

LOSING PRIDE

by

16-DE05-W30

When a father suffers a tragic loss, his guidance
to his son becomes his own words to live by.

FADE IN:

INT. ANDRE'S CAR - MORNING

ANDRE PRIDE (50s), fit, clean, well-aged, drives alone in his shiny 70s Cadillac with refurbished interior. He wears a janitor's uniform with his name stitched above his heart, flanked by a thick gold chain and diamond studs. A small box rests on the passenger seat. His eyes are solemn, quiet.

He glances at the box on the seat.

INT. ANDRE'S CAR - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

EVAN (16), joyful, bright, kind eyes rides with Andre. He picks at the frayed upholstery on the seat.

EVAN

Pops, how you gonna pass this thing to me? I can't be rollin with the hunnies with my seat game all jacked up.

ANDRE

How bout you just keep gettin them A's. You feel me?

Andre winks at him.

EVAN

Aw yeah!

INT. RANDY'S CAR - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

RANDY (40s), a bit worn for his years, drives a used BMW. His son GABE (7) sits in the passenger seat, decked out in his little league uniform. Excited.

GABE

I'm gonna get it this time, dad.

Randy looks to him. Smiles.

EXT. FREEWAY - MORNING

In their respective number one lanes, Andre and Randy pass each other, headed in opposite directions.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

Andre exits his car, small bag and small box in tow.

He retrieves a folding chair from the trunk, closes it. Walks toward the grounds.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MORNING

Randy and Gabe arrive at an empty field. Bat in hand, Randy walks, Gabe skips, toward the diamond.

EXT. CEMETERY - EVAN'S GRAVE - MORNING

Andre kneels, unboxes a SMALL CAKE decorated with "Happy 18th Birthday Evan." Sets it down. Removes a framed photo from the bag, sets it alongside the cake. Lights a tall, white candle resting nearby.

He stands, unfolds the chair leaning against the headstone.

INSERT - HEADSTONE

"Evan Bernard Pride 1998-2015
Yet a little while and the world will
see me no more, but you will see me.
Because I live, you also will live.
John 14:19"

BACK TO SCENE

Andre sets up the chair in front of his shrine. Takes a letter from his pocket. Sits. Opens the letter. Begins a slight smile.

EVAN (V.O.)
C'mon. C'mon.

INT. ANDRE'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Evan waits anxiously by the window. He looks left, right, through the glass with anticipation.

EVAN
C'mon, already.

His HEEL begins a rapid tap. We hear the creek of the SCREEN DOOR as it opens.

MAIL FALLS

through the slot.

PRE-LAP: A ball SLAPS into a mitt.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

Gabe catches the ball at the pitcher's mound. Randy stands at home plate.

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CONTINUED:

RANDY
Nice one, son. Keep it up.

GABE
Thanks, dad.

Gabe throws the ball to Randy. Randy catches.

RANDY
Alright. Let's try from second base.

GABE
K.

Gabe runs out to second.

INT. ANDRE'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Evan rushes in with the mail as Andre cooks. He shuffles through the envelopes. Stops. It's here!

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

Gabe jumps. Catches the ball. Celebrates.

GABE
I did it! I did it!

He throws the ball to his father.

RANDY
Good job, son. Alright. It's coming a little harder this time.

Randy picks up the bat.

RANDY
Ready?

Gabe stops. Swallows hard. Wiggles his head a spastic, "No."

INT. ANDRE'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

Andre shakes his head. Evan finishes his meal.

ANDRE
No son. I'm just not comfortable with you being out there in the streets late at night. It's not safe for --

EVAN
I know, I know. I won't be late this time. Promise. Ced just wants to mix some beats, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Andre doesn't buy it.

EVAN

C'mon, pops. Please. I'm like the best blue ribbon son ever.

ANDRE

Yeah, well...

(thinking)

...alright then. But one second after dark and that's it for you, my man.

Evan goes to him. Clears his throat. Wraps his arm around his shoulder.

EVAN

That's the soon to be *Doctor Pride* to you, sir.

ANDRE

Well, *Doctor Pride*, you just make sure you keep your priorities straight. You dig?

Evan kisses him on the cheek. Grabs the car keys on the table. Runs out.

ANDRE

(yelling)

Hey, hey, hey!

Andre holds out his hand as Evan walks back in. He hands him the keys. Leaves, disappointed.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Evan puts on a BLACK HOODIE. Grabs his backpack.

