



**WONDERFALLS**

"Wax Lion"

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Teleplay by  
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Final Shooting Script

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"Wax Lion"

ACT ONE

**THE LEGEND**

A CLASSIC "**Greetings from Niagara**" POSTCARD. Each letter is a window framing a scene within...

ZOOM IN though the "N" to reveal: **THE FALLS.**

POWERFUL and IMPRESSIVE. The image animates, the MIST taking the shape of THE FACE OF AN ANGRY NATIVE AMERICAN GOD.

JAYE'S VOICE

Okay, um, well there's this god. And he lives in the waterfall...

BOY'S VOICE

What's his name?

JAYE'S VOICE

Doesn't matter. So these Indians --

1A CLOSER VIEW - through another letter: A RIVERBANK. Where 1A  
FIVE Native Americans stand, staring.

BOY'S VOICE

Native Americans.

JAYE'S VOICE

Yeah. Whatever. So these Indians were all afraid of this god.

BOY'S VOICE

Why?

JAYE'S VOICE

I don't know. They made him mad and he killed some people.

2 FLASH CUTS - STOCK FOOTAGE 2

A BOLT OF LIGHTNING rips the sky, An AVALANCHE tears down a mountain, A GRIZZLY BEAR ROARS.

3 RESUME - THE RIVERBANK 3

Only now there are only TWO Native men left.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

JAYE'S VOICE

Anyway, they were like "hey, how do we get this guy to stop killing everybody." And someone said "let's give him presents."

VIEW-MASTER PHOTOS rotate into frame with a CLICK:

4 A CANOE FILLED WITH FRUIT

4

It approaches the edge looking very much like a cornucopia.

4A A CANOE FILLED WITH FLOWERS

4A

approaches the edge.

4B A CANOE RIDICULOUSLY OVER-FILLED WITH FURRY WOODLAND ANIMALS 4B

of all shapes and sizes -- bears, cougars, raccoons, deer, buffalo -- sit calmly as they approach the edge.

JAYE'S VOICE

So they gave him all this stuff and he was still mad so they figured if he likes killing people so much, why don't they just kill some people for him. So the Chief volunteers his daughter cause he thinks that's honorable or something.

5 VINTAGE SOUVENIR LAMP

5

CLICK. A HAND turns on the lamp. On the hand-painted lamp shade we see: A NATIVE AMERICAN PRINCESS. She's a voluptuous young beauty with a heaving bosom barely contained in her buckskin dress. She's poised bravely in a canoe that's rushing to the edge of the falls.

JAYE'S VOICE

And they toss Princess in a boat and send her down the river.

BOY'S VOICE

Native Americans never practiced human sacrifice.

JAYE'S VOICE

Don't interrupt me again.

The image ANIMATES. The Princess is swept off by the "current." After a beat, her father the CHIEF, enters paddling intently chasing her. He calls to her M.O.S.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

JAYE'S VOICE (CONT'D)

The chief does the whole "oh-my-god-what-have-I-done" and paddles his canoe out to save her.

Chief calls out. Princess doesn't even acknowledge him. Chief reaches out to her. Princess folds her arms...

JAYE'S VOICE (CONT'D)

But Princess wasn't having any of that. She's all "No, no. I surrender to destiny." Famous last words. Seriously. They put it on bathrobes and stuff.

6 FLASH CUTS - MERCHANDISE

6

-- A stack of T-SHIRTS silk-screened "Surrender to Destiny".  
-- A souvenir ASH TRAY with the same logo.

6A -- A stacks of VIDEOS: "Surrender to destiny."

6A

ON A MONITOR - "Surrender to Destiny" video

THE PRINCESS IN HER CANOE. For a split second we see an "Oh, shit" expression. Then she goes over the edge.

JAYE'S VOICE

Anyway, so then Princess takes the plunge.

The ANGRY GOD FACE reacts to her beauty-- he thinks she's the shit. The GOD FACE SNATCHES the Princess OUT OF THE AIR WITH ITS MOUTH and pulls her into the falls.

JAYE'S VOICE (CONT'D)

But it's all good 'cause the god thought the daughter was hot so he spared her life.

The Chief's canoe plummets into the mist below. The Monitor snaps off to BLACK SCREEN.

SMASH CUT TO:

7 BIG BEAUTIFUL NIAGARA FALLS - FULL COLOR

7

FAST PULL BACK to reveal the image is on the LCD screen of a tiny digicam. **THIS IS PRESENT DAY NIAGARA FALLS.**

CAMERA RATCHETS around the FOREIGN TOURIST holding the digicam... and just keeps moving...

CAMERA ROCKETS FAST-MOTION through a "Universal City Walk"-style center passing all sorts of tourists and honeymooners.

JAYE'S VOICE

He promised if she stayed with him in the cave he'd forgive her people...

(CONTINUED)

CAMERA ABRUPTLY STOPS AND GOES TO SLOW MOTION AS WE FIND:

THOMAS KANE, early 30's, handsome EPS DELIVERY MAN in sexy brown shorts (more on him later) heaves a sigh and **flips a coin** into the fountain in front of a statue of the Maid of the Mist in her canoe frozen at the brink of the falls. The coin catches a RAY OF LIGHT and FLICKERS for a brief moment before starting its descent into the fountain.

JAYE'S VOICE (CONT'D)

...and protect and enchant their land  
'til the end of time.

CAMERA ABRUPTLY LAUNCHES AGAIN - FAST MOTION

whipping through the crowd...

JAYE'S VOICE (CONT'D)

She figured since her entire tribe just tried to kill her, it was probably the safer option. So she agreed to live with the god in the waterfall and became Maid of the Mist.

...until it finds:

8 INT. MAID OF THE MIST SOUVENIR SHOP - RESUME NORMAL MOTION

8

JAYE, early 20's ball-buster, stands in an aisle talking to a 10 year-old Boy holding the "I Surrender to Destiny" video. In the background, ALEC, an acne-faced, mouth-breathing 17 year-old shop employee -- stares blankly at the TV.

JAYE

And thanks to Princess, Niagara has remained an enchanted wonderland despite hundreds of years of commercial development.

BOY

What happened to the chief?

JAYE

He died.

BOY

Why'd princess live?

JAYE

'Cause she was hot. You gonna buy the tape?

BOY

No.

JAYE

Then get out. No loitering.

(CONTINUED)

Jaye turns her back and pretends to fold some sweatshirts. She stops the second the Boy walks away and watches the TV beside Alec. He speaks to Jaye without looking at her:

ALEC

Peggy said the votive candle canoes need to be restocked.

His mouth doesn't close when he's finished talking.

JAYE

I'm with a customer.

ALEC

So am I.

They both stare at the television. Thomas, the EPS man, slogs into the shop looking like someone just shot his dog. He stumbles, dropping boxes, not having a good day...

As CAMERA RATCHETS AROUND THOMAS he sprouts several days beard growth and the kiosk TRANSFORMS INTO:

9 INT. THOMAS' LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

9

Thomas sits unkempt on an awful floral love seat wearing only underwear and a t-shirt. FAST MOTION MOVERS haul boxes out the door, leaving only the loveseat and big screen TV.

THOMAS

What did I do wrong?

Thomas watches as a beautiful woman in her 30's - BETH - walks out of his life. He stares blankly, suppressing tears. Finally, he pops a can of Pringles.

SMASH BACK TO:

10 INT. MAID OF THE MIST SOUVENIR SHOP - AS BEFORE

10

Thomas looks miserable; Jaye could care less.

THOMAS

Morning, Jaye.

JAYE

Morning.

She absently signs the electronic clip board.

THOMAS

Have a good one.

JAYE

Yeah, all right.

(CONTINUED)

Thomas' smile crumbles as he slowly walks away.

GRETCHEN (O.C.)

Jaye? Ohmygod. Is that you?

