



WONDERFALLS

"Barrel Bear"

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Air #107

Final Shooting Script

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WONDERFALLS

"BARREL BEAR"

TEASER

1 EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY 1

A series of spectacular shots of The Falls takes us to:

2 INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY - JAYE 2

staring at the SMOOSHED-FACED LION which sits lifelessly on the register, a hunk of wax. Alec works in the background with a clipboard inventorying Barrel Bears (the bear from the Pilot in the "Welcome To Niagara Falls" barrel). Jaye puts the phone to her ear to cover as she speaks to the Lion:

JAYE

Go ahead. Say something. Say
"make me a match."

The Lion doesn't respond, lifeless. Alec glances over at Jaye. She picks up the phone and puts it to her ear to cover that she's speaking to the Lion.

JAYE (cont'd)

Bet you'd talk if I stuck a wick in
your ass. Can you say "make me a
candle?"

Alec casually moves closer with his clipboard and one of the Barrel Bears. He's trying to listen in.

JAYE (cont'd)

(into phone, fake cheer)
Thanks for calling, you have a
great day. Bye-bye.

ALEC

Another personal call?

JAYE

No.

ALEC

Phone bills can be checked.

JAYE

Whatever.

(CONTINUED)

ALEC

I know it's traditional for labor to be at odds with management, but it really would be in your own best interests to lose the 'tude.

JAYE

I don't have 'tude.

ALEC

You do. You have 'tude. And while you may think I have no interest in your success here, I do.

(re: Ass. Manager badge)

I'm the assistant manager. If you suck it reflects on me. So stop sucking. I can't be expected to cover for you indefinitely.

JAYE

Cover for me?

ALEC

I've been very lenient in my reports. Upper management thinks you're doing a much better job than you really are so, um, F.Y.I.

JAYE

And by upper management, do you mean Peggy?

ALEC

She thinks you're a model employee.

JAYE

I am a model employee.

ALEC

If by "model," you mean a thing that just sits there and doesn't do anything, then sure.

JAYE

I do my job. And the only reason you're wearing that asst. manager tag and I'm not is 'cause I didn't want it. This place may be your life, it's not mine.

ALEC

Really? What is your life, Jaye?

2

CONTINUED: (2)

2

JAYE

Still working it out.

ALEC

Most really successful people are on a solid career track by the time they get to be your age.

JAYE

I'm twenty-four.

ALEC

It's never too late. If you buckle down now and show a little initiative, you can make sure there'll always be a place for you here at Wonderfalls.

JAYE

Oh, god...

ALEC

It's up to you. Well, you and whoever the next assistant manager is, of course. I won't be here to protect you forever.

JAYE

I'm not gonna be here forever...

ALEC

Not if you don't stop being such a taker. Don't you think it's time you started giving a little back?
(fading down)
Life at Wonderfalls is like an investment, you get out what you...

ALEC'S WORDS FADE to B.G. DRONE as INTERACTIVE LIGHT REFLECTS into Jaye's eye. The Barrel Bear Alec's holding animates:

BARREL BEAR

See a penny... pick it up.

The Bear shifts its eyes to the window. CAMERA ROCKET ZOOMS:

3

EXT. WONDERFALLS - MAID OF THE MIST FOUNTAIN - SLOW MOTION 3

MILLIE MARCUS (good-spirited, 70's) stands with her arm outstretched, mid-coin toss. Her QUARTER sails through the air, landing in the water with a dramatic PLOP.

4 INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY 4

Jaye looks from the window to the Barrel Bear in Alec's hand.

ALEC
(fading back up)
...and when I say "give back," I
don't just mean in the workplace...

BARREL BEAR
Give it back to her.

Jaye cringes and rolls her eyes. Alec reacts.

ALEC
See? Right there. The 'tude.
That's the 'tude I'm talking about.

BARREL BEAR
Give it back to her.

JAYE
Fine. Fine. I'm giving back.

She plucks the Bear from Alec's hand, starts for the door.

ALEC
Um. That's not giving. That's
taking. Jaye? Did you hear
anything I've been saying to you?

She's out the door. He follows that far, calls after her:

ALEC (cont'd)
You'll never get anywhere with that
'tude, Tyler!

5 EXT. WONDERFALLS - MAID OF THE MIST FOUNTAIN - DAY 5

Jaye moves through the crowd to the Maid of the Mist fountain holding the Barrel Bear. She sees Millie nearby now looking at a stand with postcards and knick-knacks or some such.

BARREL BEAR
Give it back to her.

Jaye looks from Millie to the fountain, stares down at all the coins. There's no real stand-out. She coughs and clears her throat to cover the sound of her asking the Bear:

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

Give what back to her? Was it a penny or a quarter? I see lots of pennies.

Interactive LIGHT bounces off one particular QUARTER, reflects into Jaye's eye. She reacts. Slaps the Bear down on the edge of the fountain, then rolls up her sleeve, plunges her hand into the water, roots around...

BARREL BEAR

Give it back to her.

JAYE

(sidelong glance)

I'm workin' on it.

She reacts with success. Pulls her dripping wet arm out of the water, clutching a handful of change. She plucks a shiny quarter off the top, tosses the rest back in the fountain

JAYE (cont'd)

Got it!

She glances up -- Millie's no longer at the postcard stand. Jaye stands, scans the crowd. No sign of her.

JAYE (cont'd)

Where'd she go?

She turns -- and finds herself nose-to-badge with a COP who is scribbling in his ticket book.

JAYE (cont'd)

(re: quarter)

Um. Should I put this back?

COP

(as he writes)

Naw. Might as well keep it. You can apply it toward the fine.

BARREL BEAR

Give it...

Jaye casually kicks the Bear into the fountain. Plonk.

BARREL BEAR (O.S.) (cont'd)

(under water gurgle)

...back to her.

5

CONTINUED: (2)

5

Off that --

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

6 INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

6

Jaye sits on Eric's cot. ERIC holds a box and MAHANDRA loads it with bottles of alcohol as she listens to Eric's cell phone. Eric can't keep his eyes off Jaye as she examines Millie's quarter.

JAYE

I had a chance to run before the cop got my name. But then I realized it was embroidered on the bright yellow vest I was wearing.

MAHANDRA

So is there a reason you had to have this quarter?

JAYE

(examines quarter)

I don't know. It was shiny.

MAHANDRA

Mmm-hmm.

(aside to Eric, re: phone)

Some guy named Darrel. Wants to know if you're coming back to work.

ERIC

Delete.

Jaye catches Eric staring, liking it.

JAYE

Why is she checking your messages?

ERIC

It's less stressful if I don't actually hear the voices.

JAYE

I know, huh.

(re: cot, not bitchy)

So this is transitional, right?
You living back here with the food?

MAHANDRA

What're you talking about? You live in a trailer.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

I own that trailer.

ERIC

How does that work? You lease the parking space?

JAYE

Yeah, and it's rent control. I've been parked in the same spot for two years with no --

(realizing)

Ohmygod. I've been parked in the same spot for two years.

Mahandra and Eric head to the bar. Eric glances back at Jaye, smitten. But Jaye's lost in the realization.

ERIC

Doesn't that defeat the purpose of having wheels on your house?

JAYE

I wasn't supposed to be parked this long, was I? I'm inert.

6A

INT. THE BARREL - CONTINUOUS - DAY

6A

Eric, carrying the box, crosses to the bar. Mahandra follows, his cell pressed to her ear. Jaye shuffles out behind them. Eric goes behind the bar, Mahandra out front.

MAHANDRA

You're settled.

JAYE

I don't wanna be settled in Niagara Falls. I mean, we're not even as cool as the Canadian side. How'd that happen?

MAHANDRA

There is nothing wrong with Niagara Falls.

(to Eric, re: phone)

It's your mom. Very upset. Died a thousand deaths...

(reacts, slugs Eric)

You haven't called your mother?

