

CAROLINA BRAY

An Action Series by Austin Highsmith Garces

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Logline:

Upon the sudden death of her father, Carolina Bray finds herself in the middle of an international CIA operation causing her to question everything she once held true.

A photograph of a person sitting on a wooden bench in a forest, looking out at a lake. The person is seen from behind, wearing a dark jacket and pants. The forest is composed of tall, thin trees, and the lake is visible in the background. The scene is peaceful and serene.

Genesis:

I'm from a small town in North Carolina. My parents met in 2nd Grade! We used to travel to the small town of Boone, NC pretty much every year, if not multiple times a year. Both of my brothers went to college there. In 2017, my husband filmed a movie in Kurdistan and it brought the plight of the Yazidi people to my attention. He's also big into crypto and it made me think about if it could be used as a method to help oppressed people form their own governments. Then I got the idea of "what if my sweet dad was somehow working for the CIA and I never knew it!" And the idea for Carolina Bray was born.

There may be no secrets in small towns but there are no strangers either.
- RA Mathis

The Show:

Carolina Bray was born and raised and still lives in Boone, NC. Her parents Helene and Paul Peterson also had another daughter, Carolina's younger sister Joey. When Helene suddenly died when Carolina was only in 7th grade, her world changed forever.

She married Matt Bray and they had their own daughter Daisy. Carolina and Matt both worked at the family bait and tackle store. But after Paul is brutally murdered in front of Carolina, her life turns completely upside down as she learns from two strangers that her beloved father Paul was actually in the CIA.

Carolina teams up with the strangers, Apollo and Bria, to catch her father's murderers and to unravel an international mystery that spans to Iraq and Kurdistan. Paul was working with Apollo and Bria using cryptocurrency to try and build a functioning economy for Kurdistan so they could finally gain full independence from Iraq. But when the head Kurdish leader is murdered, his consiglieres believe Paul is responsible and seek revenge as well as the cryptocurrency wallet they believe was the motive behind the killing.

Carolina and Joey find themselves involved in an international murder mystery and must work to clear their father's name as well as take over his work with the CIA.



■ TONE AND STYLE ■

Carolina Bray is *Alias* meets *Borne Identity*. The first season takes place in the small town of Boone, NC in the North Carolina mountains. There Carolina Bray works at a bait and tackle store with her father and husband. But when her father is murdered the world of the show expands rapidly as Carolina learns her father was an agent with the CIA. Her father was working with foreign governments and eventually our show's world will expand to Kurdistan and Iraq as our characters must deal with the generational and international fight that lies ahead. The show will also likely travel to England and potentially Russia during the first season as the search for justice evolves.

Main conflicts:

The geopolitical conflict of an ongoing battle for freedom between the Kurds and Iraq. Carolina discovering her entire existence has been a lie and she now is thrust into a fight for her life and to restore her dad's honor.



CHARACTERS



CAROLINA BRAY

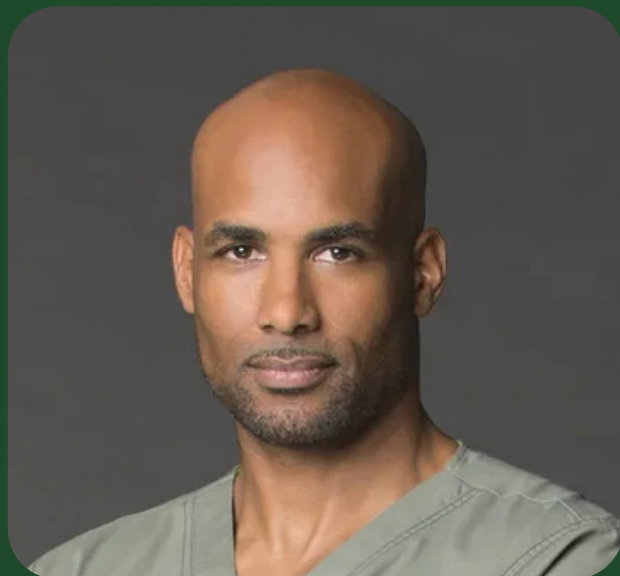
40s, a small town woman, born and bred. She has always lived a small life, helping her dad, Paul Peterson, at their family bait and tackle store along with her husband Matt Bray. Her dad raised her for the rural, mountain life, teaching her how to use a firearm, teaching her how to defend herself if need be, skills she believed to be preemptive. But after her dad is murdered and she discovers he was an agent with the CIA, Carolina realizes he was preparing her for something bigger all along

40s, Carolina's younger sister, Joey has felt like the odd person out for much of her life, especially after her mother's death when Joey was only in 5th grade. Joey has always loved computers, and not just coding, but building them from scratch.

She developed an affinity for foreign languages from her mother and much preferred learning to speak Arabic with her mother over learning physical combat with Carolina and their father. Plagued with 2nd daughter syndrome, Joey constantly feels like she has to prove her worth leading to a bit of a standoff-ish personality at times.

JOEY SMITH





APOLLO GREEN

50s, member of MI6, hardened by the life he's seen and things he has to do, but ultimately cares for his fellow man which is why he works as hard as he does. Apollo is not keen on bringing Carolina into the fold but wants to honor is old friend Paul's wishes



BRIA YU

50s, works for Interpol, adrenaline junky, whose body can't keep up as well as it used to, and as whip smart as she is focused under pressure. Bria is quick witted and still makes jokes during intense situations. She has ice in her veins.



MATT BRAY

40s, Carolina's high school boyfriend, now husband. He loved the quaint life he built with his wife with them both working for her father and raising their daughter Daisy, and is unsure if he can trust the new situation they've been thrust into which reminds him too much of his days in the armed services.



PAUL PETERSON

70s, mainly shown through flashbacks, Carolina's dad, he made sure to teach his daughter everything she needed to know to protect herself physically, but kept a major secret from her that upon his death, has upended her entire life in every way.

THE PILOT STORY

Gunfire rings out in the woods as a large SUV barrels forward as fast as it can go over the rocky terrain. The back windshield of the SUV gets blown out. Inside the SUV, Carolina Bray and her sister Joey panic and duck in their seats. Bria Yu from the front passenger seat yells at the driver to be steady as she whips around to return fire.

TWO DAYS EARLIER...

“Happy Birthday” rings out inside a small cabin in the woods of the North Carolina mountains. Carolina comes around the corner holding a cake for her dad, Paul Peterson. Carolina’s sister Joey Smith and her husband Theo sit with Carolina’s husband Matt and their 6 year old daughter Daisy. Everyone cheers as Paul blows out the candles. Daisy hops down from her chair and scampers off, returning with her arms full of presents.

The celebration is winding down and Carolina hovers over the sink finishing up the last of the dishes. Paul approaches and tells Carolina he has something he wants to give to her. Joey is entering the kitchen when she sees their exchange happen and pauses by the doorframe listening in. Carolina opens the box and inside is a beautiful engraved golden locket. Her voice catches in her throat as she thanks her dad. From outside the kitchen, hurt is written all over Joey’s face. Joey’s hurt is old and deep. She yells out to Theo that they are leaving and storms out.

The next day, Paul enters a little coffee shop across the street from a store bearing the name “Peterson’s Bait and Tackle.” He sees a sullen Joey sitting at a table by herself. He sits and starts to explain himself and also gives Joey a gift of her own, her mother’s beloved watch. Paul’s back stiffens and he looks towards the entrance. Joey asks if everything is okay. Paul covers and says everything is fine, but after their meeting, Paul texts a WhatsApp text chain on single word “Flamingo” and heads back to Peterson’s Bait and Tackle.

The next morning, Carolina and Matt pull up to the shop and tell Paul they’re going to pick up coffee. As Carolina is heading back to the shop, she hears something concerning coming from the shop and races towards the noise.



PILOT STORY CONTINUED

As she enters, Carolina sees her dad in intense combat with a stranger. There's another strange man in the store, and Carolina sees him pulling out a gun. She screams "Dad! Gun!" The stranger turns towards Carolina with the gun. Paul moves incredible fast pulling his own gun shooting the stranger to protect Carolina. But faster than she can register, the first man shoots her dad three times in the chest and runs out. Outside, Matt has run up towards the entrance as the shooter runs out, hops in the waiting car, and speeds off. Without missing a beat, Matt races to the pickup truck to give chase.

Inside Peterson's, Carolina's soul breaks in that instant as she releases a heart wrenching scream. She races to her dad's side to try and save him, but she's too late. She cradles him and cries. A nearby shop owner turns the corner seeing the fallout and cries out, takes out his phone to call 911.

In the old truck, Matt swerves around a sharp mountain turn in fast pursuit of the sleek car. Matt grabs a shotgun from the rack on the backseat and manages to fire a shot that blasts out the back windshield of the sleek car. Matt is still unable to catch the car.

Back at the store, the local Sheriff has arrived and several people from nearby nearby businesses have all gathered around, trying to share what they saw. Sitting on a curb,

Carolina is startled when someone approaches her from the side and reacts with catlike reflexes throwing her into a flashback. In the flashback, a younger Paul teaches a younger Carolina to fight. Pulled out of the flashback by screaming, Carolina realizes she's got her brother in law Theo pinned to the ground. Its then they all realize no one has spoken to Joey.

At Carolina and Matt's house that night, they are both beside themselves. A knock comes at the door and they both jump at the sudden noise. Matt answers and it's Bria and Apollo informing Carolina Joey has been kidnapped and they need her help to rescue her sister. Matt stays with Daisy as Carolina, Bria, and Apollo head out to find Joey. After rescuing her, they are chased by her kidnappers and involved in a shoot out that leaves their SUV barreling towards a thick patch of trees.

TO BE CONTINUED...





FUTURE EPISODES

EPISODE 2: The SUV narrowly misses crashing into the trees, but the steak car can't. A gun fire battle breaks out with Carolina protecting Joey and significantly aiding Apollo and Bria. Explore Carolina's struggle to believe Apollo and Bria, her emotional conflict, and the tension in her marriage with Matt. Carolina and Joey slowly learn more about the CIA mission in Kurdistan through flashbacks, revealing more about Paul's involvement. Carolina's own capabilities (marksmanship, survival skills, etc.) become more apparent as she's forced to defend herself and her family from the attackers.

EPISODE 3: Joey tries to clear her father's name by hacking into the system her dad, Apollo, and Bria were working on for the Kurds but can't access the crypto wallet. She also accidentally stumbles upon incriminating evidence against their mother, Helene, that may be tied to Helene's unsolved murder. Joey decides to hide what she found from the rest of the group which Bria picks up on.

EPISODE 4: Carolina and Joey are forced to go on the run with Apollo and Bria, as the deeper geopolitical stakes rise. The villains' intent and factions, including the Kurdish resistance and Iraqi mob, make things dangerous for both Carolina and Joey's families at home. Joey grows bolder with her efforts and begins to suspect her dad may have played a role in their mother's death.

EPISODE 5: Matt is anxious being left behind and tries to get involved, adding tension to his relationship with Carolina. Things come to a head when Daisy gets kidnapped. Carolina and Joey have a huge fight when Carolina learns Joey has been hiding information from her. Joey explains she couldn't access the information that would clear Paul's name and they can't figure out where that information is. Then Carolina remembers a file on Paul's computer that cracks things wide open.

EPISODE 6: Carolina starts embracing her new reality, growing from a reactive character to someone who takes action. Meanwhile, Apollo and Bria's motives are thrown into question when Joey shares what she's learned so far. They start unraveling the conspiracy behind Paul's death and the cryptocurrency plan, but still can't find the necessary keys to unlock the wallet or the file on Paul's computer.

EPISODE 7: Matt joins the team in trying find Daisy and gets shot. Carolina is beside herself having put her entire family in danger. Carolina holds her mom's locket and tries to figure out what she would do when she drops in causing a tiny chip to tumble out from behind the picture of her and her mom. But yet again, not even Joey can figure out how to get into the chip.

MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

THE CREATOR

AUSTIN HIGHSMITH GARCES is an artist, actress, published author/illustrator, and produced screenwriter from North Carolina. She is best known for the role of “Phoebe,” in the Warner Brothers/Alcon Entertainment films, **Dolphin Tale 1 & 2** and as “Ms. Lang” in season 2 of MTV’s **Scream: The TV Series**. Film credits include **Dolphin Tale 1 & 2**, **Gangster Squad**, and many independent movies.

Apart from her on-screen work, Highsmith Garces was a stand-up comic having performed at The Comedy Store, Acme Comedy Theatre, and the Tampa Improv. Austin is also a founding member of The Ruskin Group Theatre.

Highsmith Garces wrote and sold her first TV feature film, **A Country Romance**, and starred in it as well, which initially aired on UPtv and is now streaming on Amazon Prime. She also co-wrote and starred in a comedy feature, **The Plus One**, starring Ashanti and Cedric the Entertainer, which was released in select theaters Sept 2023 and is now on Starz. Her feature, **Inheritance** which she produced, wrote the story for, and starred in had a brief theatrical run and is now streaming on Tubi. Her children’s book, **The Miracle Tree**, about her experience as a young girl was published in April of 2019 has been adapted into a screenplay with Emmy winning writer Noam Dromi. Coming from her experience as an actress for over twenty years, Austin is a highly adaptable writer across many genres.