Jaye looks over to see GRETCHEN (smartly dressed early 20's reeking of confidence and positive energy). She holds a handful of souvenirs. Jaye pauses a moment, debating whether she can get away with pretending not to know her. Finally:

JAYE

Gretchen?

GRETCHEN

Hi. Wow. How random is this?

JAYE

Pretty random.

Jaye starts watching the TV again.

GRETCHEN

Last time I saw you was graduation. You were vomiting under the bleachers.

(confessing)

We all thought you were pregnant.

JAYE

Just drunk. What're you doing here?

GRETCHEN

Funeral.

(completely different idea)

Ohmygod. So much has happened since High School. Check it out.

Gretchen shows Jaye a meaty diamond ring.

GRETCHEN (CONT'D)

I sacked such a good one. He loves that I grew up in Niagara so I'm picking up a few souvenirs. I guess I should call them tchotchkes now that I'm Jewish.

(off her look)

Converted for love.

JAYE

So you don't really believe in it?

GRETCHEN

Oh, stop. What about you? Did you end up over-educated and unemployable like you said in the year book?

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

Yeah. Went to Brown. Got a Philosophy degree. Now I work here.

Gretchen chuckles then quickly realizes she's not joking.

GRETCHEN

Really? Wow.

JAYE

World needs ditch-diggers, too.

GRETCHEN

Your parents must've plotzed.

JAYE

They're happy if I'm happy.

GRETCHEN

Are you happy?

The question throws Jaye for a loop. She isn't sure how to respond, so she doesn't.

JAYE

Why don't I ring those up for you?

Jaye turns to the register, rings up Gretchen's items.

GRETCHEN

But you are the manager, right?

SMASH CUT TO:

11 INT. SOUVENIR SHOP - MANAGER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

11

A NAME TAG READING PEGGY - MANAGER

CAMERA REVEALS PEGGY. She's an early 30's, simple, small town gal who is very, very pregnant.

PEGGY

I just wanna start out by saying this was one of the most difficult decisions I've ever had to make in my entire life.

REVEAL we are in -- The souvenir shop manager's office.

Jaye and Alec sit opposite PEGGY.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

You are both so... so reliable and smart. And so different.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

PEGGY (CONT'D)

You have different strengths and different weaknesses. And I found that very interesting. But I have to go with an assistant manager whose strengths are best suited for the position.

CLOSE ON JAYE -- listening with no expression.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Someone who is more of a "people person" and can deal with the day-in-day-out...

The sound of Jaye's BREATHING smothers all ambient sound. Jaye stares at Peggy. She sits behind her desk with a sympathetic look on her face, occasionally looking directly into CAMERA as she speaks M.O.S.

PEGGY (M.O.S.) (CONT'D)

... trials and tribulations of retail management. And the managerial path isn't always clear. It's a minefield.

Jaye stares harder.

CLOSE ON PEGGY'S LIP

Tiny bubbles of saliva form at the corners of her mouth.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Right now it really feels like Alex is more skilled to navigate that minefield.

CAMERA PANS to Alec who is looking at Peggy realizing that he got the job. She hands him a name-tag: "Asst Manager."

RESUME NORMAL SOUND

Jaye sits in her chair as before with an inscrutable expression on her face. Peggy sits opposite Jay and Alec.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

What's good for business is good for all of us.

(to Jaye)

No one here is a loser.

Jaye tries not to react as "loser" echoes in her ear.

QUICK SHOTS:

12-14 OMIT

12-14

15 EXTREME CLOSE UP - METAL TUBE 15

It fills with hot liquid wax that rushes toward CAMERA.

16 EXTREME CLOSE UP - INT. METAL MOLD 16

A dollop of liquid wax splashing into the mold and starting to fill it.

16A CLOSE ON WAX LION 16A

It falls face-first into CAMERA blacking out the FRAME. The SOUND of it's tremendous impact brings us back to:

SMASH CUT TO:

17 INT. MAID OF THE MIST SOUVENIR SHOP - MINUTES LATER 17

Jaye stands at the cash register, staring into the distance. She's a bit flipped. RONNIE, 40's Texan tourist, bangs on the vending machine that makes little wax figures. She approaches Jaye holding a kiosk shopping bag. She presents a card with a little wax lion whose face is smooshed.

RONNIE

You didn't give me my discount and this lion is defective.

JAYE

What?

RONNIE

The face is all funky.

Jaye picks up the little smooshed-faced lion and studies it for a second before placing it back on the counter.

JAYE

Vending machine's not ours. If you have a complaint there's a number on the side.

RONNIE

What about my discount?

JAYE

What about it?

RONNIE

I'm a guest at the Hillcrest. We're supposed to get ten percent off from select local merchants. One of which is you.

She slides the card across the counter.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

That discount card has to be presented at the time of purchase.

RONNIE

My ass. I am "presenting" it now.

Jaye stares at her for a moment before responding.

JAYE

Did you just say "my ass?"

A few customers turn around. Alec approaches the counter.

ALEC

I'm sorry, ma'am. Is there a problem here?

RONNIE

Yeah, I want my discount.

JAYE

She didn't --

ALEC

(cutting Jaye off)  
May I see your receipt please?

Ronnie hands the receipt to Alec, he works the calculator.

ALEC (CONT'D)

(to Ronnie)  
Your discount comes to three dollars and eighty-six cents.  
(to Jaye)  
Take it outta the till.  
(to Ronnie)  
I apologize for the confusion. Enjoy your stay.

Jaye watches him go, suspicious that he's been replaced by a pod person. Ronnie just digs in her purse and pulls out a dime and four pennies. She slaps them on the counter.

RONNIE

Just give me four ones.

Jaye opens the till and starts to pull out the one dollar bills. She glances down at the counter and sees:

JAYE'S P.O.V. - SMOOSHED-FACED LION

It's looking directly at her. **The smooshed-Faced Lion opens its mouth and speaks:**

(CONTINUED)

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

*Don't give her money back.*

JAYE freezes, staring at the smooshed-faced lion in horror. She glances at Ronnie who is waiting impatiently for her refund. Everyone around her is acting normal.

HER P.O.V. - LION

It's looking right back at her, alive, blinking, staring.

JAYE blinks, waiting to wake up, or snap to reality. **BUT THIS IS REALITY.** She looks at Ronnie, but she doesn't appear to have heard anything. Jaye absently pulls out the last dollar bill from the till...

JAYE'S P.O.V. - SMOOSHED-FACED LION

SMOOSHED-FACED LION (CONT'D)

*Don't do it.*

JAYE extends her hand with the bills and Ronnie grabs them.

RONNIE

Thank you.

The moment Ronnie exits, a THIEF SNATCHES RONNIE'S PURSE.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Hey! That guy just stole my purse!

(calling after Thief)

You son of a bitch! Get back here, I'm gonna kick your ass! That's right. I called your momma a bitch! You better run.

Jaye looks down at the lion who stares at her.

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

*Told you.*

ALEC

Your mother's on the phone. Says she needs to talk to you.

(a reminder)

We're allowed two minutes for personal calls.

Jaye numbly takes the phone. Jaye stares at the little lion, once again a lifeless piece of wax.

JAYE

(dazed)

Hello, mother.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (3)

17

And with that, she promptly collapses.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

18 EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY 18

A Vintage Airstream trailer fronted with a row of luxury cars -- a vintage Mercedes convertible, a new Mercedes convertible, a BMW sedan and a Range Rover.

18A ANGLE THROUGH WINDOW 18A

Jaye sits on the edge of her bed, staring at the bi-fold divider that separates her bedroom from the rest of the trailer.

CAMERA MOVES DOWN THE SIDE OF THE TRAILER until it finds:

ANGLE THROUGH ANOTHER WINDOW

Four people are squeezed into the kitchenette-living room on the other side of the bi-fold. This is Jaye's family:

-- MOM Karen (athletic-suited professional, cultivating the "on-the-go" image)

-- DAD Darrin (casual-suited professional, accessible because he's not wearing a jacket)

-- sister SHARON (uptight business-suited professional, clearly uncomfortable around the family)

-- brother AARON (casual-suited professional with a desert-dry personality)

DAD

What is she doing back there?

