

The Company

"Talk"

by
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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. THE COMPANY - ELEVATOR

We face the door. Cheesy ELEVATOR MUSIC plays in the background. The door opens and we move into...

INT. THE COMPANY - RECEPTION

It looks different. Newer. Tackier. A man (late thirties but still thinks he's twenty-one) leans over the desk, chatting to a young receptionist. The man wears a cheap brown suit, a flowered shirt and bow-tie. As we near him, he turns to us.

MAN

Oh, hey there! I'm Sammy, the Director of the Company. What's your name?

He waits - as if for some response from the audience. He smiles.

MAN/SAMMY

Groovy! I'm sure you're just dying to take a look around. Follow me!

There is an awkward beat. He grins wider as his eyes glance off-camera.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - CONTROL ROOM - LATER

Sammy moves up the stairs, still looking directly to the camera. It's apparent now, from the aged haircuts and fashions of the surrounding EMPLOYEES, that these scenes are set some decades ago.

SAMMY

So, I bet you're asking yourself what you're doing here, right?

VI (V.O.)

No.

BENSON (V.O.)

No comments, please.

Sammy continues, not having heard these voices.

SAMMY

(lowering voice)
Well, let me tell you a little secret...

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)
 (yelling)
 You're here to save the world!

He throws his arms up energetically, startling a middle aged man walking by.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - HALLWAY - LATER

Sammy walks down the hall carrying a piece of paper.

SAMMY
 Y'see, when you work for us, you
 get these neat little things
 called assignments - -

He hands the paper to a passing employee who he then gives the thumbs-up sign to.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
 And these assignments - -

The images flickers. Coming in and out of focus. It starts to speed up and rewind.

VI (V.O.)
 Focus!

BENSON (V.O.)
 Now really, Miss Morgan.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - CONFERENCE ROOM

VIOLET MORGAN and ALISTAIR BENSON sit in two chairs in front of the tiny television.

Benson, sighing in frustration at the state of the film, stands and fiddles with the VCR.

He BANGS on the top of the box a few times until the tape SHOOTs OUT - landing at Vi's feet - and spewing streams of tape. Benson picks it up sheepishly.

BENSON
 We really ought to invest in one
 of those VD things.

VI
 You mean DVD. VD is like
 Gonorrhoea.

VI (CONT'D)
 (off Benson's look)
 So, that Sammy's a riot, huh?

Benson's unamused as he turns the TV off.

Vi swings her chair around and scoots towards the conference table as Benson heads to the windows and presses a button - the curtains WHIR as they are pulled back - revealing a beautiful sunny day.

BENSON

Still the same Sammy that introduced me to the Company.

VI

You had VCRs back then?

BENSON

Contrary to popular belief, Miss Morgan, I was born after the dinosaurs.

VI

But that guy? Really? I kind of got the impression that Company Directors had to be like... You.

BENSON

It's not exactly in the job description.

VI

(re: tape)

So, since this is kind of dead... When can we expect the new and improved version? They probably wouldn't make you wear the bow-tie.

BENSON

Moving on...

He takes a piece of paper from his jacket pocket and hands it to Vi.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Your next assignment.

Vi gives him a THUMBS UP. But, taking in Benson's glare, opens the paper and reads. After a beat...

VI

(reading)

"Doctor Brennan. One p.m."

(beat)

Okay, even you have to admit that that's a lot vaguer than usual.

BENSON

Hmm? Oh. Excuse me.

He hands her a second piece of paper. Vi opens it.

BENSON (CONT'D)

This is your assignment. That is your appointment.

Benson heads to the closed doors leading into the Reception area. Vi looks down at the second piece of paper.

ANGLE ON PAPER

It reads, "Rebecca Simms".

BACK TO VI

VI

(to Benson)

Appointment for what?

Vi hurriedly stands and follows him. Benson stops.

BENSON

Your psychological interview.
It's standard procedure.

VI

(daunted)

Psychological...

BENSON

Interview. Yes.

VI

So, that means talking, right? As in... sharing... stuff?

BENSON

One p.m on Friday. The office is right here in the building.

VI

I have school. Or, more specifically, I have lunch which could still be considered a part of school. Technically.

BENSON

Skip it.

He opens the door and walks into Reception. Vi follows...

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

VI

I'm getting the feeling that you
Company people aren't fans of
secondary education.

(beat)

Or the food pyramid.

(then)

I'm gonna end up working at the
Happy Vampire thanks to you.

BENSON

I don't think that's going to be
possible.

VI

Because I already have a job,
right?

BENSON

See? You're learning.

(beat)

School, Miss Morgan, can only
take you so far. The Company,
however, is a whole other plane
of education.

He presses the button on the elevator and it CHIMES as the
doors open. He steps back and motions for Vi to enter. She
gives him a tense glare and does so.

BENSON (CONT'D)

One o'clock!

Benson remains in the office and as the doors start to
close...

BENSON (CONT'D)

And yes, you are expected to
"share".

The doors shut. Vi sighs, frustrated, and - fighting off a
tantrum - kicks the elevator wall. A beat.

VI

(softly)

Ow.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. THE COMPANY - PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE

The office is plain, simple and hardly personal. The furniture is a pale beige. So are the walls. There is a wilting fern in the corner.

In fact, the only interesting thing about the room is Violet. Who sits silently in a chair, wearing her school uniform.

Across from her, and behind a desk, sits DOREEN BRENNAN. The psychologist. She is about as bland as her office.

DOREEN

So, Violet... How are things?

Vi shrugs.

VI

Fine.

DOREEN

Really?

VI

Why would I say "fine" if I didn't mean it?

DOREEN

People say a lot of things when they're put under pressure.

VI

I'm not under pressure.

DOREEN

You're being forced to see a psychologist. I think that's pressure enough.

A beat.

VI

I don't have pressure.

DOREEN

Alright.

She scribbles something down in a note pad.

DOREEN (CONT'D)

Tell me about your family.

VI
They're fine too.

DOREEN
Do you have a good relationship
with them?

VI
(quickly)
Yes.

DOREEN
What about your mother? Do you
two talk much?

Vi says nothing.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - BACKYARD (A FEW DAYS LATER)

Vi lies on her back in the grass, reading a book and
listening to music through earphones.

Suddenly, her light is blocked by...

... CAROLINE MORGAN.

Vi slowly removes one ear piece.

CAROLINE
I want to talk.

VI
Okay...

CAROLINE
To you.

Vi discreetly turns up the volume on her music player.
Caroline swoops down and unplugs Vi's earphones from the
mp3 player which she takes with her as she walks towards
the house.

VI
Hey!

She scrambles to her feet and follows. Caroline gives her a
stern look. Vi sighs.

VI (CONT'D)
(apologetic)
It's the sun. It makes me all
crazy. Like plants and
photosynthesis. I mean, what's up
with that?

Caroline softens and gently takes Vi's book and headphones. She sits down on the porch steps and Vi does so as well.

CAROLINE

I've been thinking...

VI

Talking and thinking. Apparently they're not sold separately anymore.

CAROLINE

And I've talked this over with your Dad. We both think it's for the best.

VI

Oh God...

CAROLINE

I know you're probably not going to be too fond of the idea but I think, in time, it'll really help you.

VI

Oh God...

CAROLINE

You just need to give it a chance.
You - -

VI

Mum, just give it to me straight. Exactly how far away is this boarding school? Are we talking Canada or just, like, New Zealand because - -

CAROLINE

I want you to see a psychologist.

A beat. Vi blinks.

VI

Why?

CAROLINE

Your accident was very traumatic for everyone and - -

VI

Mum, it's been over a month. If I was going to have a breakdown, don't you think I would have gotten it over with already?

CAROLINE

Time just doesn't make these sort of things go away, Vi. I've given you a bit of leeway on this one. I think probably too much.

(then)

Looking back, I should have sent you to talk to someone the day you got back from the hospital but... I guess there are a lot of things I would have done differently...

VI

It's okay...

CAROLINE

So, you'll go?

VI

No.

CAROLINE

Violet!

VI

No, I mean... I mean I can't go because I'm already seeing a psychologist. A counselor. At school.

CAROLINE

(surprised)

I didn't know about this.

VI

I just didn't want you to freak out.

CAROLINE

I wouldn't.

VI

Mum. Please.

(then)

So, are we good? No psychologist?

CAROLINE

Well, I suppose...

Vi takes back her book and music player. She stands.

VI

Great. I'll be back for dinner.

Vi hurries into the house. We get a shot of her face as she passes - relieved at having dodged that particular bullet.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARRETON ACADEMY - DAY

Establishing shot.

CUT TO:

INT. GARRETON ACADEMY - HALLWAY

Vi walks down the hall, her attention taken by a piece of paper resting on her armful of books. She doesn't notice her near collisions with other students who also make their way to class.

She is joined by SHANE EVANS. Noticing the paper, he groans.

SHANE

Please don't tell me there's a test.

VI

(noticing him)

Oh, good! It's you.

SHANE

Are you being sarcastic?

VI

(sarcastic)

Yes.

A beat. Shane is confused. Then...

VI (CONT'D)

I need your help.

She moves to the wall and hands Shane the piece of paper and a pen.

VI (CONT'D)

Your handwriting's kind of womanly, right?

SHANE

Uh...

VI

I've already typed up the actual letter. I just need a signature.

SHANE

(reading)

"Violet is currently seeing a professional psychologist out of school and therefore will not be requiring the assistance of the therapy sessions which your fine institution is offering".

(to Vi)

And I'm guessing this isn't true?

VI

How'd you know?

SHANE

Well, you are asking me to forge your mother's signature.

VI

Do you even know the definition of sarcasm?

SHANE

And you spelt psychologist wrong.

Vi snatches the paper back and looks over it.

SHANE (CONT'D)

Here...

He takes the paper and, using a copy of Caroline's signature which Vi hands him, mimics the scrawl on the bottom of the page. Handing it back to her, they continue walking...

SHANE (CONT'D)

So, are you really?

VI

Really what?

SHANE

Seeing a psychologist?

(quickly)

Not that it's any of my business.

VI

I kind of told my mum I was seeing one here.

SHANE

Ah, the old "straight out lie". I'm guessing you were away when they were handing out that little thing called a conscience?

VI

And you never lie?

They both turn, taking their conversation into a nearby classroom...

CUT TO:

INT. GARRETON ACADEMY - ENGLISH CLASSROOM

SHANE

I am a pillar of upstanding moral behaviour.

(beat; jokingly)

Seriously, there's an actual pillar. They're unveiling it next week. Ribbon cutting and everything.

Vi smiles. MR IAN PARKER sits at his desk, doing a crossword puzzle. As each student passes, they casually take a gummy worm out of a jar on his desk. Vi and Shane do this too.

VI

Hi, Mr Parker.

The two take their seats. The class is filling up and settling in.

SHANE

Need some help, Mr P?

In fact, Mr Parker does look like he needs some assistance. He's studying the crossword intently, chewing on the end of a pencil.

MR PARKER

Nine letter word. Opposite of "pleasant".

Shane thinks. Just then, BIANCA PARRY enters the room on the arm of ERIN FOWLER. When Erin sees Vi, he awkwardly pulls his arm from Bianca. Vi, however, doesn't notice either of them.

VI

(re: crossword)

Obnoxious?

Bianca, about to head down the aisle to her seat, stops at Vi.

BIANCA

(to Vi)

I'm sorry, did you say something?

VI

Huh?

BIANCA

Don't "huh" me, you - -

Erin takes her by the shoulders - guiding her down the aisle.

ERIN

Oh, hey. Sophie saved us some seats.

As he passes Vi, he gives her an apologetic smile. Mr Parker, oblivious to the near girl-fight, counts down the letters.

MR PARKER

Perfect! Okay...

He puts down the crossword puzzle.

MR PARKER (CONT'D)

That's enough English for today.
Who's up for some Uno?

The class perks up. Could this be a lesson with no actual work?

MR PARKER (CONT'D)

... When hell freezes over. Back
to The Crucible, people!

Groaning, the class pull out their copies of the book whilst Mr Parker turns to write on the board. Shane leans over to Vi.

SHANE

Wanna do something after school?
We could go to the park and try
to name all of the pigeons.

VI

As tempting as that sounds, I'm
busy today.

SHANE

(disappointed)
Oh, that's cool. I guess I'll
just go and hang out with Jimmy
or something.

VI

This weekend?

SHANE

Sure.

And as they settle in to work...

DOREEN (PRE-LAP)
How does it feel...

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - EARLIER

DOREEN
... To keep secrets from your
friends?

We're right back where we left off. Vi is firm - her
invisible wall hasn't broken down yet.

VI
I'm good at keeping secrets.

DOREEN
They're a big part of your life
at the Company, correct?

VI
It's not a life.

DOREEN
Pardon?

VI
It's a job.

DOREEN
Are you good at your job?

VI
(confident)
Yes, I'm very good.

Her eyes don't leave Doreen's. Almost challenging her to
find fault in this confession.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - AFTERNOON (DAYS LATER)

CLOSE UP ON VI

VI
I told you I wasn't good at this!

REVEAL Vi standing on the footpath.

She watches ANDREW FRIAR as he crouches at the rear of his
car - looking over his smashed tail light.

Turning, he studies the broken head light of the car behind him. He stands.

ANDREW

It's not like I was asking you to flag in an airliner. Saying "Stop" would have been sufficient.

He moves to the car in front of his own.

VI

You aren't going to leave a note?

Bending down, he rips off a bumper sticker...

ANDREW

Well, my mother used to tell me...

... Which he takes back to his own car and tapes it over his broken light.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

... That the Lord will provide.

He turns to Vi and smiles - revealing the bumper sticker to advertise Peter Jackson's "The Lord of the Rings". Vi rolls her eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Vi and Andrew walk down the path, far away from the scene of the crime.

VI

So, this girl's name is Rebecca Simms. I looked her up in the phone book last night.

ANDREW

Hey, who taught you the phone book trick?

VI

Uh... You.

ANDREW

Oh.

(beat)

Well, check me out. I'm like a real mentor and everything. I should get paid double for this.

Vi grabs his sleeve - yanking him to a stop. She's stunned.

VI

Wait. Just... Hang on.

(beat)

We get paid for this?

ANDREW

You didn't know?

VI

No!

ANDREW

Someone should have told you.

VI

Someone like, oh say, my mentor?

Andrew shrugs and keeps walking. Vi quickly catches up.

ANDREW

I don't think the blame should entirely rest on me. I'm sure Microsoft had something to do with it.

VI

Okay, now getting back to the money thing. How much, how often and how come I still only have five pairs of shoes?

Andrew stops at the window of a cafe and looks over the menu taped to it.

ANDREW

Calm down. You're like one of those money hungry girls on The Bachelor.

(to himself)

Just looking for love. Pfft!

Vi stares at him - waiting for a real answer. Andrew catches her reflection in the window and turns to her.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

You got a bank account?

VI

Yeah. A savings account but there's next to no money in there. I think my Grandparents put ten bucks in every Christmas or something.

ANDREW

The Company'll transfer your pay into it after every assignment.

VI

But won't people notice?

ANDREW

This is the Company, Vi. Nobody notices anything. What time is it?

He grabs her wrist - checking her watch.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Ah, I've got to go.

VI

But the assignment!

ANDREW

Hey, you've already got the phone book trick down. You'll figure it out.

He walks away - giving her a wave over his shoulder.

VI

(calling)

Y'know, you really shouldn't be getting paid at all!

Vi sighs and leans against the side of a bus shelter. There is an advertisement next to her. A beautiful model holding a bottle of perfume. Vi turns to look at it. The slogan reads, "Ocean View. The scent of success".

Then, the ad changes - scrolling upwards on a mechanical timer - to reveal a SECOND advertisement. This time for dog food. "Give your best friend a taste of Ocean View".

Vi, this time, looks a little confused. The ad scrolls BACK. It's the model again but this time the poster reads, "Yes. I'm talking to you. Turn around".

A little freaked, Vi spins around to see the CAFE Andrew was staring in earlier. The name painted on the window reads, "THE OCEAN VIEW CAFE". Vi takes a moment and looks back to the ad.

VI (CONT'D)

(to model; re: perfume)

Just for the record, I'm not buying that.

A nearby WOMAN, waiting for the bus, looks her up and down in concern. Vi shrugs.

VI (CONT'D)

They test on animals. I read an article.

The Woman nods in agreement.

CUT TO:

INT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Vi sits at a booth in the back of the room. She fiddles with the salt and pepper shakers, glancing around the crowded establishment. Picking up the menu, she opens it.

CLOSE UP ON MENU

Across the double spread there is only one sentence. It reads, "No, ask yourself how you can help her".

BACK TO SCENE

VI

Huh?

WAITRESS

I said, how can I help you this afternoon?

Vi slowly looks up. A Waitress stands over the table. A young woman, obviously busy and not in the mood for games.

Glancing at her name tag ("Rebecca"), Vi gives her an awkward smile.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. THE COMPANY - RECEPTION - AFTERNOON

Andrew emerges from the elevator, smiling at an attractive YOUNG WOMAN as she makes her way onto it. She barely glances at him.

As the doors close, he puts his hand over his heart.

ANDREW

Ah, Angela. Do you even know I'm alive?

JENNA (O.S.)

Her name's Tiffany.

Turning, Andrew sees JENNA COOKE sitting behind the reception desk, typing away on Glenda's computer. Andrew nears.

ANDREW

(dismissive)

You say potato.

(re: Jenna at desk)

Did you... Uh... Is Benson on some "demotion" rampage that I should worry about?

JENNA

Glenda's son is graduating from Uni today.

ANDREW

But she's gonna be back right? I mean... she hasn't, like... skipped town with all her... stuff... ?

Jenna opens a drawer, lifting up an un-opened packet of M&M's which Andrew takes, grinning.

Suddenly, the INTERCOM crackles to life.

BENSON (O.S.)

(over intercom)

Ms. Cooke? Is that Mr. Friar?

JENNA

It is.

BENSON

He's late.

The intercom goes dead. Andrew tosses an M&M at it.

JENNA

Hey!

She sweeps it off the desk and into the waste bin.

JENNA (CONT'D)

He's right, you know. Don't you have your interview now?

ANDREW

Yeah. But it's not like the show can start without me.

Jenna rolls her eyes.

JENNA

Okay, well, I'm kind of tied up right now and you're just...

ANDREW

Making it all the more enjoyable?

JENNA

Getting in my way.

Andrew sighs, replacing the packet of lollies.

ANDREW

Fine, fine. I'll go.

A beat. He doesn't move.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

So, how'd your interview go?

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - EARLIER

Jenna sits. She is silent. In the background, the CLOCK TICKS. Doreen coughs. Taps her pen on her knee. Still, Jenna says nothing.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - RECEPTION

Jenna, embarrassed, looks away.

JENNA

Fine. I mean, people don't really share that much in these things anyway, right?

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - LATER

Andrew is across from Doreen. He sits with his feet up on the desk in mid rant.

ANDREW

- - And it's not even like I don't work hard. Sure, if I was slacking off, like, twenty-four seven then Benson would have a reason to be on my case all the time but no - I'm taking time out of my day to help Vi because Benson just had to stick me as her mentor. Everyone knows that it was just to punish me in the first place. Is that immature or what? I mean, what is this? High school?

A beat. Doreen, having completely zoned out, snaps back to reality.

DOREEN

How does that make you - -

But he isn't done yet.

ANDREW

And another thing - -

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - MEANWHILE

Establishing shot.

CUT TO:

INT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Vi now stands in the line for the register. The Waitress who we now know as REBECCA SIMMS rings up the orders. She hands the Man in front of Vi his change.

REBECCA

(to man)

Have a nice afternoon!

He walks off, leaving her tip jar empty. Rebecca looks down at it.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

And thanks for the tip, jerk.

Vi moves up in front of her.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

What table?

VI

Eight. In the back.

She looks over the order slips.

REBECCA

It's fine. We don't charge for water.

Vi, seeing that she doesn't have enough time to get a real conversation started...

VI

Oh. No. I had the... Uh... I had a lot of stuff. Chef's special, vegetarian omelette... Uh... And some other things that I forget right now. You should keep looking.

Rebecca gives her a bit of a skeptical look but keeps searching through the notes.

REBECCA

Okay...

VI

(re: tip jar)

So, people around here can be pretty stingy, huh?

REBECCA

What? Oh, yeah. Well, it's not entirely his fault. I did almost kill him.

(off Vi's look)

Allergic to peanuts.

VI

So, rough day?

REBECCA

Try rough year. It's just... I'm broke. I work here for like forty billion hours a week and after rent and bills I barely have enough money to buy myself food. I'm - -

She realises what she's saying.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

- - Going on too much about my personal life to a customer who probably doesn't want to hear this. Sorry.

VI

No, it's okay. I don't mind listening.

REBECCA

(finding order slip)
Chef's special, omelette,
ecetera. That you?

VI

(not thinking)
Yeah.

REBECCA

Are you sure? There's enough food for twelve people here.

She holds out the slip. Vi takes it - glances at the price.

VI

Uh... Y'know. Come to think of it, I did just have the water.

She slips some coins into Rebecca's tip jar and quickly exits. Rebecca doesn't have time to ponder this strange behaviour as another customer steps up to the register.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - STREET

Vi stands outside. She thinks and then opens her bag, pulling her purse from inside. She takes out a bank debit card.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINE - LATER

Vi, at the machine, punches in her code and presses the button for a receipt. It WHIRS for a moment and then a piece of paper slides out along with her card. Vi takes it. Reads it. Her eyes go wide.

VI

(shocked)
Holy Mother of - -

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE

Andrew is more subdued now. His rant is over but a little of that tension still remains. Doreen looks more interested.

ANDREW

- - God! I just get so frustrated, y'know? I've been here for a couple of years now and I just don't... I just don't get it.

DOREEN

Do you think that there's something to get?

ANDREW

I... I guess so. Everyone else here; Benson, Jenna, the drones down in the Control Centre - It's like they want to have some big "Higher Power" bossing them around.

DOREEN

But you don't?

There is a pause as Andrew considers his answer.

ANDREW

I've lived my whole life being told what to do by somebody else. I thought that maybe when I died, that'd be it. Right?

(beat)

Guess I was wrong.

His eyes flicker away - embarrassed.

CUT TO:

INT. SUPERMARKET - LATER

Vi enters. She is followed closely by Rebecca.

REBECCA

You really don't have to do this.

VI

But I want to.

She takes a trolley and moves down an aisle - intent and determined.

REBECCA

You can't just... buy me groceries. It's insane. I really can't accept this.

As she talks, Vi puts stuff into the trolley. Jars, boxes, packets, anything and everything.

VI

Becky - -

REBECCA

- - Ugh. Don't call me that. My parents call me Becky.

VI

Rebecca, I'm not just buying you groceries. Well, I am but I'm also... Buying groceries for Jesus.

Rebecca just stares.

VI (CONT'D)

My Church group. It's a... thing. Charity, helping the helpless, y'know. Not that you're helpless or anything. I just mean - -

REBECCA

- - I'll go pick out some cereal.

She turns and heads into another aisle. Vi takes a moment and tries to calm herself. She smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. SUPERMARKET - AISLE - LATER

The trolley is now overly full and Vi is having a harder time pushing it.

She hears LAUGHTER and looks up to see Bianca, Erin and a GROUP OF THEIR FRIENDS at the end of the aisle.

Alarmed, Vi grabs the trolley and tries to haul it backwards but only succeeds in running it into the shelf - knocking down cans of soup all around her.

Bianca spots this and alerts her friends. They approach and Vi kneels, picking up the cans.

BIANCA

(mockingly surprised)
Violet!

VI
 (unamused)
 Hey, Bianca.

BIANCA
 (re: overloaded trolley)
 Stocking up for the apocalypse?

Vi stands and glares.

VI
 Well, your birth is the first
 sign.

Erin hides a smile and Bianca catches this. She SMACKS him lightly in the chest.

BIANCA
 Erin! I can't believe you're
 going to let her talk to me like
 that.

ERIN
 You did start it, Bianca.

Bianca opens her mouth to speak but Erin cuts her off.

ERIN (CONT'D)
 Come on. I want to avoid a punch-
 up. Let's just get the rest of
 the stuff and go.

There is a tense pause. Bianca turns to glare at Vi.

BIANCA
 Fine.
 (beat; to Erin)
 But I'd stop sticking up for her
 if I were you. I don't want her
 hanging around...
 (looking at Vi)
 I might be the one to get shot
 next time.

Vi's mouth hangs open - shocked - as Bianca turns on her heel and stalks away.

Two of the GUYS in Bianca's group knock the items from the top of Vi's trolley - some of the packets actually spilling open.

They slip away - out of sight. Erin, however, remains. He and Vi crouch down, picking up the food items which have remained intact.

ERIN
 Sorry about - -

VI

You don't have to apologize. It's not like you know what she's going to say before she says it.

ERIN

Actually, sometimes...

They share a grin.

VI

So, is the Happy Vampire not good enough of you guys now? You need to hang out at the supermarket?

ERIN

We're just picking some stuff up. We're having a barbeque down in Carmel on the marina. Bianca lives there.

They stand, loading the items into the trolley.

VI

Of course she does. Let me guess, her family has a yacht too?

ERIN

Just a little one.

VI

Where do you live?

ERIN

Not in Carmel if that's what you're thinking.

(beat)

Look, if you want to come... There'll be lots of food and - -

VI

(disbelieving)

You're kidding right?

ERIN

Well... No but let's just pretend I was, okay?

VI

Thanks anyway.

ERIN

Yeah.

He starts to walk away.

VI
I don't get it.

He turns back.

ERIN
What?

VI
How you can be so nice and be
with... her. Not that I'm... I
just...

ERIN
(beat)
After that night...

He sighs.

ERIN (CONT'D)
It's complicated.
(beat)
See you, Vi.

He walks away. Vi takes a moment, she hugs a torn open box
of cereal to her chest.

REBECCA (O.S.)
You're supposed to buy that
before you start eating it.

Vi snaps out of her daze and turns to Rebecca who holds two
tubs of ice cream - one in each hand.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
(re: ice cream)
Did that Church of yours give you
enough money for both?

Vi takes them and puts them awkwardly on the already
dangerously full trolley.

CUT TO:

INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECK OUT - LATER

Vi and Rebecca stand at the check out counter, putting
items onto the conveyor belt. Rebecca's eyes light up and
she snatches a chocolate bar from the "impulse buy" rack in
front of her.

REBECCA
Oh! Me and my brother used to buy
these all of the time.

She turns to Vi.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
(pleading)
Can I... ?

Vi shrugs.

VI
Sure, put it on the pile.

The Check Out Girl weighs a bag of oranges, punches in the price and moves to put it in a plastic bag.

She misses and the bag falls off the counter. A few oranges roll out and continues on to hit the wall.

VI (CONT'D)
I've got it.

She heads out past the security barriers to the other side of the check out counter and leans down to pick up the fruit.

We FOLLOW HER as she stands back up. Then, she freezes. She's looking at - -

- - A poster. It reads, "MISSING. Rebecca "Becky" Simms". Underneath this, there is a grainy, smiling photo of Vi's assignment.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. THE COMPANY - PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE

This time, our interviewee is Benson. He looks a lot more comfortable than Vi or Jenna.

BENSON

Stability. That's all I'm asking for Doreen. And none of these people seem to be able to give it to me.

DOREEN

Maybe you're asking for too much.

BENSON

Have you met Andrew Friar?

DOREEN

Err... Yes, I have.

BENSON

Anything is too much for that boy.

DOREEN

Alistair, have you ever thought that maybe you don't have a problem with how people take your direction but rather with how you give direction?

Benson pauses.

DOREEN (CONT'D)

Well, shall we talk about something else? How about you. No work, no assignments. How are you, Alistair?

BENSON

I'm very well, thank you. How are you, Doreen?

DOREEN

We both know I wasn't being polite.

BENSON

(sighs)

I am the managing director of a Company branch.

DOREEN

That doesn't answer my question.

BENSON
Doesn't it?

Benson leans forward and taps her note pad.

BENSON (CONT'D)
You can write that down.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - DAY

Establishing shot.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM

Vi moves about the room, the household's cordless phone pressed to her ear.

VI
(muttering)
Come on, Andrew. Pick up, pick up... Argh!

Annoyed, she jabs her finger down on the "Cancel" button and flops down onto the couch.

CAM (O.S.)
Who's Andrew?

Vi sits up as CAMERON 'CAM' MORGAN enters the room.

VI
No one. It's just an expression. Y'know, like, "Dang, that Sally's cool" or "Let's go catch us a Robert".

A beat.

VI (CONT'D)
What are you up to?

Cam sits down on the armchair across from her.

CAM
A homework assignment for school. It's very interesting.

VI
At least someone's having fun doing assignments.

CAM
Are you okay?

VI

Yes.

(beat)

No. Can I ask you something?

CAM

Go ahead.

VI

This is a hypothetical question,
okay?

CAM

Like your "expressions"?

VI

Exactly.

(then; confused)

What?

CAM

Continue.

VI

What would you do if you found
out that someone you just met is
a missing person?

CAM

How can they be missing if you
just met them?

VI

Their family thinks they're
missing but I... I mean, you know
that they're not because
hypothetically - -

CAM

Call the police. If they're
missing, someone obviously wants
them back.

VI

But I can't just... What else
could I do? Besides that.

Cam thinks. He shrugs.

CAM

Maybe there's a reason they don't
want to be found.

Vi grins.

VI

That's perfect. Thanks Cam!

She jumps off the couch and heads for the front hall. She stops.

VI (CONT'D)
Hypothetically.

CAM
(nods)
Hypothetically.

She leaves. Cam takes a miniature tape recorder from his pocket. He presses a few buttons and it rewinds. Pressing play, we hear - -

VI'S VOICE
(from recorder)
"Come on, Andrew. Pick up, pick up - -".

CUT TO:

EXT. WEALTHY SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

Vi, walking down the footpath, looks a little out place in her somewhat shabby teenage attire.

She holds a piece of paper in her hand - occasionally comparing it to the house numbers she passes. Each house along this stretch is huge. Almost mansion like. Many have locked gates and high fences. Behind them, we catch a glimpse of blue. The ocean.

Vi slows and studies the house in front of her. Scrunching up the piece of paper in her pocket, she makes her way up the drive way - through the open gates - into...

CUT TO:

EXT. SIMMS RESIDENCE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

There is a car in the drive way, hood up and tools spread around it. A pair of legs stick out from underneath the car.

VI
Uh... Hello.

No response. Vi coughs.

VI (CONT'D)
Mr... Er... Legs?

Stepping forward, she KICKS the legs lightly. Jolting, the person ROLLS out from under the car. HENRY SIMMS (15) yanks a pair of headphones from his ears and sits up hurriedly.

HENRY
(startled)
What the - - ? Oh... Hi.

VI
Sorry. I didn't mean to scare
you.

Henry scrambles to his feet, wiping his hands on his grease stained pants.

HENRY
Wasn't scared. You just...
Surprised me.
(awkward pause)
So, uh, what do you want?
(quickly)
Keep in mind that we don't give
to charity and we're already
subscribed to Better Homes and
Gardens.

VI
I'm looking for the Simms family.
(beat)
What about the Salvation Army?

HENRY
Mum has a thing about poor people
wearing our clothes.

VI
She sounds lovely.

He bends down, cleaning up the tools and putting them back in the box.

HENRY
I'm Henry Simms.

VI
Oh, great. You wouldn't happen to
know a Rebecca Simms, then?

Henry DROPS the box with a CLATTER.

The front door is yanked open and RACHEL SIMMS storms out onto the front porch. She is in her early 40s. Stylish and pristine in appearance.

RACHEL
(re: car)
Henry! For Gods sake, we don't
live in a trailer park. Do that
in the garage!

She notices Vi.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Oh. Hello.

VI

Hi.

RACHEL

Is there something I can do for you, Miss... Er... ?

VI

Morgan. Hi, I'm Violet Morgan.

Rachel moves down the steps and eyes Vi with disdain as she holds out her hand. Vi takes it and they shake.

RACHEL

Rachel Simms.

VI

I was just wondering if anybody here knew a Rebecca Simms.

Rachel stiffens.

RACHEL

Rebecca. Well, even when she's not around she just keeps on popping up. Always the centre of attention.

HENRY

Mum, come on. That's not fair.

RACHEL

Fair? You want to talk to me about fair?

She takes a deep breath and turns to Vi.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Rebecca is my daughter. She no longer lives at home. No, I do not have her current address. Have a nice day.

She turns on her heel and marches back towards the front door. Vi quickly digs around in her bag, pulling out the "Missing" flyer.

VI

Wait! Please. I don't want her address. I know where she is. I just thought that... Since you posted these...

Rachel turns. Henry sees the flyers and he looks away - busying himself with the car.

VI (CONT'D)

... You might want to know.

Rachel moves forward and takes the paper. She looks it over before scrunching it up and dropping it to the ground.

RACHEL

I have no idea where these came from and contrary to what a piece of paper will tell you, Miss Morgan, I have no wish to find that ungrateful embarrassment that I am ashamed to call my child.

(beat)

She is not "missing". She left.

She turns, walks into the house and SLAMS the door. Vi takes a moment.

VI

I'm kind of getting that charity thing now.

HENRY

Sorry about that. She's kind of... Intense. The whole family is, actually.

VI

Well if it means anything, you seem very mellow.

Henry smiles.

HENRY

Thanks.

Vi nods to the car.

VI

So, you like cars, huh? This yours?

HENRY

My Dad's. I don't have my license yet. Well, technically I drive. Just not... legally.

He looks over the car wistfully.

HENRY (CONT'D)

When I do though... I am so outta here.

VI
Like Rebecca?

Henry glances at Vi, then the house.

HENRY
I should really get this in the garage. My Mum's kind of... Well, y'know.

VI
Yeah. Well, see ya.

Vi, taking one last look at Henry and the house, walks away.

Henry watches her go and then walks over to the crumpled flyer - picking it up, smoothing it out and folding it onto his pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - EARLIER

Vi again. Sometime after the last segment of her interview.

VI
Okay, so, maybe "fine" isn't the best word to describe... everything.

DOREEN
How do you mean?

VI
I'm a private person, I guess you could say. Ever since... ever since I was little... I haven't been that... open... to new things. The Company is...

DOREEN
New?

VI
Very.
(beat)
I know my family are freaked. They pretend not to be but... I can see it when I walk in the room. I hate keeping this secret... But... what else am I supposed to do?

Doreen thinks for a moment.

DOREEN

I don't know if you can tell this
but I'm a big fan of myths,
legends - that sort of thing.

Vi glances around the bare room.

VI

Really? I couldn't tell.

Doreen takes a paperweight - vaguely oval shaped - and
rolls it between her hands.

DOREEN

There's one in particular that
says every year at a time when
both night and day are the same
length, an egg will be able to
balance on its end.

She raises the paperweight so it is balancing on its
pointed end but - upon releasing it - it falls flat again.

DOREEN (CONT'D)

However, people tend to ignore
the fact that all you have to do
is shake the egg up to break the
yolk and lower its centre of
gravity but that just takes the
fun out of it, doesn't it?

VI

Uh... I guess.

DOREEN

What I'm trying to say is, you
have to learn to be an egg.

VI

(beat)

Chicken egg or can I can branch
out? I hear those ostrich eggs
are pretty spacious.

Doreen smiles.

DOREEN

You have to balance. Find that
happy medium between a truth and
a lie.

Vi takes this in.

VI

What if I can't?

Doreen attempts to balance the paperweight again but this time she holds it. Not letting it fall.

DOREEN

As the Company psychologist for this division, I have access to every personnel file. I know you Violet Morgan.

A beat. She smiles.

DOREEN (CONT'D)

And I know you can.

Vi, however, is less certain.

CUT TO:

INT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - AFTERNOON

The place is emptying out - only a few customers remain.

Rebecca, wearing her waitress uniform, and Vi sit at a small table in the back. They both drink cups of coffee in the middle of a friendly chat.

REBECCA

Oh, and did I tell you? I rented a video last night. Can you believe it? I have had that stupid VCR for months and never had enough money to rent a movie.

(laughing)

The Hot Chick. Rob Schneider? Always funny.

VI

That's great.

REBECCA

Hey, are you okay? I get that I'm kind of annoyingly cheerful today but that's kind of your fault when you think about it, right?

VI

Rebecca...

REBECCA

I mean, if you hadn't been such a cool person, I never would have had dinner last night - and dessert. I had dessert! I'd never know what Rob Schneider looks like in a hot pink tank top - which probably wouldn't have been a bad thing but - -

VI
(quickly)
I wasn't buying groceries for
Jesus.

REBECCA
What do you mean?

VI
I was trying to help you.

REBECCA
And you did.

VI
But now you're gonna hate me for
it.

