LA FEMME NIKITA

Episode 6x09

NO ONE DISAPPEARS WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACE

Unofficial Fan-Fiction Teleplay

TEASER

INT. COLLECTIVE FACILITY – NIGHT

Cold blue light washes over a wall of surveillance monitors.

Old SECTION footage plays.

MICHAEL under Operations.

NIKITA during her earliest years inside Section.

Operations watching from the Perch.

Interrogations.

Missions.

Michael and Nikita standing beside each other, yet never entirely free.

The archival footage disappears.

Present-day surveillance replaces it.

Michael.

Nikita.

ERIK SVEN.

ZOE BROWN.

Then SHAYNE.

One photograph becomes several.

Shayne entering Section.

Shayne leaving Michael and Nikita's house.

Shayne drinking coffee with Erik.

Shayne laughing with Zoe.

Shayne alone.

DAVID FANNING stands before the screens.

He doesn't move.

PERRY BAUER enters.

He watches Fanning before looking at the surveillance.

BAUER

How long have you been watching her?

Fanning doesn't turn.

FANNING

Long enough.

BAUER

That's not an answer.

Fanning changes the image.

Shayne during a mission.

Focused.

Weapon raised.

FANNING

Look at her.

BAUER

I have.

FANNING

No.

Fanning turns.

FANNING (CONT'D)

Look at what they made.

Bauer studies him.

BAUER

Michael and Nikita's daughter.

FANNING

Their successor.

BAUER

She's off rotation.

FANNING

Temporarily.

BAUER

And yet most of our surveillance resources are pointed at her.

Fanning returns his attention to Shayne.

FANNING

Because Section revolves around her.

BAUER

Does it?

A beat.

BAUER (CONT'D)

Or do you?

Fanning slowly turns.

FANNING

Careful.

BAUER

I am being careful.

That's why I'm asking.

Bauer gestures toward the screens.

BAUER (CONT'D)

This stopped looking operational weeks ago.

Fanning's expression hardens.

FANNING

She's leverage.

BAUER

Then treat her like leverage.

Not a fascination.

Fanning approaches Shayne's image.

FANNING

You don't understand her.

BAUER

Neither do you.

Fanning smiles faintly.

FANNING

Not yet.

Bauer doesn't like the answer.

INT. MICHAEL AND NIKITA'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Rain against glass.

A CHESSBOARD sits between Michael and Nikita.

Michael studies the board.

Nikita studies Michael.

She moves a bishop.

MICHAEL

You're waiting.

NIKITA

So are you.

MICHAEL

For what?

NIKITA

You to make the mistake.

Michael examines the board.

MICHAEL

You sacrificed your knight.

NIKITA

Did I?

The phone RINGS.

Neither moves.

Again.

Nikita answers.

NIKITA

Yes?

INT. SECTION ONE – OPERATIONS – INTERCUT

QUINN stands beside JASON.

Every monitor displays:

RÉMY – SIGNAL LOST

QUINN

We've lost Rémy.

Michael immediately looks at Nikita.

NIKITA

Define lost.

QUINN

Tracker stopped transmitting eighteen minutes ago.

NIKITA

Last location?

Jason checks.

JASON

Budapest.

Michael takes the phone.

MICHAEL

Who was with her?

Silence.

MICHAEL

Quinn.

QUINN

Nobody.

Michael's expression changes.

MICHAEL

She wasn't supposed to be operational.

Jason opens an authorization.

RÉMY – PERSONAL LEAVE

JASON

Technically, she wasn't.

Michael turns toward Nikita.

MICHAEL

She went after them.

NIKITA

Fanning and Bauer.

Michael grabs his jacket.

NIKITA

Michael.

He stops.

NIKITA (CONT'D)

If Shayne wanted us following her, she would've left a trail.

Michael notices something.

One chess piece is missing.

The BLACK KNIGHT.

He finds it beside Shayne's abandoned coffee mug.

Underneath is a folded note.

Michael opens it.

DON'T FOLLOW.

His jaw tightens.

MICHAEL

She knows better.

Nikita takes the note.

NIKITA

That's what worries me.

EXT. BUDAPEST – SUBWAY STATION – NIGHT

A hooded woman moves through heavy rain.

Two COLLECTIVE OPERATIVES follow.

She knows they're there.

She descends into the station.

A train arrives.

She boards.

The operatives follow.

Doors close.

The train vanishes into darkness.

CUT TO BLACK.

MAIN TITLES

TITLE CARD:

THREE MONTHS LATER

ACT ONE

INT. SECTION ONE – OPERATIONS – DAY

Shayne's workstation remains untouched.

Jason glances toward it.

Quinn catches him.

QUINN

Stop looking.

JASON

I'm not.

QUINN

You've looked seventeen times.

JASON

You're counting?

QUINN

Apparently.

Jason returns to his monitor.

JASON

Three months.

Quinn says nothing.

JASON (CONT'D)

Nobody disappears for three months.

QUINN

People disappear here permanently.

JASON

That's cheerful.

He looks at Shayne's empty station again.

JASON

Shayne isn't dead.

QUINN

How do you know?

Jason thinks.

JASON

Because if she was dead, Fanning would've sent us the body.

Quinn looks at him.

JASON (CONT'D)

He's theatrical.

QUINN

And Bauer?

JASON

Bauer would've sent the body with documentation.

Quinn almost smiles.

JASON

They're cockroaches with different filing systems.

INT. SECTION ONE – PERCH – LATER

Michael stands before a wall of intelligence.

BUDAPEST.

BERLIN.

PRAGUE.

PARIS.

WARSAW.

Nothing.

Nikita enters.

NIKITA

You haven't been home.

MICHAEL

Neither have you.

NIKITA

I slept here.

MICHAEL

So did I.

Nikita examines the reports.

NIKITA

Michael.

MICHAEL

Don't.

NIKITA

I'm not telling you to stop.

That gets his attention.

NIKITA (CONT'D)

I'm telling you we're looking in the wrong places.

MICHAEL

We're looking for Shayne.

NIKITA

Exactly.

Michael looks at her.

NIKITA

We're looking for our daughter.

Maybe we should be looking for Rémy.

INT. SECTION ONE – TRAINING BAY – DAY

ERIK attacks a practice target.

Again.

Again.

Again.

Zoe watches from the doorway.

ZOE

It's already dead.

Erik stops.

ERIK

Didn't notice you.

ZOE

Obviously.

She approaches.

ZOE

Any word?

ERIK

No.

Silence.

ZOE

I miss her.

Erik looks at her.

ERIK

So do I.

ZOE

I know.

Erik puts down the weapon.

ERIK

Do you?

Zoe turns.

ZOE

What's that supposed to mean?

ERIK

You pursued her.

ZOE

She never told me not to.

ERIK

You knew we were involved.

ZOE

Were you?

Erik stiffens.

ERIK

Yes.

ZOE

Did Shayne say that?

Erik doesn't answer.

ZOE

That's what I thought.

ERIK

She was figuring things out.

ZOE

Exactly.

ERIK

Which didn't mean you needed to complicate it.

Zoe steps toward him.

ZOE

You think I wanted this?

ERIK

Didn't you?

ZOE

I wanted her.

Silence.

Zoe realizes how blunt that sounded.

ZOE

And maybe that's the problem.

Erik looks at her.

ZOE

We were both so busy wanting Shayne that neither of us stopped to ask what she wanted from herself.

That silences him.

ZOE

She wasn't choosing between us.

She was trying to choose herself.

Zoe walks away.

FLASHBACK:

INT. SECTION ONE – COMMON AREA – THREE MONTHS EARLIER

Shayne sits across from Zoe.

Coffee between them.

ZOE

Can I be completely inappropriate?

SHAYNE

That's usually how those sentences begin.

ZOE

Go out with me.

Shayne freezes.

ZOE

Once.

Dinner.

No expectations.

SHAYNE

Zoe...

ZOE

I know about Erik.

SHAYNE

That's part of the problem.

ZOE

Why?

Shayne searches for words.

SHAYNE

Because I don't know.

ZOE

Don't know what?

SHAYNE

Anything.

Zoe waits.

SHAYNE

I don't know what Erik and I are.

I don't know what you and I could be.

Half the time I don't know whether Shayne is who I am or another name somebody handed me.

ZOE

Rémy?

SHAYNE

Rémy was supposed to protect me.

Now Section uses it.

The Collective uses it.

Everybody wants to know who I'm attracted to, who I'm dating, who I'm choosing.

Shayne looks directly at her.

SHAYNE

I don't even know who I'm choosing when I'm alone.

Zoe reaches toward Shayne's hand.

She stops before touching it.

ZOE

Then don't choose me.

Shayne looks surprised.

ZOE

Choose yourself.

Erik enters behind them.

He hears the final words.

ERIK

Am I interrupting?

SHAYNE

Yes.

That hurts.

SHAYNE

But not for the reason you think.

ERIK

Then tell me the reason.

SHAYNE

I can't keep explaining myself to everybody.

ERIK

I'm not everybody.

SHAYNE

That's exactly the problem.

Silence.

ERIK

What does that mean?

SHAYNE

It means you matter.

She looks toward Zoe.

SHAYNE

She matters.

My parents matter.

And somehow everybody who matters keeps pulling on a different part of me.

ERIK

I never asked you to choose.

SHAYNE

You didn't have to.

Shayne stands.

