

The Company

"Last Stop: Sanity"

by

Sarah-Jane Sheppard & Alden C. Caele

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Establishing shot.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - VI'S ROOM - NIGHT

PAN AROUND Vi's extremely messy bedroom. Although we hear her voice, our heroine is nowhere to be seen.

VI (O.S.)
No, next Friday's no good.
(beat)
Family thing.
(beat)
Yes, another one.

We COME OVER the bed to find VI MORGAN lying on the floor on the other side. A telephone is pressed to her ear and a calender is spread out in front of her.

VI (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Hmmm... Next Sunday?

She runs her finger over the calender to a Sunday in a later week. This date, along with every other square on the page, is empty.

VI (CONT'D)
Nope. Dentist appointment.

CUT TO:

INT. FOWLER RESIDENCE - ERIN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

As he talks to Vi on the phone, ERIN FOWLER sits at his computer desk, spinning slowly around in his chair.

ERIN
All day?

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - VI'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

VI
'Fraid so.

ERIN (O.S.)
(filtered)
Okay, so...
(MORE)

ERIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We've sufficiently established
that you'll be busy every single
day for the next four weeks. When
do you suggest we go out?

VI
I don't know. This is... this is
a big deal. It's our first...
y'know...

CUT TO:

INT. FOWLER RESIDENCE - ERIN'S ROOM

ERIN
Date. And if you can't even say
the word, I'm finding it hard to
imagine how you're actually going
to go on it. If we ever settle on
a day, that is.

He looks up at a plain school term calender stuck on his
wall. As a complete contrast to Vi, more than half of it is
booked solid.

ERIN (CONT'D)
What about tomorrow?

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - VI'S ROOM

Vi is momentarily surprised. She looks down at her
calender.

VI
Uh, tomorrow? Tomorrow's Saturday
and I have... uh... Tomorrow
night? I'm busy.

ERIN
What about the day?

Vi smacks herself in the head.

VI
(long pause; grimacing)
Yeah. I guess that's okay.

CUT TO:

INT. FOWLER RESIDENCE - ERIN'S ROOM

ERIN
Cool. I'll pick you up around
eleven. See you later, Vi.

He hangs up and leans toward the calender. With a pen, he scribbles out "Soccer Practice" and writes "Vi - llam".

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - VI'S ROOM

Vi slowly hangs up. She stands, her face looking more than a little forlorn, and falls front first onto her bed - groaning.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - FRONT HALL - MORNING

MUSIC CUE: "Crash the Party" by OK Go

As bright morning sunlight shines in through the windows, Vi tromps down the stairs.

She's dressed in a simple pair of jeans and a t-shirt - not exactly looking to impress.

CUT TO:

INT. MORGAN RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She moves into the kitchen and heads straight for the refrigerator, passing PENNY MORGAN who leans against the kitchen bench fixing herself a cup of coffee.

PENNY

Good morning to you too.

VI

Not today, Penny.

PENNY

Ouch. I'm guessing the phone conversation with the boy didn't go well last night?

Vi turns, eyebrows raised in disbelief, as Penny sinks down into a seat at the kitchen table.

VI

How'd you know I was talking to Erin?

PENNY

Irrelevant. So, spill. Did he dump you or what?

Vi grabs a tub of yoghurt from inside the fridge and fishes out a spoon from a drawer as she speaks.

VI

No! It's not like we're actually... y'know... dating or anything. I mean, there's one date. Today, actually, but I don't... I'm not...

PENNY

Oh, I totally understand. You're not sure if you like this guy who's been obsessing over you for months. Who is, aside from Jake, probably the hottest, most popular guy in school. His girlfriend broke up with him because his passion for you was so intense that it caused the polar ice caps to melt and drown tiny countries in the northern hemisphere. I get it, I really do.

There's a beat.

VI

Remind me why I'm talking to you about this?

CAROLINE (O.S.)

About what?

CAROLINE MORGAN followed closely by PETER MORGAN enters the kitchen.

PENNY

Just Vi's boyfr - -

VI

(quickly; embarrassed)
Nothing. It's nothing.

There's a sudden BEEPING noise and Peter looks around - searching for the origin. He pulls open the microwave and looks inside.

Vi takes her mobile phone out of her pocket.

ANGLE ON MOBILE PHONE SCREEN

The text message reads, "Meeting".

BACK TO SCENE

Vi stands.

VI (CONT'D)

I'm just running down to the shops for a minute, okay? We need milk.

Caroline pulls open the fridge.

CAROLINE

I bought some yesterday.

VI

Low fat. I didn't want to say anything but Penny's been looking a little "Size 10" lately.

Vi ducks out of the kitchen as Penny gasps and hurls the empty yoghurt container at her.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - LATER

Vi walks slowly down the footpath, deep in thought. Her phone RINGS.

VI

(into phone)

Hello?

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - CONTROL CENTRE - SAME TIME

Weaving her way amongst the bustling workers is a female employee in her twenties wearing a telephone headset.

She's intense - reminding us a little of Paris Geller from *Gilmore girls*. In fact, I think that's what we'll call her - PARIS.

PARIS

(into headset)

Violet Louise Morgan?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

VI

Who's this?

PARIS

You're late.

VI

For what? Is this... Oh! The Company? Okay, that's fine.

(MORE)

VI (CONT'D)

I thought you were a telemarketer. Wait - exactly who am I speaking to?

PARIS

I say again, you're late.

VI

Well maybe if you sent me a text message with an actual time on it instead of just "meeting" - -

PARIS

If you have a complaint, there are comment cards at the front desk. Your assignment is nine-oh-four.

VI

What?

PARIS

Your assignment. Nine-oh-four. And it starts...
(checks her watch)
Now.

A BUS rumbles past Vi and pulls up at a bus stop ahead. As a passenger climbs on, Vi looks up and sees that the bus number is 904.

VI

Oh.
(beat; sarcastic)
Yay.

PARIS

Have a nice day.

She hangs up. Vi does the same and mutters to herself as she jogs towards the bus.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - LATER

Vi slips a few coins into the machine as the doors close and the bus begins to move.

She takes a seat and turns around to view the passengers. No one looks overly in need of help except for - -

- - A MOTHER AND A CRYING BABY.

The MOTHER talks on a mobile phone with a stack of papers on her lap - she looks stressed to say the least. A screaming BABY is strapped into a pram in the aisle.

Vi looks down to see a dropped pacifier lying on the ground.

Standing, she moves shakily down the aisle and picks up the pacifier. The Mother is too distracted to notice Vi wipe it on her shirt - with a slight disgusted cringe - and slip it into the baby's mouth.

The baby immediately calms.

Vi smiles to herself as the bus pulls up to another stop. The Mother, suddenly noticing the silence, looks relieved as she gathers her things and pushes the pram towards the set of doors halfway down the bus.

VI
(to herself)
Well, that was painless.

Vi stands as well and moves to the front doors - waiting for them to open.

ANGLE ON FRONT DOORS

The "Watch Your Step" sticker now reads, "Nope. All of them".

Vi turns and looks over the passengers (all SIX of them).

VI
Oh, I hate public transport.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. JENNA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

The curtains are closed but do nothing to block out the light which filters into the room, giving it a soft golden glow.

JENNA COOKE, sleeping peacefully amongst a comfortable looking quilt, stirs. She opens her eyes and looks over to an alarm clock on her bedside table. It reads 10:15 am.

JENNA
(suddenly wide awake)
Bloody hell!

She leaps out of bed and scampers into the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. JENNA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Rushing in from the bedroom, Jenna is fully dressed in her work attire. She grabs a set of keys and a handbag which she slings over her shoulder as she moves towards her front door.

She starts turning the complicated locks - about six of them in all - and slips back the security chain before her door is finally able to open.

She moves briskly out into the hall and closes the front door sharply.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - RECEPTION - LATER

With a CHIME, the elevator slides open. Jenna hurries out and moves immediately around the corner.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - CONTROL CENTRE - LATER

Pushing open the door, Jenna enters and looks around. She grabs a RANDOM EMPLOYEE and hands him her handbag and coat.

JENNA
Good morning, Barney. Can you put these in my office for me? And a coffee. I could really do with a coffee.

RANDOM EMPLOYEE

Uh... Sure thing, Ms. Cooke
but... what are you doing here?

JENNA

What do you mean?

PARIS (O.S.)

Barney! Where is my vanilla
latte?

Paris, the "intense employee", hurries down the stairs to join Jenna and a suddenly terrified looking Barney.

She shoves a styrofoam cup at him.

PARIS (CONT'D)

Because this couldn't be
described as either. I know
you're not a barista but would it
kill you to take a course or
something?

JENNA

Um... Excuse me but... who are
you?

PARIS

(shaking Jenna's hand)

Your replacement. Nice to meet
you, Ms. Cooke. Now, if you'll
excuse me, there's lots of work
to be done.

She stalks away.

PARIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Barney! Keep up!

Barney throws Jenna an apologetic glance and hands back her bag and coat - scurrying after Paris.

Off Jenna's somewhat alarmed and confused expression...

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - SAME TIME

.... Vi's melancholy one.

She sits in a seat - her head resting against the window. Every so often, her eyes dart around to the passengers she can see in front of her.

There's a foreign man in his 50s, a young woman listening to an mp3 player and a teenage boy.

Turning around in her seat, she sees a business man reading a newspaper, a woman staring blankly out of the window and another man (this one approximately 30 years old) sitting at the very back of the bus reading a novel.

Vi turns back, taking out her mobile phone.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL - ROOM - DAY

ANDREW FRIAR moves around the room. He steps over an open suitcase as his mobile phone RINGS.

ANDREW
(into phone)
Yo.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - CONTINUOUS

VI
(into phone)
Help me!

ANDREW (O.S.)
(filtered)
I'm a little busy right now, Vi.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL - ROOM

He picks a grape out of a bowl of fresh fruit on a table.

VI (O.S.)
(filtered)
Doing what?

He pops the grape into his mouth.

ANDREW
(into phone)
Working. Got an assignment.

VI (O.S.)
(filtered)
What about my assignment? You're still my mentor even if you have your own stuff now, remember?

Andrew walks to a large open window and peers outside.

ANDREW
(into phone)
Sorry. No can do.
(MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)
 You'll just have to fix that
 connection on your own.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - CONTINUOUS

Vi groans.

VI
 (into phone)
 Trust me, there's way more than
 one connection that needs fixing.
 I'll be here all day!
 (beat; brightening)
 I'll be here all day.

ANDREW (O.S.)
 (filtered)
 You sound a lot more excited
 about that than you should be.

VI
 (into phone)
 I'll talk to you later, okay?

She hangs up before he can reply. Then, she dials another
 number.

VI (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Erin! Hi!

CUT TO:

INT. FOWLER RESIDENCE - ERIN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Erin smiles.

ERIN
 (into phone)
 Hey, Vi. I was just about to come
 and get you.

VI (O.S.)
 (filtered)
 I'm really sorry about this but
 we'll have to take a rain check
 on that date thing.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - CONTINUOUS

VI
 (into phone)
 Something just came up.

ERIN (O.S.)
(filtered; beat)
Oh. Okay.

CUT TO:

INT. FOWLER RESIDENCE - ERIN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

His face drops in disappointment.

ERIN
That's fine. I... I guess I'll
just see you on Monday, then.

VI (O.S.)
(filtered)
I knew you'd understand. Bye!

She hangs up. Erin drops the phone onto his bed and leans down, picking up his soccer bag from the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

ALISTAIR BENSON sits around the table with bunch of EXECUTIVE TYPES as the double doors burst open and Jenna comes charging in!

While the Executives jump in surprise, Benson isn't shocked.

BENSON
Is this going to become a habit
with you, Ms. Cooke?

JENNA
What is all this crap about me
being replaced?

Benson looks to the others around the table.

BENSON
Would you excuse us for a moment,
please?

The Executives hurry out of the room, the last one closing the doors behind him.

BENSON (CONT'D)
(beat; to Jenna)
I am extremely happy to see that
you've started coming out of your
shell, Jenna. There's no doubt
about that.
(MORE)

BENSON (CONT'D)

However, I'd appreciate it if you'd at least knock before you come barging into important meetings to swear at me.

Jenna blushes.

JENNA

I... I'm sorry, sir. I didn't think. I just... It won't happen again.

BENSON

Oh, I'm sure it will. Now, take a seat.

Jenna sits down.

BENSON (CONT'D)

What is it you wanted to talk to me about? Something about you being... replaced?

JENNA

Well aren't I? I know I'm late - my alarm didn't go off - but I hardly think that's enough reason to replace me.

BENSON

I believe you received this news from Miss... Uh... The loud one? With the headset?

JENNA

(through a tight smile)
Yes.

BENSON

She's taking over your duties for today only. Nothing more. Today, I believe you're receiving a "free pass".

(beat)

A day off.

Jenna laughs.

JENNA

You're kidding.
(off Benson's expression)
You're not kidding.

(beat)

But... I've never had a day off. Four years and not one. I came to work when I had pneumonia! If you people gave out trophies, I'd be the little gold person on top!

BENSON

That may be true but you're not working today.

JENNA

(suddenly suspicious)
Why? What's so special about today?

BENSON

I know you can't have forgotten. You of all people. Think back four years.

(beat)

What's so special about today?

Jenna takes a long moment, thinking. Then...

JENNA

(realising)
Oh...

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - DAY

Deciding to get this over and done with, Vi stands and makes her way to the young woman listening to the mp3 player.

She sits down beside her, smiles cheesily and even throws in a friendly wave for good measure. The woman (FRANCINE, 26) tries to hide her confusion.

FRANCINE

(pulling off her headphones)

Hi...

VI

Hello. What's your name?

FRANCINE

(hesitantly)

Francine... What's yours?

VI

I'm Violet but you can call me Vi. It's nice to meet you, Francine.

FRANCINE

Yeah, same here.

She goes to replace her headphones but Vi speaks again.

VI
Are you okay?

FRANCINE
Huh?

VI
I mean, do you feel like your life is missing something? Like you're not living up to your full potential because something's standing in your way? I'd love to hear about it and details would be great.

Francine takes a long moment - trying to figure Vi out. Finally, she chuckles nervously, putting her headphones back on.

Vi waits. Francine says nothing and appears to be ignoring Vi completely.

VI (CONT'D)
Okay, I guess... I guess we'll catch up later.

She gets up and backs away - cringing at her own awkwardness.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - LATER

Vi is with the teenage boy, LENNY (16). He's trying to act smooth.

VI
So, Lenny... What's up?

LENNY
Not much. Little bit of this, little bit of that. You know how it is.

He assumes a "cool" position - foot propped up on his opposite knee and elbow leaning against the window.

LENNY (CONT'D)
Vi, right? You come here a lot?

His elbow slips, causing him to jolt forward. Vi discreetly rolls her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - LATER

ZEKI (50s) holds out a deck of cards for Vi. He is a friendly foreign man who speaks in broken English and a thick Turkish accent.

Vi takes a card, looks at it and puts it back into the deck.

ZEKI

I think you wonder how I can ever know, yes? What is your card.

He shuffles the deck deftly.

ZEKI (CONT'D)

Ah, but it is magic. The magic knows.

He slips the deck up his sleeve and waves a hand through the air.

ZEKI (CONT'D)

Abracadabra!

He flicks his hand out and he now holds a lolly-pop. He hands it to Vi.

VI

Cool trick.

He smiles, not finished, and points to something wrapped around the stick of the candy. Vi unrolls it. It's her card.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - BACK - LATER

Vi sits in a seat in front of NATHAN (30), the man reading the book, and is turned around to face him. He's handsome but this doesn't automatically mean that he's pleasant.

VI

I like reading. Yep. When I was a kid, like eight or nine, me and my friend - Lisa - we used to do those Summer reading challenges. Y'know, that the libraries put on and they give out prizes for the most books read or something. Yeah, I won a hat one year.

Nathan turns a page in the book, ignoring her.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - LATER

Mark (30s) is still reading his newspaper when Vi approaches.

MARK
Keep on walking.

VI
Excuse me?

Mark closes his newspaper and looks up at her.

MARK
I've noticed you, flitting around to everyone on this bus and trying to cosy up to them - trying to be their friend. I don't know what your scam is but I'd appreciate it if you just left me out of it, okay?

VI
There's no scam.

MARK
Really? Normal people do not act like this. They don't act...

VI
Friendly?

MARK
(beat)
You're not friendly. You're... suspicious.

Vi shrugs and moves away.

MARK (CONT'D)
I've got my eye on you, kid!

He glares and gets back to his paper.

Vi walks down the aisle towards the last passenger on the bus - a woman in her mid-30s. ALICE.

ALICE
Hi. Have you got twenty cents?

VI
Sure.

She pulls a coin from her pocket and hands it to Alice who smiles.

ALICE

Thanks. I don't want to keep it or anything. Stay - you can have it back in a second.

Vi sits down next to her as Alice takes out a scratchie from her purse. She begins rubbing away at the panel, slowly revealing the words underneath.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I never win these things. But you hear those stories all the time about a "friend of a friend" and all that. I figure - hey, why can't I be somebody's friend of a friend?

She laughs. Vi smiles knowingly.

VI

Oh, I think you're going to be lucky today.

ALICE

Hope so. Even if it's just a few dollars, you know? That'd be...

She trails off, looking down at the card in shock.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Oh.

VI

(smiling)

Are you a friend of a friend?

Alice hands her the scratchie ticket. Then closes her eyes tightly.

ALICE

You look. I mean... I did but... Thirty-five is too young to be getting cataracts, right?

Vi looks over the ticket.

ANGLE ON SCRATCHIE

The worn away portion reveals 3 matches for the prize of "\$30,000".

BACK TO VI

VI

That's more than a few dollars.

Alice opens her eyes and stands - screaming! She bends down and hugs Vi.

ALICE

I won! I won! I won! I won! I won!

Alice screeches again, takes the scratchie back and hugs Vi for a second time. The other bus passengers all turn to stare.

MARK

How much?

ALICE

Thirty thousand dollars.

Mark lets out an appreciative whistle. Alice sits down, a big grin on her face. Vi smiles as the bus pulls up to another stop.

VI

Well, it looks like someone's day has just gotten a whole lot better.

She looks up as a new passenger climbs on board...

BIANCA PARRY hands the driver some coins and waits for her change. She looks around, more than a little snootily, at her surroundings and spots Vi.

Vi groans and lowers her head onto the bar of the seat in front.

VI (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Dramatic irony is nobody's friend.

Next to her, Alice kisses her winning ticket.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Vi's bus drives down the quiet street. As it passes us, the CAMERA moves along with it and focuses on Bianca, staring out of the window.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - DAY

Bianca doesn't react as Vi awkwardly comes to stand next to her.

VI
Uh... Hey, Bianca.

Bianca lazily glances at her before turning away again. Vi sighs.

VI (CONT'D)
I know that you'd rather not talk to me. We're not exactly friends but... this is important.

Bianca turns back.

BIANCA
Not surprisingly, I don't believe you.

VI
I just need to... Ugh. Ask you if... if you need... If you're okay?

Bianca says nothing but gives her a smouldering glare. She stands, shoving past Vi and looking around for another seat.

She spots Lenny and walks towards him...

BIANCA
Is this seat taken?

Lenny stares up at her - his eyes wide in shock.

BIANCA (CONT'D)
I'll take that as a no.

She sits down beside him and smirks in Vi's direction. Vi rolls her eyes, walking past them down the aisle.

Bianca turns, focusing on Lenny. The boy sits stiffly beside her.

Finally...

BIANCA (CONT'D)

I'm Bianca.

LENNY

Lenny. Lenny Moscovitz.
Capricorn.

BIANCA

Excuse me?

LENNY

That's my sign. Not my last name.
I mean, it could be my last name
if it was hyphenated but that
would mean my mother's maiden
name was Casey Capricorn and that
makes her sound like some kind of
porn star or children's book
character - weird that those two
things fit so well together - but
she's really not.

(beat)

A porn star.

(beat)

She's a dentist.

BIANCA

(disturbed)

That's nice.

LENNY

Are you going to move now?

BIANCA

What?

LENNY

It's okay if you want to sit
somewhere else. I don't mind.

Bianca glances back at Vi - knowing that separating from
Lenny will leave herself open to attack.

BIANCA

I'm good. Unless you don't - -

LENNY

I do! Wait! I don't not want you
to - - Ah... I do not want you to
leave that seat right there.

There's a long beat. Bianca turns to face the front,
shifting away from Lenny slightly. Lenny reaches for the
window.

LENNY (CONT'D)

Do you mind?

(as he opens it)

It's a little stuffy in - yeah,
that's better.

He pulls himself up - sucking in deep calming breaths.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARRETON ACADEMY - SPORTS FIELD - DAY

Garreton Academy's soccer field is a flurry of action.

A whole team of SOCCER PLAYERS pass, run and yell until one kick causes the ball to go left. WAY LEFT.

It flies off the field and - -

- - Lands in Erin's hands. He grins widely as he approaches the field - dressed in his own soccer uniform.

ERIN

Hey guys, got room for one more?

A dark-haired boy steps forwards. This is the team captain (identified by the armband), NIKOLAI "NIKO" SHELBY, and he looks vaguely annoyed.

COACH GREY barely looks up from the background but still notices Erin's arrival.

COACH

(sharp)

Fowler, you're late.

ERIN

Sorry, Sir. Won't happen again!

Erin tries to move forward but Niko blocks his way.

NIKO

So, Erin. What happened to your case of fakeulitis?

Erin is taken off-guard as Niko grabs the ball from him.

NIKO (CONT'D)

(to team)

Team! Back on the field!

They follow his instructions.

ERIN

Hey, Niko, I didn't mean - -

Niko focuses his eyes on Erin, and they connect. The ice in his gaze freezes Erin in his tracks.

NIKO

(cold)

Look, I'm fine with telling the guys you're sick, even if we're only a couple weeks from championships.

Erin tries to speak but Niko keeps going.

NIKO (CONT'D)

However, when I lie my ass off to convince them that you're moments from death and then you show up to practice without even a few Tiny Tim coughing fits, it's my name that gets dragged through the metaphorical mud.

(then)

So, your next sick day better be because you've got the freaking ebola virus or I swear I'll come and drag you out of bed myself. *Capiche?*

Erin nods silently. Niko nods in turn, then pats Erin on the back and directs him towards the field.

NIKO (CONT'D)

(quiet, friendly)

By the way, mate, Morgan isn't worth taking your eyes off the prize. I'd drop her before it gets too serious.

Niko flashes Erin a brief smile before returning to his game face and running back to the field.

As Niko barks orders to the players, we PUSH IN on Erin's face. Doubt filters in slowly as he watches his friends play.

He shakes it off and runs down to the field.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - DAY

Vi sits back down with Alice, suspiciously eyeing Bianca and Lenny up ahead.

Alice leans closer to her, still smiling.

ALICE

You know what I can do now?

VI
(still looking at Bianca)
Buy an attack dog?

ALICE
Do it.

Vi - alarmed - turns to her.

VI
Excuse me?

ALICE
You know. Really do it. Take the leap.
(beat)
There's this chef school in Paris. It has a waiting list like a mile long and it's all very fancy and - not to mention - expensive. Well, I got in. I got the letter last month and I can go whenever but I just... I've always been broke. I never thought they'd actually accept me. So...

VI
You can do it.

Alice takes a deep breath.

ALICE
Yeah.
(then)
I'm an editor. For books. It's not like a career or anything. I mean, it's just this little thing I do for my friends and... Ugh. Right now, I'm in the middle of this snore-fest about human behaviour. My friend, Alan, he's a real sweetheart but he can't spell to save his life. He actually thought that - -

VI
Wait. Human behaviour? You mean like... communication and stuff? Talking?

ALICE
Yeah, that's part of it. Why?

VI

It's just... I... I'm doing this little project at the moment. Sort of an... experiment.

ALICE

(intrigued)
Oooh, do tell.

VI

I'm trying to find out the best way to get someone to open up. To tell a stranger their secrets.

(beat)

I have a weird concept of fun.

Alice thinks for a moment.

ALICE

Hmmm... Well, before I fell asleep, I remember reading something about common interests.

(beat)

A person is more likely to connect with someone if they see a part of themselves in them. It's like they feel more comfortable.

Vi looks around at the bus passengers.

VI

Want to help me get started?

Alice nods to Francine.

ALICE

Her. Very into music. See what she's doing with her hands? On the windowsill?

VI

She's playing notes. Like on a piano.

ALICE

Exactly.
(looking to Vi)
And there's your opening.

Vi smiles.

VI

Thanks.

She stands.

VI (CONT'D)
I'll be back.

She moves down the aisle towards Francine.

CUT TO:

INT. JENNA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jenna sits lazily by the window. She rests a shoebox on her lap and sifts through the items inside.

