

WEEKI WACHEE

"THE MERMAID WHO CAN'T SWIM"

Written by

David F.M. Vaughn

Management:  
Sonia Gambaro  
(323) 363-5451  
[Sonia@pollinateent.com](mailto:Sonia@pollinateent.com)

COLD OPEN

EXT. DIVE PLATFORM - DAY

Hovering high above a crystal clear spring, a distant crowd chants below.

CROWD  
Jump! Jump! Jump! Jump!

From the diver's POV, we look around nervously.

Heavy breathing. Fear. Panic.

The diver inches closer to the edge of the platform. The breathing becomes more panicked. The chants from the crowd become more taunting.

There is no more platform left, just the water below.

DIVER  
(to herself)  
Leap, and the net will appear.

We close our eyes. We hear the diver leap and the crowd below GASP.

BLACKNESS.

Silence.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
It's every little girl's dream to  
be...a mermaid.

EXT. MAGICAL OCEAN - DAY - [FANTASY]

A picture-perfect MERMAID splashes into a blue lagoon. She swims through a rainbow-colored coral reef as her long red hair delicately dances with the pulse of the water.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
Half-woman, half-fish, these sirens  
of the deep are the sheer epitome  
of what it means to be beautiful.  
Her curves are sultry.

The mermaid runs her hands down the side of her body.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
Her skin is like pure fresh cream.

She glides her fingers across her pale skin.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
And those tits.

She gives her breasts a squeeze and winks at camera.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
But it doesn't come that easy to  
all of us.

EXT. MAIN SHOW POOL - Day - [REALITY]

Still from the diver's POV, we gasp for breath and struggle to stay afloat.

The panicked splashing and flailing fills the screen with water.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
Some people are just better off on land.

INT. BUS - DAY

A city bus travels down a stretch of hot Florida asphalt.

We see a pencil drawing the mermaid in a journal. The drawing moves and swims on the paper.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
But few people know that these characters of fiction are anything but that. They're real. And there's a place, a beautiful perfect place nestled in a forgotten area of Florida where these ladies live, breathe, and swim amongst us mere mortals.

The bus passes by various bait shops, broken-down cars, and alligators sunning on the highway median.

ANGEL (V.O.)  
A magical place where you can --

OLD GUY  
Hey!

A crotchety OLD GUY takes off his Beats by Dre headphones and yells across the aisle.

OLD GUY (CONT'D)  
Can you keep it down a little? I'm  
trying to learn some Mexican here!

We see ANGEL, a doughy, mixed-race black girl in her late 20's, put down the voice recorder she has been speaking into.

ANGEL  
Sorry.

The old guy puts his headphones back on.

OLD GUY  
(upbeat)  
Me llamo, Ben.

Angel hunkers down into her seat and peeks out the window.

Her eyes widen.

ANGEL  
Stop! This is my stop!

She grabs her bag and scampers off the bus.

EXT. WEEKI WACHEE FRONT GATE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Angel looks down at the book she's holding, which has a photo of a towering limestone statue of two mermaids swimming. As the bus pulls away, we reveal the real statue. Angel beams.

Suddenly, the mermaid tail from the statue snaps off and crashes to the pavement, narrowly missing a PATRON.

Angel maintains her smile.

A curtain of bubbles fills the screen.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONEINT. MAIN SHOW POOL - DAY

The mermaids of Weeki Wachee finish swimming their big closing number to a dusty recording of "America The Beautiful."

All mermaids are dressed in red, white, and blue fishtails that have seen better days. They twirl underwater, breathing through air hoses, and lip-sync to the song.

A mermaid swims from under the deepest part of the spring to reveal an American flag, which she clumsily unfurls underwater.

RECORDING (O.S.)  
FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA!

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY - CONTINUOUS

TROY (late-20's pumpkin) narrates the show and FLEEK (20's wirey redneck with a mile-wide smile) operates the bubble curtains and sound. Troy speaks into a microphone reminiscent of an old Wendy's.

TROY  
Let's have a hand for all our  
beautiful mermaids today, folks.

INT. ANTOINETTE PERRY THEATER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The small, low-end theater faces the water tanks where the mermaids are performing.

The small and aged audience claps politely.