SHAYNE

Sometimes expectation doesn't need words.

She leaves.

Erik and Zoe remain.

Something in their friendship has broken.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. UNKNOWN APARTMENT – NIGHT

A laptop glows.

Collective accounts.

Bank transfers.

Operative movements.

An encrypted call activates.

PERRY BAUER appears.

BAUER

You took your time.

The other person remains unseen.

WOMAN

You waited.

BAUER

I was curious.

WOMAN

Curiosity gets people killed.

Bauer smiles.

BAUER

Michael teach you that?

The camera reveals:

SHAYNE.

Different hair.

Civilian clothes.

Tired.

Calm.

SHAYNE

No.

She leans toward the screen.

SHAYNE

Life did.

BAUER

Three months without Section.

How does freedom feel?

SHAYNE

Expensive.

Bauer smiles.

BAUER

Fanning believes you're ready.

SHAYNE

Fanning believes whatever keeps Fanning interested in himself.

Bauer's smile disappears.

BAUER

Careful.

SHAYNE

You contacted me.

Not the other way around.

Bauer studies her.

BAUER

Tomorrow.

Midnight.

Coordinates appear.

BAUER

Come alone.

SHAYNE

Obviously.

The call ends.

Shayne opens another program.

The entire conversation has been recorded.

She encrypts it.

Labels the file:

KNIGHT TO E5

She doesn't send it.

Yet.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. COLLECTIVE FACILITY – NIGHT

Fanning watches surveillance footage.

Shayne with Erik.

Shayne with Zoe.

Shayne with Michael.

Shayne embracing Nikita.

Bauer enters carrying intelligence.

BAUER

Vienna is compromised.

Fanning doesn't react.

BAUER

We lost two couriers.

Nothing.

BAUER

David.

Fanning finally looks at him.

FANNING

What?

BAUER

We have an active breach.

Fanning looks back at Shayne.

FANNING

Handle it.

Bauer follows his gaze.

The footage shows Erik beside Shayne.

Then Zoe.

Fanning's eyes narrow.

Bauer notices.

BAUER

You're jealous.

Fanning laughs.

FANNING

Of whom?

BAUER

Take your pick.

Erik.

Zoe.

Michael.

Nikita.

Anyone who gets close enough to influence her.

FANNING

I'm evaluating vulnerabilities.

BAUER

No.

You're resenting them.

Fanning turns.

BAUER

This is becoming a conflict of interest.

FANNING

Don't use that phrase with me.

BAUER

Then stop behaving like one.

Bauer throws a file onto the desk.

BAUER

We had an opportunity to penetrate Section's financial network.

You redirected the team.

FANNING

Shayne moved.

BAUER

Exactly.

Bauer steps closer.

BAUER

We're rebuilding The Collective.

You're trying to win the attention of a woman who hates you.

FANNING

This isn't about attention.

BAUER

Then what is it?

Fanning looks at Shayne's image.

FANNING

Proof.

BAUER

Of what?

FANNING

That she's not theirs.

Bauer studies him.

BAUER

She isn't yours either.

Fanning turns cold.

INT. MICHAEL AND NIKITA'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Michael and Nikita sit across from each other.

The chessboard between them.

Michael moves a rook.

MICHAEL

Bauer moved money through Bucharest.

Nikita moves a pawn.

NIKITA

Fanning moved personnel into Budapest.

MICHAEL

Diversion.

NIKITA

Probably.

Michael moves.

MICHAEL

Check.

Nikita studies the board.

NIKITA

You're thinking about Shayne.

MICHAEL

I'm thinking about the game.

NIKITA

Same thing.

Michael looks up.

NIKITA

You keep trying to protect the king.

MICHAEL

That's the objective.

NIKITA

Not always.

Nikita sacrifices her QUEEN.

Michael stares.

MICHAEL

Why would you do that?

Nikita makes another move.

NIKITA

Because you were watching the queen.

Michael realizes.

Checkmate.

NIKITA

You never saw the bishop.

Michael stares at the board.

Then something clicks.

MICHAEL

Neither did they.

Nikita understands.

NIKITA

Shayne wasn't taken.

MICHAEL

No.

NIKITA

She disappeared deliberately.

Michael stands.

MICHAEL

She made herself the queen.

NIKITA

So Fanning and Bauer would stop watching the board.

Michael looks at her.

MICHAEL

Except Fanning never stopped watching her.

Nikita considers it.

NIKITA

Maybe that's what she's counting on.

INT. COLLECTIVE SAFEHOUSE – NIGHT

Shayne enters.

Three armed operatives search her.

Nothing.

Fanning emerges.

His eyes settle on her.

Too long.

FANNING

Shayne.

She notices.

Not Rémy.

SHAYNE

David.

FANNING

You're either very brave or very stupid.

SHAYNE

I've been accused of both.

Bauer enters.

BAUER

Section abandoned you.

SHAYNE

Maybe.

FANNING

Michael hasn't found you.

SHAYNE

Maybe he stopped looking.

BAUER

You don't believe that.

SHAYNE

I believe Michael loves me.

Fanning steps closer.

FANNING

Then why aren't you home?

Shayne allows a crack of vulnerability.

Measured.

Controlled.

SHAYNE

Because love and control aren't always easy to tell apart.

Fanning takes the bait.

FANNING

You were right to leave.

SHAYNE

Was I?

FANNING

Michael watches you.

Judges Erik.

Interferes with Zoe.

Questions your choices.

Shayne looks at him carefully.

SHAYNE

You know a lot about my personal life.

Fanning says nothing.

SHAYNE

More than Bauer seems comfortable with.

Bauer looks at Fanning.

FANNING

Michael became Operations.

SHAYNE

Maybe.

FANNING

And Nikita isn't much different.

Shayne pauses.

SHAYNE

Better at hiding it.

Fanning smiles.

He thinks he's found her weakness.

Shayne sees it.

And lets him.

INT. SECTION ONE – OPERATIONS – SAME

Jason's terminal BEEPS.

JASON

Quinn.

She approaches.

QUINN

What?

JASON

Ghost signal.

QUINN

Source?

Jason isolates it.

Letters appear:

RÉMY

Jason freezes.

JASON

It's Shayne.

Quinn moves closer.

QUINN

Are you sure?

Another transmission.

KNIGHT TO E5

Jason immediately reaches for communications.

JASON

Get Michael and Nikita.

INT. COLLECTIVE SAFEHOUSE – LATER

Fanning sits opposite Shayne.

Bauer remains nearby.

FANNING

Why Erik?

Shayne raises an eyebrow.

SHAYNE

Excuse me?

FANNING

He's trained to manipulate attachment.

You know that.

SHAYNE

You brought me here to discuss my dating life?

FANNING

I'm curious.

SHAYNE

That's becoming obvious.

Bauer looks at Fanning.

FANNING

And Zoe?

Shayne's expression changes.

Now she knows.

SHAYNE

You track that too.

FANNING

I track everything.

SHAYNE

No.

A beat.

SHAYNE

You track me.

Fanning leans back.

FANNING

You're important.

SHAYNE

To The Collective?

She glances at Bauer.

SHAYNE

Or to you?

Silence.

Shayne sees the fracture.

She pushes.

SHAYNE

Does Bauer know how much time you spend watching me?

Fanning's jaw tightens.

FANNING

Don't play games.

SHAYNE

That's the problem.

You think this is a game between you and my parents.

Michael.

Nikita.

Operations.

The past.

She leans forward.

SHAYNE

I'm just the piece you can't stop touching.

Fanning's eyes flash.

There.

Shayne found it.

SHAYNE

You don't want to recruit me.

You want me to validate you.

FANNING

You think highly of yourself.

SHAYNE

No.

I think accurately of you.

Bauer watches closely.

SHAYNE

That's why you keep watching.

Because I don't fear you the way you want me to.

Fanning stands.

BAUER

David.

Fanning ignores him.

SHAYNE

Every time I choose Erik...

Fanning watches.

SHAYNE

...or Zoe...

His expression changes again.

SHAYNE

...or Michael...

She waits.

SHAYNE

...or Nikita...

Then:

SHAYNE

...or myself...

She smiles.

SHAYNE

You lose.

Fanning SLAMS his hand onto the table.

Bauer steps forward.

BAUER

Enough.

Shayne leans back.

Calm.

Fanning has just shown her exactly where the fracture lies.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. SECTION ONE – OPERATIONS – NIGHT

Michael and Nikita arrive.

Jason brings up the signal.

JASON

It's bouncing through seventeen relays.

MICHAEL

Can you trace it?

JASON

Eventually.

MICHAEL

We don't have eventually.

NIKITA

What else did Shayne send?

Jason enlarges:

KNIGHT TO E5

Michael studies it.

MICHAEL

It's not coordinates.

NIKITA

It's a move.

Michael looks at her.

NIKITA

She's telling us to wait.

MICHAEL

She's surrounded by Collective operatives.

NIKITA

And if we move now, we destroy whatever she's spent three months building.

Michael turns away.

MICHAEL

She's my daughter.

NIKITA

Mine too.

Michael looks at her.

NIKITA

Which is why we have to trust her.

A painful silence.

MICHAEL

I hate this.

Jason glances over.

JASON

For what it's worth, everyone does.

Michael looks at him.

JASON

Just trying to contribute.

INT. COLLECTIVE SAFEHOUSE – NIGHT

Bauer places a tablet before Shayne.