REBECCA
(confused)
Vi... I don't think I could ever
hate you. You're the sweetest,
most generous person I've ever
met.

VI
And that just made me feel a
hundred times worse.

REBECCA
Tell me what's going on.

WAITRESS (O.S.)
Hey, Rebecca!

Rebecca turns to another Waitress who's wiping down some
tables on the other side of the cafe. She nods towards the
door.

REBECCA
Customers.

Rebecca and Vi turn to see Rachel, Henry and an older man,
GREG SIMMS, standing at the entrance. Greg and Rachel look
pretty stunned to see their daughter. Rebecca looks to Vi.

VI
(apologetic)
I was trying to be an egg.
(beat)
Sorry.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Rachel, Greg and Henry sit at a booth together. Henry smiles at Rebecca as she hands him a menu. She tosses the other two menus unceremoniously down on the table in front of her parents.

GREG
(to Rachel)
Maybe we should just go.

RACHEL
No.

She turns to look at Vi who stands awkwardly nearby.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
We were invited. We're going to
enjoy our free meal.
(beat)
Not that we can't afford it.

Rebecca throws her hands up in exasperation.

REBECCA
God, Mum! You really can't help
yourself, can you?

Lifting up her menu, Rachel starts scanning the pages.

RACHEL
I'm afraid I don't know what
you're talking about.

REBECCA
You live in Carmel, not
Buckingham Palace.

Henry stifles a laugh.

GREG
Henry... You knew about this
didn't you?

Henry throws an alarmed glance to Vi who darts forward.

VI
I did sort of... speak to Henry
again and ask him to... persuade
you to take up my offer of a free
meal. He didn't technically know
about anything.

HENRY

I was just hungry, Dad. Honest.

Rachel hands her menu back to Rebecca.

RACHEL

I'll have the fruit salad, thank you.

REBECCA

(muttering)

Well, there's two words I haven't heard come out of your mouth in about a decade.

RACHEL

Fruit salad?

REBECCA

Thank you.

RACHEL

With yoghurt.

HENRY

I'll have - -

Rachel shoots him a death glare. Henry sheepishly hands the menu back to Rebecca.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Water.

GREG

Nothing for me.

REBECCA

So, lets see if I have that straight. Fruit salad, water and nothing?

RACHEL

With yoghurt.

REBECCA

I'll be right back.

Rebecca turns and stalks into the kitchen. Vi stands for a moment - not sure about who to deal with first.

VI

(to Greg)

So you're having nothing, right?

Greg nods.

VI (CONT'D)

I'd better make sure she wrote
that down.

And she scampers after Rebecca.

CUT TO:

INT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Vi enters to find Rebecca furiously chopping up fruit with
a large knife.

REBECCA

Can you believe them!? Ugh! They
just waltz in here and order me
around like it's my job to see to
their every wish!

VI

Would it be a bad time to remind
you that you work in the food
service industry?

Rebecca raises the knife and plunges it into a chunk of
watermelon.

REBECCA

And did you see the way she threw
the evil eye at Henry? He's just
a kid and she's treating him like
he's a serial killer on death row
or something.

Vi steps back as Rebecca yanks the knife from the
watermelon and waves it around in the air.

VI

Maybe... Maybe they're acting
like that because they don't know
to express their feelings any
other way.

REBECCA

Feelings? Hah! Those two don't
have feelings!

KER-CHUNK. A pineapple loses its spikes.

VI

They have to have some feelings.
They put up those posters and - -

REBECCA

You don't know them like I do. I swear to God, they must have kidnaped me and Henry from the hospital or something. There's no way we're related to those two monsters. There's no way I...

She slows, breathing heavily.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I can't turn out like her.

VI

She must have some good qualities.

REBECCA

Who's side are you on anyway?

(beat)

Y'know, when I volunteered at the children's hospital after I turned eighteen, she didn't let me back into the house until I stopped.

Vi is confused.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

She didn't want me making her sick before her latest high society ball.

She sweeps the chopped up fruit into a bowl and empties a tub of yoghurt over the top of it.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

I thought I'd gotten rid of them forever. I guess... I guess it's my fault. Maybe when I left, I should of gone somewhere a little further away.

(beat)

Maybe Istanbul. Yeah... That would work.

She pours a glass of water and takes the glass and the bowl of fruit back into the cafe. Vi stands for a beat, horror coming over her face.

VI

I think I messed up...

CUT TO:

INT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON FRUIT SALAD

The last yoghurt covered piece is speared viciously with a fork and raised to Rachel's ruby lips.

ANGLE ON SCENE

The rest of the cafe is empty. All the tables have chairs stacked on them except for the Simms' booth and a small table on which Rebecca and Vi sit.

REBECCA

We're closed, y'know. You have to leave eventually.

RACHEL

I am not done.

HENRY

Mum, there's no more fruit - -

RACHEL

I am not done.

She scrapes the yoghurt from the side of the bowl, licks it off the fork and dabs her mouth with her napkin.

GREG

We really ought to be going now.

RACHEL

Yes, I suppose you're right.

All three stand and start to make their way to the exit. Vi, screwing her face up in annoyance, stands as well.

VI

Wait.

They turn to face her.

VI (CONT'D)

You can't just leave like this.
(motions to Rebecca)
She's part of your family. You can't just walk out on family.

GREG

I don't see how this is any of your business, Miss.

VI

It's my business because I've spent time with this girl and she's so friendly and sweet and she's probably the best daughter anybody could have and it just... It amazes me to think that you really don't want her.

Rachel moves forward.

RACHEL

It amazes me that you're taking such a keen interest in the workings of this family, Miss Morgan. Surely, you have a family of your own to which you don't pay half as much attention that you're paying ours.

VI

Fortunately, my family's not as screwed up.

RACHEL

Really? Well, it seems the Simms family have found the cure for being screwed up. Get rid of the one who's causing it.

She glares at Rebecca. Vi's mouth gapes open in disbelief.

VI

(to Rebecca)

Have you checked her for birthmarks that resemble three sixes?

Henry scans his mother up and down - perhaps checking for this elusive birthmark. His eyes widen.

HENRY

Uh... Mum...

RACHEL

(annoyed)

What?

He points and Rachel moves her hand down her neck.

VI

Oh my God...