INT. MAIN SHOW POOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Each mermaid waves flirtatiously and does an underwater summersault as her name is called.

TROY (V.O.)  
Mermaid Staycee...Mermaid  
Loren...Mermaid Airwrecka...Mermaid  
Carl...and my soon to be ex-  
girlfriend...Mermaid Bethany!

Bethany winces with surprise underwater as she gulps from the air hose.

On the final button of the number, the dingy blue show curtains come down over the tank windows.

INT. ANTOINETTE PERRY THEATER - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The matinee audience finishes their applause and filters out.

Angel sits center and beams with joy, when a pair of wrinkly hands covered in plastic jewelry rub her shoulders.

MARY

You have your mother's shoulders.

Angel spins around to see MARY, a sexy, smokey, and overtan woman in her late 60's. Her jaguar blue eyes pierce like bullets.

Mary looks down to Angel's chest.

MARY (CONT'D)

(eyes widening)

And her cans.

Angel zips her hoodie a little higher.

ANGEL

You knew my mother?

MARY

Honey, I was so sorry to hear she passed. Next to me, she is the greatest mermaid we've ever had here. How was the trip down?

ANGEL

Nineteen hours. Or, four Frazens, three Little Mermaids, and half a Joy Luck Club.

MARY

Cute. Where's your stuff?

Angel holds up a child's Disney backpack.

MARY (CONT'D)

That's it?

ANGEL

This was kind of an impulse decision.

MARY  
Come with me.

Mary grabs Angel's hand, and they walk out of the theater.  
Angel notices the hand holding is strange.

INT. CONTROL BOOTH - DAY

Troy and Fleek pack up when Bethany barges in, hair still sopping wet from the show.

Her arms are folded. Troy ignores her.

BETHANY  
Well?

TROY  
Well what?

BETHANY  
Troy, this is one of your jokes,  
right?

TROY  
I don't know what else to tell you.

BETHANY  
But you haven't told me anything.

CARL (20's twink with aggressively unnatural blue contact lenses) enters with Bethany's fish tail in tow.

CARL  
Maybe in *your* house you can just leave important things laying around, but in this house, we hang up our fish tails like responsible adults.

BETHANY  
Sorry, Carl.

CARL  
Well, 'sorry' isn't going to take the wrinkles out, now is it?

He looks at the fabric closely.

CARL (CONT'D)  
I don't think.

Carl leaves.

TROY  
I gotta jet.

BETHANY  
Troy, wait. Tell me what's the matter. Why are you upset with me?

Troy remains silent. Bethany tears up and runs out.

FLEEK  
What was that?

TROY  
(cocky)  
Oh, I don't know, maybe the start of the best proposal ever.

EXT. MERMAID MEET 'N' GREET - DAY

A documentary film crew interviews a MERMAID as Mary and Angel walk past.

ANGEL  
What's that?

MARY  
They're doing a documentary about the park and all the interesting characters who work here.

ANGEL  
Oh, do we do a confessional--?

Angel walks towards the crew. Mary grabs her arm.

MARY  
No.

Mary breaks the fourth wall and addresses us.

MARY (CONT'D)  
We're not doing that.

EXT. MERMAID DORMS - (ESTABLISHING) - DAY

Classic summer camp housing. Two small, unassuming wooden buildings with front doors that face each other.

INT. ANGEL'S DORM - DAY

Wood paneled walls and a window-unit air conditioner. Everything is covered in a thick layer of dust. Garbage is strewn about.

The door opens. Angel and Mary stand in the doorway, still holding hands.

ANGEL

How long has this been empty?

MARY

Twenty years or so? Only people who've been here since were the bugs and a vagrant or two. But don't worry. They're long gone.

A loud RATTLE is heard in the closet.

MARY (CONT'D)

Maybe.

Mary notices Angel feeling uncomfortable. She puts her hand under her chin.

MARY (CONT'D)

Your Mom lived in this room once.

ANGEL

She did?

MARY

We shared some good times here.

Angel smiles sweetly.

MARY (CONT'D)

Some really really good times.

ANGEL

Cool.

Mary pats the bed.

MARY

Right. Here.

ANGEL

I get it.

MARY

Well, I'll let you get comfortable.  
The other girls are moving in to  
their rooms today too. Take off  
your bra if you'd like.