19 INT. AIRSTREAM TRAILER- DAY 19

Mom and Dad stand. Aaron's in an easy chair. Sharon's in a small kitchenette booth looking very annoyed. They speak in hushed-tones:

AARON

Maybe she's taking a dump.

MOM

Must you be such a sow.

SHARON

The mouth-breather at the store said she went pale, twitched a couple of times and passed out.

(CONTINUED)

DAD

Well, that can't be good.

MOM

(concerned)

He called it a 'sode. Short for episode.

A voice calls from behind the partition:

JAYE'S VOICE

I'm fine. You can go home now.

MOM

(to partition)

Sweetheart, you're not fine. You had a 'sode.

JAYE'S VOICE

(through partition)

Just low blood sugar. Ate a snickers.  
Thanks for coming.

SHARON

If this is an intervention, shouldn't we  
be intervening?

DAD

Who said anything about an intervention?

Sharon glances at Mom, who reacts a bit defensively.

MOM

It's not so much an intervention as it is  
a collective expression of concern.

SHARON

You said intervention.

MOM

(warm)

Oh, sweetheart, let it go already. All  
that anger makes you look old. You  
haven't said two kind words to your  
sister since you left for college. Why  
do you have to be so snarky?

SHARON

Stolen baby-sitting money... stolen make-  
up... stolen car...

DAD

Did anyone examine her?

(CONTINUED)

MOM

A very handsome paramedic said he  
couldn't find anything physically wrong.  
(to Sharon)  
Didn't you think he was handsome?

SHARON

Please stop asking me that.

DAD

A paramedic isn't qualified to tell you  
nothing's wrong.

AARON

It's not physical. It's emotional.  
(off their looks)  
She lives in a trailer park. Clearly,  
she's disturbed. I mean, clearly.

MOM

She isn't disturbed, she's depressed.  
(to Dad)  
They have pills for that now. Can't you  
prescribe something?

DAD

You don't just go poppin' pills if you're  
feeling down. There are other ways to  
deal with depression.  
(to partition)  
Sweetheart, when was the last time you  
had an orgasm?

Sharon and Aaron cringe. There is no response from Jaye.

SHARON

That sound you hear is stunned silence.

DAD

It's nothing to be ashamed of. Millions  
of people have orgasms every day.

JAYE'S VOICE

(through partition)  
Not ashamed. Mortified.

DAD

Maybe she should talk to Doctor Ron.

MOM

I really don't want her talking to my  
therapist. She'll give him ideas.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE'S VOICE  
(through partition)  
Don't need therapy. All better now.

Sharon has had enough of the pampering. She gathers her jacket and her purse, getting ready to leave.

SHARON  
I think we should put her down.

MOM  
Sharon.

Aaron shrugs, seeing Sharon's point:

AARON  
It is just like going to sleep.

MOM  
(re: Sharon)  
Don't encourage her.

SHARON  
God Forbid.

And with that, Sharon's out the door.

SHARON (CONT'D)  
(on her way out)  
Drop me a jingle when the kid gloves come off.

The door slams shut behind Sharon leaving Mom, Dad and Aaron to sit in silence. After a moment:

AARON  
So we're not putting her down?

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PARTITION

Jaye listens to them, too freaked out to respond.

MOM'S VOICE  
(through partition)  
We're not going to put you down,  
sweetheart. We just want to understand  
what happened to you.

OFF Jaye as she stares at the little smooshed-faced lion on her nightstand, a lifeless piece of wax...

SMASH CUT TO:

20 INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

20

DOCTOR RON, 40'S, white-bearded country club type wearing smart slacks and deck shoes, sits opposite Jaye. His feet are propped up on the desk next to a decorative brass monkey. A long awkward moment of silence. Finally:

DOCTOR RON  
Tell me about your family.

JAYE  
I really don't wanna gossip.

DOCTOR RON  
Would you say your family life is stressful?

JAYE  
(shrugs)  
Not that I'm aware of. Does my mother say it's stressful?

DOCTOR RON  
We're not talking about your mother.

JAYE  
Not yet.

DOCTOR RON  
Do you feel pressure to live up to your mother's expectations?

JAYE  
I thought we weren't talking about my mother.

JAYE'S P.O.V.

The Brass Monkey on the desk turns and looks directly at her. She reacts, all expression drains from her face.

Jaye looks to Doctor Ron but he doesn't appear to notice.

DOCTOR RON  
We're not. We're talking about you.

She tears her eyes away from the monkey.

JAYE  
I'm confused.

DOCTOR RON  
That's perfectly normal.

(CONTINUED)

BRASS MONKEY

*Perfectly normal.*

Jaye is horrified. She surreptitiously picks her bag off the floor and puts it on the desk in front of the Brass Monkey.

DOCTOR RON

I understand there's some animosity between you and your sister. Care to elaborate?

JAYE

Um... No.

They stare at each other for a long beat, neither of them saying anything. The Brass Monkey peeks over her bag, looking at Jaye. She reacts, answering quickly:

JAYE (CONT'D)

She hates me.

DOCTOR RON

Hate's a strong word.

JAYE

Yeah, well, what're ya gonna do...

DOCTOR RON

How does that make you feel?

JAYE

(shrugs)

One less person to worry about.

Doctor Ron takes that in.

DOCTOR RON

When was the last time you told your sister you loved her?

JAYE

(wry)

I don't know how you did things in your family, but we weren't raised that way.

Jaye glances at the Brass Monkey.

BRASS MONKEY

(bone-dry)

*I love you.*

Jaye stares dumbly at the monkey, her eyes wide. This is freaking her out.

SMASH CUT TO:

21 EXT. NIAGARA FALLS - NIGHT 21

MIST glows off the falls. Tourists chase a good time. CAMERA FINDS THE BARREL. A trendy Niagara-themed bar & restaurant.

22 INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT 22

Retro-Niagara decor. Hip crowd, hot music. The place to be. As CAMERA moves through the crowd we SEE forlorn Thomas drinking at the bar in his civilian clothes.

MAHANDRA (early 20's, attractive, confident) and Jaye are bellied up to the bar drinking shots. The Brass Monkey sits on the counter top between them. They both down a shot, a second round stands waiting. Jaye is still rattled.

MAHANDRA

Why'd you steal that monkey?

Jaye hesitates, trying to focus on the conversation.

JAYE

(simply)

It told me to.

Jaye turns the monkey so it's facing Mahandra, watching, hoping it will say something to her, as well.

MAHANDRA

Is it gonna tell me to steal something?

JAYE

I'd be so happy if it did. You have no idea.

She throws back her second shot. A cell phone RINGS several times in the background. They try to ignore it.

JAYE (CONT'D)

I ran into Gretchen Speck today. Her hair looked like carpet.

MAHANDRA

I always hated her. Remember when she wiped her ass with Margaret Wayne's gym towel?

JAYE

Yeah. That was really mean.

They contemplate that for a moment. Jaye decides to test the waters with Mahandra to see what kind of reaction she gets.

JAYE (CONT'D)

I, uh... I fainted today.

(CONTINUED)

MAHANDRA  
 (concerned)  
 What?

JAYE  
 Word on the street is it's stress.

MAHANDRA  
 You don't have stress.

JAYE  
 I have lots of stress. I work retail.  
 And, by the way, the mouth-breather is  
 now my boss.

Mahandra stares at Jaye, shakes her head.

JAYE (CONT'D)  
 Should have seen my mother when she found  
 out. Looked like she just dried her face  
 with Margaret Wayne's gym towel.  
 (confidentially)  
 I think I actually enjoyed telling her.

MAHANDRA  
 Of course you did. You're spiteful.

JAYE  
 Nuh-uh.

MAHANDRA  
 Nuh-huh. You're spiteful in a way the  
 definition of spiteful doesn't quite  
 prepare you for.

Jaye's jaw drops.

MAHANDRA (CONT'D)  
 Don't drop your jaw at me. Disappointing  
 your family is an extreme sport for you.  
 You're just pissed 'cause it bit you in  
 the ass and now you're working for a  
 mouth-breather who's still in high  
 school.  
 (beat)  
 And I say all this without judgement.

Jaye is speechless for a long beat. Finally:

JAYE  
 I so want to storm out on you right now  
 but if I stand up I'll fall.

Mahandra throws her second shot back.

(CONTINUED)

MAHANDRA

Okay. I have to go back to work.

She puts on her apron and grabs a serving tray.

MAHANDRA (CONT'D)

(to Bartender)

I need those kamikazes.

The bartender turns around and we meet ERIC (late 20's/early 30's, boyishly handsome with just a pinch of dorkiness).

ERIC

I just gave 'em to you.

MAHANDRA

Yeah. We drank those. Need four more.

(to Jaye)

He's new.

Eric hesitates then turns and starts mixing the drink. The cell phone RINGS again. It's coming from his back pocket.

JAYE

Your ass is ringing.

CAMERA ZOOMS INTO his back pocket

22A MOVING THROUGH the fabric to REVEAL a RINGING CELL PHONE. 22A  
The liquid crystal display reads: 107 Messages.

22B RESUME 22B

Eric hands Mahandra the drinks and she moves off.

ERIC

(to Jaye)

My ass rings a lot.

JAYE

Ever think about setting it on vibrate?

He smiles. Is she's making small talk or flirting?

ERIC

I'm not sure I'm secure enough with my manhood to do that.

Eric slides another kamikaze Jaye's way.

ERIC (CONT'D)

On the house.

22 CONTINUED: (3)

22

JAYE

Right on. So why do you have an ass if you don't answer it?

ERIC

I used to answer it. I just haven't answered it since I got married. And that was like six days ago.

SMASH CUT TO:

23 HOTEL ROOM DOORS - FLASHBACK

23

The doors swing OPEN REVEALING Eric with his wife HEIDI. The BELLMAN stands nearby holding their keys.

ERIC'S VOICE

Her name's Heidi. She's obsessed with bed linens. She was my college sweetheart. Married in Jersey. Honeymoon in Niagara. It was like a fairy tale...

BELLMAN

The honeymoon suite.

SMASH CUT TO:

24 HOTEL ROOM DOORS - FLASHBACK

24

A RAIN STORM outside. The doors swing OPEN REVEALING Eric soaking wet carrying golf clubs. His smile quickly fades.

ERIC'S VOICE

...until I caught her going down on the Bellman in our room.

ERIC

Honey?

ERIC'S VOICE

I guess the sheets had an eight hundred thread count and she couldn't control herself.

24A EXT FALLS - DAY

24A

Eric cuts through the tourist throng, fighting emotion.

ERIC

"Heidi, my wife" became "Heidi, the whore."

SMASH CUT TO:

25 "THE BARREL" DOORS - FLASHBACK 25

The doors swing OPEN REVEALING Eric, who stumbles into the bar desperately trying to keep in the emotion.

ERIC'S VOICE

I walked out of the honeymoon suite, into this bar and cried for three days until someone gave me a job.

26 RESUME SCENE - INT. BARREL - NIGHT - PRESENT 26

As before. Dumbstruck, Jaye slides her drink back to Eric. He nods gratitude, checks who's watching, and downs it.

JAYE

Don't you have work in New Jersey?

ERIC

I'm pretty sure they're gonna fire me when I don't show up.

JAYE

That's awesome.

Eric looks at Jaye, liking her.

ERIC

You know, I've been thinking. I'm almost numb enough to start something on the rebound. What d'you say?

She leaves a couple bills on the bar as she stands to leave.

JAYE

Sweet of you to offer, but...  
(leans in, whispers)  
...I may be clinically insane. You might wanna hold out for someone a little more stable.

ERIC

I don't think that'd be as interesting.

Jaye smiles, there's real chemistry here. She considers him again and finally heads out. OFF Eric watching her go...

27 INT. MAID OF THE MIST SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY 27

Jaye stands watching the TV playing the same "Maid of the Mist" video seen earlier. The smooshed-faced lion is sitting on top of the cash register, a lifeless wax figure.

Thomas the EPS Man enters the store with a hand-truck of packages and his electronic clip board. He approaches Jaye.

(CONTINUED)

THOMAS

Morning.

JAYE

Hey.

Thomas hands Jaye the electronic clip board. She notices a pale ring of skin where his wedding band used to be. Jaye glances at Thomas, says nothing. She doesn't care.

THOMAS

How 'bout this weather, huh?

JAYE

Yeah.

Thomas smiles. He turns and off loads the packages. Jaye reacts when she HEARS a voice:

SMOOSHED-FACED LION'S VOICE

*Ask him about the ring.*

JAYE'S P.O.V. - SMOOSHED-FACED LION

It's staring right at her.

JAYE

Oh, god.

She tries to keep her cool, glancing around to see if anybody else sees the lion talking. No one notices.

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

*Ask him.*

JAYE

Don't talk to me.

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

*Ask him about the ring. The one he doesn't wear.*

Thomas finishes and turns to go.

THOMAS

Have a good one.

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

*Ask him.*

JAYE

(sotto, to lion)  
Shut up.

(CONTINUED)

THOMAS

I'm sorry?

JAYE

Have a nice day.

THOMAS

Thanks.

Thomas doesn't know what to make of it, he starts to leave.

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

(slow, sing-song)

*Hello, my baby.*

JAYE

(sotto)

Stop.

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

*You stop. Ask him.*

(sing-song)

*Hello my honey, hello my...*

A customer walks by the smooshed-faced lion. He stops, watches, waits for her to pass. When she's out of sight:

SMOOSHED-FACED LION (CONT'D)

(sing-song)

*...ragtime gal. Send me a kiss by wire.  
Baby, my heart's on fire. If you refuse  
me, honey, you'll lose me...*

Jaye catches up to Thomas before he's left the store:

JAYE

Hi. Sorry. Um... so what happened to your wedding ring?

He stares at her a moment.

THOMAS

I... I don't wear it anymore. We talked about this.

JAYE

We did? No, we didn't.

THOMAS

Yeah, we did. Quite a bit. The divorce.

JAYE

(lying)

Oh, yeah. Now I remember.

(CONTINUED)

Thomas wallows in the memory of his failed marriage.

THOMAS

I still don't know what I did wrong.

JAYE

Uh-huh.

(back to business)

So what happened to the ring?

THOMAS

(voice catching)

I pawned it.

JAYE

Oh.

THOMAS

I gotta go.

Jaye is mortified.

JAYE

Poor Bitch.

She shoots the smooshed-faced lion an accusatory glance.

JAYE (CONT'D)

You made me make him cry.

ANGLE - THROUGH WINDOW - THOMAS

He crosses to the Maid of the Mist fountain and digs in his pocket and produces a coin. He flips it into the air...

SMOOSHED-FACED LION (O.C.)

*See a penny... pick it up.*

JAYE heaves a wary sigh.

EXTREME CLOSE ON - QUARTER - SLOW MOTION

It spins through the air and splashes through the surface.

28 EXT. MAID OF THE MIST SHOP - A MOMENT LATER

28

Jaye approaches the edge of the fountain. A FLICKER of INTERACTIVE LIGHT dances on her face.

JAYE'S P.O.V.

Hundreds of coins line the bottom of the fountain. A single quarter shines much brighter than any of the other. Jaye pulls out the quarter. A LITTLE GIRL watches her.

(CONTINUED)

LITTLE GIRL

You're not supposed to steal.

