

FAMILY SPIES

Pilot

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"The Whellington Group"

TEASER

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Scattered wooden puppets stare lifelessly at each other.

A black rope is barely seen as it drops from above. A dark-clad FIGURE slides down it. Crouches and looks around.

Seeing nothing amiss, the figure shakes the rope. Another similarly dressed figure slides down.

The first figure tosses back a hood revealing VANESSA MORGAN'S (27), beautiful, yet determined face.

VANESSA

This way.

QUINLEY "QUIN" TALBERT (30), major league gorgeous, shrugs off his hood and follows her.

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Vanessa and Quin make their way down the hall. Quin grabs her arm, pulling her up short. She freezes.

After listening a moment, Quin shakes his head. They continue along the hallway.

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - OFFICE - NIGHT

Vanessa makes a beeline for a shelf loaded with puppets. She picks up the one that's eighth from the end. Holds it out to Quin. He shakes his head.

QUIN

It's your show.

Vanessa smiles. Inspects the puppet. Savagely twists off it's head. Pokes a finger inside and turns it upside down.

Round cut diamonds pour into her hand.

She quickly looks each one over.

VANESSA

They're gone.

Quin frowns. Moves closer to take a look.

QUIN
You sure?

VANESSA
They missed one.

She holds up a diamond.

Quin pulls a small gadget out of his pocket. Runs the light over the diamond.

A tiny WG appears on the diamond.

QUIN
Son of a...puppets would slide
right through customs and no one'd
ever be the wiser.

Vanessa dumps the fake diamonds back inside the puppet. Tucks the real one in her vest pocket and zips it.

VANESSA
Not completely back to square one.

QUIN
Shhh!

He holds up a hand and listens.

QUIN (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Vanessa nods. Falls back letting him take the lead.

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Quin and Vanessa hurry back the way they came. They round a corner and come face to face with a giant CLOWN.

Not missing a beat, Quin delivers a mighty roundhouse to the clown's stomach. It stumbles back and doubles over.

Vanessa and Quin turn tail and run in the opposite direction.

The clown gasps. Pulls a semi-automatic weapon. Fires.

Vanessa and Quin fly around a corner. Bullets kick up plaster in the wall above their heads. They dive through a door.

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - ASSEMBLY LINE - NIGHT

Vanessa leads Quin around the abandoned machines.

The clown chases on floppy feet, shooting wildly.

A defective puppet's head explodes on the shelf just in front of Vanessa's face. She ducks and changes direction.

Quin returns fire. He and Vanessa race for the double doors.

They're locked. Last bullet, Quin shoots the lock. Vanessa spins and returns fire at the clown. Both clips empty.

Quin pulls her through the doorway.

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - DESIGN LAB - NIGHT

Quin and Vanessa survey the room. They skirt the empty desks and dodge around tall filing cabinets.

VANESSA

There's supposed to be a door here.

They run their fingers along the wall.

QUIN

Looks recently bricked in.

VANESSA

Gotta go back.

They look around the cabinets.

The clown blocks the doorway. Waiting.

Quin and Vanessa duck out of sight. Trapped.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - DESIGN LAB - NIGHT

Vanessa jerks her head toward the only door. Quin nods. Using the cabinets for cover, they inch toward it.

The clown stands motionless. Waiting to kill them.

Quin and Vanessa position themselves to spring for the door. She fishes in her pocket. Pulls out a penny.

They exchange looks. Quin nods.

Vanessa lobbs the penny across the room. It CLANGS against an empty file cabinet.

The clown looks away from them. His body stays put.

Quin and Vanessa share a frown.

Quin springs at the clown. Knocking him down.

The gun skitters across the floor.

Vanessa dashes out the door. Quin is soon on her heels.

INT. PUPPET FACTORY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Vanessa and Quin sprint down the hallway.

The clown flops along behind them.

Vanessa and Quin are almost to their extraction point.