(CONTINUED)

6A

CONTINUED:

6A

ERIC

Yes, I have. I call her a lot. I just dial direct into her voice mail and leave messages. What? She's best friends with my wife.

MAHANDRA

Does your mother know her best friend fellated the bellman in your honeymoon suite?

ERIC

I'm not sure how Heidi painted all that. And I'm not sure I care.

MAHANDRA

You need to go see your mother.

JAYE

Yes, get out. Go see your mother before this place sucks you in and never lets you go.

ERIC

I'm not going back to Jersey. Maybe not ever. I'm not that Jersey guy. I moved on.
(to Jaye, smitten)
Onward and upward.

MAHANDRA

(re: phone)
It's your wife. Boy, she even sounds like a trollop.

ERIC

(beat)
Save.

Jaye reacts, a little disappointed.

MAHANDRA

(spots something O.S.)
Ohmygod!

Jaye looks over and WE WHIP to SEE: MILLIE MARCUS standing in the near distance, waxing nostalgic over the photos hanging on the wall near the barrel display. WHIP BACK TO:

JAYE

Ohmygod!

(CONTINUED)

6A

MAHANDRA
Are you mocking me?

JAYE
(same "ohmygod!" cadence)
No, I'm not!

MAHANDRA
Like you know who that is.

JAYE
No, I don't!

ERIC
Who is she?

MAHANDRA
Millie Marcus. The picture she's
looking at -- that's her.

CAMERA WHIP PANS to MILLIE, banks off her look, going into
her POV and up to --

7 FX SHOT - THE BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO ON THE WALL 7

It's a YOUNG MILLIE in a one-piece bathing costume, circa
late 1940's. She's blowing a kiss to the camera. The photo
ANIMATES and blooms with COLOR... Young Millie blows kisses.
Another FLASH! and the image returns to a BLACK AND WHITE
STILL.

8 INT. THE BARREL - CONTINUOUS 8

WE COME OFF the PHOTO, past the entranced Older Millie,
WHIPPING BACK TO:

JAYE
Why's her picture on the wall?

MAHANDRA
Only because she was super famous.
Millie Marcus was the first
American woman to go over Niagara
Falls in a barrel. And live.

JAYE
How does going over Niagara Falls
in a barrel make someone famous?

(CONTINUED)

MAHANDRA

Uh, because it's Niagara Falls?
Where is your hometown pride? You
really are like a Hobbit that hates
The Shire.

STUFFED BASS

Give it back to her...

Jaye looks to the STUFFED BASS above the bar, it repeats:

STUFFED BASS (cont'd)

Give it back to her...

Jaye sighs, rolls her eyes.

MAHANDRA

I'm gonna get her autograph...

Mahandra reaches for a napkin. Jaye's already swiveled off
her bar stool and is moving off toward Millie. Mahandra
reacts to that, as...

JAYE

approaches Millie.

JAYE

Millie Marcus?

MILLIE

Yes?

JAYE

You don't know me... and I'm pretty
sure it can't be this simple... but
I wanted to give you this.

She holds out the quarter. Millie takes it, slightly
confused. Jaye glances back to the Stuffed Bass.

STUFFED BASS

Give it back to her.

JAYE

(yep, what she thought)
Right. So not the quarter.

Mahandra steps up now with her napkin.

MAHANDRA

Miss Marcus? Hi. I'm a huge fan.
My dad's been telling me about you
all my life. He's the guy who
fishes corpses out of the river.
Can I get your autograph?

MILLIE

(thrilled)
Well of course! Do you have any
idea how long it's been since
someone's asked me that?

MAHANDRA

Couple of days?

MILLIE

You're sweet. No. Years, I'm
afraid. I think the last...
(as Mahandra hands her:)
Really? A napkin?

Mahandra ditches the napkin, grabs the picture off the wall.

MAHANDRA

Or maybe this.

JAYE

(off Millie's reaction)
It's okay, she works here.

As Mahandra struggles to remove the photo from the frame:

MAHANDRA

Do you still live in Paris? I
remember reading you'd moved there.

MILLIE

Yes. I traveled the world with my
barrel. Paris seemed as good a
spot as any to finally settle.

JAYE

Wow. So you just did that one
little thing and it got you outta
here and all the way to France?

MILLIE

Well. Not exactly a "little"
thing. That stunt nearly killed
me.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

(sotto to Mahandra)
See? She was willing to kill
herself to get out of here.
(then, realizing)
But you came back. On purpose?

MILLIE

All my really precious memories
were made here. I had nothing
keeping me elsewhere, so...

MAHANDRA

No family or anything?

MILLIE

No. I guess I was just too busy
being famous when I was young. In
a way, my public has always been my
family. But now that family's
grown and left the nest. Forgotten
about old Millie.

STUFFED BASS

Give it back to her.

JAYE

What? The famous?

Mahandra and Millie glance at Jaye.

JAYE (cont'd)

(off their looks)
Sorry.

Mahandra gets the picture out of the frame and hands it to
Millie along with a pen.

MAHANDRA

It's 'Mahandra' with an H.

MILLIE

It's worth more if I don't
personalize it.

MAHANDRA

Not to me.

Millie looks at her, smiles. As she signs, Jaye considers
the moment between fan and celeb.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (4)

8

JAYE

So you like signing autographs,
huh?

9 FX SHOT - BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO

9

CAMERA ZOOMS TO the picture and it ANIMATES AGAIN. CAMERA RATCHETS AROUND YOUNG MILLIE to REVEAL a PHOTOGRAPHER standing in an EXCITED CROWD. As his camera FLASHES, we MATCH CUT TO:

10 INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY

10

FLASH! Mahandra with a disposable camera. She's snapped a picture of Older Millie who sits at a table next to a stack of 8 X 10's of the bar photo. The turn-out is pretty pathetic. Mahandra looks to some shop BROWSERS:

MAHANDRA

Millie Marcus, right here. First American female to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel! And live!

The Browsers force a smile, but move off -- out the door.

MILLIE

Why don't we move the table out to the courtyard where more people can see me?

MAHANDRA

They said you'd get a fine.

MILLIE

My manager Hank always had folks lined up around the corner waiting for my autograph. But he's dead now so I guess nobody's comin'.

ANGLE - ALEC AND JAYE

Jaye surveys the crowd, or lack thereof, feeling a twinge of guilt. Alec studies the scene like a train wreck.

ALEC

I appreciate that you're showing initiative, but you said she was gonna attract customers not drive them away.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

We still have customers.

ALEC

Not in the ten foot radius around that table. My report will reflect a positive change in attitude but I will have to note a lapse in judgement on your part.

MAHANDRA

(approaching)

Why am I the only one talking to her? I don't wanna be the only one talking to her. She is not a pariah. She is our very own Maid of the Mist. Better. She survived Niagara Falls with no divine intervention. I mean, no divine intervention that we know about.

JAYE

Maybe I should've told more people.

MAHANDRA

Did you tell anybody?

JAYE

Not really.

MAHANDRA

This is sad. This is sadder than that hooker we saw getting beat up by that other hooker.

ALEC

At least a hooker fight would draw a crowd.

Alec moves off. Now that Mahandra has Jaye alone:

MAHANDRA

Alright. Why are you doing this?

JAYE

What do you mean?

MAHANDRA

You really expect me to believe you've just spontaneously tapped into the magic that is Niagara?

JAYE

Well...

MAHANDRA

Right. So I'm forced to wonder: am I the target of your cruel buzz kill -- or are you just trying to humiliate an old woman?

JAYE

I'm not trying to humiliate anyone. Not intentionally. She said she liked signing autographs. What'd you expect me to do?

MAHANDRA

What you usually do: nothing.

JAYE

It's practically nothing. It's not like we had to rent the table. I thought you'd like that I was showing an interest.

MAHANDRA

I would if I believed it.

JAYE

Okay. Well. The truth is...