JAYE

You're not supposed to talk to strangers.

The Little Girl hurries away. Jaye studies the quarter.

JAYE'S P.O.V. - QUARTER

The EAGLE on the back turns and looks directly at her, fluttering its wings as it adjusts its stance on the perch.

JAYE

startles, dropping the quarter. It crashes down on the pavement and bounces, rolling toward a **flight of stairs**. Avoiding all foot traffic, it sails off the first step, hits the third step down and **bounces** higher into the air.

Jaye reaches the top of the stairs. The quarter flies through the air toward a BICYCLIST putting on his headphones as he sits on a park bench next to an open **fast food sack**.

EXTREME CLOSE ON - QUARTER

It flies into the open fast food sack.

RESUME

The Cyclist gets on his bike, grabs the sack and takes off. Jaye rolls her eyes and scrambles down the stairs after him.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Ohmygod. What am I doing?

The Bicyclist peddles off, his headphones blaring in his ears. Jaye pursues him on foot but she's falling behind.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Hey! Stop!

He starts to pull away. Jaye gives up, slowing to a walk.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Ah, screw it.

The bicyclist pulls further away. After a moment, he passes a garbage can and tosses the fast food sack inside.

Jaye reacts, starts toward the garbage can. She grabs the sack off the top and starts digging through its contents.

(CONTINUED)

An elderly couple pass by scowling at Jaye. She stares them down. She finds the quarter. She looks at it, then looks into the garbage can. The purse is partially buried in the trash. A RAY OF LIGHT FLICKERS off the fasten on the purse. Interactive light FLICKERS on Jaye's face. She pulls the bag out of the garbage and realizes... it's Ronnie's purse.

JAYE (CONT'D)

You gotta be kidding.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

29 INT. TRAILER - NIGHT

29

Jaye sits at her kitchenette table. The smooshed-faced lion, Brass Monkey, and quarter are on the table in front of her next to a box of Kentucky Fried Chicken and Ronnie's purse.

She grabs a piece of chicken and starts to pick at it, always with one eye on the smooshed-faced lion and his posse. She tears off a small piece of meat and places it in front of the lion. She watches to see if it'll take a bite.

It doesn't. She eats the piece she put in front of the lion.

JAYE

So we got Poor Bitch... and his ring... which led us to the quarter... and the quarter led us to the purse, which was empty.

(considers)

Is that supposed to mean something? Is this a metaphor?

The lion says nothing.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Are you Satan?

(no response)

Are you God?

(no response)

If you don't say something in the next five seconds I'm gonna assume you're Satan.

The lion stares mute, as do the monkey and the quarter. They are all absolutely lifeless.

JAYE (CONT'D)

One-Mississippi-two-Mississippi-three-Mississippi-four-Mississ --

(cutting herself off)

Oh, god. I'm a crazy person.

She buries her face in her hands. After a moment she looks up at the purse. There's a KNOCK at the door pre-lapping...

SMASH CUT TO:

30-32 OMIT

30-32

A DOOR OPENS TO REVEAL: RONNIE. WE ARE:

33 EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

33

The door opens. Ronnie recognizes Jaye instantly. They stare at each other for a moment. A chubby 10-YEAR OLD GIRL peeks out from behind Ronnie's ass. Jaye's mood has soured considerably:

JAYE

I found your purse.

Ronnie snatches the bag from Jaye and opens it.

RONNIE

Where's my wallet? My... my brush, my tampons? I had a lot of very expensive make-up in this bag.

JAYE

It was in the garbage.

RONNIE

Oh? And how'd you find it? Wednesday your day to dig through the trash?

JAYE

Your voice just got loud.

RONNIE

You bet your ass my voice got loud. You and your little friend stole my purse.

JAYE

What?

RONNIE

Morley Safer did a whole thing on identity theft. I know how you people work. Little packs, preying on tourists. You're probably here to trick me into telling you my mother's maiden name, you bitch.

JAYE

I came here to be nice. I knocked on seventy-one doors looking for your sorry ass just to be nice.

Jaye raises her fist to Ronnie's face to illustrate her chafed knuckles. But Ronnie thinks she's about to hit her and reacts defensively...

JAYE (CONT'D)

My knuckles are raw --

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

...punching her in the face. Jaye's head snaps back on her neck and stares at Ronnie for a charged moment. The tension is palpable.

SMASH CUT TO:

33A CLOSE ON - A COCKTAIL IN AN AMAZING GLASS

33A

A WISP OF SMOKE drifts above the cocktail. CAMERA follows the WISP OF SMOKE until it finds SHARON taking a drag on a cigarette. REVEAL we are in --

INT. SHARON'S BIG FANCY LIVING ROOM/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

She sits at the table alone eating a Lean Cuisine, watching a table top television. She scrutinizes her reflection on the knife, looking for acne. The phone rings.

JAYE AND RONNIE

side by side, both bruised and heavily tussled. WE ARE:

34 INT. MOTEL FRONT LOBBY - NIGHT

34

Jaye and Ronnie sit on a bench. POLICE OFFICERS mill about. Jaye glances over at Ronnie, looking her up and down.

JAYE

Ohmygod. Look at your toenails. You trim those with pliers?

Ronnie doesn't justify it with a response. She just stews.

NEW ANGLE

SHARON approaches escorted by a police officer. She doesn't seem the least bit surprised to find her sister here.

SHARON

What is wrong with you?

35 EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

35

Jaye is walking down the steps and a much brisker pace than Sharon, who just seems wearied by the entire situation.

SHARON

You're twenty-four. "Troubled Teen" is no longer flattering on you.

JAYE

Nice talking to you.

SHARON

You better stop.

(CONTINUED)

Jaye keeps going and Sharon takes her shoe off and throws it at the back of Jaye's head. She stops and rubs her head.

JAYE

Ow. That was dramatic.

Sharon picks up her shoe, puts it on.

SHARON

If you really wanted this to be dramatic, you should've called mom.

JAYE

What's that supposed to mean?

SHARON

"Grow up" is what it means. Getting arrested for disorderly conduct? Really, though.

JAYE

She hit me first.

SHARON

That's so surprising. I can't imagine why anyone would ever want to hit you. And fainting at work? What's that about? You starving yourself again?

JAYE

Why are you being such a cow? You're my sister.

SHARON

You tell people you're not related to me.

JAYE

It was just that one time.

SHARON

It was Grandpa's wake.

Jaye tries to think of some defense, but can't.

JAYE

Well, you always have such a bug up your ass.

She stares at Jaye a beat then unlocks her car door. She's about to get in the car but stops - there's still something she wants to know:

SHARON

Just curious. How many people did you call before you called me?

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

Five. No, six. You were the only one home.

Sharon takes that in, stung. She shakes her head, shuts the car door and pulls away.

Sharon's car wipes to REVEAL Ronnie's chubby 10-Year Old Girl standing on the stairs in front of the motel. She watches Jaye for a moment before speaking:

CHUBBY 10-YEAR OLD GIRL

Thanks for finding my mom's purse.

Jaye just stares at her, not knowing how to respond. Finally:

JAYE

You're welcome.

With that, the Girl turns and walks back into the station.

36 OMIT

36

37 INT. MAID OF THE MIST SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY

37

Jaye stares at the TV monitor. The smooshed-faced wax lion sits lifelessly on the cash register.

JAYE

(sotto)

Don't get in the boat.

INCLUDE MONITOR

On the video, the Native American Princess gets into the canoe and is shoved away from shore by her tribesmen.

JAYE (CONT'D)

...Dumbass.

Alec approaches -- annoyed she's not doing anything.

ALEC

(clears throat)

If you're looking for something to do the name patches need to be re-alphabetized.

She turns and looks at him.

JAYE

I'm folding.

But Alec's ready to pick a fight.

(CONTINUED)

ALEC

No, you're not. You're --

MOM (O.C.)

Hello, sweetheart.

They turn to see Jaye's mother Karen walking into the store while Sharon waits outside. Alec huffs and moves off.

MOM (CONT'D)

How's everything?

JAYE

Just swell.

Sharon stares at Jaye from outside the store as she lights up a cigarette. Jaye stares back.

MOM

Good, good. Um, I need to talk to you about the monkey.

JAYE

What monkey?

MOM

The one you stole from Doctor Ron's office. He'd like it back and he's refusing to see me until he gets it so you should take care of that right away.

Sharon gives Jaye a conspiratorial "way to go" thumbs-up as she smokes in front of the store.

JAYE

I didn't take the monkey.

Mom notices Sharon smoking.

MOM

Sharon? Another cigarette? Aren't your fingertips yellow enough?

(back to Jaye)

Sweetheart, of course you took the monkey. He has it all on tape.

(off her look)

He put a security camera in his office after that Olsen girl stabbed herself and told everyone he tried to kill her.

JAYE

Oh. Okay. Well, then I guess I have the monkey. Can't you just buy him a new one?

(CONTINUED)

MOM

No. I can't just buy him a new one.

Mom notices Sharon talking to Thomas the EPS Guy. Sharon keeps glancing around, clearly not interested.

MOM (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Ooo. Sharon's speaking to a nice-looking man.

(getting back to it)

Just give Doctor Ron back his monkey.

He's the best analyst in the state.

Mom leans in and gives Jaye a heartfelt kiss on the forehead. She studies her daughter sweetly for a moment.

MOM (CONT'D (CONT'D)

I think it's time to do something different with your hair. Let's you and me have a salon date.

Jaye is speechless. Thomas comes in with a delivery. As Mom exits past him, she turns and checks Thomas out. Thomas crosses to Jaye, for the first time we see a real twinkle in his eye:

THOMAS

Your sister's hot.

Jaye's not interested. As signs the clipboard, hands it back.

SMOOSHED-FACED LION

*He thinks your sister's hot.*

JAYE'S P.O.V. - LION

It's now looking right at her:

SMOOSHED-FACED LION (CONT'D)

*Make me a match.*

Jaye reacts in horror.

JAYE

You can't talk. You don't have a larnyx.

If you don't have a larnyx, you can't

talk. Get it? You can't talk.

Jaye lies awake. She has no choice because from the next room we HEAR:

38 CONTINUED:

38

SMOOSHED-FACED LION (O.S.)  
(sing-song)  
*...Sharon and Poor Bitch sitting in a tree, k-i-s-s-i-n-g... First comes love, then comes marriage then comes Thomas with a baby carriage...*

39 EXT TRAILER - DAYBREAK

39

Morning sun spills over the horizon.

40 INT. TRAILER - DAYBREAK

40

A slightly more strung-out Jaye lays in bed staring at the ceiling as sunlight stretches across the room. She's been kept awake all night by the singing smooshed-faced lion, who is still singing...

SMOOSHED-FACED LION (O.S.)  
(sing-song)  
*...Sharon, Sharon, give me your answer true... I'm half crazy, all from the love of you. It won't be a stylish marriage--*

Jaye snaps, finally having enough.

CLOSE ON - PARTITION

It jerks violently open revealing a harried Jaye with an alarm clock in her hand.

JAYE  
If I do this will you... SHUT UP?

SMOOSHED-FACED LION  
(continuing)  
*...but you'll look sweet upon the seat of a bicycle built for--*

She hurls the clock at the lion and KNOCKS the smooshed-faced lion off his perch. He lands in a metal trash can. A moment of silence. Then:

SMOOSHED-FACED LION (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(echoey)  
*Make me a match.*

Jaye stares, certain she's losing her mind.

41 OMIT

41

41A ANGLE ON PHONE MESSAGE PAD

41A

41 CONTINUED:

41

The "While You Were Out", four-per-page variety. As we tilt down the pad we see four messages from JAYE to SHARON. Each slip is torn from the pad as we tilt down.

- 1) "CALL ME. URGENT"
- 2) "MUST SEE YOU TONIGHT"
- 3) "8:00. THE BARREL. LIFE OR DEATH"
- 4) "WEAR SOMETHING SLIMMING"

42 INT. THE BARREL - NIGHT

42

Jaye sits at the table alone. She jams the little smooshed-faced lion into the floral arrangement. After a beat, Sharon approaches the table still in her business suit.

SHARON

This better be good 'cause I'm having a real hard time getting it up for your drama.

JAYE

(to passing waiter)  
She'll have a glass of chardonnay.  
(to Sharon, re: suit)  
You call that slimming?

She ignores the comment.

SHARON

How many people did you ask to dinner before you asked me?

JAYE

None.

Sharon doesn't know quite what to make of it, she takes a seat.

SHARON

Did you get fired again?

JAYE

No. Remember Thomas?

SHARON

Who?

JAYE

Cute EPS guy at the store?

SHARON

Oh. Vaguely. What about him?

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

Didn't you think he was cute?

SHARON

Not particularly.

JAYE

Why didn't you think he was cute?

SHARON

I don't know. He's not my type.

Jaye takes it personally.

JAYE

How can you say that? How can you say he's not your type? You could do a lot wor -- look who's here.

(to O.C.)

Hi, Thomas.

They turn to see Thomas approach wearing a suit and carrying a bouquet of flowers. They both force smiles.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Sharon. You remember Thomas.

SHARON

(suspicious)

Hello.

Thomas hands the bouquet to Sharon.

THOMAS

These are for you.

Sharon is, once again, mortified but tries to cover.

JAYE

That is so sweet. Look at how beautiful those are. I have to go to the bathroom.

SHARON

You just went.

JAYE

(beat)

No, I didn't.

Jaye jumps up from the table before Sharon can say a word.

Jaye rushes up to the bar and flags Eric over.

41 CONTINUED: (3)

41

JAYE (CONT'D)  
Quick. Get me drunk.

He offers her a tray of brightly-colored drinks.

ERIC  
Jello shooter?

JAYE  
You have grape?

Sharon calls out from across the room:

SHARON (O.C.)  
That's not the bathroom.

Jaye moves around a corner and out of Sharon's line of sight.

TIME CUT TO:

43 INT. THE BARREL - LATER

43

SHARON AND THOMAS - A FEW MINUTES LATER

At the table. They hand their menus back to the Waiter.

THOMAS  
(to waiter)  
And could we have some more bread?

The waiter moves off. After a long and awkward moment:

THOMAS (CONT'D)  
Jaye seems like she'd be a real nice sister.

Sharon finishes her wine, decides to cut to the chase.

SHARON  
Yeah. Um...you seem like a very nice man...

THOMAS  
Thank you. You seem like a very nice lady.

SHARON  
Right. Just so you know, absolutely  
nothing is gonna happen between us.

She regrets spitting it out, but is glad it's out there.  
Thomas stares at her in stunned silence for a moment.

THOMAS  
What?

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

I don't know what you were told, but I was brought here under false pretenses.

THOMAS

She told me you thought I was cute.

Sharon winces. She tries to say the following as nicely as possible but it still comes off a little harsh:

SHARON

She lied. I don't. I'm really sorry. I am. This is very awkward.

Thomas' jaw drops open a bit.

THOMAS

I... I don't understand.

Sharon stops the passing Waiter.

SHARON

(re: wine glass)  
I'm gonna need another one.  
(to Thomas)  
And you should probably have one, too.

43A ANGLE - JAYE AND ERIC

43A

at the bar, mid-conversation:

JAYE

I guess I thought if I could just get my sister laid the little wax lion might shut up.

ERIC

The wax lion wanted your sister to have sex?

JAYE

I'm assuming.

ERIC

Does the little wax lion ever tell you to burn things or hurt people?

JAYE

He's probably working up to that.

Eric has a small chuckle, then sobers.

ERIC

You're just teasin' about the lion, right?

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

Of course.

She throws back her jello-shooter. Eric smiles, he doesn't know what to make of her but is clearly attracted.

CUT TO:

44 INT. THE BARREL - LATER

44

THE TABLE - SHARON AND THOMAS

Sharon has a new glass of wine. So does Thomas.

THOMAS

Is it my teeth?

(off her look)

My ex-wife used to complain about my teeth. The bottom ones are kinda crooked. See.

(he shows her)

Is it because my teeth?

SHARON

It isn't a big plus, but it's not the deal-breaker.

Thomas is quiet for a moment, becoming introspective.

THOMAS

I'm too sensitive, aren't I? Some women don't like that but I think it makes me a really good kisser. Do you like to kiss?

She doesn't know how to react to that statement.

SHARON

It's not you. Really, it's not, it's me.

Thomas regards her with disappointment.

THOMAS

Oh. That old chestnut.

Sharon glances over her shoulder to make sure Jaye isn't within earshot. She leans close, confiding in a hushed tone:

SHARON

If I tell you something, you have to promise you won't breath a word of it to anyone. Okay?

THOMAS

All right.

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

I'm a lesbian.

She feels really bad for the guy. He just looks at her.

SHARON (CONT'D)

The reason I'm not attracted to you is because your genitals are on the outside.

THOMAS

Well, you're trying 'em all on for size, aren't you? What's next? Gonna tell me you just wanna be friends?

44A JAYE AND ERIC

44A

at the bar. Jaye dryly assesses the situation:

JAYE

I think the universe is conspiring against me.

ERIC

The whole universe?

JAYE

Yup.

Jaye's being glib, but she does actually feel this way -- she just doesn't want to come off as a paranoid freak.

ERIC

Not just the Milky Way or, like, planet Earth. But the entire universe?

JAYE

(nods)

All of creation. It's a plot. I know that now.

ERIC

What's the universe plotting?

JAYE

Couldn't tell you. Vanna hasn't turned over enough letters yet.

Eric considers that.

ERIC

I always thought Vanna White had a large head.

JAYE

Me too, actually.

(CONTINUED)

Eric looks at her and smiles.

ERIC  
See? Simpatico.

He just continues to smile until she's forced to smile back.

JAYE  
I guess I've been in the bathroom a  
really long time.

She glances at Thomas and Sharon, feeling a twinge of guilt.

CUT TO:

ON SHARON AND THOMAS

Sharon hovers over her plate as she shovels food. Thomas takes a few sad bites. Jaye approaches.

JAYE  
Sorry. Somebody was just telling me the  
most interesting story about pirates.

SHARON  
I'll bet.

Thomas abruptly drops his fork.

THOMAS  
Is your sister really a lesbian?

Jaye takes the defense:

JAYE  
You need to stop kissin' the mirror,  
buddy. Just 'cause a girl's not diggin'  
your chili doesn't mean she's --

Jaye cuts herself off as she reacts to Thomas' swelling neck.

JAYE (CONT'D)  
Did you have that goiter before?

Sharon glances over and reacts. Thomas feels his neck -- which is looking like he swallowed a large rodent -- and reacts. His skin is getting splotchy. He's eerily calm, almost dazed.

THOMAS  
Were there peanuts in the salad?

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

CUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

46 INT./EXT. JAYE'S CAR - NIGHT

46

Jaye's behind the wheel on auto-pilot, speeding to the emergency room. Sharon and Thomas are in the back seat.

JAYE

What was with that crack about you being a lesbian?

SHARON

Um...

JAYE

Are you a lesbian? I mean, it's not horribly surprising, but are you?

SHARON

What do you mean it's not horribly surprising?

JAYE

You drive an S.U.V.

Thomas wheezes and falls over, his neck totally bloated. The tension ratchets up a notch.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Is he still breathing?

SHARON

I don't think so.

JAYE

Maybe we should "trach" him.

Sharon thinks about that a second.

SHARON

You have a pen?

Jaye nervously reaches into the glove box and pulls out a couple of options.

JAYE

Ball point or fine tip?

Sharon takes both and starts to chew at the end of one to remove the cap.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Does mom know?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

Sharon spits out the pen cap, her mouth and chin covered with blue ink. She's oblivious.

SHARON

She would unspool.

JAYE

Can I tell her?

SHARON

No.

As Sharon winces and prepares to drive the pen home...

SMASH CUT TO:

47 INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE - NIGHT

47

TWO NURSES burst through the doors pushing a barely conscious Thomas on a gurney.

NURSE

We've got a stabbing victim!

Sharon and Jaye follow, running to catch up.

48 OMIT

48

48A INT. HOSPITAL RECOVERY ROOM - LATER

48A

Jaye stands with a DOCTOR as Thomas is wheeled in by a NURSE.

DOCTOR

Actually, the medium point Bic round stic is the preferred pen for emergency tracheotomies.

JAYE

You don't say.

49 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA - SAME

49

Sharon sits against the wall of the waiting area, still oblivious to the ink on her chin and blouse. BETH, the pretty woman in her early 30's we saw walking out of Thomas' life, ENTERS. Sharon stops and takes notice, attracted.

BETH

Excuse me. Did you bring in the man with the pen in his throat?

Sharon stares at Beth before responding -- this woman is clearly her type. Sharon's the type of gal that is easily flummoxed in front of someone she finds attractive.

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

Um... yes.

BETH

I'm his ex-wife. My name's on the emergency contact card in his wallet. Are you his girlfriend?

SHARON

I don't have a girlfriend. I mean, I'm not his... no.

Beth smiles.

BETH

You have ink on your chin.

Sharon reacts.

SHARON

Oh, god. How embarrassing.

She wipes at her chin but misses the stain completely.

BETH

Here.

SHARON'S P.O.V. - CLOSE ON BETH'S LIPS - SLOW MOTION

She licks her thumb with casual sensuality.

ON SHARON - NORMAL MOTION

Beth wipes the ink on Sharon's chin off with her moist thumb.

BETH'S P.O.V. - CLOSE ON SHARON - SLOW MOTION

Sharon reacts to the touch, barely believing this is happening.

SHARON'S P.O.V. - BETH - SLOW MOTION

She reacts to Sharon's reaction to the touch.

NEW ANGLE - NORMAL MOTION

They stare at each other a moment. The air is charged.

CUT TO:

Thomas sits groggily in bed. The swelling has gone down considerably.

(CONTINUED)

There's now a tube in his throat and he can't talk. Jaye, Sharon and Beth stand around his bed. Beth and Sharon can't stop staring at each other.

JAYE

Did they give you morphine?

(off his nod)

I love morphine.

BETH

I'll bring you some clean underwear and some magazines and call your folks. I'll let work know you won't be in for a few days.

Thomas nods. By now Sharon is actively smitten with Beth and can't take her eyes off her.

JAYE

You're not gonna sue us, are you?

As he shakes his head "no," Thomas clocks something going on between Sharon and Beth.

JAYE (CONT'D)

Cause it sort of is your fault. As someone with a deadly food allergy, you really should learn to read a menu.

Thomas doesn't respond, he's watching Sharon and Beth flirt. Jaye notices what he's looking at, reacts.

JAYE (CONT'D)

(to Sharon)

What are you doing?

SHARON

Nothing.

Thomas' eyes ping-pong back and forth between Jaye and Sharon.

JAYE

You're being sneaky about something.

SHARON

No, I'm not.

JAYE

Liar.

But Jaye doesn't buy it, she studies her sister. Sharon is blushing beyond anything that would be considered normal.

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

Let it go.

Jaye glances at Beth -- who averts her eyes -- and starts to figure it out.

JAYE

Oh. So that's how it is.

SHARON

What?

JAYE

You know what.

Sharon dismisses Jaye and rolls her eyes.

SHARON

As delightful as this has been, I have to be in court in the morning. Do you have money for a cab?

JAYE

Not aft --

BETH

(cutting her off)  
I'll give you a ride.

Jaye and Thomas react, eyeing Beth.

SHARON

(beat)  
Great.

Sharon and Beth spontaneously start for the exit.

JAYE

You don't even know where she's going.

They ignore Jaye.

BETH

(to Thomas)  
I'll come by tomorrow. Feel better.

And without another word, Beth and Sharon scramble out the door. Jaye watches them disappear. After a moment, Thomas turns to her a bit wounded. He GURGLES something unintelligible.

JAYE

At least now you know it wasn't you.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (3)

50

Thomas genuinely considers that and nods as an ATTRACTIVE NURSE ENTERS to check the instruments.

JAYE (CONT'D)

So do they bring you the morphine, or do you have to ask for it?

The Attractive Nurse leans over Thomas and smiles, making eyes at him. Surprised by her flirtation but liking it a lot, he smiles back. For all the hardships of the evening, Thomas can't believe his luck.

Jaye clocks the exchange, marveling at the turn of events.

JAYE (CONT'D)

You gotta be kidding me.

CUT TO:

51 EXT. TOURIST CENTER - NIGHT

51

Jaye stands next to the Maid of the Mist statue, looking out over the falls. She takes a step back to look up at the Maid and heaves a beleaguered sigh. After a moment, Eric walks by on his way home from work. He stands next to Jaye and looks up at the Maid, as well. She glances at him briefly, then turns back to the maid.

ERIC

Why do they always sacrifice the pretty ones?

JAYE

I guess killing pretty people is easier than killing ugly people. Although, you'd think the opposite would be true.

Eric crosses to the railing and looks out over the falls.

ERIC

I don't get why she didn't just paddle to the other side of the river. It's not that far.

JAYE

She was "Surrendering to Destiny."

ERIC

Oh, was that it?

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

You know, the office of travel and tourism did this whole "Surrender to Destiny" promotion in the 80's and some cult used it as an endorsement for mass suicide.

ERIC

Really?

JAYE

(nods)

Bunch of 'em piled into canoes and went over the edge. They were pulling bodies out of the river for weeks.

ERIC

That wasn't in any of the brochures.

JAYE

There was a lot of media coverage. It was surprisingly good for business.

ERIC

Well, for those of us not in cults, I think there's something to be said for surrendering to destiny.

QUICK POP TO:

52 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

52

Thomas is buck naked in his bed, intubated and all. The Attractive Nurse stands over him wringing a soapy sponge. She smiles seductively and he returns the gesture.

ERIC'S VOICE

I mean, if it's destiny there's probably a reason for it...

BACK TO:

53 EXT. TOURIST CENTER - NIGHT

53

As before.

ERIC

...right?

JAYE

(shrugs)

Okay.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

So why struggle with fate? Life can be  
sort of peaceful when you stop struggling.

She looks out over the river and the falls.

JAYE

It's a lot like drowning that way.

As Jaye contemplates that...

CUT TO:

54 INT. JAYE'S TRAILER - NIGHT

54

Jaye lets herself in and finds Sharon sitting on her bed,  
waiting for her.

JAYE

How'd you get in?

SHARON

Crawled through the bathroom window.  
You're gonna need a new screen.

JAYE

Couldn't wait in your luxury S.U.V.?

SHARON

I did but there was this dirty kid eating  
spaghetti-o's out of a can and he  
wouldn't stop staring at me.

Jaye sits down next to Sharon.

JAYE

So you're a lesbian now.

SHARON

(nods)  
Just now.

Jaye thinks about that a moment.

JAYE

Is that lady gonna be your new "friend?"

SHARON

I just met her. We haven't even kissed.  
(beat)  
Okay. We made out in the car.

Jaye considers this, then takes a stab at bonding.

(CONTINUED)

JAYE

I could see doing a girl if I was in prison and there weren't any guys around. Especially if the girl was Drew Barrymore.  
(off her look)  
I'm just trying to be supportive.

Sharon looks at Jaye, trying to figure her sister out. She can't help but smile.

SHARON

About that. Why are you being so nice to me all of a sudden?

JAYE

I've always been nice to you.

SHARON

No, you haven't. When I was seventeen you left a space heater and a litter box in my closet for a week while I was on spring break. You have not always been nice to me.

JAYE

I forgot why I did that.

SHARON

You've never asked me who I was dating or if I was even interested in somebody. And here you are setting me up on a blind date.

JAYE

So what?

SHARON

I'm not complaining. I think it's wonderful. I really do. But you're not the same girl who made all my clothes smell like cat piss. What's going on with you?

Jaye's silent for a long beat. She's seriously thinking about the question.

JAYE

I don't know. I don't know what's going on with me. I feel like a pinball. I've been bouncing off bumpers and flippers trying to get something to happen but I had no idea what it was, then out of the blue there's a tracheotomy and you're a lesbian and then there's this other lesbian and...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

JAYE (CONT'D)

(takes a breath)

I was just trying to do what I thought I was supposed to do but they didn't tell me what it was; they just kept making me guess.

Sharon picks up on that.

SHARON

Who made you guess?

Jaye's about to spill and tell her everything, but she doesn't.

JAYE

Nobody. The proverbial they.

Sharon doesn't say anything, she just rests her cheek on Jaye's head. Jaye reacts to the warmth of the gesture. She spots the Brass Monkey staring at her -- it mouths the words "I love you." Jaye winces as she forces herself to say:

JAYE (CONT'D)

I...  
(fighting the bile)  
...love you.

Sharon reacts, stunned. Before she can say anything:

JAYE (CONT'D)

Please don't respond to that.

55 OMIT

55

56 INT. MAID OF THE MIST SOUVENIR SHOP - DAY

56

Jaye stocks merchandise on a shelf near the front windows. Among the tourists walking by she sees:

THOMAS & THE PRETTY NURSE

Holding hands, each grinning, infatuated. Thomas spots Jaye, smiles at her, grateful:

THOMAS

(To Jaye; mouthing soundlessly)

Wow.

The couple strolls on by...

56A JAYE SMILES

56A

Surprised and maybe even a little pleased with herself. Then there's a FLICKER of INTERACTIVE light on her face.

(CONTINUED)

56A CONTINUED: 56A

56B JAYE'S P.O.V. - MAID FOUNTAIN - SLOW MOTION 56B

A WOMAN tosses a coin into the fountain, the quarter flips through the air catching a ray of light as it spins.

56C NEW ANGLE - RESUME NORMAL MOTION 56C

Jaye watches. On the shelf behind her we see rows of stuffed BEARS WITH UNSETTLING PLASTIC FACES in little toy barrels with "Niagara Falls" stenciled on the side.

JAYE'S P.O.V. - PLASTIC-FACED BEAR

PLASTIC-FACED BEAR

*See a penny...*

NEW ANGLE

Jaye stares at the bear, eyes wide.

JAYE

No. No, no. We're done. No more talking from things that don't talk. We had a deal.

(re: smooshed-faced lion)

Ask him.

But the smooshed-faced lion just stares, lifeless.

JAYE (CONT'D)

(to smooshed-faced lion)

We had a deal.

Alec turns and glances at Jaye, suspicious of the outburst.

JAYE'S P.O.V. - PLASTIC-FACED BEAR

PLASTIC-FACED BEAR

*Don't squeeze the charmin...*

Jaye glances at the plastic-faced bear and can see he's looking outside. She turns to see what he's looking at. She reacts, annoyed, Jaye grabs the plastic-faced bear and exits.

56D EXT. SHOP/FOUNTAIN 56D

The woman who just tossed the coin has toilet paper stuck to her shoe. She's starts to head off down the tourist center.

Jaye starts to follow the strange woman, calls out to her:

JAYE

Hey. Lady.

(CONTINUED)

56D CONTINUED:

56D

And Jaye reluctantly embarks on a new adventure...

THE END