As Vanessa reaches for the door, a bullet slices through her side. She goes down. Hard.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - VANESSA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Vanessa bolts upright in her bed. Breathing hard. Sweating. She squints in the bright sunlight that streams through frilly lavender curtains. The dolls and childhood mementos do nothing to calm her.

She grabs her cell phone. Hits a speed dial button.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. QUIN'S CONDO - BEDROOM - MORNING

Sleek and ultramodern, the condo's only colors are black and silver with occasional splashes of red.

JAMIE COLLINSWORTH (26), an angular blonde, sprawls across the middle of the King Sized bed. Quin huddles in a corner, careful not to touch her.

His phone buzzes on the night stand. He slides out of bed to sit on the floor and answers it.

QUIN
You had the dream again.

VANESSA
It's getting longer and longer.

QUIN
But ends the same way.

VANESSA
I feel like I haven't slept in weeks. How long will this go on?

QUIN
As soon as you figure out what your subconscious is trying to tell you, I bet it'll go away.

VANESSA
And if I don't? Figure it out?

QUIN
You will.

SHARON (O.S.)
Vanesssssa. Breakfast.

Vanessa sighs and rubs a hand over her face.

VANESSA
It's like she knows the instant I'm awake. What is that?

She hangs up and climbs out of bed.

Quin closes his phone. Looks thoughtfully at Jamie still sleeping. He slides his pillow from the bed and curls up on the floor. Instantly relaxing.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

SHARON MORGAN (64), ball of energy, bounces from stove to table to refrigerator, preparing breakfast.

Vanessa drags her way into the kitchen stops short when she sees OFFICER BOB WOODLEY (34), clean cut, sharp pressed with glasses, sitting at the table.

SHARON
Sleepy head. Look who stopped by
before going on his shift.

Vanessa glares at her mother.

Sharon answers with an angelic smile.

VANESSA
G'morning, Officer Bob.

OFFICER BOB
Morning, Vanessa. Mighty fine day
out today isn't it?

VANESSA
Yes. Where's daddy?

Sharon lays a plate of sausage on the table.

SHARON
Fishing. He dreamt that the cows
were standing up.

Vanessa smiles and sits at the table.

SHARON (CONT'D)
I don't want to rush you dear, but
Officer Bob agreed to give you a
ride downtown this morning.

VANESSA
What? Why would I need a ride?

SHARON
I had to move your car this morning
to let your dad out. I'd just got
it parked when it died.

VANESSA
What?

OFFICER BOB
Older cars can be a little
temperamental.

Vanessa bolts up from her chair to hurry outside.

SHARON
Oh dear. I think I upset her. Maybe
you can help her fix it.

Bob nods. He carefully smooths out his uniform and follows.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Vanessa leans under the hood of her mint condition '73 Mustang convertible.

Bob joins her.

OFFICER BOB
I should take a look.

VANESSA
That's not necessary.

Bob saunters over. Leans under the hood. He's careful not to let the car touch his sparkling uniform.

OFFICER BOB
Let me see.

She raises an annoyed eyebrow as he scans under the hood.

VANESSA
I'll be back.

OFFICER BOB
Take your time.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - KITCHEN

Vanessa storms in. Sharon smiles as she sips her coffee.

SHARON
Did Officer Bob fix it already?

VANESSA
Hand them over.

SHARON
What?

VANESSA
The spark plugs, Ma. Give 'em here.

SHARON
Spark plugs?

VANESSA
Don't play dumb. I can't believe you'd resort to sabotaging my car to try to get me a date.

SHARON
How's he doing?

VANESSA
Take a look.

Sharon and Vanessa look out the window.

EXT. MORGAN HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Bob frowns. Almost touches the battery, but yanks his hand back and inspects it for dirt.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Sharon frowns briefly. Vanessa smirks at her.

SHARON
But he has a steady job.

VANESSA
I'm not interested, Mom.

Vanessa starts searching the kitchen.

SHARON
He's wildly respected in the community.

VANESSA
I don't care.

SHARON
He's a very nice man.

Vanessa pauses in her search and stares her mother down.

VANESSA
Where did you hide my spark plugs?

SHARON
Just give him a chance. Today.
That's all I'm asking.

Vanessa opens a bag of flour from under the counter. Holds it over her head.

VANESSA
The spark plugs.

SHARON
You wouldn't.

Vanessa raises the bag higher. Prepares to slam it on the sparkling clean floor.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Wait! Here.

Sharon flicks the lid off the cuddly bear cookie jar and pulls out the spark plugs. Vanessa relaxes a little.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Give me the flour.

VANESSA

Give me the spark plugs.

SHARON

On three.

VANESSA

One-two-three.

SHARON

One-two-three.

The women exchange the flour and spark plugs.

SHARON (CONT'D)

Can't you just give him a chance?

VANESSA

Can't you lay off the matchmaking?
How can I enjoy my vacation if I
have to dodge men at every turn?

SHARON

Honey, when I was your age, that
was a vacation.

VANESSA

Mom.

SHARON

I worry about you. Your sisters
both have somebody. I just want my
children to be happy and settled.

VANESSA

I am happy, mom.

Sharon studies her closely. Shakes her head.

SHARON

Then why haven't you been sleeping?

Vanessa starts to protest. Sharon holds up a hand.

SHARON (CONT'D)

No. I promised your dad that I
wouldn't pry. Just tell us when
you're ready.

Vanessa smiles. Hugs her mother.

VANESSA
I love you, Mom. Just promise me.
No more matchmaking.

Sharon crosses her fingers behind Vanessa's back.

SHARON
You got it.

EXT. CELESTE JEWELERS - DAY

Vanessa, in a tailored business suit, smiles as she approaches the storefront. She goes inside.

INT. CELESTE JEWELERS - DAY

Like a kid in a candy shop, Vanessa scans the glass cases of fine jewelry. She's drawn to the diamond section.

TERRY WALES (30), super charismatic, smiles as he approaches from behind the diamond case.

TERRY
They're exquisite aren't they?

VANESSA
Yes.

TERRY
You won't find a better selection
anywhere else in the state.

VANESSA
I know.

Vanessa finally spares him a glance. Her eyes catch on the diamond necklace displayed in a small wall case behind him.

Terry follows her gaze.

TERRY
I'm afraid that's not for sale.

VANESSA
No one in their right mind would
ever buy it anyway. I can see from
here the diamonds are cut too deep.

TERRY
We've had many offers on it.

Vanessa gives him a surprised look.

VANESSA
 Seriously?

TERRY
 The owner refuses to part with it.

VANESSA
 If he sold it, his reputation would
 go right out the window.

TERRY
 So is there anything you're looking
 for in particular?

VANESSA
 Just a job.

TERRY
 I'm sorry. We're not hiring.

STEVE (O.S.)
 And why would I hire you?

Vanessa and Terry look at STEVE DOBSON (61), full head of
 white hair tops his wiry frame, standing near the back room.

VANESSA
 Because I was trained by the best.

STEVE
 I've heard that before.

VANESSA
 And you can't turn down free labor.

STEVE
 Get over here, girl.

Vanessa smiles and crosses to him. He folds her in a big hug.

STEVE (CONT'D)
 How dare you be in town for two
 whole days and not stop by?

VANESSA
 You're closed on Wednesdays. You
 know I only came by for the
 diamonds.

The fond smile she gives him make her words a lie.

Steve turns his attention to Terry who watches them puzzled.

STEVE

Meet the reason why I won't sell that piece. Vanessa here designed it and made it.

VANESSA

Uncle Steve! I have a reputation to protect. It's hideous. And you have it on display.

TERRY

It's very good.

STEVE

Her eye was that good at twelve. Imagine how good she is now. Tell me you want to come back full time.

Vanessa shakes her head. Examines loose stones in a case.

VANESSA

Apparently my partner and I had accumulated too many vacation days. I'm not good with sitting still.

INT. CELESTE JEWELERS - CUTTING ROOM - DAY

Vanessa sits at a workbench coaxing an emerald cut diamond from a rough stone.

Terry comes in and grabs a few gift boxes, but she snags his attention. Fascinated, he moves closer to watch.

After a few moments, Vanessa finishes the diamond. Continues to study her work.

VANESSA

I'm a little rusty.

TERRY

If that's rusty, I'd love to see you at your best.

She hands him the diamond and he inspects it with a loupe.

VANESSA

See the flaw? I couldn't get it.

TERRY

You mean that tiny little speck that can barely be seen with 10x magnification?

VANESSA

Yeah.

Terry hands her the stone back. His hand lingers on hers.

MELANIE (O.S.)

Yooo hoooo? Hello?

MELANIE DOBSON (28), plain and unremarkable, comes in the back room carrying a picnic basket on her arm. She stops short when she sees Vanessa with Terry.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

Vanessa. Hi.

Vanessa gives her a warm smile and goes to hug her. Melanie stiffly endures the embrace.

VANESSA

Melanie. You're looking good. What brings you by?

MELANIE

I thought daddy might like to have a late snack with me.

She drags her gaze from Terry. Gestures with the basket.

Vanessa frowns.

VANESSA

He's at his weekly sales meeting. You know that.

MELANIE

Silly me. I must've gotten my days mixed up. Again.

She giggles. Her eyes slide back to Terry. He's inspecting Vanessa's diamond again.

Understanding lights Vanessa's eyes.

VANESSA

What happens when you work so hard.

TERRY

Melanie, you have got to take a look at this.

Melanie's face lights up. He hands her the diamond and loupe. She moves the loupe instead of the stone.

MELANIE

Yes. It's beautiful.

TERRY

Your cousin is amazing isn't she?

Melanie lowers the loupe and glares at Vanessa.

MELANIE

Yeah. Amazing.

Vanessa quickly cleans up the work area.

VANESSA

I think I'm going to call it a day.

She grabs her stuff and heads for the door.

Terry takes a hasty step towards her.

TERRY

See you tomorrow?

Vanessa looks at him. Then at Melanie's irritated face.

VANESSA

It's Saturday.

TERRY

We're open Saturdays.

VANESSA

I'll be back on Monday. But I'll see you tomorrow, Melanie.

Melanie gives her a blank look.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Agatha's birthday extravaganza.

MELANIE

Oh right. See you tomorrow.

With a final wave, Vanessa scrams.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Vanessa comes through the back door and stops short.

Sharon bustles around the kitchen that now has the makings of a very large, very impressive taco bar.

VANESSA

You've been busy.

SHARON
You know how Agatha loves tacos.

VANESSA
Her party's not 'til tomorrow.

SHARON
That's part two. This is part one.
She's been so down lately.

VANESSA
Any idea why?

Vanessa washes her hands and arranges the food on the center island around the balloons already in place.

Sharon avoids her gaze.

SHARON
You know kids. Speaking of, you should get changed. The gang's going to be here any minute.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Vanessa dumps paper plates in a large garbage bag off to the side of the room. Watches the festivities with concern.

AGATHA ROBERTS (14), skinny and shy, offers up hesitant smiles as she opens gifts. She never meets anyone's gaze.

AMBER ROBERTS (38), high strung, gives her daughter long suffering looks as she efficiently sweeps away the gift wrap.

TOBIAS ROBERTS (15), stocky, dutifully hands the wrapped presents to his sister.

GREG MORGAN (32), playful and charming, breaks away from the crowd and joins Vanessa when she stops pretending to work and watches everyone treating Agatha with kid gloves.

GREG
I bet she'll like my gift better than yours, Nessy Bessy.

VANESSA
What's going on?

Greg shrugs.

GREG
Dunno what you mean.

VANESSA

Yeah you do. Why is everyone being so careful around Agatha?

Greg looks at group just as CLAY MORGAN (65), big and gruff, tentatively pats Agatha on her head when she offers him a smile. Sorrow heavy in his eyes. Sharon gives his arm a supportive squeeze.

GREG

Hmmm. I hadn't noticed.

VANESSA

Liar.

The doorbell RINGS.

Amber takes a break from her gift wrap disposal duties to answer it. She sighs in relief and hugs REMY BORDEN (42), smooth and laid back, as he steps through the doorway.

REMY

Hey everybody. There's the birthday girl. Happy Birthday, Agatha.

The room goes completely silent.

Agatha stares at him with wide eyes.

Amber sighs heavily.

AMBER

I taught you better manners than that, Agatha.

AGATHA

Thank you.

Remy makes his way over to the food near Vanessa and Greg.

Greg glares at the man and takes the trash into the kitchen.

Remy shrugs it off. Grins at Vanessa.

REMY

Hey girl! Haven't seen you in a hot minute. How's things in Seattle?

VANESSA

They're great. How're things here?

REMY

Ah you know. I'm between jobs right now. Whyn't you send me a ticket to come visit? I gots some time.

VANESSA

How about I take you to the airport and you buy your own ticket?

Remy laughs. Playfully punches her shoulder.

REMY

You funny, girl. You funny.

Remy reaches for a plate. Clay's meaty hand lands on his shoulder. A fragile smile on his face.

CLAY

Feel up for a little chat?

REMY

With you, Pops? Anytime.

Amber keeps an eye on Clay and Remy. She pops up off the floor when they duck into the kitchen. Follows.

Vanessa hesitates then heads for the kitchen herself. Greg comes out and grabs her. Turns her the other direction.

GREG

They just need a minute.

VANESSA

You know why they need a minute, don't you? What is going on?

He ignores her. Sits next to Sharon.

GREG

Jessica just texted me. She and Jason had to work late. They'll definitely come tomorrow.

SHARON

Same old song. So Agatha, are you excited about all your presents?

Agatha never drags her gaze away from the kitchen.

AGATHA

Yes, ma'am.

Vanessa looks around with narrowed eyes. She smiles.

VANESSA
Potty break.

She heads upstairs.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY - NIGHT

Vanessa confirms she's alone and slides into the hall closet.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - CLOSET - NIGHT

Vanessa slides the boxes uncovering a heating grate. She lays down until she can see her father angrily pacing the kitchen.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Clay nails Remy with a hostile look.

Remy actually takes a fearful step back. Amber pats his arm.

CLAY
He is not welcome in my house,
Amber. I can't believe he's still
welcome in yours.

AMBER
Daddy, be reasonable.

CLAY
Be reasonable? I'm plenty
reasonable after what he did.

AMBER
Agatha's had a rough time since
Aaron's death. Tobias, too. They
need to have a man around again.

Clay stops pacing to face her squarely.

CLAY
Then I suggest you find a real man.
Not this...this thing.

REMY
Amber's never had any complaints
about my manhood.

Clay's face turns beet red. His nostrils flare in anger.

CLAY
Get out of my house.

AMBER
If he goes, I go, Daddy.

CLAY

If that's what you want. But Agatha and Tobias won't be going with you.

AMBER

What? You can't do that.

CLAY

I believe the restraining order said 500 feet away from Agatha.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - CLOSET - NIGHT

Vanessa clenches her teeth in anger. She hides the grate and backs out of the closet.

INT. MORGAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sharon and Greg play a board game with Tobias and Agatha.

Vanessa skips down the stairs and gives them all a huge grin.

VANESSA

I just had the most wonderful idea.
It's time we had a sleep over.

Agatha's eyes light hopefully.

AGATHA

Really?

VANESSA

Yes, really.

SHARON

You munchkins scam upstairs and brush those teeth. There're some new PJs for you in Greg's old room.

Tobias is already up the stairs, his speed belies his bulk.

AGATHA

Mom?

VANESSA

We'll handle your mom. Scat.

Agatha smiles for real and follows her brother.

Vanessa turns an accusing look on her mother and brother.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Why didn't anyone tell me?

Greg shoots a nervous look at his mother. Unfazed, Sharon holds Vanessa's gaze.

SHARON

There's nothing to tell, dear.

VANESSA

So the fact that Remy molested Agatha is nothing?

END ACT ONE