ANGEL

Thanks.

MARY

Better rest up for the swim tests.

ANGEL

Swim tests?

MARY

Of course. You can't be a mermaid  
if you can't swim, silly.

Mary lowers the zipper on Angel's hoodie and is gone.

Angel reaches into her bag and pulls out a framed PHOTO of a vintage Weeki Wachee, and Angel, 5, beaming next to her mom MOLLY (30's, and the epitome of mermaid; pale skin and curly red hair) in full mermaid attire. The photo of Angel is clearly taped on over the photo of Molly.

She swipes some garbage off the dresser and places the photo.

She walks to an unmarked door and opens it.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

She opens the door to STAYCEE (42, a mouth full of braces, and the prettiest girl in her trailer park). The simple bathroom connects the two dorm rooms.

ANGEL

Gah!

STAYCEE

I thought I heard voices. Over  
there.

ANGEL

You did, though it could have been  
whatever is lurking in that closet.  
And you are?

STAYCEE

Sharing a bathroom for the first  
time since I was a kid which I am  
unhappy about. Name?

ANGEL  
Angel.

STAYCEE  
(rolling her eyes)  
Of course it is. See that soap?

She points to some brown soap sitting next to the shower.

STAYCEE (CONT'D)  
That's my soap. It has oatmeal in it.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

In a blue-tiled locker room, mermaids Loren, Airwrecka, Bethany, and Carl clean up after the matinee.

AIRWRECKA  
That's it?

BETHANY  
He wouldn't say another word.

CARL  
That's so weird.

LOREN  
I thought things were going great with you two?

BETHANY  
They were! We made real strides after the incident involving the slutty nurse.

AIRWRECKA  
You've apologized more than once for choosing such a cliche Halloween outfit.

BETHANY  
I just hate that I don't know what is wrong.

LOREN  
It's times like these that I really appreciate not having to be in the dating game anymore.

A thick silence.

LOREN (CONT'D)

What?

CARL

You need to get out there, Loren.  
Date again.

LOREN

I'm a one man kinda woman.

AIRWRECKA

Pervis is dead, Loren, I think  
you're good.

INT. ANGEL'S DORM - DAY

Staycee and Angel continue their doorway standoff.

STAYCEE

And lastly, no matter what you do,  
do NOT come in here if you hear me  
screaming "Help! Help! Definitely  
come in here!" I have a very  
particular way of making love.

ANGEL

Doesn't seem very safe.

STAYCEE

Just stay on your side, and I'll  
stay on mine. Deal?

ANGEL

Did I do something wrong?

STAYCEE

Of course not, sweetie. Just want  
you to know the rules around here.  
Being number two is a big job that  
I don't take lightly. I've paid my  
dues. Oh, and girl code 101: If  
I'm hotter than you and you pose no  
threat to me whatsoever - we can be  
friends!

ANGEL

Hmm.

STAYCEE

C'mon, let's go meet the thinner  
girls!

INT. DRESSING ROOM - SAME

CARL

Why are you so committed to this  
guy, anyway?

Loren twists the wedding band around her finger.

LOREN

I made him a sacred promise, Carl,  
and I intend to keep it.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY - [FLASHBACK]

The dramatic Lifetime movie version of this event, from  
Loren's perspective.

Loren's high heeled shoe is caught on some train tracks.  
Dressed in a red ball gown and obnoxiously red lipstick, she  
pulls and tugs at her leg, trying to break free.

A hulking locomotive barrels down on her.

LOREN

Help! I can't get my foot out!

Her husband PERVIS runs to help her.

He tries to yank her foot out, but it won't budge. He tries  
harder and harder, until it finally gives, and she escapes  
safely to the side of the tracks. She turns back to Pervis.

Pervis looks down and sees that his shoe is now caught in the  
track. He pulls and pulls, but it's stuck.

LOREN (CONT'D)

Pervis!

The train is right on him!

PERVIS

Never love again!

SMOOSH!

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

The girls sit agog at Loren's story.

LOREN

And I never have.

AIRWRECKA  
That's so romantical.

CARL  
We have to work on your definition  
of romance, Airwrecka. And  
pronunciation.

BETHANY  
Maybe I should bring Troy to the  
train trestle.