She takes out a photo of a small girl, clearly a YOUNG JENNA, playing with a black puppy. Jenna smiles.

Moving onto another picture - a TEENAGE JENNA posing with her formal date. She is lavishly dressed, hugging one of his arms to her chest and laying her head on his shoulder - a stark contrast to the more socially awkward Jenna we know today.

She turns the photo over.

The photo is marked: JENNIFER & BRIAN - FORMAL - SEPT, '01.

Jenna's face is wistful and marked with regret.

There's a KNOCK on her front door and Jenna freezes - caught off guard.

CUT TO:

INT. JENNA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jenna opens her front door to reveal Benson.

JENNA
Sir? What are you... ?

BENSON
I am here, my dear, to ensure that you do not waste this day.

JENNA
(scoffing)
I am not wasting...

She gives up.

JENNA (CONT'D)
I'll get my coat.

As she disappears back into her apartment...

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEUM - WORLD HABITAT EXHIBIT - LATER

As the pre-recorded sounds of tropical BIRDS play in the background, Jenna and Benson stroll along a raised wooden walkway.

On either side of them is dense South American jungle. Every so often, in a clearing, there's a scene of motionless animals - like something from the Discovery Channel on pause.

JENNA

I don't think I've ever been here. Which is surprising because it's exactly my kind of place.

BENSON

The Garretton Museum of Natural History? Why it's a staple of every child's education.

JENNA

Don't get me wrong. I did the museum field trip thing when I was a kid but I'm not exactly a homegrown Garretton girl, remember?

BENSON

Of course I do.

JENNA

Sir?

BENSON

Hmm?

JENNA

Why did you bring me here?

BENSON

I thought you'd be comfortable here. I know about your tendency to shy away from the outside world and I assumed that this was the perfect stepping stone. Outdoors but indoors.

He motions to the room around them.

JENNA

A stepping stone to what, exactly?

Benson stops and leans against the railing. He looks beyond it to a troop of monkeys - frozen by the edge of a calm pool.

BENSON

Do you see these creatures here?

JENNA

(smiling)

Yes, Benson, I see the monkeys.

BENSON

Do you see how poised they are?
Always alert to danger.

JENNA

Sir, there is no danger.

BENSON

Ah, but look.

He points. Following his direction, Jenna spies the head of a tiger lurking a few metres away in the water, hidden by ferns.

JENNA

I don't understand.

BENSON

You have spent the past four years at the Company being the monkey. Wary, cautious. I'm not saying those are bad qualities but there comes a time when one must stop being the monkey, and become the tiger.

Benson gives her a knowing smile and walks away, leaving Jenna to ponder this.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - DAY

Vi - with one of Francine's headphones pressed to her ear - nods along enthusiastically.

As she hands it back to Francine...

VI

Yeah. I totally get what you mean about that extended piano piece. It's very...

FRANCINE

Mozart, right? I'm so glad you agree with me. You wouldn't believe how many kids today don't get classical music.

VI

Oh, I know. It's tragic. I mean it's like, "Chopin who?"

Vi looks to Francine's backpack sitting on the floor. It's so stuffed with papers and books that it won't even zip up.

VI (CONT'D)

So what's all this? More music stuff?

FRANCINE

Oh no. This is less fun. School - course work and case reports.

VI

Case reports?

FRANCINE

I'm a law student. Or at least I'm trying to be.

She sighs.

FRANCINE (CONT'D)

Basically, if I don't come up with the money for this semester's tuition...

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - LATER

ZEKI

... They will close us down! It is almost too much.

Vi sits across from him - fiddling with Zeki's deck of cards.

VI

But that sounds awesome. A restaurant with a magic show and free desert? Who wouldn't want to... Am I doing this right?

She flicks her hand out, clumsily producing a card in her fingers. Zeki reaches forward and takes her through the motions of the trick - correcting her mistake.

ZEKI

It is all in the wrist, see?

(beat)

(MORE)

ZEKI (CONT'D)

It seems this town does not find
the magic so interesting. I just
wish that I...

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - BACK - LATER

VI

... Knew why you won't talk to
me.

Nathan closes his book and looks over at Vi who sits across
the aisle from him.

NATHAN

Maybe I have nothing to say.

VI

Ha! You just spoke! I win.

She grins.

NATHAN

Or it could just be that I don't
have a problem you can solve.

He nods to Mark a few rows ahead of them.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

There are other people who need
more help than I do.

Vi looks over her shoulder at Mark.

VI

(quiet; to herself)
I'm running out of time.

NATHAN

Don't worry.

She turns back to him.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

The rain's coming.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - LATER

Vi, now smiling, slips into the space next to Mark. He
groans.

MARK

Not you again.

VI

Me again. Why don't you want to talk to me... Uh...

MARK

I'm not telling you my name, Violet.

Vi looks surprised.

MARK (CONT'D)

You're not the only one here who can be observant.

He flicks out his newspaper and looks back to it.

MARK (CONT'D)

I still think you're up to something. I don't know what it is but it has nothing to do with a "special project". Yes, I heard that too.

Vi looks around and spots Mark's laptop bag on the floor. The front pocket lies open. Vi un-clips her watch and lets it fall to the floor.

VI

Oops.

She leans down to get it but slips her hand into Mark's bag just as...

MARK

What the hell are you doing?!

Vi jolts back to see Mark staring at her in anger.

VI

I, uh, nothing. I was just - -

Mark drops his newspaper and leaps to his feet - pushing forward and forcing Vi out into the aisle.

The rest of the bus has now noticed the situation - except for Francine who's, again, listening to music.

MARK

You were trying to steal something. That's it. You're just a little thief.

He grabs her arm. Vi cries out and Alice leaps up. She runs towards them.

ALICE
 Let her go! She didn't do
 anything - -

The aisle is only narrow but Mark pulls Vi back and Alice stumbles around them - falling into Nathan who has now appeared on the scene.

ALICE (CONT'D)
 (standing; to Mark)
 She's just a kid.

MARK
 Lady, I don't care if she's the
 last descendant of Jesus, this
 brat was going through my bag
 looking for something to pinch.

VI
 I dropped my watch! That's it!

Mark shakes her.

MARK
 Oh yeah? Fall into my bag, did
 it?

NATHAN
 Sir, I think we can settle this
 if we just - -

Alice rips Vi away from him and slaps Mark across the face.

ALICE
 Don't you ever touch her again,
 got it?

MARK
 Ow! Jesus, lady! That's assault.
 Holy crap. Did everybody see
 that?
 (to Alice)
 I've got witnesses!

Alice launches herself at him - screaming, kicking and scratching.

Nathan leaps forward, trying to hold her back, and Mark cowers in his seat.

Over at the front of the bus, Lenny grows concerned.

LENNY
 I'll be right back.

BIANCA
 Lenny, don't get involved!

But he's already standing and steps around Bianca into the aisle.

As he sets off...

BIANCA (CONT'D)
Lenny, come on!

She reaches out for his arm but catches the bottom of his shirt. Pulled back, he loses his balance and falls.

He lands on the floor of the bus with a THUMP and groans, grasping a seat to pull himself up...

.... Only he's placed both his hands in Francine's lap.

Francine looks down in horror and screams. She whips up her heavy backpack and starts hitting with him it - causing his attempts at standing to fail.

Papers whirl through the air like a snowstorm as Bianca jumps up - appearing behind Francine and Lenny. She can't reach Francine or get her attention.

BIANCA (CONT'D)
Hey, stop! It was - -

LENNY
- - An accident! Ow! Ah-ah!

Zeki stands, shocked.

ZEKI
(attempting a
distraction)
Look!

He whips out a pair of scissors and sets off towards the scuffle between Mark, Nathan, Alice and Vi.

ZEKI (CONT'D)
I can cut your tie and then -
Pfft! Back together! Magic!

Bianca looks up.

BIANCA
(screaming)
He's got a knife!

Lenny jolts into a sitting position, causing Zeki to trip over him and go tumbling into Vi and the others!

Meanwhile, Alice is hitting Mark with his own newspaper. Mark rips it back and starts hitting her with it.

MARK

How do you like it? Huh? Huh? Not too much fun, is it?!

SCREEEEEEEEEECH!

The bus jolts forward. Everyone standing falls - either hitting the ground or grabbing onto something and merely stumbling.

There's a long beat of silence as the BUS DRIVER turns off the engine and gets up from his seat. He turns to stand at the front of the bus - facing his passengers.

BUS DRIVER
EVERYBODY SIDDOWN!

There's no hesitation. Everyone standing immediately slides into a seat. The ones on the floor claw their way onto the nearest empty bench.

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)
Anymore fighting on my bus - the next stop is where you start walking. Got it?

Everybody nods.

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)
GOT IT?!

They burst out in a chorus of "Yes, Sir's" and "Yes, Mr. Bus Driver's".

There's a beat. The Bus Driver glares and sits down - starting up the bus again. As it moves off, Vi takes a deep breath, taking stock of the situation.

She looks around at the passengers - most looking ashamed of themselves and a little shook up.

Mark throws angry glances at Alice who returns fire as she settles back in her seat - digging through her pockets.

Zeki lifts up his scissors to see that Nathan's book has been impaled on the end. Nathan reaches over and plucks the book from the end of the blade.

Vi turns to the front. Bianca sits next to Lenny, running a hand over his head. He winces - obviously pained - and Francine is realising her music player is broken.

Vi sighs, slumping down in her seat.

ALICE (O.S.)
Oh my God...

She turns. Alice is rummaging through her handbag, her pockets, the crevices of the seats - anywhere she can think of.

VI

Alice, what's wrong?

She looks up at Vi, horror stricken.

ALICE

My ticket. It's gone!

Vi's eyes widen and as we wonder how her day could possibly get any worse, we:

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY - ??? - DAY

It's windy. That's about all we can gather from Andrew's location as we only see him from the chest up.

There's some kind of brick wall behind him too, if that helps at all.

He speaks into his mobile phone.

ANDREW
(into phone; yelling)
What? Speak up!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - SAME TIME

Vi crawls around on the grimy bus floor, peering underneath seats.

VI
(into phone)
I said, get your butt over to the next stop and help me! I can't do this by myself!

ANDREW
(distracted)
Sure you can! You can do whatever you put your mind to, Vi.

VI
Save me the motivational crap. How can one sixteen year old girl stop a bus full of people from murdering each other?

ANDREW
Chloroform?

VI
Andrew!

ANDREW
Look, this is not a great time for me.

He pointedly glances down - although we can't see what he's looking at.

VI
Are you... Are you on a date?!

ANDREW
Not exactly.

VI
Ugh, fine. Can you just meet me
at the last stop to drive me
home? I'm on the nine-oh-four.

Uneasy, his eyes dart up.

ANDREW
Oh crap.

VI
What?

ANDREW
Rain's here. Gotta go.

He hangs up.

He turns to someone beside him.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
You don't happen to have an
umbrella do you?

REVEAL a shaky, middle aged man standing on the ledge of a
huge building. He has a cardboard sign around his neck -
"I'm sorry".

Andrew sits casually on the ledge beside him.

The Man shakes his head.

END INTERCUT:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - DAY

She snaps her phone shut and clambers up onto an empty
seat.

Looking out of the window, she sees rain beginning to
patter down - growing in intensity.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARRETON ACADEMY - SOCCER FIELD - DAY

The team is still practising, despite the fact that the
rain is coming down harder every minute.

Niko and a number of other guys are clearly visible on the
field. However - -

- - Erin is on the bench, watching the group and yelling
from the sidelines.

ERIN
(interjecting)
Ben, speed up! You're not playing
against your grandma!

Erin frowns and sits back, shivering a little.

ON ERIN

Behind him creeps an UNKNOWN FIGURE, who stealthily reaches down and shoves his fingers into Erin's sides, causing Erin to yelp and jump up.

The figure is revealed to be another team member - a laughing boy named MARCO.

MARCO
(laughing hysterically)
God, that was priceless!

ERIN
Jeez, Marco, you coulda just
smacked me or something.

MARCO
Would that have been anywhere as
fun?

ERIN
(annoyed)
For me? Yeah!

Marco just gives Erin a flat look.

MARCO
Hey, have a sense of humour.
(chuckles)
I mean, you gotta.

ERIN
What's that supposed to mean?

MARCO
You dropped Bianca Parry for
Dorkgirl. Best joke I've heard
all year.

He grins and walks off. Erin just stares after him.

ERIN
(confused)
How do you guys even *know*?

Niko walks towards him - passing Marco on the way.

NIKO

Fowler, you're up. Just don't be sick out there. We gotta run in that field.

Niko heads back to the field. Erin gets up.

ERIN

(under his breath)

Ha ha, so damn funny...

Erin's getting more annoyed. He glances at the field, then pulls his mobile phone from his bag and dials a number.

He waits for a moment but gets a BUSY SIGNAL.

Erin snaps the phone shut and throws it in his bag, then runs off towards the field.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSEUM - WORLD HABITAT EXHIBIT - DAY

Jenna walks into frame to find Benson sitting on a bench in a small enclave eating from a bag of popcorn.

She sits down beside him.

JENNA

I know what you're trying to do and I just...

She takes a deep breath.

JENNA (CONT'D)

I don't appreciate it. This is hard for me - more so than other people. I'm trying and if I've been slightly cautious about the choices I make in my second life, so be it. It's better to be safe than dead all over again.

BENSON

I'm curious - what makes you believe that your second life is more difficult than anyone else's? We've all been through the same experiences, have we not?

JENNA

No. We haven't. I mean sure, there might be a couple of people who can claim to understand what I'm going through but most of the people we work with?

(MORE)

JENNA (CONT'D)

They weren't stabbed to death by a creep who broke into their apartment.

Benson nods.

BENSON

So, you're saying that you don't want to move on? Become a new person?

JENNA

I have moved on! I'm a frigging tiger, alright?!

BENSON

I see.
(beat)
Popcorn?

Jenna says nothing and Benson stands.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Well, I'll be returning to work. If you feel that it's necessary, you can take over from... Whoever that girl is.

Jenna stares down at her shoes.

JENNA

Fine.

There's a beat. Benson nods and leaves. Jenna sighs.

She stands, walking to the railing and looking over another scene. This one is of a tiger standing on a rocky outcrop - hunched over the bloody carcass of a monkey.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - DAY

Vi stands at the front of the bus - just behind the line separating her from the Bus Driver.

VI

It seems we have a bit of a problem.

REVERSE ANGLE

We see the passengers each staring expectantly at her.

BACK TO VI

She steps forward.

VI (CONT'D)

A winning scratchie ticket -
worth thirty thousand dollars -
is missing and we need to do
something about it.

MARK

Why?

VI

Excuse me?

MARK

Why should we help her?

He nods to Alice.

MARK (CONT'D)

There's nothing in it for us.

ZEKI

It is a selfish man who does
something only for himself.

MARK

Hey, I never said I wasn't
selfish. I feel it's one of my
best qualities.

Vi rolls her eyes.

VI

Look, I just think that - -

BIANCA

And who died and made you
president of the bus? Last time I
checked this was public transport
not the "Listen-To-What-Vi-Says
Mobile".

FRANCINE

Yeah. She wasn't the only one
that something bad happened to.
Who's going to pay for my
headphones?

LENNY

That was an accident.

FRANCINE

Whatever, perv.

BIANCA

Well, are you going to pay for
his hospital bills?

She pushes back Lenny's hair to reveal a gash on his forehead.

FRANCINE

That wasn't me. That was the freak with the sword.

She motions to Zeki.

ZEKI

Not a sword! Scissors! See, for a trick?

ALICE

So is anybody going to help me or not? I've checked everywhere!

MARK

Not everywhere.

ALICE

No - I have. Under the seats, in between the - -

Mark stands.

MARK

You haven't checked her.

He points to Vi.

VI

Me?

MARK

You all seem to be forgetting that this all started because of her. She was next to you when you won the money, she's proven herself to be... morally flexible when it comes to taking what isn't hers. Must I continue?

Vi puts her hands on her hips.

VI

(challenging)
Please do.

ALICE

Well...

VI

(shocked)
Alice!

ALICE
He does have a point.

Vi turns to Bianca.

VI
Bianca! Tell them that I'm not a thief.

BIANCA
That depends on how you look at it.

Vi throws her hands up in the air.

VI
This is ridiculous!

She spots Nathan sitting at the back silently - observing.

VI (CONT'D)
You! In the back. Do you think I'm a thief?

Nathan considers this for a moment.

NATHAN
It's possible - -

VI
Well that's just - -

NATHAN
You didn't let me finish.

He stands and moves down the bus, past Mark.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
It's possible for any of us to be the thief. Violet has proven herself to be less than trustworthy if this gentlemen's allegations against her are to be believed. Francine, was it?

Francine nods.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Francine needs tuition money and our magician friend here is in danger of going out of business.

FRANCINE
That's crazy. I was all the way over here. I didn't go anywhere near that part of the bus.

NATHAN

But there was that fight. Alice was flailing around like a fish in a net. It wouldn't be difficult for the ticket to work its way over to the floor near where you're sitting right now.

He looks to Lenny.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Or you. Spending all that time so close to the ground. You could have easily seen the abandoned ticket.

His eyes dart to Bianca.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Even if you didn't want the money yourself, you could have taken it simply to get your friend, Violet, in trouble.

(beat)

And I use the term "friend" loosely.

LENNY

How do you know all this stuff?

Nathan turns, returning to his seat.

NATHAN

It's my job.

He sits down and opens his book.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I'm a private detective.

The other passengers of the bus remain in stunned silence. Until...

LENNY

Cool.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARRETON ACADEMY - SPORTS FIELD - DAY

It's still raining as Erin darts through his teammates with the ball underfoot, weaving between their feet.

Finally, he reaches the goal and kicks.

Marco head-butts the ball back towards him and it hits Erin straight in the face.

Reeling back, Erin's hand goes to his bloody nose as the teammates crowd around him. He looks up to see Marco standing there, smirking.

Something clicks behind Erin's eyes as he launches forward - tackling Marco to the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - DAY

CLOSE ON LENNY

With a nasty red scrape across his forehead - just under his hairline. Bianca moves into frame, dabbing at the wound with a tissue.

Lenny glances at Vi, sitting a few rows down from them and staring out of the window.

LENNY

So you two know each other?

BIANCA

Of course not. Why would you think that?

Lenny looks confused but nods - believing her.

BIANCA (CONT'D)

(amused)

Some advice? Not everything a girl tells you is the truth.

LENNY

Oh, I didn't - -

BIANCA

Yes, you did.

LENNY

(sighing)

Sorry. I just... I'm not really used to being around... Y'know...

BIANCA

People?

LENNY

People of a certain...

BIANCA

Impressive and overwhelming beauty?

LENNY

Huh?

BIANCA
I'm teaching you how to flirt,
keep up with me now.

Lenny blushes.

BIANCA (CONT'D)
And to answer your question -
yes. We do know each other.

She leans back - having finished cleaning Lenny's cut.

LENNY
But you're not friends?

Bianca opens her mouth - -

LENNY (CONT'D)
It's okay. I think I know the
answer.

Bianca smiles slightly but it drops when she looks over at
Vi.

LENNY (CONT'D)
You're kind of like Superman and
Lex Luthor. Destined to be mortal
enemies.

BIANCA
Hmm. Try Jennifer and Angelina.

LENNY
Who?

BIANCA
Aniston and Jolie. Come on, don't
tell me you've never watched *E!*
News?

(beat)
Okay. Here's the deal. Jennifer
Aniston is living a perfectly
happy existence with Brad Pitt
until Angelina Jolie slutted it
up with her skin tight clothes
and men's dress shirts in *Mr &*
Mrs Smith and led poor Brad into
her vicious, boyfriend-stealing
claws.

(beat)
And just so you know - I'm
Jennifer. The good one.

Bianca sighs.

BIANCA (CONT'D)

But you want to know something
funny?

(beat)

I'm kinda jealous. He chose her.

There's a long beat. Lenny looks over at Vi and shrugs.

LENNY

Eh. She's not that hot.

Bianca laughs causing Lenny to grin widely.

Over at Vi, she hears Bianca laugh and looks up. Irritated,
she shifts away and hears a RUSTLING of paper down below.

Looking down, she sees one of Francine's case reports. As
she picks it up, a smaller piece of paper stuck to the back
falls into her lap.

It's ripped in half and the writing on it is typed except
for one hand scrawled note just below the tear.

9 - 0 - 4

Vi's eyes widen and she looks up to Francine who's trying
to get all her papers back into her backpack.

But something's wrong. Vi's studies the two pieces of paper
again. One is stark white with Francine's handwriting which
is different from the "9-0-4" on the other paper.

Also, the smaller paper is yellowed and aged with the text
having nothing to do with law course work.

Realisation dawning upon her, Vi looks up and turns around
in her seat.

She focuses on Nathan who turns a page in his novel - the
origin of the piece Vi holds in her hand.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

We recognise the sound of HORNS and impatient YELLS before we even notice the bus which slows to a stop behind a line of cars.

Through the flurry of windscreen wipers and rain, we see the Bus Driver slump down in frustration.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - DAY

From the high vantage point of the drivers seat, the situation outside is all too clear. The Bus Driver turns to face the passengers - each lost in their own world.

BUS DRIVER

Traffic jam.

They perk up at the news - although not happily.

MARK

This is just great.

ALICE

I'm really glad you feel that way because I want to spend another hour on here with you too.

Mark gives her an irritated look.

BIANCA

There's no way I'm making my hair appointment now.

Lenny checks his watch.

LENNY

It might not last long.

From ahead - unseen through the rain - there's the SCREECH of tyres and a huge SMASH! Everyone visibly cringes.

Mark stands and walks down the aisle.

MARK

Okay, that's it. I'm walking. My office is only six blocks from here.

He now stands at the front of the bus - near Francine.

FRANCINE

You're going to work on a Saturday?

MARK

I... Uh... So? I'm not allowed to work weekends?

He taps the Bus Driver on the shoulder.

MARK (CONT'D)

Hey, buddy. Just let me out here.

BUS DRIVER

Sorry, mate. Regulations. You'll just have to sit tight like everyone else.

MARK

I don't think you - -

The Bus Driver turns around - some of that commanding power we witnessed earlier is starting to bubble through.

BUS DRIVER

I said sit tight.

A beat.

MARK

Sure.

He sits down across the aisle from Francine and "humphs", opening his (now tattered) newspaper.

MARK (CONT'D)

I've got all the time in the world.

This seems to click with Vi. She turns to look at Nathan and then stands, heading over to him.

On her way, Alice glances at her nervously and Vi stops.

VI

Oh, come on. You don't believe that guy, do you?

ALICE

No, I don't.

VI

Alice, I didn't take your ticket. You won it. It's yours. No one has the right to take it from you. I understand that.

ALICE

Yeah.

(beat)

I was going to go to Paris.

Vi's face becomes determined.

VI

And you're gonna get there. I
promise.

She keeps on moving and arrives at the back of the bus by
Nathan's side.

NATHAN

Can I help you with something?

Vi shoves the scrap of paper at him. The one with "9-0-4"
scrawled in the corner.

VI

What's this?

Nathan takes it.

NATHAN

Apparently the end of chapter
seven. That's okay, I've read
this before.

He hands the paper back.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

You keep it.

VI

That's the number of this bus.

Nathan laughs - not at all uneasy.

NATHAN

Yes, it is.

VI

So what are you really doing
here?

NATHAN

I was heading into the city to
buy some new shoes. I'm going to
a wedding next week.

He takes the paper back and studies the number.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I just jotted this number down in here from the timetable at the bus stop. If you're concerned that I defaced this book, I think you should take it up with Mr. Zeki. He's the one who tore the page out with his "magic scissors".

VI

You said something before. About the rain. About it giving me more time.

NATHAN

Did I?

Off Nathan's overly innocent expression...

CUT TO:

INT. GARRETON ACADEMY - CORRIDOR - DAY

Erin - now in casual clothes - steps out of a room marked COACH'S OFFICE, he holds an ice pack to his nose.

He looks over to see Niko sitting, waiting for him. He stands.

NIKO

Need a ride?

ERIN

Sure.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARRETON ACADEMY - FRONT LAWN - DAY

The two boys exit the school from the front doors, in the midst of a conversation. Neither pays much attention to the rain.

NIKO

Erin, look at you. Faking sick, punching out our number two - -

ERIN

I thought I was number two?

NIKO

Don't be so optimistic. You're number four on a good day.

ERIN
(grumbles)
Thanks for the compliment,
captain.

NIKO
Hey, I call it as it is, which
you need me to do sometimes. Like
now.

Niko stops walking - causing Erin to halt too.

NIKO (CONT'D)
This may not matter to you, but
this is big. And the only one
teetering on the edge of screwing
up so far is you.

Erin is sick of this.

ERIN
Changed my mind. I'll walk.

He heads away but Niko follows.

NIKO
How many more practices are you
gonna disappear from because of
this girl? I mean, is this going
to be like when you and Bianca
started dating?

ERIN
Don't - -

NIKO
I'm the friggin' captain, Erin.
If I want to bring up something,
I'm allowed to.

ERIN
Don't you think it's a bit soon?

NIKO
We all know you pretty much broke
up with Bianca, so don't even
pull that crap. And now you're
onto Morgan. I like Vi, I really
do, but... she's weird, and
that's being nice.

Erin just speeds up.

ERIN
You don't know who you're talking
about!

All Niko can do is get the last word in.

NIKO
(yelling)
Do you?

He just shakes his head and heads back to the parking lot.

Erin continues to walk through the rain, shivering but too proud to turn around.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - DAY

Francine leans over to Mark who's trying - unsuccessfully - to read his newspaper.

FRANCINE
Do you really think she did it?
Stole that woman's money, I mean?

MARK
Didn't you hear Sherlock Holmes
back there? We all could have
done it.

FRANCINE
He didn't say anything about you.
Why would you do it?

MARK
Steal thirty thousand dollars? Why
wouldn't I?

He looks down, a little embarrassed.

MARK (CONT'D)
Things aren't going so well for
me right now. I'm going through a
rough divorce that's cleaning me
out. I'm - -

FRANCINE
- - Working Saturday's to pay for
the lawyers. I get it.

MARK
I find it hard to believe that
you've been divorced.

FRANCINE
I want to be a lawyer.

MARK

Oh. Fantastic. Someone else who can help my cheating wife take everything that I've got.

Francine quirks an eyebrow - confused.

FRANCINE

Wait. Haaaang on. Are you saying that she cheated on you and she's the one who's getting rich?

The look on Mark's face reads the affirmative.

FRANCINE (CONT'D)

We've gotta bring this bitch down.

Mark smiles sincerely. He holds out his hand and they shake.

MARK

Mark Easton. Nice to meet you.

Behind Mark, Zeki stands and walks a few rows back. We FOLLOW him as he stops at Lenny.

ZEKI

(as he crouches down)
Excuse me. Could I have... Ah...
A moment to speak with you?

LENNY

To speak? With me? Sure.

ZEKI

I am deeply sorry. I did not mean to hurt you.

Lenny's confused and Zeki motions to the boy's forehead.

LENNY

Oh, this? Nah. Wasn't you.

He nods to Francine.

LENNY (CONT'D)

Fake nails.

BIANCA

(to herself)
I knew they weren't real!

Zeki pulls a business card from his jacket pocket and hands it to Lenny.

ZEKI

Regardless, I would like to apologise. Here is a card for my restaurant. You come - bring your friend - and your meal is free.

LENNY

Seriously?

He looks over the card, smiling.

LENNY (CONT'D)

That's awesome. Aw! Magic show. Sweet. Hey, my cousin loves magic.

ZEKI

Bring your cousin.

LENNY

No, I mean... He's got this bar mitzvah thing coming up and he's looking for a place to have the party.

Zeki's face brightens.

ZEKI

We can do that.
(beat)
But not for free.

Lenny nods and Zeki smiles some more.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - BACK - SAME TIME

Vi sits down in a seat across from Nathan.

VI

You knew. You knew the rain would cause us to get stuck in traffic and that I'd have more time to... How could you know that?

NATHAN

You've got to have a little faith, kid.

VI

Don't call me that.

NATHAN

Why not? We could be friends. Maybe if we met somewhere else.
(MORE)

NATHAN (CONT'D)

An office party. A business meeting.

Vi's eyes widen. It's all coming together.

Nathan reaches into his pocket and pulls out Alice's scratchie ticket.

VI

That's - -

NATHAN

We're on the same side, Vi.

VI

But you took that from her. That's not... You're not fixing anything.

NATHAN

And what are you doing? How are you helping them?

Vi looks around at the bus.

VI

I don't... I can't help them. I don't know how.

NATHAN

What did I tell you, huh? Have a little faith. They're helping each other. They're helping themselves. We're just shadows.

Vi sees Mark and Francine, now sitting together, deep in conversation. Bianca and Lenny laugh and smile, in the midst of an innocent game of thumb wrestling.

Zeki sits across from them, writing things in a note pad and occasionally showing these notes to Lenny who nods.

Vi looks over at Alice - sitting alone and dejected.

VI

What about Alice?

Nathan turns back the pages in his book, holding it out to her. She sees the other half of the torn page - still attached in the book.

Above the tear - the other half of the hand written message - is "Alice".

NATHAN

You let me worry about her.

Nathan puts the scratchie back in his pocket and Vi slides into the seat next to him.

VI

You have to give it back to her.

NATHAN

Listen, I don't know how much they told you but you obviously aren't up to date with Company protocol. We're both following the plan... But in different ways.

He looks over at Alice.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

This is way it has to be.

With the ROAR of the engine, the bus lurches forward - albeit at a slow crawl. The passengers (minus Vi, Nathan and Alice) CHEER.

Vi can't help but stay focused on Alice.

MUSIC CUE: "New York" by Eskimo Joe

It's almost as if we see what Vi sees as the world on the bus fades and changes to various passengers exiting.

The first to leave is Mark who pointedly ignores Alice and Vi but shakes Francine's hand.

At the next stop, Francine stands - dropping a folder from her bag. Lenny picks it up and hands it to her. The soft, apologetic smile on Francine's face shows us that there's no hard feelings between them.

Then, it's time for Zeki to leave. He waves to Vi, winking, and pats Lenny on the shoulder as he heads to the front door.

Now, we're down with Lenny and Bianca. Lenny squints out through the rain.

LENNY

Oh.

BIANCA

What is it?

The bus hisses to a stop.

LENNY

That's mine.

BIANCA
 (disappointed)
 Oh. You mean... ?

LENNY
 I guess this is it.

He doesn't move.

BUS DRIVER
 Anybody off?

LENNY
 (calling)
 Yeah!

He stands slowly as does Bianca - allowing him to step out into the aisle.

LENNY (CONT'D)
 I guess this is it.

BIANCA
 You already said that.

Lenny nods and walks down to the front of the bus - pausing at the open door. He waves and steps off.

As the doors close, Bianca sits down and looks out of the window.

Vi turns to Nathan.

VI
 Do you have a pen?

Nathan suspiciously pulls a pen from his jacket pocket and hands it to her. Vi takes his novel and rips out a page.

VI (CONT'D)
 (off his expression)
 Take one for the team, friend.

ANGLE ON BIANCA

Vi appears beside her.

VI
 Is that it?

Bianca turns to her, glaring, as the bus starts to move again.

BIANCA
 Oh, don't think you know what
 you're talking about Morgan. You
 have no - -

VI

For God's sake, Bianca. If there was a priest on this bus he would've married you guys by now!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Lenny - quickly being soaked through with rain - watches the bus as it drives off.

He turns and starts to walk away.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - CONTINUOUS

Bianca grits her teeth. Vi holds out the paper and pen.

VI

Don't listen to who's saying it.
Just listen.

(beat)

Don't be a moron, Bianca.

There's a pause and then Bianca snatches the paper and pen from Vi. She stands - whirling around to the front of the bus.

BIANCA

STOP THIS BUS!

She takes off up the aisle, scribbling something down on the piece of paper.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

Stopping, Lenny grimaces and turns. He sprints for the bus which suddenly slams on the breaks twenty metres ahead of him!

Reaching the closed door - he bangs on it with his fists.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - FRONT - CONTINUOUS

The Bus Driver, startled, fumbles to open the door. It opens halfway and Lenny slips in - as Bianca reaches him.

LENNY

Can I have your number!

BIANCA

(thrusting a slip of
paper at him)
Here's my number!

They stop and chuckle nervously. Bianca hands him the paper and he slips it into his pocket.

LENNY

Bianca, I just wanted to say - -

The Bus Driver pulls a lever and the door snaps shut onto Lenny! Pinned half in and half out of the bus, Lenny gasps for air as Bianca screams.

BIANCA

(to Bus Driver)

What are you doing? Let him out!

BUS DRIVER

It's stuck!

Bianca reaches out for Lenny but he shakes his head.

LENNY

It's okay. I just... I just wanted to say... If you're Jennifer, I guess that makes me Vince Vaughn.

Bianca laughs.

BIANCA

But way cuter. Hey... I thought you didn't watch *E! News*.

The door slides open and Lenny falls forward - gasping and coughing. After a moment, he straightens.

LENNY

(shrugging)

I have a sister.

They take a moment together - smiling.

BUS DRIVER

Ahem.

Snapping out of it, they turn to him.

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)

On or off?

LENNY

Oh! Sorry. I'll just... Yeah.

He steps off the bus and the Bus Driver closes the doors. From outside, Lenny waves and Bianca does the same.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

As the bus pulls away, Lenny sees Vi at the window a little further down. He nods to her.

LENNY
(mouthing)
Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - MIDDLE - CONTINUOUS

Vi sees this and smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - BENSON'S OFFICE - DAY

There's a KNOCK on the door and Jenna enters. Benson looks up from his work and smiles.

BENSON
Don't take this the wrong way but
I was hoping I wouldn't see you
until tomorrow.

Jenna laughs but it's half hearted as she breaks down in tears. She sinks down into the chair across the desk.

JENNA
Why do you care so much? What
does it matter to you if I'm a
monkey or not?

Benson hands her the photograph of a woman and a baby - the one we saw all the way back in an early episode.

BENSON
The little one. My daughter. You
remind me of her.

He opens a drawer - riffling through it - and pulls out a manila folder.

BENSON (CONT'D)
Strong willed. Resourceful.
Tough.
(beat)
She's older now. Eighteen.

JENNA
I didn't know you still had
contact with your family. Around
the office - people always said
your family thought you were
dead.

BENSON

They do. A little secret of mine, Jenna. The surveillance department are an inquisitive bunch. You ask them to keep an eye on someone - they'll go the whole nine yards.

He opens the folder. Inside is evidence of the girl's life - pictures drawn in crayon as a child, report cards, birthday cards, school photographs.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Anyway... My point is, this is all I have of my daughter. Moments. Memories of things I never shared with her. But this is the way it should be. As it should be with you.

JENNA

I don't understand.

BENSON

Who you were before you joined the Company is a memory. What happened to her - how she died - it doesn't matter. All that matters is who you are now.

(beat)

Don't live like a memory, Jenna.

Jenna nods and we MOVE DOWN into the contents of Benson's folder.

FADE TO:

INT. THE COMPANY - BREAK ROOM - SOME TIME AGO

Andrew and Vi are clowning around with a digital camera. Their voices are unheard over MUSIC as Andrew sets the flash off in Vi's face - laughing.

Jenna, sitting at the break table, rolls her eyes and tries to ignore them.

Behind her, Andrew slings his arm around Vi and holds the camera out with his other arm - preparing to take a picture.

Vi tosses a plastic spoon at Jenna's back and she turns around. Vi motions for Jenna to join them. Jenna takes the camera from Andrew - misunderstanding - but Vi shakes her head, pulling Jenna over to her side.

Andrew takes the picture of all three of them together. As the flash goes off, we...

CUT TO:

INT. JENNA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

ANGLE ON PHOTO

Of the three of them, smiling.

PULL OUT to reveal that Jenna has just fitted it in a photo frame. She puts it aside, looking down at the box of photos on the coffee table.

She lifts out a drivers licence from inside the box. It shows Jenna - about five or six years ago - but the name reads, "Jennifer Franklin".

Putting it back in the box, she closes the lid and takes the box away - replacing it with the photo of herself, Andrew and Vi.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - BACK - AFTERNOON

It's getting late now - the sky is darkening behind already dark clouds.

The bus slows and stops.

BUS DRIVER

End of the line - everybody off!

The doors open and Vi, Nathan, Bianca and Alice stand. Bianca hops off first, disappearing up the street. Alice moves towards the front of the bus and Nathan steps towards the second set of doors.

Just before he gets out, he turns back to Vi.

NATHAN

This is right.

Vi nods and Nathan exits. Instead of following him, Vi walks down towards the main doors where Alice is taking one last look for her ticket.

Vi stops behind her.

VI

Find it yet?

Alice shakes her head.

ALICE

No. Look... I'm sorry for... I really don't believe that you have it.

(beat)

It was probably that blonde girl.

Vi laughs.

VI

She did look kind of shifty.

ALICE

Anyway, thanks for... Just thanks.

Vi gives her a small smile. We PAN DOWN to Vi's hands. She flicks her wrist and the scratchie ticket appears in her fingers. She moves her hand towards Alice's pocket but the woman moves - exiting the bus.

Missing her chance, Vi starts to follow. Outside, Andrew leans against the "BUS STOP" sign. However, it actually reads, "NOT DONE".

Confused, Vi turns around.

BUS DRIVER

I said end of the line.

Snapping out of her daze, Vi moves forward - shaking his hand.

If we were paying close enough attention, we would see her other hand dip quickly into the Bus Driver's pocket.

VI

You did a great job today. Sorry about all the... Y'know.

The Bus Driver looks oddly touched at her words.

BUS DRIVER

Comes with the territory, I guess.

Vi smiles and hops off the bus.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP - AFTERNOON

She joins Andrew and hugs him.

ANDREW
 (surprised)
 Wow - hey. You can't have missed
 me that much.

Vi lets go and pats down his jacket.

VI
 You're all damp.

ANDREW
 Wet t-shirt contest. So, how'd
 the assignment go? Any problems?

They start to walk and Vi spots Nathan. He's sitting at the
 bus stop, reading his book. He looks perfectly calm -
 looking up and giving her a smug nod.

VI
 (as she passes)
 Might wanna check your pocket
 there, partner.

Nathan curiously puts his hand in his pocket and his smile
 drops. Vi and Andrew keep walking.

VI (CONT'D)
 (calling back)
 It's all in the wrist!

After a moment Andrew turns to her - suddenly serious.

ANDREW
 You didn't tell me about any
 Breakers on the phone.

VI
 Break-a-huh?

ANDREW
 That's Nathan Percy.

They reach Andrew's car.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
 He's part of the Breakers -
 another Company division.

VI
 Do you see the blank face? No
 idea what you're talking about.

ANDREW
 We're Fixers because we fix
 broken connections.
 (MORE)

ANDREW (CONT'D)

The Breakers - surprise, surprise
- break connections that weren't
supposed to be made in the first
place.

VI

Oh.

She looks back at Nathan - who stares into her with cold eyes. Andrew visibly shivers.

ANDREW

Those guys give me the creeps.
Look, I have goosebumps.

And as they climb into the car, they're back to normal - the seriousness of their "Breaker" conversation having passed.

VI

Dude, wet t-shirt contest? It's
like fifteen degrees.

Andrew starts the engine and they drive away. As we watch them move up the street...

VI (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hey, do you mind if I call
someone? I've got to fix one last
connection.

FADE TO:

EXT. PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

The rain has let up. Now, it's almost like a soft mist which looks magical as it falls down into an illuminated streetlight.

Erin stands under the light - looking in all directions.

Vi walks out of the darkness, holding an umbrella.

VI

Hey, Erin.

ERIN

Hey.

Both are smiling, a little awkwardly.

VI

I had a really bad day. I mean,
you wouldn't even believe - -
(notices Erin's grin)
What?

ERIN

I dunno, just happy to see you.

Vi rolls her eyes and blushes.

VI

Thanks.

ERIN

I defended your honour today. One of the guys, Marco, kept shooting his mouth off, so...

(mimes punching)

Pow.

VI

(shocked)

Oh my God! So that's what the...

She motions to Erin's nose which looks terribly tender.

VI (CONT'D)

I was afraid to ask.

(beat)

Wait, do I even know this Marco?

Why would he - -

Erin steps forward and reaches his hand out, brushing her hair behind her ear. Vi quiets down.

ERIN

Hey, I've been waiting all day for this.

And he leans down and kisses her. Short, sweet, like he's been doing it forever so he doesn't need to be greedy. Vi likes it.

VI

(breathless)

Wow.

ERIN

So, Vi. You free after all?

VI

Well, I have some homework...

(Erin's face falls)

Kidding.

Erin's face lights up.

ERIN

Coffee?

VI
(teasing)
Any verbs, adverbs, prepositions?

He rolls his eyes.

ERIN
Violet Morgan, would you like to
have coffee with me?

VI
("That's better")
Definitely.

And off the warm, fuzzy feeling coming from these two:

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE