

BTB_6_ToorotVillage.mmsw 11/21/22

Toorot Village Website

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BTB

By Colin Hickey

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FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A FAMILY PHOTO and OVEN MITT with "To Produce & Serve Muffins" hangs over an oven that has MELTED CHEESE bubbling in a POT. VANESSA, female, late 20's, festive turtleneck, leggings, apron with cheese stains, takes a taste. It-is-delicious!

VANESSA

Mmmm!

(beat)

Kids, the cheese is ready!

Vanessa moves from the kitchen to the den.

INT. DEN - CONTINUOUS

Generations have lived here before this family. The couch and love seat form a "L," photos of the family on the wall.

VANESSA

That means you two should be-

Vanessa stubs her toe on a POLICE CAR toy surrounded by a FIRETRUCK, AMBULANCE and TOY BIN.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

I asked you two to get ready after you cleaned up.

Vanessa turns. A moment of her staring.

BRYCE, male, 6-13, dressed in a tuxedo t-shirt and Caribbean green bathing suit, stands next to SHANNON, female, 3-6, in a purple Renaissance outfit, showing off her dress.

SHANNON

We're sorry, mommy.

BRYCE

Shannon will pick it up.

Vanessa eyes Bryce, he grins.

VANESSA

I will clean it up for the last time, my loves, because it's winter. You each need to change.

BRYCE

(Caribbean accent)

But we're on an island, mom!

VANESSA
 Long Island is not the Caribbean,
 Bryce. Shannon, did you brush your
 teeth?

SHANNON
 No, mommy.

VANESSA
 Please brush your teeth.

SHANNON
 Can you brush my teeth?

Vanessa gets closer to Shannon's eye level.

VANESSA
 No, today you're going to brush them.
 If you need help, your brother is
 here for you.

Shannon looks up at Bryce. Bryce looks at Shannon and nods.
 Shannon looks at her mother.

SHANNON
 Can daddy help me?

BRYCE
 Dad's at work again.
 (defeated)
 Come on.

Bryce and Shannon turn to leave. Vanessa sees a moment to
 teach her children.

VANESSA
 Freeze!

Bryce and Shannon freeze in place. Vanessa removes a
 CELLPHONE.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
 Please turn around and face me. I
 have something I want you two to
 hear.

Bryce and Shannon don't move. Vanessa looks at her kids.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
 Please turn around and face me.

BRYCE & SHANNON
 (through their teeth)
 You said "freeze."

Vanessa enjoys the game with her children.

VANESSA
 Please unfreeze, please turn around
 and please face me.

Bryce and Shannon do as they are told. Bryce smiles, Shannon giggles.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
 Your father loves his job and loves
 doing his job down to the very core
 of his soul. It's the same way he
 loves the both of you. I'm going to
 play you a voice message he left me
 days after our wedding and years
 before we had you two wonders.

Vanessa plays the message.

CALVIN (V.O.)
 Hiiiiii, my beautiful. I hope you're
 making your famous melted cheese
 cause when I get home I'm gonna spread
 it all over you an-

Vanessa fast forwards. Bryce gives his mother an eye, Shannon
 stares at the phone.

VANESSA
 It's further ahead.

CALVIN (V.O.)
 Fill your-

Vanessa fast forwards.

CALVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 -when we have kids...

VANESSA
 This is it.

CALVIN (V.O.)
 I will miss sporting events, dance
 recitals, holidays and family parties.
 I might even miss their first steps.
 (MORE)

CALVIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And it hurts, but I'm doing my job,
the job my father and grandfather
did because I want to make certain
other people don't miss those games,
recitals, holidays and their
children's first steps. The people
didn't ask me to do it and they didn't
have to cause I've felt, since I was
born, it is my duty to serve them.
It's my duty to protect our kids and
the city we live in from those who
would take away those moments.

(beat)

I love you. I will say it everyday
as many times a day as I can, Vanessa.
I love you. See you soon, my
beautiful. I love you and our future
babies.

Vanessa doesn't hide her emotion. She wants her children to
see the effect their father has on her.

VANESSA

I don't expect you to understand
everything he said and why he said
it right now, but over time, his
purpose to the job and to you will
make sense.

BRYCE

We understand, mom.

Vanessa nods. Bryce looks at Shannon.

BRYCE (CONT'D)

Don't eat the cheese.

VANESSA

Bryce!

Bryce grins at his mother. Vanessa tries to hide her laugh.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Brush up and change into your winter
clothes please.

Bryce and Shannon exit. Vanessa puts the toys in the bin,
slides it under the couch.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

That's the last time I let them dress
themselves.

The TV is on and muted. Aerial shot of police, ambulance and fire department vehicles. The TICKER reads, "RIOT AT MALL." Without looking at the TV Vanessa takes the remote, turns it off, drops the remote, fixes PILLOWS, folds a BLANKET. *DING!*

SHANNON (O.S.)
 (mouth full of
 toothpaste)
 Mommy, the bread dinged!

Vanessa hustles to the kitchen.

VANESSA
 I heard it, baby, thank you! Don't
 forget to brush your tongue!

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Vanessa puts on the oven mitts, opens the oven, removes TWO LOAVES OF BREAD, places them on top of the stove next to the pot of melted cheese, removes the mitts.

SHANNON CRIES! Vanessa touches the hot tray--**BURN!**

VANESSA
 Ou!
 Vanessa, annoyed, shakes off the pain. SHANNON KEEPS CRYING!
 SHANNON (O.S.)
 Mom! Mom! Mom!

Vanessa calms herself.

VANESSA
 (sing, country)
 "You're gonna miss this."

She exits.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Shannon cries on a STOOL at the SINK. Bryce stares at Shannon, hands in the air. Vanessa enters.

BRYCE
 It's okay, Shannon!

VANESSA
 What happened?

SHANNON

(upset)

I was brushing so good-

VANESSA

"So well." You were brushing "so well."

SHANNON

I'm sorry again, mommy.

VANESSA

It's okay, you don't have to be sorry, you're learning. Please tell me what happened.

SHANNON

I was brushing so well then when I spit out I spit out on my dress.

Shannon faces Vanessa. Toothpaste is on her dress. Shannon cries.

VANESSA

It's okay.

BRYCE

It washes out.

VANESSA

That's right it does!

Vanessa damps a RAG, bends down, blots the toothpaste.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Your brother knows that because daddy and I helped him learn to grow day by day just like Nana and Pa taught me when I was your age. Now your brother is helping you grow day by day.

Bryce winks at Shannon.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

It is part of the life cycle.

Shannon touches Vanessa's belly.

SHANNON

I teach the baby?

Vanessa smiles at her daughter.

VANESSA

Absolutely. Remember though, it's a secret. Daddy and I will tell the family at the party today.

Vanessa stands upright.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Check out your dress now.

Shannon looks down, no more toothpaste. She looks at her mother amazed!

VANESSA (CONT'D)

How does she look, Bryce?

BRYCE

Like a princess.

Shannon smiles.

VANESSA

Once you're ready I have slices waiting for you two.

SHANNON

(confused)

I just brushed my teeth!

VANESSA

I know, but it's a treat before we leave. You get to try the bread fresh out of the oven in a gooey pool of cheese.

Vanessa looks at Bryce.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Good thing you have your bathing suit on, mon.

Bryce smiles.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

But you will put pants on over them.

Vanessa looks at her WATCH, points at Shannon.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Daddy will be home any moment, so we don't have time to change your outfit, Shan.

(MORE)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

You'll just wear the big coat and you won't get any cheese on your beautiful dress because there is no way I could get that out before we leave.

SHANNON

I will be extra careful.

VANESSA

Wonderful!

Vanessa puts her hand in the center of them. Bryce and Shannon put their hands on top of hers.

EVERYONE

Break!

They exit.

INT. DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Vanessa walks through the den, enters the kitchen. Shannon stops, looks at the front door.

INT. KID'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bryce enters, grabs PANTS, puts one leg through as he approaches the window. CAR BREAKS capture Bryce's attention.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Vanessa carefully removes the bread from the pan, places it on a COOLING RACK. She smells her success.

INT. DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Shannon stares at the door.

SHANNON

(low)

People are at the door.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Vanessa slices the bread.

VANESSA

What was that, Shan?

INT. KID'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bryce pulls up his pants.

SON
Mom, dad's work car is here!

The front of a POLICE CAR is outside his window.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Vanessa plates the bread.

VANESSA
(to Bryce)
Thank you!
(to self, aloud)
Work car?

INT. DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Shannon stares at the door.

SHANNON
People are at the door.

INT. KID'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bryce looks further out the window.

BRYCE
(quietly)
Where is he?

INT. DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Vanessa hustles toward the door, taps Shannon's shoulder.

VANESSA
Baby, the bread's ready for you.

Vanessa opens the door.

VANESSA (CONT'D)
You're just in time for some-

All reactions, chemical and emotional, in Vanessa cease.
She stares. Her eyes ricochet as her worst fear manifests...

VANESSA (CONT'D)
No.

TWO HIGH RANKING POLICE OFFICERS and a CHAPLIN stand before her. Vanessa steps backwards.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

No.

The officers and Chaplin enter. On the bookcase next to the door is a PHOTO of CALVIN, male, late 20's, in a police uniform with the AMERICAN FLAG behind him. There is another of Calvin, in uniform, with Vanessa, Bryce and Shannon.

Vanessa backs up to the couch and sits. The officers sit next to her. The Chaplin kneels before her. Vanessa lets out all of her emotion, all of her love in an attempt to will her husband back to life.

But it cannot, is not and will not work.

Her husband, her children's father, is gone.

Bryce and Shannon watch their mother cry while friends of their father do what they can to console her.

Bryce takes Shannon's hand in his. He squeezes.

BLACK.

Hold on the **BLACK** for three seconds.

Fade Up, stacked, white text, "BTB."

Fade Up, stacked, white text fills-in, "Back The Blue."

Credits.