Jaye glances past Mahandra to the shelf of Barrel Bears... then back to Mahandra... a pregnant moment, finally:

JAYE (cont'd)

...you made Millie seem so cool, I just wanted to be her friend...

Mahandra just stares, deadpan.

JAYE (cont'd)

...and it's wrong nobody knows who she is anymore and... Hey, um, she got out so already I like her...

Jaye is saved as a FEMALE CUSTOMER approaches the register with a handful of purchases, including a Barrel Bear. Jaye eyes it warily.

JAYE (cont'd)

Didja find everything okay?

FEMALE CUSTOMER

Yes, thank you.
(low, re: Millie)
Um, who's that woman?

Jaye starts ringing her up. She hands Jaye her credit card.

JAYE

Millie Marcus. First American
female to go over Niagara Falls in
a barrel.

MAHANDRA

And live.

FEMALE CUSTOMER

Is it a book signing?

MAHANDRA

Photo signing. That's why the
photos.

FEMALE CUSTOMER

Oh. I didn't get close enough to
see. Didn't want to feel
obligated. Thought she might be
taking a survey.
(signs credit slip)
But there's no book?

JAYE

(hands her bag)
No book.

Jaye hands her the bag, smiles. She exits, making a wide
berth around Millie's table. Off Jaye, glances from this to
a rack of (or some display) of books (where browsers browse).
Jaye looks from this to Millie, considering...

11 INT. TYLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 11

MOM, DAD and Jaye -- and their guest, Millie Marcus -- are
enjoying tea and cake. Sharon stands near the door with her
purse, antsy. Jaye gives Mom the hard sell:

JAYE

So Millie would be your co-author
and the book would be like a
historical tour of Niagara Falls.

MOM

I've already done a book on Niagara Falls, sweetheart. They sell it at the store where you work.

SHARON

(to Mom)

So are we not going to the movies?

MOM

Don't be rude. Have some cake.

Mom hands her a slice. Sharon checks her watch, sighs and plops into a chair, taking the cake.

JAYE

You could write a sequel.

MOM

There's no market for a sequel.

JAYE

How can you be so sure?

MILLIE

Your mother's a widely respected authoress. She'd know.

(to Mom)

I've read several of your travel guides, Mrs. Tyler.

MOM

Do call me Karen. And I'd be more than happy to sign anything you brought with you.

DAD

Our son's going to be disappointed he couldn't be here to meet you, Millie. He wanted to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel when he was a child.

MOM

We discouraged it, of course.

JAYE

The book doesn't have to be all about Niagara Falls. It could just be a section.

MOM

We're not talking about that anymore. Thank you.

DAD

(jumping in)

Our daughter seems quite taken with you, Millie. Do you always have this effect on young people?

MILLIE

Oh, I suppose I did... back in the day. Though I have to admit it's been quite a while since anyone's taken such an active interest.

The eyes of all the family members turn to Jaye. What's gotten into her? She grows uncomfortable under their stare. She looks at her plate. Tries to ignore them, finally:

JAYE

What? It's not that weird. She accomplished a thing, okay? Hell, it got her out of here and all the way to Paris, France.

DAD

And who could use the example of an American hero more than the French?

MILLIE

I wouldn't call myself a "hero."

DAD

But that's what you are. Your story embodies the pioneering spirit of innovation that thrives in today's modern woman. I know. I've seen it with my girls...
(looks to daughters, beat)
...with Sharon. Jaye's sister and I are both active members of CLAW. "Concerned Ladies of America, West" East Coast Branch. We've been promoting achievement and morality in family life and public policy since Sharon was sixteen.

JAYE

(sotto, to Sharon)

How do you live with yourself?

11

CONTINUED: (3)

11

DAD

(getting the idea)

Concerned Ladies are always looking for inspirational speakers... They'd be interested in Millie's story, don't you think, Sharon?

JAYE

Yeah! Don't the worried women have like bake sales or raffles?

DAD

We have fund-raisers all the time.

SHARON

Well, not all the...

JAYE

Millie could speak at a fund-raiser Who better to talk to the scared chicks than the lady that did Niagara Falls in a barrel? Right? (a challenge) Who better? Am I right?

MOM

I like that idea. Sharon, you should do that.

OFF Sharon staring into middle-distance...

12

EXT. STREET - DAY - CLOSE ON - TELEPHONE POLE

12

A poster featuring Young Millie is stapled into place. It reads: "The Concerned Ladies of America West (East Coast Chapter) present 'BACK IN THE BARREL' an evening with Millie Marcus." We hold this image for a beat. Then AN OLDER WOMAN'S HAND reaches into FRAME and tears the poster down...

13

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

13

A sign says, "Closed Tonight For Private Party." The place is basically empty save for a few scattered conservative RIGID WOMEN. A dais with tables and a podium are positioned at one end of the room. Behind the podium there is a wall-sized blow up of the now familiar picture. Eric and Mahandra struggle with a barrel display in the background. As Jaye, Dad and Sharon survey the room.

(CONTINUED)

DAD

I hear there's gonna be quite a
turn out. That's exciting.

JAYE

We blanketed the neighborhood with
illegally posted fliers.

DAD

Pays to advertise. Good thinking.

SHARON

You blanketed the neighborhood.
I've got volunteers hitting every
church parking lot and high-end car
dealership in the area.

JAYE

I said "we."

SHARON

Which implied "you." And "you"
haven't done anything.

DAD

Now Sharon, this was Jaye's idea.

(to Jaye)

Congratulations, sweetheart. It's
so nice to see you involved and
interested in something that
doesn't directly benefit you.

(sotto, to Sharon)

Try to be encouraging.

JAYE

Honoring an American hero benefits
all Americans, right?

Overwhelmed, he gives her a hug. Sharon tries not to glare.

DAD

(coy, to Jaye)

Say. If I went home and got my
banjo you think your sister would
let me warm up the crowd.

Behind Dad, Sharon shakes her head "no" to Jaye.

JAYE

She'd be a horrible daughter if she
didn't.

Dad looks to Sharon, hopeful.

SHARON

I think it's a great idea.

Dad smiles and moves off.

SHARON (cont'd)

He'll never find that banjo. I
already talked to Mom.

Jaye glances around, spotting some of the Rigid Women.

JAYE

You know, you should be thanking
me. There's no shortage of
masculine women around here.
Have you considered using the
Republican Party as a lesbian
dating service?

Sharon shoots her a look and shrugs on her coat.

SHARON

I have to pick up more name-badge
holders.

Before Jaye can get another word out Sharon turns heel and
EXITS. In the background, Eric and Mahandra lose their grip
on the barrel and it CRASHES to the floor. They quickly
scramble to right it as Millie looks on. Jaye approaches.

MILLIE

Oh! It's like seeing an old
friend. I haven't laid eyes on
this barrel since I donated it to
the Niagara History Museum in '69.

Millie runs her hand over the barrel, blinks back tears of
gratitude. Jaye, Mahandra and Eric all moved.

MILLIE (cont'd)

I'm sorry... I'm just... I'm so
moved. I didn't think anyone cared
about those days anymore. I
thought everyone had forgotten, but
then you kids...

VIVIAN (O.S.)

I haven't forgotten --

They all look over to see --

VIVIAN CALDWELL, a slightly sturdier contemporary of Millie's. She's entered the place unnoticed by anyone. Millie registers recognition...

VIVIAN (cont'd)
I'll never forget.

MILLIE
(to herself)
Oh, lord...

Vivian raises her arm and points an accusatory finger at Millie --

VIVIAN
You stole my life, you bitch!

Behind Jaye, The Stuffed Bass pipes up:

STUFFED BASS
Give it back to her.

Off Jaye's confusion...

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

14 INT. THE BARREL - DAY

14

Where we left off. Vivian facing down Millie and gang.

VIVIAN

You got some ovum, comin' back here.

JAYE

Who is she?

MILLIE

She's nobody. Just a crazy fan.

VIVIAN

Lying cow.

JAYE

She doesn't sound like a fan...

VIVIAN

You probably thought I was dead. Hell, I prayed you were.
(holds up flyer)
Then I saw this.

MAHANDRA

Hey. Watch it. You're talking to a genuine icon.

VIVIAN

She put the "con" in "icon."

MAHANDRA

(to Eric)
Security.

ERIC

I can't toss out an old lady.

MAHANDRA

Then call the cops and let them.

MILLIE

Oh. I can't see that we need to involve the police. The four of us should be able to take her.

ERIC

Um, do you have a ticket?

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

You think I'm gonna pay to listen
to her lies? Paid enough already.

JAYE

What lies?

14

CONTINUED: (2)

14

VIVIAN

Start with that one --

Vivian points to the blow-up of young Millie.

ERIC

Are you telling us that girl in the
photo isn't Millie?

MILLIE

Of course it's me! Who else could
that be? Look at that smile!

Off Millie's dimply-present-day-smile, CAMERA WHIPS back
to...

15-17 OMITTED

15-17

18 EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - LATE 1940'S - DAY - FLASHBACK 18

POP! As FLASHBULBS explode and Millie blows kisses.

VIVIAN (V.O.)
 Oh, it's her. But anyone who
 really went over Niagara Falls
 wouldn't be smilin' like that --

Suddenly everything's going in FAST REVERSE MOTION. Young Millie's bathing cap goes on her head crazy-fast-motion-backwards, sucking up her fabulous locks. She takes a few backwards steps and is obscured by RESCUERS. They run OUT OF FRAME (reverse of them running in) revealing the BARREL as it bobs in the water -- now it's SUCKED DOWN into the water (the reverse of it popping up), then it goes bouncing and ZOOMING BACK UP the falls...

VIVIAN (V.O.)
 It's a honey of a ride. Hundred
 seventy feet, straight down over
 razor sharp rock. And before you
 get there, the current topside's
 enough to scramble your brains.
 Nobody goes through that and comes
 out grinnin'.

UP RIVER: the Barrel goes backwards up the river current to the LAUNCH MEN, who seem to be bringing it to a stop, the REVERSE of them launching it into the current...

JAYE (V.O.)
 You saying the barrel was empty?

VIVIAN (V.O.)
 No. It wasn't empty.

In backwards motion the top is popped off and A WOMAN emerges. CAMERA COMES AROUND CLOSE on her as her bathing cap comes off (the reverse of it going on) -- and WE SEE that it's not Young Millie, but YOUNG VIVIAN. She's a sturdy, athletic girl -- but not near the cheesecake that Young Millie is. One might call her "plain."

VIVIAN (V.O.)
 It was me...

Nervous YOUNG VIVIAN MORPHS INTO... OLD VIVIAN, back in --

19 INT. THE BARREL - DAY 19

-- the bar, the same look on her face, deep in the memory.

(CONTINUED)

MAHANDRA

Uh, I don't think so.
(to Jaye and Eric)
You're not buying this, are you?
The biddy's post-modern. She's
just trying to tear down a legend
like those... legend tearer-
downers.

VIVIAN

I was supposed to ride that barrel
right outa this crummy town.

JAYE

And you never considered a bus?

OLD VIVIAN MORPHS BACK TO YOUNG VIVIAN and WE ARE:

20 EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY - FLASHBACK

20

Young Vivian looks out over the river with trepidation. The
moment of courage and fear. She pulls on her bathing cap.

VIVIAN (V.O.)

I was gonna see the world...

She draws herself up tight in the barrel.

VIVIAN (V.O.)

But all I saw was the inside of a
barrel...

The men bring the lid down over her...

VIVIAN (V.O.)

And I couldn't even see that...

...BLACKNESS.

21 EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY - FLASHBACK

21

FORWARD MOTION REGULAR SPEED VERSION. The barrel is taken by
the current... it reaches the horseshoe... and goes over...

VIVIAN (V.O.)

Anything could've been waiting for
me at the bottom. Could've been
death... could've been fame.

It SPLASHES down below. The RESCUERS appear, fish the barrel
out.

(CONTINUED)

21

CONTINUED:

21

We're right there in the middle of the action this time. They drag it to shore, pry open the top, reach in and pull out a very banged up and dazed Young Vivian.

VIVIAN (V.O.)
Instead it was Hank...

JAYE (V.O.)
"Hank?"

Now a SLICK MAN appears, HANK, a Barnum-esque character. He pushes his way to her, stretches open one of her eyes.

VIVIAN (V.O.)
My manager... and fiance. The bastard. I didn't know it at the time, but before I went over the Falls, Hank sold me down the river.

Hank sees she's okay, more or less, then gives the hi-sign to his guys, and they start dragging her away. Hank moves to some bushes -- and pulls out: THE GORGEOUS YOUNG MILLIE, who's been hiding nearby. The struggling Vivian is dragged from view. Young Millie steps into the limelight. Hank presents her to the crowd. Young Millie basks in her glory, blowing kisses. FREEZE FAME TO:

22

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

22

THE PHOTO. We come off that to a now wistful Millie...

MILLIE
Hank... wonder whatever became of him.

VIVIAN
He wrote me once. Thirty years ago. Told me how he dumped you.

MILLIE
He said he dumped me? Okay. Must've been after I ditched him in Amsterdam.

JAYE
So it's true?

MILLIE
Could have been Belgium. It was a long time ago.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

You made a career on what I did.

MILLIE

"What you did." Honestly, Vivian, what did you do? You fell down. That took gravity, not skill. You didn't have the charisma to pull off a world tour. Hank knew that, which is why he chose me to do all the real work. Sure the barrel may have carried you -- but I carried the barrel. And the legend. Lugging both all the way across three continents.

VIVIAN

This barrel?

Vivian moves to Millie's travelling barrel and easily puts her foot through it -- making a hole.

ERIC

Uh, that's on loan...

VIVIAN

Balsa. It's a fake. Just like her. The real one's still sitting in my front yard in Gastown.

MILLIE

It's not a "fake." It's a prop. Show business, dear. A concept you never could seem to grasp.

JAYE

(to Millie)

I don't believe this... you're not even gonna pretend you're not a big fat liar?

MAHANDRA

Hey -- she's not fat. And she's not a liar, either!

ERIC

Um, what about the part where she didn't really go over Niagara Falls in a barrel?

MILLIE

Don't worry about Vivian. She's done this before. No one ever believes her. She rants and she raves and people just think she's crazy.

JAYE

But she's not crazy.

MILLIE

She is if she thinks people want the version of the story where the homely girl goes over the Falls.

VIVIAN
(hit where she lives)
You're vile.

MILLIE
Face it, Vivian. No one was ever
going to pay to see you -- not
outside of a barrel, anyway.

VIVIAN
You are vile and you are evil.

MILLIE
But I'm not wrong. Why don't you
stay and find out? I'll even pay
for your ticket. You can hear all
about how I went over the Falls.
It's a thrilling tale -- you'll
feel like you were there. And once
the applause dies down, you can
come up to that dais in your t-
shirt and men's slacks and call me
a liar... and see what happens.

A pregnant beat. Vivian glances to the image of glamorous
young Millie, then to the still-glamorous Millie who stands
before her. As she backs down and goes away:

VIVIAN
(under her breath)
Go to hell.

And Vivian's gone. Millie deflates a little.

MILLIE
Thank goodness. I was afraid for a
moment things might get ugly.

JAYE
You don't think that was ugly?

MILLIE
Well, it was certainly unpleasant.
But the truth hurts sometimes.

JAYE
The truth?! What do you know about
the truth? My god. How do you
live with yourself? But then you
don't really, do you? Because
you're not even you. And if you're
not the person you say you are...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

22

CONTINUED: (5)

22

JAYE (cont'd)

And I'd rather be a nobody that's a
somebody than a somebody that's
just a nobody. Or something.
Point is -- you suck!

And now Jaye turns, exiting. Millie wavers there, hit with
the force of Jaye's words.

MILLIE

A nobody...?

22A

INT. THE BARREL - BACK WALKWAY - DAY

22A

Jaye on the move. Mahandra follows close behind.

MAHANDRA

Don't you run from me.

JAYE

Oh, I'm running alright. I'm
running for justice. I'm gonna
give - whatshername? The old lady?

MAHANDRA

Millie?

JAYE

No. The other one.

MAHANDRA

Vivian Caldwell.

JAYE

Yeah. Viv. I'm giving her back
what's rightfully hers.

MAHANDRA

There is no rightfully here. There
is legend. And Millie Marcus is
that legend. So you're not givin'
nothin' to nobody.

JAYE

That's not Millie's legend. It's
Viv's. Millie stole it. She's a
stealer. We don't like stealers.

MAHANDRA

You think George Washington really
chopped down that cherry tree?

(CONTINUED)

22A

CONTINUED:

22A

JAYE

I know he didn't steal it.

MAHANDRA

It doesn't matter who was or wasn't in the barrel. What matters is what the story teaches us.

JAYE

Nothing. The story teaches us nothing. You do get that?

MAHANDRA

You're her. You're grandma flannel. Just add forty years and a pair of orthopedic sneakers. You're a couple of haters.

JAYE

What?

MAHANDRA

Vivian Caldwell has no love for Niagara Falls and neither do you. You're both itchin' to tear down one of our most cherished icons.

JAYE

Vivian is the cherished icon!

Mahandra studies her for a suspicious beat.

MAHANDRA

You knew. You knew about her the whole time. You set Millie up. You set me up. You'll stop at nothing to trash this place and pee on its history.

JAYE

Your hometown rah-rah is bordering on the absurd. Think about what you're saying: I set something up. Me.

MAHANDRA

I don't know how much effort you expended but you're involved.

JAYE

The only thing I'm involved in is a little flannel granny justice.

(CONTINUED)

22A

CONTINUED: (2)

22A

Jaye marches off. Mahandra calls after her:

MAHANDRA

Whistleblower!

(then)

In a bad way!

23-25

OMITTED

23-25

25A

VIEWMASTER TRANSITIONS

25A

Featuring the Falls and vintage period images take us to:

26

EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - DAY

26

A ramshackle building. Out front, where one might expect to see a lawn gnome -- is a LARGE BARREL, overgrown with weeds and moss. We PULL BACK WIDER to see Jaye's car pulling up.

Jaye exits her car, moves up the walk, looks at the Barrel in the yard. She gets to the door, knocks. It opens, revealing Vivian standing there.

VIVIAN

What do you want?

JAYE

I wanna help you get back what's yours.

26A

EXT. THE BARREL - DAY

26A

CLOSE ON - the "Back In The Barrel" flyer on the front door as a FEMALE HAND writes across it in thick RED PEN: "CANCELLED." Now WE SEE it's Sharon. She turns toward camera, snaps the cap on the pen, then exits frame, pissed.

26B

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

26B

Millie and Mahandra drinking at the bar. Eric serving. The women are a little tipsy, Mahandra more so than Millie.

MILLIE

I hope the Concerned Ladies aren't very angry that I cancelled.

(CONTINUED)

MAHANDRA

They're mostly just... concerned.
They wanna reschedule.

MILLIE

There's no point. Not now.

MAHANDRA

Sure there is! They're even
talking about a whole summer tour --
they wanna fly you and your barrel
all over the country.

MILLIE

That would have been glorious. But
no. I can't risk it. Not with
that loose cannon out there.

MAHANDRA

I don't think Vivian'll be back.

MILLIE

Not Vivian. That Jaye girl. You
saw the way she fell for Vivian's
sob story. The hateful thing she
called me -- a nobody.

MAHANDRA

Well she's wrong. Jaye may be my
best friend, but she thinks in two
dimensions. Very linear.

MILLIE

I just hope she doesn't encourage
Vivian's delusions. She's on the
edge, that woman. Wouldn't take
but a tap to send her right over.

ERIC

Again.
(off their looks)
Sorry.

MILLIE

I'm sorry about how her life turned
out. Truly I am. But this is
beyond petty personalities. It's
bigger than all of us.
Why it's as big as the Falls
itself! We're not talking about my
fame -- we're talking about
Niagara's legacy.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

26B

CONTINUED: (2)

26B

MILLIE (cont'd)

A legacy I've been custodian of for more than half a century. Am I suppose to just stand idly by and see all that destroyed?

MAHANDRA

Hell no!

ERIC

Wow. That's impressive. You made ruining that poor woman's life actually sound kinda noble.

MAHANDRA

It is noble. She's protecting the legend for future generations.

MILLIE

Oh, I like that very much.

MAHANDRA

I mean, who wants to think some unscrupulous publicity whore lied and slept her way into the history books?

MILLIE

Uh...

MAHANDRA

That doesn't do anyone any good! But I'll tell you what does -- the story of Millie Marcus and her barrel.

ERIC

It is sort of the quintessential American tale.

MAHANDRA

Yes! Exactly. It teaches us there's nothing a person can't do!

ERIC

Or nothing a person actually has to do! I mean, look at her. She's one hundred per cent fabrication. She decided what she wanted to be and damn the facts! You don't get much more American than that.

(CONTINUED)

MAHANDRA

You get it. You really do. And you know why? Because you've got a little of that Millie Marcus spirit in you.

ERIC

You think?

MAHANDRA

Oh, yeah. You're not that other Eric anymore. You have moved on. You left that other Eric's whole, pathetic past behind in New Jersey. Starting over here, in Niagara -- magical land of the possible.

ERIC

Actually Heidi chose the spot.

MAHANDRA

Whatever. Point is, you are new-baptised in enchanted waters.

ERIC

(likes that idea)

I am new-baptised... I can be whoever I want...

MAHANDRA

(to Millie)

You see there? You see what an inspiration you are? You can't hide your barrel under a bushel. You have to go on that tour, you just have to.

MILLIE

But how can I? When inspiration could so easily turn to scandal?

MAHANDRA

It won't.

(then)

Not if we make sure...

27 CONTINUED: 27

27A CLOSE ON - HAND-COLORED PHOTOGRAPH 27A

It's YOUNG VIVIAN in a one-piece bathing suit identical to Young Millie's. She's standing next to the real barrel. We are --

28 INT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - DAY 28

A modest home. Jaye stands next to an end table studying the photograph of Young Vivian. Vivian keeps her distance, wary.

VIVIAN

She's right. Nobody wants to see a movie starring the ugly girl.

JAYE

But the ugly gir -- But you are the star. You have a picture. You have a picture of you with the barrel. And you have the barrel. Say, here's a crazy idea: Why don't we just tell everybody?

VIVIAN

You don't think I tried that? Truth didn't matter.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN (cont'd)

Every person in town saw Millie
Marcus crawl outta that barrel.
She's the star. She'll always be
the star. Hank saw to that.

There's nothing Jaye can say except:

JAYE

You got screwed.

VIVIAN

I got screwed.

JAYE

You could still, like you know,
tell on her.

VIVIAN

Not gonna change anything. Not for
me. I missed my window.

JAYE

No, no. The window's still open.
And there's a nice breeze. Just
'cause she biddy-slapped you
doesn't mean you have to quit.
That barrel is a symbol of what you
accomplished and what you can
accomplish and nobody can take that
away from you.

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

Jaye sees Vivian looking past her. She turns and sees THE BARREL BOBBING UP AND DOWN as it moves past the window. OFF Jaye cocking her head...

29 EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - DAY

29

Jaye comes running out. Eric and a drunken Mahandra have hoisted the barrel into the back of Eric's truck. Millie's sitting shotgun. As Mahandra and Eric climb back in the cab:

JAYE

What are you doing?

MAHANDRA

Protecting history!

JAYE

You're drunk.

MAHANDRA

And you're a nihilist! Why don't you run and get a Bible and a copy of the Constitution and tear those up too, while you're at it?

JAYE

Oh, stop it.

MAHANDRA

You'd love that, wouldn't you? You'd love it if I just stepped aside and allowed you to destroy one life after another with your truth-covered lies. You may have started this little geriatric war but I'm gonna finish it.

JAYE

What? What war? Eric, why are you helping? What's gotten into you?

MAHANDRA

The spirit of Millie Marcus, that's what.

ERIC

Don't ask me any questions. I'm really not sure what's happening.

Now Vivian appears, coming up behind Jaye.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

They're taking your barrel!

VIVIAN

So what. I been trying to get the
garbage men to haul that filthy
thing away for sixty years.

JAYE

(to Mahandra)

You can steal every barrel in
Niagara Falls! Won't make her life
any less a lie!

MAHANDRA

Not if nobody ever knows about it!

JAYE

The two people that matter know.
The lady that did a thing. And the
lady that didn't.

Millie winces at the truth. Vivian reacts, empowered.

VIVIAN

That's right, you ol' skank. Go on
ahead and take that barrel. Take
it to your grave. Live some more
of your lie and get buried in it.

Vivian turns and starts walking back to the house.

MILLIE

Come back here. Come back here.
My life is not a lie.
(yelling after Vivian)
My life is not a lie!

VIVIAN

(her back to her)

Oh, yes it is. And nothing you can
do will ever change the fact that
you never went over Niagara Falls.

Now Millie looks to the barrel in the back of the truck.

MILLIE

Oh, there's one thing I can do.
(to Eric)
Take me to the Falls. I'm goin'
over.

ERIC

Uh...

She steps on his foot, which is over the gas, and leans over and spins the steering wheel -- and the truck FISHTAILS out of there --

JAYE

Okay. Now that's just nuts.

Off Jaye, watching the tail lights of Eric's truck recede toward destiny --

BLACK OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

29A EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY (MAGIC HOUR) 29A

The Falls (stock), a wall of lethal water rushing down with thundering power.

No, the water's not purple, just the prose.

30 EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - PRECIPICE - ABOVE THE FALLS - 30
MAGIC HOUR

Eric's truck pulls up, with Vivian's barrel in the bed and Eric, Mahandra and Millie inside.

MAHANDRA

Wait-wait-wait-wait-wait-wait-wait.

She turns on her video camera and crawls out of the truck over Millie's lap, shutting the door behind her. Mahandra gets into position and trains the camera on Millie.

MAHANDRA (cont'd)

Okay.

Eric and Millie step out of the truck.

MAHANDRA (cont'd)

(live voice over)

Millie Marcus. Legend. Icon.
Daredevil in a one-piece. She
returns to the magical land of Nia--

Mahandra stumbles over a rock as she steps back. She goes down and quickly scrambles back up to her feet.

MAHANDRA (cont'd)

-- returns to the magical land of
Niagara to make history once again.

ERIC

Do you have to videotape this? You
could be recording evidence.

MAHANDRA

I'm recording history.

ERIC

History that's admissable in court.

(CONTINUED)

MILLIE

You can see everything from here.

(pointing)

That's where I hid -- where they pulled Vivian ashore and we switched places. The people down there never saw a thing.

(proudly)

We had 'em skunked.

Mahandra stops the video camera and rewinds the tape.

MAHANDRA

I'm just gonna erase that part.

ERIC

(to Mahandra)

Okay, I have an idea... you'll tape her getting into the barrel... we'll stop the camera, pull her out of the barrel, then you'll videotape it going over the Falls and it'll look like she did it!

MILLIE

That'd be a lie.

ERIC

What's wrong with that? A lie's worked great for you for sixty years! What happened to not having to do a thing to be a thing? What about just deciding you were that thing?

MAHANDRA

Ultimately, it's dishonest. I think it's called "fraud."

MILLIE

And I'm no fraud!

30

MAHANDRA
At least you won't be shortly.
(to Eric)
Back up the truck.

ERIC
This won't change the past.

MAHANDRA
Yes, it will. If it's true
tomorrow, it'll be just as true
sixty years ago. We're reverse-
engineering history. Tearer-
downers beware.

31 EXT. RIVERBANK HIGHWAY - SAME TIME 31

Jaye's car zooms down the road, way too fast.

32 INT. JAYE'S CAR - SAME TIME 32

Jaye and Vivian. Jaye in a panic. Vivian hangs on.

JAYE
How far?

VIVIAN
Not sure. Keep going. I'm sure
something will look familiar.

JAYE
You could be a little more helpful.
A woman is about to die.

VIVIAN
She might not.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

Don't you care about anything?
Don't you even care that the only
proof of what you did was just
stolen?

VIVIAN

It's destiny. No one was ever
meant to know the truth, and I was
meant to be stuck here all my life.

JAYE

You're sure it's destiny? Could
just be you're lazy.

VIVIAN

You think a lazy person would have
the gumption to go over the Falls?

JAYE

Kinda. I mean, if they thought that's all they had to do for the rest of their life. Beats work.

VIVIAN

I risked death --

JAYE

-- to avoid work. So I'm thinkin' kind of a role model for lazy. I mean, what have you done since? Besides sitting around in your own filth growing a resentment tumor.

VIVIAN

I was wronged.

JAYE

Boo-hoo. Everyone's got troubles. Hell, I'm already twenty-four and I've never done anything.

(MORE)

JAYE (cont'd)

I have a worthless philosophy
degree that's gotten me no further
than a dead-end retail job working
for a mouth breather while my
parents slip me a few sympathy
bucks now and then so I can
continue to support my trailer park
lifestyle. And you think I sit
around feeling sorry for myself?

VIVIAN

God. I would if I were you.

JAYE

Well, you're not me.

VIVIAN

(realizing)

You're right, I'm not you.
Actually... you're me.

JAYE

Not even.

VIVIAN

Even. Oh, yeah. Better'n even. I
can see exactly where your life's
goin'. Which would be nowhere.
Just like mine, current of life
rushin' by and you're just some
debris got stuck up on an old log.
Once you're on the log, you don't
get unstuck. The current just
pounds and pounds and grinds you
down to a tiny little stuck-nub.
I'm living proof of that.

JAYE

You may be nubby, but I'm not
stuck.

VIVIAN

Oh, you're stuck.

32

CONTINUED: (4)

32

JAYE
I'm not stuck.

VIVIAN
So stuck.

JAYE
Am not.

The car lurches, bumps, comes to a STOP.

32A

OMITTED

32A

32B

EXT. JAYE'S CAR - NIGHT

32B

The back TIRES in a pit of MUD, SPINNING mud but going nowhere.

33

OMITTED

33

34

INT. JAYE'S CAR - SAME TIME

34

Vivian looks to Jaye with raised eyebrows -- see there? Says nothing.

JAYE
Shut up.

34A-35

OMITTED

34A-35

36 EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - PRECIPICE - ABOVE THE FALLS - NIGHT 36

Eric finishes righting the barrel at the edge of the cliff. Mahandra trains the video camera, preserving history. We're INTERCUTTING film with Mahandra-Cam Video POV.

MAHANDRA

(aims Camera at Millie)
Is there anything you'd like to say, Miss Marcus, before the great event?

MILLIE

(into video camera)
Yes. This message is for a certain bitter old hag.

Mahandra turns the video camera around to film herself:

MAHANDRA

Jaye, I hope you're paying attention.

She turns the video camera back on Millie.

MILLIE

Vivian Caldwell, I took your barrel just like I took your man! Call my life a lie, will you? I'll show ya! After tonight, there'll be nothing about Millie Marcus that you could call a lie!

ERIC

Except the last three letters of "Millie," which actually spell "lie."

MILLIE

Shut up.
(into video camera)
Not only will I be the first American Woman to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, but I'll be the first to do it twice!

(CONTINUED)

ERIC
You didn't do it the first time...

MILLIE
Oh, right. Okay, then I'll be the
oldest woman to ever go over
Niagara Falls in a barrel --
(aside)
We do think I'd be the oldest?

ERIC
Pretty sure we're good there.

MILLIE
Right, then.

ERIC
Can we at least wait until sunrise?
It being night time could really
hamper a rescue effort.

MAHANDRA
No one in their right mind is gonna
let us get away with this in broad
daylight. We have to do it now.

Millie moves to the barrel. Mahandra follows with her
camera. Eric dogs them both.

ERIC
Miss Marcus, you're already an
inspiration -- you've shown people
they can be whoever they say they
are. What is this really gonna
change?

Millie is next to the barrel, looking over the edge, taking
in the distance. She seems almost entranced, now...

MILLIE
(nearly to herself)
Everything. It changes
everything...

36

CONTINUED: (2)

36

She teeters forward for a moment. Eric and Mahandra both reach out, grab her, pull her back, steadying her.

CUT TO:

37

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - RIVERBANK - BELOW THE FALLS - NIGHT 37

Jaye's trying to get her car unstuck from the mud. Leans against the back of the car. Pushes. Rocks the car.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

This is not destiny. It's not supposed to happen this way. If Millie goes over, she dies... Mahandra is committed and eventually sobers up... Eric goes to jail... where he finally meets someone nice... and sane. Maybe it is supposed to happen this way...
(then, fueled with resolve)
No. It can't. Can it?

VIVIAN

Come on, honey. Accept it. It's too late. You'll never get your car out of this metaphor in time.

JAYE

It's a mud pit, not a metaphor. The car may be stuck, but I'm not. I can leave any time I want.

VIVIAN

Then why don't you?

JAYE

I have... work responsibilities and family obligations. I can't just --
(beat)
Okay. I may be a little stuck.

VIVIAN

Some folks are just fated to be stuck. I'm living proof of that.

JAYE

Fine. Whatever. You're living proof. I'm living proof. Everyone's living proof.

VIVIAN

(spots something O.S.)
Millie Marcus ain't. She ain't living proof of anything... not anymore...

Jaye turns to see --

JAYE'S POV OF THE RIVER

Where the cracked and broken BARREL floats past.

(CONTINUED)

37

CONTINUED: (2)

37

JAYE AND VIVIAN

JAYE

Ohmygod... ohmygod she did it.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

Told you it was too late.

Vivian walks back to the car as Jaye stares at the river,
dumbfounded.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

38 EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - NIGHT

38

Jaye's mud-splattered car pulls up. Sitting on the front stoop of Vivian's shack are Eric and Mahandra, crestfallen. Jaye and Vivian get out of the car.

JAYE

I could call my sister for you.
You'll probably need a lawyer.

(then)

We saw what happened.

MAHANDRA

Your sister's an immigration
attorney.

JAYE

You might want to think about
leaving the country.

MAHANDRA

We'll pay for the barrel, okay? It
was an accident.

(accusingly to Eric)

At least I think it was.

ERIC

It was!

(to Jaye and Vivian)

It slipped. Then it kinda
bounced... and rolled... then it
sorta plummeted.

JAYE

Oh my God!

VIVIAN

Did she have any last words?

MAHANDRA

Yeah: "Screw this; I'm going home."

JAYE

What?

ERIC

But then she decided she wanted to
come here instead.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE
She's here?

VIVIAN
In my house?

MAHANDRA
She said her butt was too bony to
wait on the stairs.

Off Jaye and Vivian's reaction, we...

39 INT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - MOMENTS LATER

39

Jaye and Vivian enter to find Millie sitting in one of
Vivian's chairs. She is nearly catatonic, muttering:

MILLIE
I'm a bitch. I am such a bitch.
My god am I a bitch...
(looks at Jaye and Vivian)
I'm a bitch.

JAYE
You're just now realizing this?

MILLIE

I'd never been up there before. I looked down... and I realized what you did... and what I never had the guts to do. Hell, I won't even get on an escalator, what made me think I could jump the Falls?

MAHANDRA (O.S.)

(from outside)
A bottle of Merlot.

MILLIE

You were right. It was all a lie. Every handshake. Every autograph. Every speech. My whole life a lie.

VIVIAN

Least you had a life.

MILLIE

Yes. I had yours. But I want to give it back to you. Will you let me do that?

VIVIAN

How?

MILLIE

The Concerned Ladies want to spring for a national "Back In The Barrel" summer tour. All expenses paid. I want to take you with me.

(MORE)

39

CONTINUED: (2)

39

MILLIE (cont'd)

I want to tell the world that
Vivian Caldwell is the real hero.
The first American woman brave
enough to go over Niagara Falls in
a barrel!

MAHANDRA (O.S.)

And live!

MILLIE

Please let me make this right.

VIVIAN

Little late, isn't it?

MILLIE

Oh, god no. No. Standing up
there, I realized something --

VIVIAN

Right, that you're a bitch.

MILLIE

Right, sure. That. But also that
it's not too late. It's not too
late to come clean. It's not too
late to change things. Don't you
see? It's never too...

Millie freezes. Jaye and Vivian look at each other. A beat.
Finally, Jaye pokes at Millie. Dead weight.

JAYE

I think she's dead.

OFF that...

39A-40 OMITTED

39A-40

41 INT. FUNERAL HOME/CHAPEL - DAY

41

The deluxe funeral service. The room is full to bursting
with flowers, and a string quartet plays in the corner.

We pan across the only four mourners: Mahandra, teary and
distraught; Vivian, crying softly; Eric, stoic and somber;
and Jaye, eyes darting about, hoping she's gotten away with
this one. A PASTOR speaks over a stainless-steel (non-
biodegradable) urn atop a marble pedestal.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC
(aside to Jaye)
How'd you arrange all this?

JAYE
Her purse was full of traveler's
checks.

ERIC
Isn't that illegal?

JAYE
Probably the least illegal thing
we're doing right now. Keep quiet.

PASTOR
"It is better to go to a house of
mourning than to go to a house of
feasting, for death is the destiny
of every man."
(then)
We've come here today to pay our
respects to a woman who has touched
each of us. We've all felt her
love, her generosity, her kindness
of spirit. We all remember her
smile, her laugh, her words of
comfort in times of need. Not me
personally, of course... but many
people did. So let us rejoice in a
life well-lived. Let us celebrate -
- Vivian Caldwell.

Jaye, Eric and Mahandra share conspiratorial looks. Holy
Christ, maybe they will get away with this. Vivian -- the
real one -- sobs.

PASTOR (cont'd)
Vivian Caldwell is a name I wasn't
familiar with until, well, until
just a few minutes ago. But as I
look out at the faces of those who
have gathered here today, I know I
can say with some certainty, that
Vivian is not dead. No. She's
very much alive.

The mourners freeze at that -- whoops.

PASTOR (cont'd)

...alive in the people she touched during her time here... and so I ask you to keep the spirit of this wonderful woman alive by continuing to reach out to others, and when you do, remember that you carry the legacy of our beloved friend with you, wherever you go...

41A INT. JAYE'S CAR - NIGHT

41A

Post-funeral. Jaye gets in the car and STARTLES when she sees Mahandra sitting in the back seat.

MAHANDRA

I don't wanna die alone and friendless, screeching my final testimony into a video camera.

JAYE

Um... alright.

MAHANDRA

I'm sorry I went crazy.

JAYE

That might mean more if you come up here and sit in the front seat.

Mahandra gets out of the back seat and into the front.

MAHANDRA

I think I know why I went crazy. You drove me there.

JAYE

What?

MAHANDRA

It started with the mumbling. Then this obsession with consciousness and why things talk. We all know you have a philosophy degree but I mean, come now. And the random acts of kindness. Are you feeling guilty about something?

(CONTINUED)

41A

CONTINUED:

41A

JAYE

No. Well... no.

MAHANDRA

So there is... something?

JAYE

I don't know. I think so. I don't think it's just in my head. I hope it's not just in my head. Or would that be a good thing?

MAHANDRA

I don't know. You won't tell me what it is. And that makes me sad.

JAYE

And crazy?

MAHANDRA

Yes. And crazy. Jaye... you used to tell me everything.

Jaye looks at her for a beat. Fuck it. Big breath, then:

JAYE

Okay. Okay... Remember when I told you about the little smooshed-face Wax Lion that talked to me? I wasn't making that up. It spoke. And it's not alone. Animals with faces that aren't really alive talk to me and tell me to do things. It's very confusing and I don't always understand.

MAHANDRA

(a frozen beat, then:)

So whenever you're ready to tell me the truth, I'm here to listen.

JAYE

(oh, well)

I appreciate that.

42

EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - NIGHT

42

A TAXI CAB idles. Jaye and Mahandra lug some suitcases to the DRIVER. He places them in the trunk.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE
(to Mahandra)
That everything?

MAHANDRA
That's all the big...
(spots something O.S.)
Ohmygod...

A ghost... MILLIE appears, moving toward them.

As the apparition gets closer, WE SEE that it's not Millie, but Vivian, dressed in Millie's clothing, with a Millie-like hair-do. Eric comes up behind her, carrying the last bit of luggage. Mahandra threatens to burst into tears again.

MAHANDRA (cont'd)

I'm sorry... I'm sorry. It's just... you look so much like her.

VIVIAN

Oh, sweetheart. None of that. You heard what the non-denominational minister said: As long as you remember her, she'll always be with you. In fact, here she is --

Vivian hands the urn with Millie's ashes to Mahandra, who takes them before she can refuse.

MAHANDRA
(suddenly no longer teary)
Okay, gross.

Mahandra quickly hands the urn to Jaye. Vivian looks down at her new outfit.

VIVIAN
I guess now I know what it's like
to be Millie --

ERIC
Because you're wearing her clothes?

VIVIAN
Because I feel like a fraud.

JAYE
Yeah. One of life's little ironies
that you have to continue Millie's
lie so you can finally tell the
truth. I never said it was a
perfect plan, but at least this
time it'll be you up on those
podiums getting the accolades and
signing the autographs.

VIVIAN
But I'll still have to sign her
name?

JAYE
'Fraid so.

Vivian looks to an airplane ticket in her hand.

VIVIAN
So I'm actually getting out of
here. Can hardly believe it.

ERIC
You'll enjoy Florida. It's nice.
I went there once with my parents.
(going inward)
But that was another life...

JAYE
Then after Florida, Colorado! And
then... it's really up to you.

Vivian looks at Jaye, smiles.

VIVIAN
I guess maybe it is.

The TAXI DRIVER approaches the little gathering.

TAXI DRIVER
Sorry to interrupt -- Miss Marcus?

VIVIAN
(with a glance to Jaye)
That's me.

TAXI DRIVER
We'd better get going if you don't
want to miss your flight.

As he takes her bag from her, holds the door open for her:

TAXI DRIVER (cont'd)
And can I just say it's an honor
driving you. My great Aunt Esther
was actually there the day you went
over the Falls. She talked about
it all the time. You were a huge
inspiration to her.

VIVIAN
Why, thank you dear. And do call
me Millie.

She gets in, he closes the door for her then moves to the
trunk to load the bag. Jaye moves to the window, leans down.

JAYE
See? Nobody's stuck. You're not
living proof anymore. I destroyed
the evidence.

VIVIAN
Maybe the lying old cow was right.
Maybe it really is never too late.

JAYE
Except in her case, kinda was.

VIVIAN
True.

They ponder that for a moment, then:

JAYE VIVIAN
Poor bitch. Poor bitch.

Now the Driver climbs in, gets behind the wheel. Glances back to Vivian and hands back a piece of paper and a pen.

TAXI DRIVER
Could I maybe get your autograph?

VIVIAN
Of course, dear!

She writes. Reacts. Scribbles it out.

VIVIAN (cont'd)
Crap. Let me do that again...

And the Taxi is pulling away, now. Jaye looks after her and sees a little reflection of herself driving off as well.

43 INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY 43

Jaye is at the register. Millie's urn sits there, as silent as a Wax Lion. She is considering various places to put the urn when she sees an open spot on the shelf next to the Barrel Bear. She brings the urn to the Bear.

JAYE
Murderer.

Jaye places the urn next to the Bear.

JAYE (cont'd)
At least I gave it back to her,
right?
(re: the urn)
Well, not her, but the other her.
That's who you had in mind, right?
(a beat)
Y'know, things would be a lot
easier if you were clearer with
your pronouns.

Jaye starts to walk away. Once her back is to the bear:

BARREL BEAR (O.S.)
It's never too late.

Jaye whirls -- the Bear is silent. She opens her mouth to retort, stops short, considers it. She picks up the Barrel Bear... and yanks it from its barrel.

44

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY

44

Jaye and Eric, standing at the railing overlooking the Falls.
Silence.

JAYE

Should we say something?

ERIC

Maybe.

JAYE

You wanna start?

ERIC

Um. Okay. Yeah. I'd just like to say... Millie Marcus taught me that what's most important in life is to be yourself. Even if you have to be somebody else to do it. So from here on out, you can just call me... Eric.

JAYE

But like with a "Q" or something?

ERIC

No. Just me. I figure it's not so terrible being Eric. Now-Eric, I mean. Then-Eric was sad, but Then-Eric was then. I'm Now-Eric. And don't laugh... but I kinda like it here. I like The Barrel, I like slinging cocktails, I like Niagara Falls... and I like you.

JAYE

I'm not laughing. In fact, knowing that I can leave... makes me wanna stay. For now anyway. There's something about having a choice that makes a person feel unstuck.

ERIC

That's a start.

JAYE

Maybe it is.

ERIC

And here's an ending...

He holds up his cell phone. Jaye reacts.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE
What are you doing?

ERIC
This phone belongs to Then-Eric.
So it's goin' away.

JAYE
Ohmygod. You sure you're ready to
cut the cord?

ERIC
It's wireless.

JAYE
Okay, then.

ERIC
Alright. Here goes... Goodbye to
the old life!

Eric flings his arm with the phone! Looks over the Falls to
see where it went...

JAYE
It's still in your hand.

He looks to it. Oh. Ha ha.

ERIC
Okay. This time I mean it.

He brings his arm back again, and in fact this time --

SLOW-MOTION as Eric hurls his cell phone over the Falls. The
instant it leaves his hand... it lights up and RINGS.

WIDER -- Eric still frozen in the position. The SOUND of the RINGING PHONE getting more and more distant. We can see he might want to jump in after it. A beat.

JAYE
I'm sure they'll call back.

ERIC
Yeah.

JAYE
Alright. My turn.

Jaye holds up the plastic barrel that used to contain the Bear. The top is sealed with several layers of duct tape.

JAYE (cont'd)
We are gathered here today to say goodbye not only to Then-Eric, but to our friend, Millie. Or most of her, at any rate. Some of her got on the cash register. But hopefully it wasn't anything important. Just like an elbow or something. She was...
(searches for just the right words)
...she may have been a liar but she'll always be a legend. She lived her life claiming she went over Niagara Falls in a barrel. Now nobody will ever be able to say different.

And she throws it --

THE PLASTIC BARREL: if our flashback barrel drop was CGI, then this is the exact same FX shot with our plastic barrel. Millie Marcus finally goes over Niagara Falls in a barrel.

As Jaye and Eric look their last to Millie.

JAYE
And so history is preserved.

ERIC
And the legend continues.

45A

CONTINUED:

45A

As they turn. The Cop from the Teaser is there, scribbling in his ticket book.

JAYE

Oh, crap.

COP

Littering. Two-hundred fifty dollar fine.

(holds out ticket book to Jaye)

Just need your autograph.

And off that --

BLACK OUT.

END OF SHOW

*
*