ANDRE (O.S.)

I want you on that bus before sundown.

EVAN

Okay pops.

He leaves.

IN THE KITCHEN

Andre picks up the letter on the table.

ANDRE (PRE-LAP)

Dear Mr. Pride,

EXT. CEMETERY - EVAN'S GRAVE - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

He reads...

INSERT - LETTER

"On behalf of Cornell University, I'd
like to welcome you to the freshman
class of 2015."

BACK TO ANDRE

He smiles. A very proud dad.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MORNING

Randy stoops to eye level with Gabe.

RANDY
What did we talk about in the car?

GABE
Not to be afraid.

RANDY
Un huh. Remember why?

Gabe hangs his head. Embarrassed.

GABE
Cuz it's false evidence appearing
real. And God is my protector.

RANDY
That's right. No matter what happens,
win or lose, you've gotta keep giving
it your all.

Gabe shakes his bowed head, "K." Randy lifts his chin.

RANDY
Look son, I was part of a team once. I
made a mistake and lost just about
everything. My career. Reputation.
Your mom. You.

GABE
You didn't lose me, dad. I'm right
here.

Randy opens his arms.

RANDY
Bring it in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They hug. Randy chokes back emotion. Smacks Gabe's tush.

RANDY

Now get out there and show me what you got!

Gabe runs off. Randy stands. Walks toward home plate.

EXT. CEMETERY - EVAN'S GRAVE - MORNING

Andre walks to the framed photo. Picks it up.

INSERT - PHOTO

of Evan, beaming, as he stands beneath a banner that reads: "Math & Science Olympics 2013." He holds a large first place BLUE RIBBON.

BACK TO ANDRE

ANDRE

Where did I go wrong, son?

INT. CEDRIC'S BASEMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Evan listens to music with his buddy CEDRIC (16) and girlfriend MAYA (16). His cell phone DINGS. He picks it up.

ON THE SCREEN

POP CALLING

EVAN

puts his phone on VIBRATE. Stuffs it in his pocket. Kisses Maya a little too long. She giggles, pushes him off.

INT. ANDRE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Andre watches through the front window. Paces. CAR LIGHTS appear. He goes to the door. Opens it. The car passes by.

He picks up the house phone. Dials.

INT. CEDRIC'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

The music bumps as Cedric works on the MIXING BOARD. The trio grooves to the beat.

Evan's phone vibrates...and vibrates...in his pocket.

MAYA

You gonna answer that or what?

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CONTINUED:

EVAN

Nah. It's probably just my dad.

MAYA

He's probably worried, Ev.

EVAN

Man, it's only like 10:30.

Maya looks at her CELL.

MAYA

Try 11:15.

EVAN

Yeah, well, Pops'll be ah-ight.

(gloating)

Cuz I'm about to be ivy league up in this mug!

MAYA

Baller!

CEDRIC

Hey Ev, you gonna mix this thing with me or what, yo? You gotta run home to daddy or something?

Evan goes to the mixing board.

EVAN

Nah, bruh. I got you.

He puts the headphones on. Sits. Bobs his head to the music. The bass bumps. The treble CLACKS.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

Randy WHACKS the ball as Gabe stands in the outfield, waiting.

GABE'S POV - THE BALL

careens down, headed toward his terrified face.

BACK TO SCENE

RANDY

(screaming)

Arm up, Gabe!

Gabe freezes. Randy throws the bat. Runs to Gabe.

RANDY

Now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gabe closes his eyes, tucks his head, and shoots his mitted hand skyward. The ball plops on the ground.

Randy shakes him.

RANDY
You wanna be a quitter the rest of
your life?

Gabe begins to cry.

RANDY
Answer me!

GABE
(yelling)
I'm not a quitter. You are!

Gabe runs away. Randy draws inward.

QUICK FLASHES - RANDY REMEMBERS

-- He places his police badge on his office desk. Leaves.

-- He argues with Karen (30s), pregnant. She screams at him,
"You can't leave me like this!" He walks out.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - BLEACHERS (PRESENT DAY)

Gabe sulks. Randy sits beside him.

GABE
That's what mom calls you. Sorry.

RANDY
It's okay, son.

GABE
I'm not a quitter, dad. I'm not.
I'll prove it.

RANDY
I know you're not, son.

GABE
You think I'll ever make the team
again?