Staycee enters with Angel close behind.

STAYCEE  
So...what do we think of the new  
headband?

She does a little twirl.

CARL  
Oh my god.

STAYCEE  
Is my eye bleeding again?

CARL  
You're Mermaid Molly's daughter,  
aren't you? I'd recognize those  
shoulders anywhere.

Staycee looks back to Angel, and rolls her eyes.

STAYCEE  
Can you dummies stop staring at  
number fourteen and start paying  
attention to this headband. It's  
Etsy couture!

A high-pitched SCREAM is heard from outside. A cross between  
a screaming goat and a woman being murdered.

Angel SCREAMS and tries to run away but slams into the wall,  
and collapses to the floor.

LOREN  
Those are just the peacocks.

CARL  
That's where we get our High School  
football team name, the Screamin'  
Peacocks!

Angel gets up and peers outside the window to see two beautiful peacocks milling about.

ANGEL  
Oh. They're so pretty.

A GUNSHOT.

Angel backs up into the wall in a panic. Nobody else budges.

AIRWRECKA  
Don't worry! That's just Fleek  
loading some lumber.

Angel peers outside to see Fleek loading two-by-fours into a flatbed truck.

Angel relaxes again.

A kitten's MEOW is heard.

Everyone BOLTS out of the locker room in a frenzy.

BETHANY (O.C.)  
Angel, RUN!

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

The Mermaids chit-chat as Mary walks into the room.

MARY

Ok girls, we have a lot to go over today. First, I'd like to welcome our newest Mermaid to the family, Mermaid-in-training Angel.

Most people clap.

MARY (CONT'D)

Daughter of the late great Mermaid Molly. Mermaid-in-training Angel, would you like to get up and say something?

Angel stands up.

ANGEL

Just Angel is fine.

MARY

Strange speech, but thanks.

Angel, confused, reluctantly sits back down.

MARY (CONT'D)

Well, we are happy to have you here. Even though your legacy status gets automatic inclusion into our group, we think you're just as valuable as any other mermaid here.

The group claps for her.

Staycee notices everybody cooing at Angel. She's unimpressed.

MARY (CONT'D)

This is going to be a big year for the park.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

To celebrate our seventy-fifth year  
in the underwater live performance  
mermaid category of Florida  
entertainment, we're going to  
harken back to the times when the  
park first opened, a more civilized  
time, before that piece of shit  
mouse down the street even existed.

EXT. MERMAID DORMS - DAY - CONTINUOUS - [FLASHBACK 1944]

The air is electric as MERMAIDS move into their new dorms.

MARY (V.O.)

As you know, you all are now living  
in the dorms once inhabited by the  
very mermaids who created this  
park. Like Mermaid Ruby.

A beautiful MERMAID RUBY does a TV turn to camera, and smiles  
a big 40's smile.

MARY (V.O.)

Mermaid Lilliana.

An even more captivating MERMAID LILLIANA does a turn to  
camera, flashing her pearly whites and pin-up look.

MARY (V.O.)

And Mermaid Sammey.

MERMAID SAMMEEY clumsily turns to camera, and is SO FUCKING  
UGLY.

The camera glass cracks and splinters.

EXT. WEEKI WACHEE FRONT GATE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Mermaids in sexy one-piece bathing suits line the edge of the  
highway US 19 with handmade signs and wave traffic into the  
park.

MARY (V.O.)

We'll be advertising the old  
fashioned way, bringing customers  
from the highway directly into the  
park.

A MAN drives by with his window open passing the girls.

MAN #1

Show me those gams, hun!

Another MAN drives by.

MAN #2  
Lookin' sharp, toots!

A third MAN drives by.

MAN #3  
My brakes aren't working! Please  
call for help!

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS - [PRESENT]

MARY  
And we will give the good customers  
of Weeki Wachee the experience of  
yesteryear. Vintage is in, folks.  
Staycee will be leading the yearly  
swim tests in the main show pool  
tomorrow. Please do not be late,  
as they are required for you all to  
remain the highest quality of  
mermaids.

CARL  
Mer-PEOPLE.

MARY  
No, Carl. Mer-MAIDS. You're the  
Prince.

CARL  
(with other plans)  
For now.

Staycee raises her hand, with her thumb pointing towards  
Angel.

STAYCEE  
Will there be a...fitness test?

LOREN  
Staycee!

STAYCEE  
What?

LOREN  
That's not nice.

STAYCEE

I just wanna make sure we're taking  
our yearly calendar shoot  
seriously. They're our main source  
of income.

MARY

Mermaids, you are dismissed.

The girls filter out of the meeting. Angel looks uneasy.

LOREN

What's wrong? I can tell something  
is wrong. I have a sick sense  
about things.

AIRWRECKA

Don't listen to Staycee. She's  
just mad because that headband is a  
little much for her coloring.

Staycee hears this and takes off the headband.

ANGEL

No, it's not her. I'm just not the  
best swimmer. More of a floater,  
really.

Quiet. People aren't sure how to proceed.

LOREN

(genuinely trying)

That's ok, we can help you get your  
tail in gear!

Nobody responds to the joke.

AIRWRECKA

Why don't you come out to the show  
pool later and we'll see what you  
can do?

LOREN

Mermaids are half fish, guys.

ANGEL

Ok, I will. Thank you.

LOREN

(muttering to herself)

It was a good joke, Loren.

Staycee slinks in.

STAYCEE  
A mermaid who can't swim?

The group quiets down at Staycee's slam. Everybody looks to Angel to see what she'll say.

ANGEL  
A grown-up with braces?

Everybody GASPS. Someone in the back GUFFAWS.

Staycee's eyes narrow. She leans in.

STAYCEE  
Just because you're a legacy,  
doesn't mean you can change the  
pecking order around here. There's  
Mary, then ME, then all the other  
mermaids who have ever come before  
you. Then the peacocks. Then  
Fleek. Then my Uncle Frank for  
reasons I'd rather not get into.  
And then... there's you. Right.  
Here. On the bottom.

CARL  
Who hurt you!?

Staycee gets close to Angel, and whispers.

STAYCEE  
These waters are littered with the  
corpses of girls like you.

They are almost touching noses. They hold for a beat.

ANGEL  
(whispered)  
You smell like coconut-

STAYCEE  
(whispered)  
-It's my lip gloss-

ANGEL  
(whispered)  
-it's nice.

EXT. CHILDREN'S POOL PARTY - DAY

Troy and Fleek sit next to an above-ground pool, filled with screaming children. Bethany swims with the kids in full mermaid attire.

FLEEK

This plan is startin' to feel a little backward.

TROY

Backwardly awesome.

FLEEK

So...not awesome?

TROY

Think about it. The best highs are always right after the lowest low.  
It's math!

FLEEK

It is?

TROY

Sorry I don't have my AA in rocket scientist, but if there's one thing Troy Butts knows, it's women.

(he smiles with confidence)

And they love a big finish.

## BACK BY THE POOL

A LITTLE GIRL swims up to a crying Bethany. Makeup smears her face.

LITTLE GIRL

Are you ok?

Bethany grabs the little girl's face tightly.

BETHANY

Don't ever let a man inside your heart!

The little girl tries to squirm away. Bethany holds tight.

BETHANY (CONT'D)

You better pray to God you wind up a lesbian!

EXT. MAIN SHOW POOL - DAY

Angel arrives in an oversized Tweety Bird T-shirt and basketball shorts.

Across the pool, MARSHALL (29, head lifeguard, stupid hot) and Fleek see Angel.

MARSHALL

That her?

FLEEK

Yup.

MARSHALL

Molly's daughter?

FLEEK

Yup.

Back at the Show Pool, Loren runs up to Angel.

LOREN

You came! I thought you'd have run away by now.

ANGEL

I think I'm done running away.

She looks around the show pool, which is fed by the underground spring.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

This place is incredible.

LOREN

It's a natural spring that feeds our pools and the water park across the way. We're not supposed to pee in it, but--

She makes a face like "whoopsie!"

Excited YELLING is heard, and Angel looks up to see Staycee leap off a tall platform connected to the theater and do two perfect somersaults in the air before entering the spring.

She lands with a small splash.

LOREN (CONT'D)

So, are you ready?

ANGEL

For what?

AIRWRECKA  
(motions to the platform)  
For the tower of power.

ANGEL  
I thought you were going to teach  
me how to swim?

AIRWRECKA  
We are. We just need to break you  
in first.

Angel looks up to the swim platform and then back to the girls.

ANGEL  
Nope.

She starts to leave, but Airwrecka grabs her arm.

AIRWRECKA  
Everybody's done it.

ANGEL  
(panic setting in)  
I just thought we would start with  
baby steps, you know? Maybe the  
bathtub, possibly a warm jacuzzi?  
Ooh, a jacuzzi sounds fun!

LOREN  
Mermaid Molly wouldn'tve run away.

ANGEL  
It's just so...high.

LOREN  
Come on. We all did it. It's your  
turn. You can do it!

Loren starts to rally the group.

LOREN (CONT'D)  
You can do it! You can do it!

The group begins to chant.

CROWD  
Jump! Jump! Jump!

LOREN  
Guys, that wasn't my chant.

Angel's brow starts to sweat. Her eyes dart back and forth.

She shuffles towards the base of the platform.

ANGEL  
(mumbling)  
I don't wanna die, I don't wanna  
die.

LOREN  
Take each step individually, and  
don't look down!

Angel takes a big breath and starts the climb. First, she takes each rung as a huge achievement. Pausing after each one. Then, she gets the hang of it. Faster and faster, and more confident in every step, she finally hits her stride.

The crowd continues its chanting and watches with excited anticipation below. Staycee perches herself on a rock along the shoreline.

Angel reaches a small platform at the top. She peers down. She is so high up, she can't make out the faces of the people below.

ANGEL  
Oh poop. Oh poop. Oh poop.

CROWD  
Jump! Jump! Jump!

MARSHALL  
(to Fleek)  
She's gonna die, right?

FLEEK  
More'n likely.

LOREN  
(from below the platform)  
You can do it! We are your sisters  
and we will catch you if you fall!

ANGEL  
(yelling down)  
I'd be amazed to see you catch a  
hundred and eighty-five pound fast  
ball!

AIRWRECKA  
(under her breath  
judgmentally)  
One eighty-five? Yikes.

Angel leans back against the pole with her eyes closed.

ANGEL  
Jesus, what am I doing here?

MAGICAL MUSIC is heard, and the clouds in the sky part. A rainbow of light dances on Angel's face.

She opens her eyes and sees her mom's face come out of the clouds.

ANGEL (CONT'D)  
Mom?

MOLLY  
Hi, honey.

ANGEL  
Mom, is that really you?

MOLLY  
It's really me. Well, cloud me.

ANGEL  
I miss you.

MOLLY  
Oh baby, I miss you too. I'm so sorry I never got to watch you grow up.

ANGEL  
Dad said you had important things in the world you had to conquer.

MOLLY  
Meth won't smoke itself, now will it?

ANGEL  
I guess not.

MOLLY  
Why don't you jump, baby?

ANGEL  
I'm scared.

MOLLY  
You have to be brave.

ANGEL  
I'm not sure I'll ever be the mermaid you were.

MOLLY  
Well no, of course you won't.

Angel waits for the "but..." It doesn't come.

ANGEL  
Not the pep talk I expected.

FLEEK (O.C.)  
Show us your tits!

Molly turns and takes off her top and flashes Fleek.

ANGEL  
I think he meant me, Mom.

MOLLY  
Oh. Right.

Molly puts her top back on.

MOLLY (CONT'D)  
Be brave. It's the only way to get  
the good stuff in life.

ANGEL  
But what if I mess up?

MOLLY  
Leap, and the net will appear.

ANGEL  
That's beautiful. Did you make  
that up?

MOLLY  
No. I heard it on an episode of  
Chopped.

Molly's image quickly dissipates as the skies clear again.

Angel repeats Molly's mantra with her eyes closed.

ANGEL  
Leap, and the net will appear.  
Leap, and the net will appear.

Angel stands up, eyes still closed.

AIRWRECKA  
What is she doing?

LOREN

Open your eyes, Angel! For the  
love of God! There's no net!

Angel opens her arms wide and trust-falls forward.

The crowd GASPS.

EXT. MAIN SHOW POOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS - [FANTASY]

FANTASY ANGEL (thinner, lighter skinned, with long red hair) gracefully leaps off of the platform and effortlessly and peacefully sails through the sky to R. Kelly's "I Believe I Can Fly." The perfect blue water below slowly comes into focus as her body twists and turns in the air like a professional diver. Birds and butterflies dance around her as she glides through the air.

EXT. MAIN SHOW POOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS - [REALITY]

From high atop the trees, real Angel flips and flops like a rag doll in the air. She descends in silence with one breast hanging out of her shirt. She lands in the water flat on her back, making a horrific FLOP.

The crowd recoils.

END OF ACT 2

ACT 3INT. INFIRMARY - DAY

Angel lies on her stomach as Marshall attends to her swollen red back.

She winces with pain as he applies cold packs.

MARSHALL  
I think it was awesome.

ANGEL  
Me almost dying?

MARSHALL  
You having the guts to just throw yourself off that thing. I wouldn't have. Especially since you can't swim.

ANGEL  
I just wish it came naturally like it did for my Mom.

MARSHALL  
Mermaiding is in your blood.

ANGEL  
Sure doesn't feel like it. I wanted this to be me so bad.

MARSHALL  
You know, I can help you with your swim tests.

ANGEL  
The girls tried that already.

MARSHALL  
I'm a lifeguard. Trust me. It took me seven hours of classroom training to legally be able to say that.

EXT. MAIN SHOW POOL - DAY

Marshall and Angel stand in knee-deep water at the edge of the pool. Angel is in her T-shirt and shorts.

MARSHALL

First thing to do, is not be afraid  
of the water. Think of it as a  
friend.

Marshall takes off his shirt. He's unfairly ripped.

ANGEL

Holy shit.

MARSHALL

What?

ANGEL

Uh, nothing. You know what, do you  
mind putting your shirt back on?  
Hard to concentrate.

(needs another excuse)  
Also sun is bad for your skin.

MARSHALL

Sure.

He starts to put his shirt back on.

ANGEL

You know what, never mind. Vitamin  
D is good for the skin!

He takes it back off.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

Better. Yeah. Better.

MARSHALL

Here, come to me.

Angel goes to Marshall, and he lowers her in the water as if  
she's getting baptized. The deeper she gets, the more her  
limbs begin to panic. She treads the water violently.

MARSHALL (CONT'D)

Calm yourself. Be one with the  
water.

He lets her go. She tries to calm herself, but it doesn't  
work. She panics and starts thrashing.

ANGEL

I can't swim! I'm drowning! Help!  
Help!

Marshall goes over to her, and stands her back up. The water  
isn't more than a few feet deep.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

Wow, that's more embarrassing than  
I thought.

Angel sees Staycee has been watching her the whole time.  
Staycee sucks on a lollipop and skips off.

MARSHALL

When is your swim test?

ANGEL

Tomorrow.

MARSHALL

Maybe...maybe you're the kind of  
mermaid who works in the gift shop?

INT. TROY'S DORM - DAY

Troy admires the contents of a ring box when there's a KNOCK.

He quickly hides the ring in his pocket and opens the door.

Bethany stands with a bouquet of supermarket roses and a sad  
look on her face.

BETHANY

I'm sorry.

Troy turns dramatically, but smiles on his way back across  
the room.

TROY

(dramatically)

I just -- I don't know what to say  
anymore. Maybe this is it for us.

BETHANY

Listen, you're clearly mad at me  
for something, and I guess I need  
to come clean about a few things.

TROY

(his smile changes  
abruptly)

What's that now?

BETHANY

It's obvious you know about Dale,  
so I won't even begin to lie about  
him.

TROY  
Dale.

BETHANY  
I knew that had to be it!

TROY  
...ok. Ok.

BETHANY  
But, then I thought maybe it was  
because of the rash.

EXT. MAIN SHOW POOL - NIGHT

Angel looks up to the jumping platform. She takes in a big breath, and starts the long climb.

ANGEL  
(muttering to herself)  
I can do this. I can do this. I  
have mermaid blood in me, for  
Pete's sake. I can do this. I can  
do this.

She gets to the top of the platform. She peers down.

ANGEL (CONT'D)  
I can't do this, I can't do this.

She closes her eyes, holding back tears.

ANGEL (CONT'D)  
I can't do this.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Show me your tits!

ANGEL  
Mom?

