

Defne'yi Beklerken

Waiting for Defne

Defne is a fourteen year old who is going through the blues, anxiety and excitement of stepping into adolescence. She starts a new journal in the first days of her sophomore year. The young girl, who decides to be honest with her self and write down everything as is in her journal, wants to get over her timidity and despair and change. On the first page of her journal she notes that although she would like to forget the bad events of the past, they do not vanish.

One day Defne is found unconscious in her bed. While she is being taken to the hospital, her mother sees a notebook in the bed and takes it with her. Defne's mother Emel and her father Selim are waiting anxiously at the emergency ward. Emel realizes that the notebook she took as she was leaving for the hospital is her daughter's journal and despite being very sensitive about respecting private life, she begins to read the journal.

For Defne, who has just started her sophomore year, school turned into a nightmare a few years ago. When she was in 7th grade, Defne fell off the balance board during gym, her sweat pants tore showing her pink panties. From that day on she came to be known by the whole school as "Burst Sweat Pants". This nickname began to gain obscene meanings in 8th grade when the children moved into adolescence. Later, the boys at school harassed Defne in the classroom and touched and molested her. What bothered Defne was not only the psychological and physical violence she was exposed to at school but also the change in her mother and father's attitude towards her. Her father looks at her clothes in a strange way and her mother is slowly drifting away from her. Her mother is no longer touching her like she used to and every time she wants to tell her about her problems, she says, "You are old enough to fend for yourself." Melahat who has looked after Defne since she was born understands the problems of an urban youngster but is incapable of helping her. Melahat is an extremely optimistic person and hence unintentionally stops Defne from opening her heart to her. Defne is all alone both at school and at home.

Emel is all upset as she reads her daughter's journal. She thought her daughter was very happy at school. Just then the doctors at the emergency ask Emel and Selim whether their daughter could have wanted to commit suicide and whether she was taking drugs. Although Emel and Selim object vehemently, Emel cannot help thinking that she may never have really known her daughter.

The events that Defne lived through in the early days of her sophomore year, the people she met and her changing feelings are put into words in her journal. A new student joins the class and since there is no other place, he comes and sits in the first row next to Defne. This student called Mert who comes to school with a book and a notebook that he holds under his arm is a quiet boy, who gives no one the come on and with whom the other students have decided not to meddle with thanks to his assertiveness. Mert comes to school with three different books every week, buries himself in his book at breaks and lives in a world of his own. Defne calls this new boy "Book". In her journal she never mentions the real name of the boy. Since neither Defne, nor Book leaves the classroom during breaks, Defne is afraid of the rumors that will start. But after a while she realizes that she does care about the rumors and wants to get closer to Book. Although she hates men, she thinks that Book is different. She wants to attract his attention but does not know how to do that. One day, while doing some research on Book on the internet she finds out that Book's mother and sister were killed in a traffic accident but decides not to say anything about that. Although not a single word is said, a silent bond begins to build between the two adolescents. At this time, Melahat gets married and moves to another town. Defne who regards Melahat as her mother, feels that life will become more difficult and she will be even lonelier with Melahat's departure. The only person with whom she communicates is Nazlı, the young mother who lives next door. Although she shares some of her feelings and what she is going through with Nazlı, the relation is superficial because of the details and secrets she doesn't want to talk about.

One day Book breaks the silence and asks Defne to have lunch together. So, a relation begins to develop, though slowly, between the two. They go to lunch together, talk about books, films and music during breaks. Thanks to Book, Defne gets to meet new writers, poets and musicians. Although Book does not talk much about himself, Defne begins to open her heart to him. One day she tells him about the "Burst Sweat Pants" incident skipping the bit about the molesting. However, Book listens without batting an eye. Defne who feels that he doesn't care, tells him that she knows what happened to his mother and sister in a ruthless tone with the intention of hurting him and from that day on Defne and Book do not speak to each other. At this time, Defne begins to visit Nazlı and the old lady nicknamed Papatya who lives on the entrance floor, regularly. As neither her workaholic mother, nor her introvert father, who is buried in the book he has been writing for years and will probably never finish, is able to fill the void left by Melahat. Defne tries to find refuge in the warmth of the adults around her.

While Emel keeps reading the journal, Nazlı, Papatya and Book join those waiting for Defne. All the ones she loves are now near her. The doctors tell them that Defne's situation is improving, that she had gastric lavage just in case and that her breathing is better. Everybody feels better. Emel is almost at the last pages of the journal.

Nazlı advises Defne to write Book a love letter to break the ice. Defne finds this idea extremely "stupid". But thinking over, she decides to write an excuse rather than a love letter and give it to Book. She places the letter in a book and gives it to Book. Book does not look at Defne until the end of the school day. Defne regrets having done such a stupid thing. At the last hour, Book asks Defne to meet him at the café behind the school after class. Defne is very excited. After school, she tells the school bus driver that her mother will pick her up and begins to walk slowly towards the cafe. The street is deserted. Those who molested her earlier are following her. Defne does not write what happened after that in her journal.

The next day Defne wakes up sick and does not go to school. She hates both the boys at school and Book. Defne wants to forget what she went through and visits her neighbors. She drinks tea in every house she visits. She cannot tell anyone what happened and sits there worried, nauseous and with tears waiting to flow.

Emel who finishes reading Defne's journal while waiting at the emergency, asks Book what happened after school. Book begins to tell her what happened. He tells her that after school he went into the street that led to the café. When he saw the bullies at school attack Defne verbally and molest her, he started fighting them. Shocked, the bullies ran away. All the while Defne was standing against the wall watching them. After the boys ran away, he went up to Defne, hugged her and kissed her on the lips. Defne was very angry and ran away shouting that he was like all the other boys. The next day, when Defne did not come to school, Book went to her house to apologize and give her a book he liked and learned that she was taken to the hospital.

The wait at the emergency ended with the news that Defne regained consciousness. They are informed that Defne reacts to tea and her situation was the result of having had too much tea. Everyone is extremely happy. Defne is also happy because all her loved ones are around her.