

DRUMMING IN THE DARK

Written by

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FADE IN:

MONTAGE - CANDICE'S DRUMMING OBSESSION

-- 10-MONTH-OLD CANDICE sits on a kitchen floor, using a wooden spoon to bang on several pots and pans she has pulled from a lower cabinet.

-- 4-YEAR-OLD CANDICE sits in her room with a toy drum before her. In a circle, various stuffed animals and dolls hold propped up toy musical instruments. A makeshift band. Candice plays her drum with unusual talent for a small child.

-- 9-YEAR-OLD CANDICE sits in the stands of a high school football game. On the field, the marching band performs. The percussionists take center stage. Candice watches, her face lit up by the grand performance.

-- In front of a Christmas tree, 12-YEAR-OLD CANDICE sits at her new 7-piece drum set, banging away on it like a pro.

END MONTAGE

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Illuminated with hundreds of lights. The stands are filled with anxious football FANS. Many are on their feet cheering.

On the field, Middleboro High School, the home team, plays Southridge.

Scoreboard reads: Southridge 13, Middleboro 7. 11 seconds left in the first half. Ball on the Southridge 32-yard line.

Middleboro's offense lines up at the Southridge 32. Defense faces them. The snap. Middleboro's QUARTERBACK throws long. A RECEIVER catches it at the 6-yard line and runs it in for the score. A roar of cheering from the stands.

Middleboro celebrates the score. Their CHEERLEADERS bounce up and down on the sideline, screaming as they wave their pompoms.

The marching band, dressed in their blue and gold uniforms, waits off to the side, instruments ready.

Middleboro kicks the point after. It's good. A whistle blows for half-time. PLAYERS charge off the field and disappear into the tunnel.

In the stands, only a few fans file out toward the exits. Most stay behind, taking their seats and watching the field in silence.

Middleboro's marching band charges the field. They play a series of movie themes, marching in step during the entire show. A large amount of excellence for a high school band.

CANDICE LINTON, now a beautiful 18-year-old whose ambition illuminates nearly everything she touches, plays the tenors, a set of four drums connected to a carrier she wears over her shoulders. The only tenors player in her band, she drums with exceptional skill.

During the melody, Candice performs an intricate solo.

IN THE STANDS

The crowd is captivated as they watch in silence.

SAL LINTON (42) a serious man and TARA LINTON (40), a quiet, demure woman sit together on a bench. To Tara's opposite side sits SAMANTHA (SAM) LINTON (12). She wears a Middleboro sweatshirt. Their attention to Candice is much more personal. They watch with pride.

ON THE FIELD

Candice finishes off the set with lightning quick beats over the span of all four drums.

The stadium silence is broken with a roar of cheering. Candice is obviously a favorite around here. She beams as she looks around at the masses.

EXT. STADIUM - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Fans flood through the gates. Several lines of cars form to reach the couple of exits.

Sal, Tara, and Sam wait next to their car. Candice, dressed in casual clothing and carrying her uniform, jogs up to them.

CANDICE

How was I?

SAM

You were great, Candice. Far better than all those boys in your section.

CANDICE

Well, it's hard to compare me when I'm the only tenors player.

SAL

(joking)

I was beginning to think you were going to leave us out here all night.

CANDICE

I do have a social life, you know.

Candice climbs into the back seat of their car. Sam joins her.

CANDICE

I need to run by the band room to drop off my uniform...

SAL

Yeah, yeah. We know the drill by now.

Sal slides in behind the wheel. Tara takes the front passenger seat. The car drives out of the lot, in the direction of the high school nearby.

INT. LINTON HOUSE - CANDICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Very organized. Many trophies for playing the tenors are displayed around the room. Her 7 piece drum set, looking just as new as it did when she got it for Christmas all those years ago, stands in the corner.

Candice sits at her computer, attempting to write a school report, but she struggles to focus. She lays her head against her palm and sighs.

Off to the side lies a pad of paper and pen. Candice abandons her school work to doodle some musical notes on the pad. The pace increases as enthusiasm takes over. She writes out a series of drum beats.

A knock at her door right before it opens. Tara, dressed for bed, peers inside.

TARA

Candice?

Candice quickly puts the pad down and looks at her mom with innocence.

CANDICE

Yeah, Mom?

Tara enters. She stands behind Candice, grips her shoulders.

TARA

Are you okay? We haven't seen you
for hours.

Candice types on her keyboard inconsistently. Starts and
stops often. A total lack of concentration.

CANDICE

I'm fine. My History report is just
taking longer than I planned.

TARA

I thought you did that early in the
week.

CANDICE

I guess I shouldn't have gone to
the movies with Sherry the other
night.

Tara brushes the hair back from Candice's face.

TARA

You have all weekend to finish the
report. Go to bed.

Tara leaves the room, closing the door behind her.

Candice stares at the computer screen. Lifts her fingers to
type. Her eyes turn to the drum set, then to the pad she had
scribbled notes on.

INT. LINTON HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Sal sits up in bed, watching a late baseball game on TV. A
lamp next to the vacant side provides the only light.

Tara enters and closes the door.

TARA

You need to talk with Candice.

Tara climbs into bed.

SAL

Why?

TARA

Why? She's your daughter.

Sal clicks the TV off and settles into bed.

SAL

What did she do now?

Tara turns her lamp off, snuggles up to Sal.

TARA

She's working way too hard. I think she does it to please you.

We hear a light drumming coming from somewhere close-by, a melody in the works.

SAL

Working, huh?

Tara smirks.

INT. LINTON HOUSE - CANDICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - SAME

The note pad propped up on a music stand, Candice sits at her drums and plays the notes. She attempts to play very lightly, but it's louder than she realizes.

She's oblivious to her door opening. Sal and Tara stand in the doorway, serious looks on their faces. Tara crosses her arms at the sight of her daughter drumming.

Candice finishes and grabs the pad to make a few adjustments on the notes.

Sal clears his throat. Candice jumps. An uneasy grin crosses her face.

CANDICE

Mom... Dad. I was just...

SAL

We can see what you were doing.

TARA

What have we told you about playing those drums after ten?

Candice puts on an innocent act.

CANDICE

I was trying to be quiet.

The answer fails to please Sal.

CUT TO:

INT. LINTON HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Six pieces of Candice's drum set stand together off to the side of the organized area.