VOICE (O.S.)  
Uh...yeah...it's your Mom. Mommy  
wants you to show me those cans!

Angel looks down to see Fleek standing at the base of the tower. He darts away when he's caught.

Angel sighs and sits down on the platform. Her chubby feet dangle over the edge. She looks up to the night sky.

ANGEL

Mom? Are you up there? Sure could  
use some help right now.

She waits.

Nothing but the cicadas BUZZING in the dark.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

I leaped. There was no net.

Nothing from Mom.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

I'm so sick of being unable to do  
this. I'm a grown-ass woman, who  
should know how to swim. I've seen  
it a million times in the movies.  
You did it. Hell, thousands of  
people can do it. Why not me?

She gets up, determined.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

I can do this, I can do this!

She leaps off the platform.

INT. INFIRMARY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Angel's eyes open in a hospital bed, face down.

ANGEL

Darnit!

INT. TROY'S DORM - DAY

Troy sits in a chair with a look of death on his face.

Bethany paces the room.

BETHANY

And then I thought, "how could he  
know about the ENTIRE rowing team?"  
But you're a smart guy. So I knew  
trying to hide any of the group  
stuff was futile. But how could  
you have known about the farm --

TROY

-- Ok stop stop STOP! I can't hear any more! This wasn't how it was supposed to be.

BETHANY

How what was supposed to be?

TROY

My proposal.

Bethany stops.

BETHANY

You were going to propose to me?

TROY

Yes. Before, well, before all this.

BETHANY

I don't understand. Then why were you being so mean to me?

TROY

Because that's what I thought would make this even more special. To beat you down emotionally, so this tiny ring would seem...more impressive.

He shows her the simple engagement ring.

BETHANY

Oh, Troy.

TROY

I didn't have enough for a big one.

BETHANY

Yes.

TROY

Yes?

BETHANY

Yes! And I was lying about the rash and cheating and stuff, I was just trying to get you back.

TROY

Oh, thank god!

They hug.

TROY (CONT'D)  
I'm so glad you didn't get into  
weird stuff with the rowing team.

BETHANY  
Sure.

INT. ANGEL'S DORM - DAY

Angel, wrapped in bandages and gauze, packs her bags.

A KNOCK at the door. The door tips forward and falls to the ground, revealing Mary in the doorway with her hand in knock position.

ANGEL  
Come in.

MARY  
Rumor is you're leaving.

ANGEL  
I really wanted this to be me.

MARY  
Sit down.

She pats the bed, and they sit together.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Wanna know a secret?

ANGEL  
Sure.

MARY  
Sometimes, when I sneeze, I pee a  
little. Not a lot. But a little.

ANGEL  
What does that have to do --

MARY  
-- But you wanna know something  
else?

ANGEL  
Now I'm not so sure.

MARY  
Your mom, as wonderful and amazing  
as she was, couldn't swim at first  
either.

ANGEL

Really?

MARY

She was actually terrible.

ANGEL

Wow.

MARY

But she kept trying, and eventually became an excellent swimmer. So, while I know it's hard, and not for everyone, I see something special in you.

ANGEL

Delusion?

Mary grabs Angel's face, and turns it towards a mirror.

MARY

Heart.

ANGEL

Thanks, Mary.

MARY

Give it time.

There is a crack of THUNDER, and it begins to rain.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hmm...might have to cancel the tests because of this weather. Maybe your Mom is with you after all.

ANGEL

(through a smile)

I guess so.

The rain beats heavily on the window.

MARY

Wanna kiss?

ANGEL

Nah, I'm good.

END OF ACT 3

**ACT 4**

**EXT. MAIN SHOW POOL - DAY**

The heavy thunderstorm takes over the spring.

Angel stands at the base of the tower. She has a look of determination on her face.

Staycee stands underneath the eve of the snack bar watching her.

STAYCEE

The swim tests were cancelled,  
dummy!

Angel looks over to Staycee, then back up to the platform.

She climbs up, rung by rung, until she gets to the top.

She looks up to the clouds, where rain and lightning fall from the sky.

She inches to the edge of the platform.

Angel takes a big breath in. She opens her eyes wide.

ANGEL

I'm a mermaid, mother fucker.

She leaps.

**END OF ACT 4**

**END OF EPISODE**