

WONDERFALLS

"BARREL BEAR"

TEASER

Ext. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY

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

INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY - JAYE

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.

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?

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:

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

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.

INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY

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!

EXT. WONDERFALLS - MAID OF THE MIST FOUNTAIN - DAY

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:

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.

Off that --

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER
ACT ONE

INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

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.

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.

INT. THE BARREL - CONTINUOUS - DAY

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?

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!

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 --

FX SHOT - THE BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO ON THE WALL

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.

INT. THE BARREL - CONTINUOUS

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?

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.

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.

JAYE

So you like signing autographs, huh?

FX SHOT - BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO

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:

INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY

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.

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...

INT. TYLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

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?

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...

EXT. STREET - DAY - CLOSE ON - TELEPHONE POLE

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...

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

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.

DAD

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

JAYE

We blanketed the neighborhood with illegally posted fliers.

SHARON

"We?" Did you really say
"we?"

(to Dad)

And I have a permit to post.

DAD

Of course you do.

(wraps an arm around
Jaye)

Sweetheart, you're bringing people together and that's a gift. That's an aptitude... but I have to ask -- Sharon, will you excuse us?

Sharon stares and stands stiffly as Dad pulls Jaye aside:

DAD (cont'd)

(lowering voice)

I have to ask... is this part of a community service program?

JAYE

What?

DAD

Do you have to do this? Are you under court order?

JAYE

Well... not court order, per se. But I do feel compelled, if that's what you're asking.

DAD

You're not taking any money
from the ol' gal, are you?

JAYE

No. Although, I did take that
quarter. But I gave it back.
It just wasn't enough...

DAD

(wanting to believe)
Then this is all out of the
kindness of your heart?

JAYE

(eyes Stuffed Bass)
More or less.

Dad nods, trying to swallow his building emotion.

DAD

I knew you had it in you.

He moves off and Sharon quickly crosses to Jaye.

SHARON

You made our father cry.
(horrible
realization)
Did you out me? Did you?

JAYE

No, but thanks for pointing
out that blackmail's always a
good option with you.

SHARON

You know those bail receipts
with your name on them? I
keep those.
(shrugs on coat)
Now, if you'll excuse me I
have to go pick up name-badge
holders.

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

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

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?

VIVIAN

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

JAYE

What lies?

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...

OMITTED

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

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.) (cont'd)

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.) (cont'd)
It was me...

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

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

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

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:

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY - FLASHBACK

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.) (cont'd)

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

The men bring the lid down over her...

VIVIAN (v.o.) (cont'd)

And I couldn't even see
that...

...BLACKNESS.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY - FLASHBACK

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. 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.) (cont'd)

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:

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

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.

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... 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...?

INT. THE BARREL - BACK WALKWAY - DAY

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

(realizing)

You're in league with her. You're in league with Grandma Flannel. You are Grandma Flannel. Just add forty years and a pair of orthopedic sneakers.

JAYE

What?

MAHANDRA

You set Millie up. You'll stop at nothing to trash this place and pee on its history.

JAYE

Think about what you're saying: I set something up. Me.

MAHANDRA

(considers)

Oh... Yeah... Okay, then why are you doing this?

JAYE

Flannel granny justice.

MAHANDRA

And?

JAYE

There's no hidden agenda. My agenda's in plain view.

MAHANDRA

Oh, no, no, no, no, no it's

not. You got something tucked
away in your agenda hole.
Maybe I just need to lob a
cannister of tear gas down
there and see what crawls out.

JAYE

What kind of tear gas?

MAHANDRA

The kind that's gonna sting.

And with that she marches off and so does Jaye.

OMITTED

EXT. THE BARREL - DAY

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.

INT. THE BARREL - DAY

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.

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. 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.

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

(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?

OMITTED

VIEWMASTER TRANSITIONS

Featuring the Falls and vintage period images take us
to:

EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - DAY

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.

The RING of a cell phone takes us to...

INT. THE BARREL - BACK ROOM - DAY

Eric winces as his cell phone continues to ring. The
caller ID taunts him with "Unavailable." After several
more rings, he's at the breaking point and finally
answers:

ERIC

...Hello?

MAHANDRA'S VOICE
Don't you feel inspired?

ERIC
Who is this?

MAHANDRA'S VOICE
It's me.

SPLIT SCREEN TO INCLUDE: INT. BARREL - DAY

Mahandra walks toward the backroom, talking on her own cell.

MAHANDRA
Hey! You answered that other Eric's phone. Is this progress or did you fall off the wagon?

ERIC
I don't know. It said unavailable. Thought it might be Jaye.

THE SPLIT SCREENS BECOME ONE

...as Mahandra crosses to Eric in the back room.

MAHANDRA
Ha, got that ri -- Then that's progress. Would you've picked up if you thought it was anybody else?

ERIC
(thinks)
Huh-uh.

MAHANDRA
(genuinely touched)
Ohhhh... See? You're not that other Eric anymore. You have moved on. You've started over here in Niagara Falls, magical land of the possible, your eye on a new lady...

ERIC
Heidi chose Niagara Falls.

MAHANDRA

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

ERIC
(likes that idea)
I am new-baptised...

MAHANDRA
On the subject of Jaye... we
need to call her bluff. We
need to call it and trick it
into running outside so we can
kill it.

ERIC
Is there a bluff to be called?

MAHANDRA
Poor, naive Eric. You're so
sweet. Yes, there's a bluff.
There may be bluffs. I don't
know. But I do know this:
Jaye Tyler doesn't like old
ladies. They scare her. It
all goes back to Hansel and
Gretel.

ERIC
She seemed to like that other
one.

MAHANDRA
Seemed to but she doesn't.
Don't get me wrong. She's a
lovely human being but she's
up to something. We could all
be in danger. Okay, maybe not
in danger but she is up to
something...

ERIC
Is it that she's up to
something, or is it that she's
up to something and won't tell
you what it is?

MAHANDRA
Uh-huh. Can you get a truck?

CLOSE ON - HAND-COLORED PHOTOGRAPH

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 --

INT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - DAY

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. 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.

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...

EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - DAY

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.

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

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY (MAGIC HOUR)

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

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

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

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!

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.

EXT. RIVERBANK HIGHWAY - SAME TIME

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

INT. JAYE'S CAR - SAME TIME

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.

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.

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.

JAYE
I'm not stuck.

VIVIAN
So stuck.

JAYE
Am not.

The car lurches, bumps, comes to a STOP.

OMITTED

EXT. JAYE'S CAR - NIGHT

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

OMITTED

INT. JAYE'S CAR - SAME TIME

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

JAYE
Shut up.

OMITTED

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

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!

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...

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

CUT TO:

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

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

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.

JAYE AND VIVIAN

JAYE

Ohmygod... ohmygod she did
it.

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

EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - NIGHT

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.

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...

INT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - MOMENTS LATER

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.

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...

OMITTED

INT. FUNERAL HOME/CHAPEL - DAY

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.

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...

OMITTED

EXT. VIVIAN'S SHACK - NIGHT

A TAXI CAB idles. Jaye and Mahandra push a suitcase
into the trunk.

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. But I
think I know why it happened.
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?

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.

MAHANDRA
(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

Poor bitch.

VIVIAN

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.

INT. WONDERFALLS - DAY

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.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - DAY

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.

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 --

FX SHOT - PLASTIC BARREL OVER FALLS

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.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - RAILING - DAY

As Jaye and Eric look their last to Millie.

JAYE

And so history is preserved.

ERIC

And the legend continues.

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