RANDY
Just the team? How about the majors!

Gabe's eyes widen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GABE
Really? You think so?

RANDY
I know so.

Randy ruffles Gabe's hair.

EXT. CEMETERY - EVAN'S GRAVE - MORNING

Andre wipes his tears. Removes his gold chain. Drops it in a small hole by the grave. Buries it. Touches the headstone.

ANDRE
Happy birthday, son.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Andre enters with his cart of supplies. Puts on cleaning gloves.

IN THE STALL

He works on a clogged toilet that won't budge. It's disgusting. Practically overflowing with excrement.

Two MEN enter the bathroom, turn on the faucet. As Andre struggles with the smelly mess he overhears...

MAN #1 (O.S.)
So, rumor has it, Bailey's next in line for VP. But, uh...and you didn't hear this from me...you got him beat by a long shot.

MAN #2 (O.S.)
Well, well, well. The old Harvard education finally pays off.

MAN #1 (O.S.)
We'll be running this thing before you know it.

MAN #2 (O.S.)
Empire state of mind, bro.

They slap hands.

MAN #1 (O.S.)
Welp. Back to the grind, my man.

The water stops. On their way out...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAN #2 (O.S.)
Happy hour at Brennan's?

Andre stands, affected. Tosses his gloves in the toilet.

EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Randy and Gabe pull up. Park. Karen exits the house. Waves.

INT. RANDY'S CAR - SAME

GABE
Are we gonna practice again next
Saturday? Please, dad.

RANDY'S POV - KAREN

stands on the lawn, arms folded. He can't take his eyes off her.

BACK TO RANDY

RANDY
Make sure it's okay with your mom.

Gabe looks at his mom.

GABE
Dad, why won't mom talk to you?

Pause.

RANDY
Well, Gabe. Sometimes people do
things that hurt people. And
sometimes it's because they love them.
And sometimes they leave so they don't
hurt them more.

GABE
Did you hurt somebody daddy?

Randy looks away.

EXT. CORNER STORE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Evan walks out of the store. A POLICE CAR pulls up, slowly. In the passenger seat we see OFFICER SIMS. The driver hidden from view.

INT. POLICE CAR - SAME

From the driver's POV, officer Sims presents a SKETCH of a suspect with slight resemblance to Evan.

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CONTINUED:

The driver shakes his head, "No."

On the police radio we hear...

FEMALE VOICE
Suspect spotted wearing a black
hoodie. Code 6C. Copy.

Sims picks up the receiver.

SIMS
Copy that.

He gets out of the car, hand covering his GUN.

ON THE SIDEWALK

Evan's phone BUZZES in his pocket.

DRIVER'S POV - EVAN

reaches for his phone. He yells...

DRIVER
Sims, he's got a gun!

EXT. CORNER STORE - SAME

Sims aims his gun at Evan. We see Randy jump out of the driver's side, reaching for his gun. Sims shoots. Randy looks at Sims in shock. Maya exits the store, screams "No!"

INT. RANDY'S CAR - AFTERNOON (PRESENT DAY)

RANDY
Don't you worry about that. Just make
sure you're ready to catch that ball
next time.

GABE
K.

RANDY
Love you, son.

Randy hugs him.

GABE
Love you too, dad. And dad?
(opening the door)
You're not a quitter either.

Randy gazes at Karen as Gabe rushes to her. She hugs him. Tells him to "Go inside." Her eyes land on Randy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He gets out of the car. Walks toward her.

Their love is thick. Unspoken.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. USED CAR LOT - DAY

Andre walks alongside his prized caddy. Strokes the hood. A SALESMAN approaches. Gives him a CHECK. Andre gives him his keys. They shake hands.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Andre waits. Clutches a stack of PAPERS. The bus arrives. He climbs on.

WOMAN (PRE-LAP)
How can I help you?

INT. COLLEGE - REGISTRAR'S OFFICE - DAY

At the front counter, Andre slides the papers to the CLERK.

ANDRE
Yes, Miss. I'd like to uh...

He looks around, sees mostly young students waiting in line.

ANDRE
...register for fall classes, please.

The clerk looks over the papers.

CLERK
Are you a new or returning student?

ANDRE
I'll be a new student. First time.
(nervously)
I mean it's been a long while since I
been in school, you know. Got my GED
and --

CLERK
Welcome,
(smiling)
Mr. Pride.

FADE OUT.