A fiery red rash has spread up Rachel's arms, neck and taking hold over her face.

Suddenly, she starts choking and clasping her neck, she falls forward. Rebecca and Greg catch her. The group is thrown into chaos - -

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN VIEW CAFE - STREET - LATER

- - Which quickly dissipates as Rebecca and Vi watch Rachel, on a stretcher, being lifted into an ambulance with Greg climbing in after her.

VI

Okay, so we need to get your story straight. You didn't know that she was allergic to strawberries.

REBECCA

She's my mother, of course I knew!

VI

(shocked)

You did this on purpose!?

REBECCA

No!

(beat)

Maybe. I don't think so!

VI

I'm sure no one would blame you if you did.

REBECCA

It was an accident!

HENRY (O.S.)

Keep telling yourself that, Becky.

Henry joins the pair and they watch the ambulance drive off down the street - siren wailing.

HENRY (CONT'D)

She's gonna be okay, right?

REBECCA

Yeah. Remember the Warren's Christmas party and those jam tarts?

Henry laughs.

HENRY

Oh, yeah.

They are silent for a moment. Vi, sensing the "family reunion moment" moves away.

REBECCA
I'm sorry I left.

HENRY
Me too. But I understand why.

REBECCA
Y'know, I've decided something.

HENRY
You're going to open a food based assassin agency?

REBECCA
We need to stick together. I was wrong to leave you behind... To just take off like that.
(beat)
We don't have to end up like them.

Vi, drifting away, picks up this conversation and she smiles. She glances down at her watch and cringes. Looking up, she scans the surrounding area.

VI
Andrew... Never around when you need him.
(sighs)
The bus it is.

She heads to the bus stop but is stopped by Henry. He smiles, his hands in his pockets.

HENRY
I don't know what you did... Or how you even... I just wanted to say thanks. You found her for me.

VI
Found her? Oh... It was you!

Henry nods, pulling the Missing flyer from his pocket.

HENRY
My mum realised after you stopped by the other day. She threw away my laser printer.

VI
We've already discussed how she's psychotic, right?

HENRY

If think it's been established.

MUSIC CUE: "Everything Under the Sun" by Common Rotation

Rebecca joins them as a bus pulls up behind Vi.

VI

This is my ride.

REBECCA

See you round?

VI

(smiles)

Sure.

She climbs up the steps, drops some coins into the collection and takes a seat. She waves as the bus pulls into the street.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Vi watches Rebecca sling an arm over Henry's shoulders and they turn back to the cafe.

Shifting to face the front of the bus, Vi smiles - mentally patting herself on the back.

FADE TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Andrew enters and heads straight for the fridge, rummaging around inside. Jenna looks up from her spot at the table. She picks at a sandwich.

They are the only two in the room. Andrew takes out a big slab of birthday cake and scrunches up the note that goes along with it.

ANDREW

(noticing Jenna)

Oh, hey.

Taking a fork from a drawer, he sits down across from her.

JENNA

Hi. How'd your interview go?

ANDREW

Oh, y'know. I laughed, I cried, it was a real Hallmark production.

JENNA
I didn't say a word.

ANDREW
(amused)
Wait... Really?

Jenna shakes her head.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Damn. And I thought I was a
rebel.

JENNA
I felt bad for her.

ANDREW
There's an easy fix for that, you
just... talk.

JENNA
Might be easy for you. You can't
shut up. But me... I just
don't... talk to people.

ANDREW
We're talking.

JENNA
We're talking about talking. I
don't think that really counts.

Andrew shrugs.

ANDREW
Well, I don't mean to offend you
or anything but you don't really
make yourself all that
accessible.

JENNA
What is that supposed to mean?

ANDREW
Just today you practically kicked
me out of the room so you
wouldn't have to have a
conversation and I know for a
fact that you specifically stay
late so you don't have to ride
with anyone in the elevator on
the way down.

JENNA

I... I do not... And that was different, you had an appointment to get to. I didn't want you to be late.

Andrew laughs.

ANDREW

Yeah, sure.

A beat. He snickers. Jenna cracks a smile. Andrew stands, getting a second fork out of the drawer and handing it to her. He pushes the cake between them.

JENNA

Who's cake is this?

Andrew shrugs. Jenna laughs. The door opens and Benson enters. Casting a hawk like eye around the room, he spots them.

BENSON

Mr. Friar, Ms. Cooke. Didn't expect to see either of you here so late.

Andrew, mouth full of cake, turns to Benson.

ANDREW

We like to avoid the crowds.

Jenna buries her face in her hands, laughing. Benson raises an eyebrow.

BENSON

Yes, well... Good night.

He turns and exits. Jenna and Andrew, now well into a giggle fit, burst out laughing again.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Establishing shot.

We hear the tinny sound of EXPLOSIONS, SHOUTING and GUNSHOTS.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM

The room is dimly lit - most of the light comes from the TV.

Vi sits on the couch, curled up in a blanket and Shane sits on the floor in front of her, eating popcorn from a bowl.

Vi studies the back of the DVD cover. If we were paying close enough attention, we'd see that it's for XXX. (The action movie. Get your minds out of the gutter).

VI

(re: DVD cover)

Vin Diesel and The Rock freak me out. They're like the same person but... not.

Shane's eyes never leave the TV.

SHANE

One of them was a wrestler.

VI

Which one?

SHANE

The one with the name that implies he was a wrestler.

VI

(sarcastic; shocked)

You mean The Rock isn't his real name? Scandalous!

Shane smiles and tosses a handful of popcorn at her. They are silent for a moment, watching the movie.

SHANE

Hey... Vi... I was just wondering...

Vi tenses. She knows what's coming next.

VI

I'm sorry but I just can't do this right now. Or ever. All week I have been talking. I can't do it anymore. I'm all talked out. Seriously. So, I'm sorry if you want to ask me about my "feelings" and how things are "going" but it's just not gonna happen.

SHANE

(beat)

I was gonna ask for that blanket but okay, you're totally right about that other thing too...

He points to the spare blanket slung over the end of the couch. Vi blushes.

VI

Oh.

Vi sheepishly hands him the blanket.

VI (CONT'D)

(awkward; apologetic)

Shane...

SHANE

Shh! Explosions!

He points to the TV, throwing a grin over his shoulder at Vi. They're okay. No hard feelings. Vi smiles.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE