, I'll call that grumpy old crone whatever I dang well please.

She shoots. It goes in. She jogs over to the ball and passes it to him. He does a lazy dribble with it.

BRUCEY

You send her a picture of the baby?

She makes a play for the ball. He avoids her and they play a bit. He shoots. It goes in.

AMBER

Maybe. But you don't care about that, right? You don't care if you ever see mommy again. You said.

He SPIKES the ball at her. Hard.

BRUCEY
Don't be snide.

AMBER
You said that, though.

BRUCEY
Still her granddaughter.

She slow-bounces the ball on the ground.

AMBER
That you'll never let her meet. Such
a terrible, terrible son.

She makes a tut-tut sound and wags her finger at him.

BRUCEY
Blow it out your ass, fucknuts.

Amber drops the ball and charges him. There's a hint of
playfulness in it, but - she's actual-steamed.

They tussle for a bit. Amber gets him in a headlock.

AMBER
You talk to your older sister with
that kind of mouth?

She tugs on his hair. Pretty hard.

BRUCEY
Get off.

AMBER
Are you going to be polite?

He doesn't say anything. She tugs on his hair even harder.

AMBER
Wellsir?

BRUCEY
You're gold, you're gold. Just get
off me. You reek of body spray.

She shoves him away and jogs for the ball. She passes it
across half the court.

AMBER
Of course I sent her pictures of the
baby, you big dummy. That's my niece
you're talking about.

BRUCEY
You know what else is yours?

She stops walking and cocks her head.

BRUCEY
The ball.

He kicks it as hard as he can. It sails way past the courts.
He walks off in the opposite direction.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY EIGHT - MORNING

They sit on a bench. All the courts are in use. Amber checks
a pretty expensive watch. They've been waiting a while.

BRUCEY
Damn. Get a run in, maybe?

AMBER
I already convinced my brain that
I'll have to make it up at the gym
later. I blew it over the weekend,
too. Got caught up in work.

He tosses the ball from hand to hand.

BRUCEY
Gotta be honest. I don't know whether
I'm coming or going. I have dreams
that I can't fall asleep and I wake
up twice as exhausted.

AMBER
And Ellie?

BRUCEY
She had some friends over yesterday.
Those sisters. The ones that got
blasted at the shower. Remember?

AMBER
Ouch, yeah. One of them had her
boobies flopping all over the place.

BRUCEY
They're great with the baby.

AMBER
What about Ellie? Is she still moping
around like gangbusters?

He leans back and drops the ball in his lap. He - breathes.

BRUCEY

Remember that time we found dads
nudee mags and you made me tell Mom
they were mine so she didn't knock
him into next week?

Amber grins.

AMBER

Poor Papa. He came in right after
mommy snatched them and just said
"What are you doing with my
catalogs?" Catalogs. Sheesh.

BRUCEY

Remember what Mom did after?

AMBER

She knocked all of us into next week
with the magazines for trying to -

AMBER/BRUCEY (SAME TIME)

"Put one over on her poor soul."

They each laugh in their own way. The laughter trails off
into something different. Brucey tosses the ball in the air.

BRUCEY

Yeah, see, I told Ellie that story
once. I don't know, back when we
first started dating. And you know
what she did?

AMBER

Laughed her socks off.

BRUCEY

She put her hand on my cheek and held
it there for a while.

One of the courts clears out. He hops up.

BRUCEY

I know you got concerns. OK. Great.
Fine. Me? Not so much. Your ball.

He tosses her the ball and jogs backwards onto the court.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY SIXTEEN - MORNING

THWAP. The ball hits Brucey in the chest. He's dead on his feet. Amber jumps forward and grabs the ball.

AMBER
Get the lead out.

BRUCEY
Shit. Sorry. Head up my ass over here. Whose ball is it?

AMBER
Let me ask you. What if your daughter talks like that?

Brucey shakes it off. He's MADDDD exhausted.

BRUCEY
If who does what now?

AMBER
Your baby girl. What if she swears like a sailor?

He snaps awake a little.

BRUCEY
We'll just enlist her in the navy and let her save the world, I guess.

He dribbles around her. She grabs the ball with very little effort and scores it.

The ball bounces off the court. He slow-jogs to get it.

AMBER
Are you still pulling double duty?

BRUCEY
Nah, I'm fine. I have a newborn at home, you know. They sleep weird.

He checks her the ball. They play. His energy level is a confusion of peaks and valleys.

AMBER
I was thinking of stopping by tomorrow. I miss my niece.

BRUCEY
Tomorrow's not so good. Maybe next weekend? Or the one after that.

He PLUNKS the ball low off the rim. She grabs it this time.

AMBER

Are you running at all?

BRUCEY

Not much. I took the baby out in the stroller, but the sidewalk is too uneven to get it going for long. I'll find a spot.

AMBER

You've got to find the time.

BRUCEY

You're right, you're right.

AMBER

Maybe if you had a partner who would get off her backside and pitch in every once and a while.

He SNATCHES the ball away from her.

BRUCEY

She's not my partner, she's my wife. And we - me and you - are done talking about her. Got it?

AMBER

I can't be worried about my kid brother?

BRUCEY

Worry about your game.

He takes a shot from outside the key. It doesn't go anywhere near the basket.

AMBER

Bruce. I'm worried now. This is me telling you I'm worried. It's been two weeks. Is Ellie helping with the baby or not?

He jogs off for the ball and jogs back. He checks her the ball. She holds on to it.

BRUCEY

Play.

He stares at her and grits his teeth. She knows the look. She probably taught it to him.

They play. It gets aggressive. They both foul each other a ton. They both do their best to score as much as possible.

Brucey has the ball. He darts to one side for a fake out and puts the weight on his ankle wrong when he spins back.

He drops to the ground.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - PARKING LOT - LATER

Amber sits in her car. She grips the steering wheel and shakes it as hard as she can.

She looks over at Brucey's car. The drivers seat is back as far as it will go. He's asleep.

She takes out her phone and texts Ellie "I'm coming over. See you in twenty minutes." BLOOP. Send.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY TWENTY THREE - DAY

Brucey warms up on the sidelines. Amber farts around with the ball on the court.

Brucey is AGLOW.

BRUCEY

I'm telling you, she's totally in love. It's incredible.

AMBER

Ellie is?

BRUCEY

Yeah. She woke up yesterday and just. I don't know. Saw the baby. She hasn't put her down since.

AMBER

Oh.

He trots over to her.

BRUCEY

I actually got more than half an hour of sleep at once last night, I got six miles in this morning and, sister, I am feeling ready.

AMBER

Ready for what?

BRUCEY

To absolutely mop the court with you.

He grabs the ball from her and dunks it. Or - I dunno. He does something energetic and dramatic.

He spins around and tosses her the ball. It bounces right past her. A distraught look covers her face.

BRUCEY

Aw, shit. Don't tell me you got the depressions now. Ellie's I could handle because I knew she'd snap out of it. You're a much bigger baby than she is, though. Bone chilling.

He bounces from side to side. Chipper.

AMBER

Bruce.

BRUCEY

That's me. Brucey the Bruce, the greatest living husband and father on the planet.

She rubs her face with both hands. He recognizes it as one of her signs of genuine distress.

BRUCEY

Wuddup?

AMBER

I called mom.

His expression drops. He takes off running for the parking lot without a second glance.

EXT. ELLIE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

GRETA, a true BATTLE AX OF A WOMAN if ever there was, sits on the porch swing. Glowering.

An overnight bag sits at her feet. She tosses the occasional pissed off glance at the front door.

Brucey comes hauling ass down the street and into the front yard. He stops dead when he sees his mother.

She gets to her feet. Slowly. She walks to the top of the steps. Even more slowly. Her fists clench at her sides.

GRETA

That god damned wife of yours won't
let me in the house.

Brucey leans down on his knees to take deep breaths. When he
stands up straight he looks right at Greta.

And laughs.

BRUCEY

Oh thank god.

CUT TO BLACK: