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AVIVA
DRESCHER

October 10, 2011

"Aviva has a larger-than-life quality," a friend tells *Star*. Together, she and her husband, investment banker Reid Drescher, are the parents of son Hudson (right) and daughter Sienna.



Aviva
Drescher
Real Housewives'
**BRAVEST
STAR**

The *Real Housewives* of New York City's new star overcame the physical and psychological scars of a horrible childhood accident to become a top model, loving wife and doting mom.

BACKSTABBING friends, bickering husbands and finding a fabulous designer handbag are some of the "hardships" faced by the women of Bravo's *Real Housewives* franchise. But Aviva Drescher, who *Star* can confirm will be one of the new cast members on the NYC series, experienced, and overcame, a horrifying real-life tragedy before she was even a teen.

Aviva, 41 — one of three new women reported to be replacing Kelly Killoren Bensimon, Cindy Barshop, Alex McCord and Jill Zarin on the series — was just 6 years old when her left foot got caught in a barn-cleaning machine's conveyor belt at her family's upstate New York dairy farm in 1977. Rescue workers spent "three hours sawing free my mangled, manure-ridden leg," she later revealed, but gangrene eventually set in, and her foot and ankle had to be amputated two months later.

"Being an amputee was not, and has never been, a dominating factor in my life," says the 5'10" beauty, who was a successful model before studying law — and even chose to have another six inches of her left leg removed in 1997 to accommodate a newer, more lifelike prosthetic.

"Aviva is the strongest, most resilient and brilliant person ever," her close friend, author Jill Kargman, tells *Star*. "She's warm and nurturing, but she doesn't deal in BS. She tells it like it is. She's everything a modern woman should be, and she's going to be a wonderful addition to the show." — CARA SPRUNK ★

**MEET THE OTHER
NEW NYC STARS**

One of the reported new NYC faces has a Kennedy connection. Author and former ABC News producer **Carole Radziwill**, 48, was married to the late Anthony Radziwill, who died of cancer in 1999. His mom is **Lee Radziwill**, sister of the late Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. The other new star is fashion designer **Heather Thomson**, 41, creator of the clothing line Yummie Tummie. She and hubby **Jonathan Schindler**, a commercial real estate exec, are the parents of two children.



Carole Radziwill



Heather Thomson