

LEGENDS AND THE FALL

Jane Miller

Characters:

Cliff

Dennis

Alison

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ALISON AND DENNIS IN ALISON'S OFFICE. THEY ARE WEARING HELMETS, LIFEJACKETS AND HOLDING PADDLES. CLIFF ENTERS.

- ALISON:** Hi Cliff. Thanks for coming. Sit down. Coffee?
- CLIFF:** No thanks. Trying to minimize the old caffeine intake-
- DENNIS:** Are you sure? We can get you coffee asap. Where's Sal?
(*CALLING OFFSTAGE*) Sal...Coffee for Cliff...Pronto.
- ALISON:** No coffee.
- DENNIS:** No coffee. Right. I'm all over that.
(*CALLING OFFSTAGE*)
Can the coffee, Sal.
I drink green tea myself. Love the green tea.
- CLIFF:** I prefer chamomile...with honey.
- DENNIS:** I'm really a Chai man... if its true confessions time.
- CLIFF:** What's with the lifejackets?
- ALISON:** All will be revealed. But first.... I'd just like to take a moment to say how nice it is to see you.
- DENNIS:** It's great. You look bloody great. Top notch. Buff. Cut. I don't think its going too far, to say you've never looked better.
- ALISON:** That's valid.
- CLIFF:** I try to keep fit. You need to...In today's competitive market. I exercise regularly...Pilates...Weight training...Run-
- DENNIS:** I run every morning.
- CLIFF:** Truth be told, I try to run both morning and night.
- DENNIS:** I try to run morning night and some lunch times.
- CLIFF:** I try to run morning, night and some lunchtimes with 3 kilogram weights strapped to my shins.

ALISON: I've done both the Melbourne marathon and the Hawaiian triathlon over the last 4 years but that's neither here nor there. The reason I wanted to see you-

CLIFF: I think I know what this is about.

ALISON: You might well think that Cliff...Because of all the rumour and innuendo. That's the thing I have to deal with on a daily basis... as CEO. Youngest CEO in the history of the Company. Not that I want everyone to know that.

DENNIS: Don't forget 'first woman'....

ALISON: I don't want to focus on that...That's not the Company way.

DENNIS: Ego is a dirty word. We're a family.

ALISON: The thing that you might've heard, is that the Company is embarking on an exciting period. We're really heading into some whitewater. Whitewater with its spills but also, some very definite thrills. Hence the lifejackets and helmets.

For instance and this is just between us....We've got a new marketing catch phrase coming out for the Company's 25th Anniversary. "A Whole new Way to Be".... A pun on 'be' as in 'bee' and the fact that we manufacture honey products. A Whole New Way to Be.

CLIFF: Love it.

DENNIS: I really love it. It's new... it's fresh, it's exciting. I just love it.

CLIFF: It grabs me. Fills me with hope.

DENNIS: For the future.

CLIFF: For the millennium.

ALISON These marketing people are clever. The thing is...And this is where the whitewater comes in. I have some great news and some possibly not so great news.

CLIFF: To be honest. I think I know what's coming.

DENNIS: How? I didn't say anything ...Cliff's heard nothing from me. Scout's honour..

ALISON: Perhaps we shouldn't jump the gun. You may have the bare bones but not the whole tapestry of the story.

CLIFF: What am I in for? Trip overseas...Share offer...Conference...Bonus....Give it to me straight...I can take it.
(WINKS AT DENNIS)

ALISON: We're making you redundant. As of tomorrow.

(DENNIS PUSHES AN EMPTY CARDBOARD BOX AT CLIFF)

DENNIS: Here's a box...For your things.

CLIFF: Redundant. Do you mean the sack?

DENNIS: There'll be a pay out. It's like the sack....but with a gift.

CLIFF: Can I sit down?

ALISON: Get a chair.

DENNIS GETS A CHAIR AND PUTS IN BEHIND CLIFF WHO SLUMPS DOWN

CLIFF: I thought I was getting a bonus....For the anniversary.

DENNIS: You are getting....money.

ALISON: It's tough Cliff.... I feel it. Trust me.
It's brutal...But completely legal. We're totally within our rights.

DENNIS: Mate....I've had your back. I've been here paddling for you.
Alison will back that up. I've taken in a lot of water over this myself. Everybody hurts. Everybody cries...Sometimes.

ALISON: You've been an important employee, Cliff. Everyone acknowledges that.

DENNIS: A quality operator. A company man-

ALISON: I know this is tough. I take that on board. I embrace it. I never back away from shouldering responsibility. I can't. I'm the youngest CEO – male or female – in Company history....But let's not harp on that.