Four photographs.

MICHAEL.

NIKITA.

ERIK.

ZOE.

BAUER

Prove you're finished with Section.

SHAYNE

How?

Fanning leans forward.

FANNING

Choose.

SHAYNE

Choose what?

FANNING

Who matters least.

Shayne looks at the photographs.

Fanning watches her reaction to Erik.

Then Zoe.

Too carefully.

FANNING

The Valentine or the lesbian.

Shayne's eyes harden.

SHAYNE

Don't reduce them to that.

FANNING

Then Michael.

The man who monitors your life.

SHAYNE

No.

FANNING

Nikita?

SHAYNE

No.

Fanning grows impatient.

FANNING

Then who?

Shayne takes the tablet.

She opens another personnel file.

Her own.

SHAYNE SAMUELLE-JONES

Operational identity:

RÉMY

She taps it.

SHAYNE

Me.

Fanning frowns.

FANNING

That's not how this works.

SHAYNE

Then you shouldn't have asked me to choose.

Bauer stares at her.

He realizes.

BAUER

David.

Fanning turns.

BAUER

She's playing us.

Shayne smiles.

Tiny.

Too late.

Her thumb presses against a scar on her wrist.

A hidden transmitter activates.

The lights DIE.

INT. SECTION ONE – OPERATIONS – SAME

Jason's screens erupt.

Files cascade everywhere.

JASON

Whoa.

Quinn rushes over.

Collective safehouses.

Accounts.

Weapons caches.

Communications.

Operative identities.

QUINN

How?

Jason stares at the information.

JASON

Three months.

Michael approaches.

JASON

Shayne hasn't been hiding from them.

She's been mapping them.

Nikita understands.

NIKITA

She made herself the infiltration.

Michael studies the intelligence.

Fear slowly gives way to something else.

Pride.

INT. COLLECTIVE SAFEHOUSE – DARKNESS

Gunfire.

Shayne moves through the chaos.

Not like Michael.

Not like Nikita.

Her own rhythm.

Her own methods.

She redirects Collective operatives away from escape routes.

Fanning catches her.

FANNING

You think this makes you Nikita?

Shayne twists free.

Drops him.

Takes his weapon.

SHAYNE

No.

She looks at him.

SHAYNE

That's the point.

Bauer FIRES.

Shayne dives behind cover.

BAUER

You're Michael's daughter.

SHAYNE

Also missing the point.

She triggers the fire suppression system.

Water rains down.

Emergency lights flash.

Fanning finds her again.

He grabs her arm.

FANNING

You could've had something different.

Shayne looks at his hand.

Then him.

SHAYNE

With you?

Fanning's grip tightens.

SHAYNE

David...

you never wanted me.

He freezes.

SHAYNE

You wanted to possess the one thing Michael and Nikita have that you can't control.

She breaks his grip.

SHAYNE

That's not affection.

It's obsession.

Fanning lunges.

Shayne disappears into smoke.

INT. COLLECTIVE FACILITY – LATER

Bauer finds Fanning.

Bruised.

Furious.

Shayne is gone.

BAUER

She manipulated you.

Fanning says nothing.

BAUER

And you let her.

FANNING

She manipulated both of us.

BAUER

No.

Bauer approaches.

BAUER

She used your obsession to manipulate me.

That's worse.

Fanning turns.

FANNING

Choose your next words carefully.

BAUER

The Collective cannot be built around your fixation with Shayne.

FANNING

She's the key to Section.

BAUER

She's the key to you.

Silence.

BAUER

That's why she keeps winning.

Fanning looks toward the empty surveillance monitor.

BAUER

Michael taught her patience.

Nikita taught her deception.

You taught her something neither of them could.

FANNING

What?

BAUER

How to recognize obsession...

and turn it into a weapon.

Bauer leaves.

Fanning remains.

One monitor flickers back on.

Shayne's photograph.

Fanning stares.

Far too long.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. ABANDONED RAIL TERMINAL – DAWN

Michael and Nikita arrive alone.

Abandoned Collective equipment.

Blood.

Weapons.

No Shayne.

Michael searches.

MICHAEL

Shayne!

Nothing.

Nikita spots something.

A BLACK CHESS KNIGHT sits on a crate.

She picks it up.

Underneath:

CHECK.

Michael joins her.

MICHAEL

Where is she?

Nikita turns the piece over.

Coordinates.

She looks at Michael.

NIKITA

She wants us to find her now.

EXT. DANUBE RIVER – MORNING

Shayne sits alone on a bench.

Three months older in ways calendars don't measure.

Michael approaches from one direction.

Nikita from the other.

Shayne sees them.

Michael stops several feet away.

He doesn't rush her.

MICHAEL

You disappeared.

SHAYNE

I know.

MICHAEL

Three months.

SHAYNE

I know.

MICHAEL

We thought you were dead.

Shayne looks down.

SHAYNE

I'm sorry.

Michael wants to be angry.

Relief wins.

MICHAEL

Why didn't you tell us?

SHAYNE

Because you'd have stopped me.

Michael doesn't deny it.

Nikita sits beside her.

NIKITA

Did you know what you were doing?

Shayne thinks.

SHAYNE

At first?

No.

Nikita almost smiles.

SHAYNE

I knew Fanning and Bauer wanted me because they thought I was the weak point.

MICHAEL

So you let them believe it.

SHAYNE

I needed Fanning watching me.

Michael's expression changes.

SHAYNE

He wasn't watching Section anymore.

He wasn't even watching The Collective.

He was watching me.

NIKITA

And Bauer?

SHAYNE

He figured it out.

Eventually.

She looks across the river.

SHAYNE

By then they were fighting each other.

MICHAEL

You manipulated them.

Shayne looks at him.

SHAYNE

You taught me.

Michael says nothing.

SHAYNE

Both of you did.

She looks at Michael.

SHAYNE

You taught me how to let somebody see exactly what they expect.

Then Nikita.

SHAYNE

You taught me how to survive long enough to decide what they never get to see.

NIKITA

And Rémy?

Shayne looks toward the river.

SHAYNE

Rémy taught me the rest.

NIKITA

Which is?

Shayne looks between her parents.

SHAYNE

Sometimes you don't manipulate someone by lying.

A beat.

SHAYNE

You give them pieces of the truth...

and let their arrogance build the lie for you.

Michael absorbs it.

MICHAEL

Come home.

SHAYNE

My apartment ready?

Michael almost smiles.

MICHAEL

Yes.

SHAYNE

Then I'm going there.

His smile disappears.

Nikita laughs softly.

SHAYNE

But I'll come over for dinner.

Michael nods.

Enough.

INT. SECTION ONE – OPERATIONS – LATER

The elevator opens.

Shayne enters.

Operations falls silent.

Jason stands.

JASON

Well.

Look what the cat dragged back from international espionage.

SHAYNE

Miss me?

Jason embraces her.

JASON

Absolutely not.

He holds her tighter.

JASON

Never do that again.

Quinn approaches.

QUINN

Welcome back, Shayne.

Shayne pauses.

Her original name.

Not the codename.

SHAYNE

Thank you.

Across Operations, Zoe sees her.

Erik sees her.

They approach from opposite directions.

Then stop when they see each other.

Shayne notices.

SHAYNE

Seriously?

Neither answers.

SHAYNE

I've been gone three months and this is still happening?

ERIK

We were worried.

ZOE

Very worried.

SHAYNE

Good.

They look confused.

SHAYNE

Because we're establishing something right now.

She looks at Erik.

SHAYNE

I care about you.

Erik listens.

Then Zoe.

SHAYNE

And I care about you.

Zoe wasn't expecting it.

SHAYNE

But I disappeared partly because everybody kept asking who I was going to choose.

ERIK

I didn't.

Shayne raises her hand.

He stops.

SHAYNE

Not intentionally.

That's what made it worse.

She looks between them.

SHAYNE

I'm not a mission objective.

I'm not a competition.

And I'm not the prize at the end of whichever one of you proves you understand me better.

Zoe looks down.

Erik nods.

SHAYNE

Right now...

I'm choosing neither of you.

That hurts them both.

Neither protests.

SHAYNE

I need to figure out who came back.

Zoe meets her eyes.

ZOE

Fair.

Erik takes longer.

ERIK

Fair.

A beat.

ERIK

Coffee?

Shayne raises an eyebrow.

ERIK

All three of us.

Zoe looks at him.

ZOE

You're buying.

ERIK

Why me?

ZOE

You're the Valentine operative.

You're supposed to be charming.

ERIK

That's not how Valentine training works.

ZOE

Apparently not.

Shayne walks between them.

SHAYNE

Three months infiltrating The Collective was easier than this.

She laughs.

INT. SECTION ONE – PERCH – CONTINUOUS

Michael watches from above.

Nikita joins him.

NIKITA

Don't.

MICHAEL

I'm not doing anything.

NIKITA

You're thinking loudly.

Michael watches Erik.

Then Zoe.

Then Shayne.

MICHAEL

There are two of them now.

Nikita suppresses a smile.

NIKITA

Apparently.

MICHAEL

This is worse.

NIKITA

For you.

Not necessarily for Shayne.

Michael looks down.

MICHAEL

Fanning's still alive.

The humor disappears.

NIKITA

I know.

MICHAEL

He's obsessed with her.

NIKITA

Which makes him dangerous.

MICHAEL

Yes.

NIKITA

It also makes him predictable.

Michael looks at her.

NIKITA

Shayne figured that out before we did.

Michael watches his daughter.

Not as someone needing rescue.

As an operative who just outplayed two experienced enemies.

MICHAEL

Yes.

NIKITA

You don't sound happy about it.

MICHAEL

I am.

A beat.

MICHAEL

That's what concerns me.

LATER

INT. MICHAEL AND NIKITA'S HOUSE – NIGHT

The house is quiet.

The unfinished chess game remains on the table.

Shayne sits with a mug she hasn't touched.

Michael enters.

MICHAEL

Can't sleep?

SHAYNE

Apparently disappearing for three months doesn't fix that.

Michael sits across from her.

Silence.

MICHAEL

Erik?

Shayne looks up.

SHAYNE

That obvious?

MICHAEL

No.

A beat.

MICHAEL

Zoe too.

Shayne exhales.

SHAYNE

Of course you know.

MICHAEL

I'm your father.

SHAYNE

That's not usually the reassuring part.

Michael accepts it.

MICHAEL

I'm trying.

SHAYNE

That's the problem.

MICHAEL

What is?

SHAYNE

Everyone's trying.

Erik's trying to give me space.

Zoe's trying to be honest.

Mom's trying not to interfere.

You're trying not to interrogate anyone within thirty feet of me.

Michael attempts to calm her.

SHAYNE

And I'm standing in the middle wondering why I feel guilty no matter what I do.

MICHAEL

Because you care about us.

SHAYNE

That's not supposed to make it harder.

MICHAEL

Usually does.

Shayne looks at him.

SHAYNE

Did you ever know?

Michael understands.

MICHAEL

About your mother?

SHAYNE

About anything.

Who you were supposed to love.

Who you could trust.

Whether it was real or conditioning or loneliness or Section putting two people together until something happened.

Michael thinks.

MICHAEL

No.

Shayne is surprised.

MICHAEL

Not at first.

Sometimes not afterward.

SHAYNE

That's comforting.

MICHAEL

It isn't supposed to be.

A tiny smile.

MICHAEL

You want me to tell you Erik is wrong for you.

SHAYNE

You'd enjoy that.

MICHAEL

Maybe.

She stares.

MICHAEL

A little.

SHAYNE

I knew it.

Michael becomes serious.

MICHAEL

But that's not what I'm going to tell you.

Shayne waits.

MICHAEL

Erik cares about you.

Shayne blinks.

SHAYNE

You just said that out loud.

MICHAEL

Don't make me repeat it.

SHAYNE

I should record this.

MICHAEL

Shayne.

She settles.

MICHAEL

Zoe cares about you too.

That doesn't mean you owe either of them an answer.

Shayne looks at him.

MICHAEL

You don't owe Erik a relationship because he was there first.

You don't owe Zoe a chance because she was honest.

And you don't owe either of them certainty because they're uncomfortable with your uncertainty.

Shayne goes quiet.

SHAYNE

What if I hurt them?

MICHAEL

You might.

SHAYNE

Great talk, Dad.

He leans forward.

MICHAEL

That's not the same as betraying them.

Shayne listens.

MICHAEL

There's a difference between hurting someone because you're careless...

and hurting someone because the truth isn't what they wanted.

A long silence.

SHAYNE

I don't want Zoe thinking she's some experiment.

MICHAEL

Then don't treat her like one.

SHAYNE

And Erik...

She hesitates.

SHAYNE

Erik makes me feel safe, but I am too confused to risk anything.

Michael's expression softens.

SHAYNE

Which scares me.

MICHAEL

Why?

SHAYNE

Because every time I feel safe with someone, part of me wonders how long it'll be before something changes. I have to live with that when it comes to you and Mom every fucking day.

Michael's Section mask falls away.

MICHAEL

Then don't promise forever.

Shayne looks up.

MICHAEL

Promise honesty.

That's enough.

SHAYNE

You make that sound easy.

MICHAEL

It's not.

Michael looks toward the chessboard.

MICHAEL

Your mother and I spent years lying to everyone around us.

Sometimes to each other.

Sometimes because we had to.

Sometimes because we were afraid of what the truth would cost.

He looks at Shayne.

MICHAEL

Don't inherit that part of us.

Shayne looks away.

SHAYNE

What if I don't know whether I want Erik...

or Zoe...

or neither...

She looks at him.

SHAYNE

...or something I don't even have a name for yet?

Michael considers it.

MICHAEL

Then don't name it.

Shayne looks at him.

MICHAEL

You spent three months proving to Fanning and Bauer that nobody gets to define you.

Don't come home and let affection do what they couldn't.

That lands.

SHAYNE

That's annoyingly good advice.

MICHAEL

Your mother said something similar to me.

SHAYNE

There it is.

Michael almost smiles.

Shayne reaches across the table.

Places her hand over his.

Michael covers hers with his.

SHAYNE

I know I scared you.

MICHAEL

Yes.

SHAYNE

I'm sorry.

Michael tightens his hand around hers.

MICHAEL

Don't do it again. Please.

SHAYNE

You know I can't promise that.

Michael sighs.

MICHAEL

I know.

A beat.

MICHAEL

Then leave a better trace.

Shayne smiles.

SHAYNE

Deal.

Michael stands.

SHAYNE

Dad?

He stops.

SHAYNE

If I ever do choose one of them...

Michael closes his eyes.

SHAYNE

Don't.

MICHAEL

I didn't say anything.

SHAYNE

Your face did.

MICHAEL

What about my face?

SHAYNE

It threatened Erik in at least four languages.

Michael thinks.

MICHAEL

Only three.

Shayne laughs.

SHAYNE

You don't get to scare either of them away.

Michael starts walking.

MICHAEL

I can make no such promise.

SHAYNE

Dad.

He stops.

Looks back.

MICHAEL

I'll try.

SHAYNE

That is not reassuring.

MICHAEL

Goodnight, Shayne.

SHAYNE

Goodnight, Dad.

Michael leaves.

Shayne looks at the chessboard.

She picks up the BLACK KNIGHT.

Places it upright between both sides.

For once, it belongs to neither.

INT. HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

Michael finds Nikita leaning against the wall.

She heard enough.

MICHAEL

How long have you been standing there?

NIKITA

Long enough.

Michael walks past.

Nikita follows.

NIKITA

"Promise honesty."

Michael stops.

MICHAEL

What?

NIKITA

That was good.

MICHAEL

I have moments.

NIKITA

Apparently.

They walk upstairs.

INT. COLLECTIVE FACILITY – NIGHT

Cold again.

Bauer sits before a monitor.

Fanning enters.

FANNING

She gave Section everything.

BAUER

Not everything.

Bauer activates a file.

RÉMY

BAUER

She spent three months inside our network.

FANNING

Meaning?

BAUER

We spent three months inside hers.

Another directory opens.

PROJECT RÉMY

Fanning's expression changes.

FANNING

She thinks Nikita invented the identity.

Bauer looks toward Shayne's photograph.

BAUER

Let her.

Fanning stares at Shayne.

Again.

Too long.

BAUER

David.

Nothing.

BAUER

If this becomes personal again, you're finished.

Fanning finally looks at him.

FANNING

It was always personal.

Bauer's expression darkens.

BAUER

That's exactly what I'm afraid of.

INT. MICHAEL AND NIKITA'S HOUSE – SAME

The chessboard.

Michael replaces the black knight.

Nikita watches.

NIKITA

Your move.

Michael studies the pieces.

Then tips his king over.

NIKITA

Giving up?

MICHAEL

No.

I'm tired of playing their game.

Nikita considers him.

Then sweeps several pieces aside.

NIKITA

Good.

Michael looks at her.

NIKITA

Then we change the rules.

INT. SHAYNE'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Boxes everywhere.

Her first night back.

Shayne enters alone.

She drops her keys onto the counter.

Her phone vibrates.

ERIK: Glad you're home. No pressure. Goodnight.

Before she can answer:

ZOE: I'm sorry things got complicated. I'm still your friend before anything else.

Shayne stares at both messages.

She smiles faintly.

Then sets the phone down.

No choice tonight.

Her laptop activates.

A Section prompt appears:

IDENTITY: RÉMY

Shayne stares at it.

She closes the window.

Immediately, another message appears.

UNKNOWN SENDER

She opens it.

YOU STILL DON'T KNOW WHY NIKITA CHOSE RÉMY.

Shayne freezes.

Another line:

ASK HER ABOUT PROJECT RÉMY.

Her expression changes.

She picks up her phone.

Josephine’s name.

Her finger hovers.

Michael's words echo:

PROMISE HONESTY.

Shayne presses CALL.

One ring.

Two.

NIKITA (V.O.)

Shayne?

Shayne stares at:

PROJECT RÉMY

SHAYNE

Mom...

A beat.

SHAYNE

I need you to tell me the truth.

Silence from the other end.

Too much silence.

Shayne realizes Nikita recognizes the words before she even says them.

SHAYNE

What is Project Rémy?

Nothing.

Then:

NIKITA (V.O.)

Where did you hear that?

Shayne's expression hardens.

The question itself is an answer.

SHAYNE

You know what it is.

CLOSE ON SHAYNE.

The identity crisis she thought she had finally controlled has just opened another door.

CUT TO BLACK.

END ACT FOUR

END OF EPISODE