

FADE IN:

INT. GETTY AND CHASE DEPARTMENT STORE, HAMPTONS, N.Y. - DAY

Sleek, compulsive, high-maintenance HILARY DARLING SWANSON, 51, skims through a rack of evening dresses. Even at the half-century mark, her figure's keeping pace with the best of them. It's no wonder she treats the task at hand like Vera Wang planning her fall line.

Across the rack, Hilary's younger sister ARLENE *putzes* along in a torpor. Arlene wears Goodwill-purchased Levis, hiking boots and a Steelers football jacket. Evidently, Arlene's own humble origins have stalled on that side of the tracks. She cynically grabs a gown, reads the tag.

ARLENE

Incredible.

HILARY

Don't look at the price, Arlene. I told you, it's my treat.

ARLENE

This would have covered my back rent. Why didn't you treat me to that?

HILARY

You're nothing but a pill.

A roving SALESWOMAN espies Hilary chinning a Ralph Lauren satin dinner dress with an exaggerated boatneck.

SALESWOMAN

Very nice. I've got a pair of shoes that would match that to a T.

HILARY

Do you? Well, then. I'll be over in a few.

ARLENE

Hilary, you think she has shoes to match this?

HILARY

That's a mis-rack.

Arlene's dress is something else altogether. In fact, it appears to be the shredded remnants of a power suit after a nuclear explosion. Hilary points to some clearance Halloween costumes on sale nearby. As Arlene reracks this selection:

HILARY
Look over there.

In the accessories department, a pretty ACTRESS with a face familiar to us all is browsing the belts. And she's toting a bag from Saks.

ARLENE
Isn't that -

HILARY
Don't gawk, Arlene. Give her her privacy.

ARLENE
Why? Nobody else is.

Arlene means the TWO UNDERCOVER SECURITY EMPLOYEES staking out the celebrity from different angles.

ARLENE (CONT.)
Boy, that last movie she did really tanked, poor thing.

HILARY
When you get to her level, it doesn't matter. I'm trying these on.

ARLENE
I bet it matters to her.

As Hilary marches off towards the fitting room, Arlene watches the actress surreptitiously slip a ruby-studded belt into her Saks bag. Arlene resolves to go warn the perpetrator of her doom.

HILARY (O.S.)
Arlene, where are you?

Arlene stops dead in her tracks like a tethered ball. She the first dress she sees, falls in line behind her sister.

INT. FITTING ROOM - DAY

Hilary sashays out of her stall in the alluring boatneck. She checks the fit in a full-length mirror. It's perfect. Arlene makes sure the coast is clear before stepping out in her selection. It calls to mind a Bavarian windmill. Hilary gives it a perfunctory glance, focuses on the more appealing image in the mirror.

ARLENE

This is why I shop the boys' department at Sears.

HILARY

You're not serious.

ARLENE

They have husky sizes.

HILARY

So, all you have to do is cut off the little bugle boy. What do you think of this? It's Ralph Loren. I like it.

Suddenly, the actress sweeps into the room. She's got several selections draped over her arm and enters the middle of three stalls. Curious, Hilary and Arlene retreat back to theirs on either side.

ARLENE'S STALL

As she undresses, she hears the unexpected sound of SAWING, like a jeweler's file on plastic. Then some fumbling with hangers. Now more sawing. Then the sound of a PURSE UNZIPPING and a loud POP of a plastic bottle.

HILARY'S STALL

Trying not to pry, Hilary works on removing her dress. Gazing in the mirror, she stops to stare at her bust.

HILARY

I could have been an actress.

The sound of something SPILLING next door jars her back to present events. She looks down, sees a swarm of little capsules roll across the divider, right up to her Rockports.

FITTING ROOM

A stall opens and the actress flies out, as if late for a curtain call. Her Saks bag is bulging. The sisters emerge from their stalls in unison, check it out. They find a pile of security tags and the ruby-studded belt.

HILARY

My God, she's just robbed Getty and Chase. Whatever for?

ARLENE

Remember that time she checked into a psych ward - after the break up with what's his name? She's a sick puppy.

HILARY

Well that doesn't give her the right to - Arlene, what are you doing?

Arlene grabs some tissue paper, scoops up the sawed tags and stashes them into her Steelers jacket.

ARLENE

I don't want her to get caught.

HILARY

This is not your affair. Now put those back before a clerk walks in here.

Undeterred, Arlene gathers up their own dresses and other returns in the room and sticks the heap in the middle stall.

ARLENE

Let's go.

Too shocked to argue, Hilary takes her purse and follows Arlene out. Moments later, one of the security guards blasts into the room. He searches the stalls, finds nothing conclusive. He pulls out a two-way radio, dangles the belt.

SHOP FLOOR

The second guard is shadowing the actress's getaway when he hears a disgruntled voice on his radio.

FIRST GUARD (O.S.)

Wait for the alarm.

The actress exits the store without a peep.

HAT SECTION

Arlene eyes an ELDERLY MATRON with a saddlebag-sized purse, trying on a felt hat with feathers. With the old dame distracted, she dumps the tags into the purse. Meanwhile, the shoe saleswoman we saw earlier is bearing down on Hilary. She waves a pair of high heels in the air. Hilary panics and bolts for the exit. Arlene catches up to her and they exit together.

EXT. GETTY AND CHASE - DAY

As the sisters reach daylight, a Jaguar driven by the actress burns rubber past the entrance. The sisters make a dash for a Mercedes parked just up the block at curbside. Hilary activates her remote car keys.

HILARY
Arlene, we could have been arrested.

ARLENE
Hurry up. We're still in present
tense here.

The guards emerge from the store in hot pursuit. Then the ALARM sounds back at the entrance. They turn back to see the elderly shopper looking rather distraught, then go off to arrest her.

Arlene cringes with guilt as she and Hilary climb into the car. Hilary revs up the engine and peels away.

INT. MERCEDES, ALONG HIGHWAY 27, THE HAMPTONS - DAY

Both sisters look back in their mirrors as Hilary changes to the fast lane at a near right angle, accelerates to 75 mph.

ARLENE
Who says the rich lead blasé,
predictable lives?

HILARY
Of course, we don't. But it doesn't
usually involve felonies at the
street level. And since when did
you become a shoplifter?

Arlene retrieves a copy of the New York Times from the back seat and starts reading the front section.

ARLENE
I don't steal. I wonder what she's
doing in the Hamptons.

HILARY
Arlene, don't you know, this is the
Beverly Hills of the East Coast.

Hilary points out the palatial estates along the highway. Arlene looks around.

ARLENE
More like Russia before the
Bolshevik Revolution.

HILARY
Russia? What are you talking
about?

ARLENE
I'm talking about that.

Arlene points out an estate with an elaborate manmade waterfall tucked between Greek columns and statuary.

HILARY

Oh, I know, it's so lacking in subtlety. Douglas and I looked at that place.

ARLENE

Speaking of felonies, how's hubby dealing with the probe?

HILARY

The S.E.C. called yesterday looking for him. This whole Congo mess has been a nightmare.

ARLENE

I can't believe people fell for such a third-rate scam. "There's gold in them there hills."

HILARY

It's not gold. It's called coltan. They use it to make cell phones and micro-chips.

ARLENE

I know what it is. The warlords fund their massacres with bribes from the mining companies.

Again, Hilary's not sure what Arlene's talking about. The Westhampton Yacht Club rolls into view outside her window. The boats catch her wistful eye.

ARLENE (CONT.)

Anyway, those investors should have seen it coming.

HILARY

Well, I guess we can't all be geopolitical geniuses like you. So, Arlene, did you apply for food stamps yesterday?

ARLENE

The line was too long.

Hilary exits the highway, heads up a long, winding a hill dotted with more palatial estates.

INT. 70TH FLOOR, LOWER MANHATTAN HIGHRISE, NEW YORK - DAY

An elevator door opens, revealing DOUGLAS SWANSON, 55. A BODYGUARD beside him looks like the Terminator. Doug's in stellar physical shape for his age, and accentuates this youthful physique with tight slacks, a black silk shirt and leather blazer. Cocaine residue mustaches his nose and covers the black shirt. The bodyguard cuts off Doug's exit, cleans all this up before letting him disembark.

Leaving the Terminator behind, Doug breezes down a corridor adorned with sprawling plants and murals of Venice Beach. He dips his head into a waiting room, finds a fidgeting JOB CANDIDATE, along with a BUSINESSMAN clutching a large portfolio. In the hallway, a secretary, NATALIA, 26, appears. Doug motions towards these visitors and gives her a slit-throat gesture. Then he resumes his trek.

INT. C.E.O. EXECUTIVE SUITE - DAY

Doug breezes into his office. From the floor-to-ceiling windows, we get a tantalizing sweep of the Manhattan skyline. Several restored pinball machines are set up near his ash black desk. Farther into the suite, Doug's attorney, NEIL FEINSTEIN, 68, marks time on a sofa across the room drinking coffee. Across from him, two S.E.C. agents, JEFFREY BROOKS and BOB PARKER, stand to greet Doug.

NEIL

There you are. Doug, these nice gentlemen are from the Securities Exchange Commission. Jeffrey Brooks and Bob Parker.

DOUG

What's up?

Snubbing his guests, Doug goes over to his desk and opens a laptop. A surfboard is mounted behind him with the company name: "WAVE SECURITIES". As the machine boots, he stares at a photograph: He and Hilary foisting cocktails on a yacht.

BROOKS

Mr. Swanson, we're looking into the Katanga affair and have some questions to ask you, if you don't mind.

NEIL

Like I said, someone else handled all those transactions. Doug doesn't have a clue.

PARKER

You're talking about James Ogadipo?

NEIL

That's right. Doug signs off on deals every day, based on whatever James and our other guys recommend.

BROOKS

That's not how Mr. Ogadipo remembers it. I suppose you've heard that he's cooperating with our probe.

Doug brings up an online Ebay auction, rattles off a bid. Two seconds later, he HUFFS with consternation.

PARKER

Mr. Swanson, three months before the rebels seized the mines, you actively promoted Katanga stock to your investors. Isn't that right?

DOUG

Like I knew what the banshees were up to.

BROOKS

What's that?

NEIL

Look, I can make this simple. The Katanga Mine promised good returns. And everybody knew it. The ore in the ground would have fetched at least eight hundred million. Wait a minute... Here's the prospectus. It was all done on the up and up, just like everything else we do here.

PARKER

Then why did you sell out your shares three days before the attacks?

NEIL

The stock topped out at a hundred thirty-five. That number was prefigured for selloff. What was happening on the ground had nothing to do with it.

BROOKS

Again, not what Mr. Ogadipo said.

NEIL

Ogadipo will tell you Hamas was in on this if it'll save his ass. He's Nigerian, for chrissake. Doug never should have hired him. Now unless you have any hard evidence of a crime being committed here, why don't you two bean counters go back to your own high-rise and let us get to work?

BROOKS

(A BEAT.)

Alright. We'll be in touch.

NEIL

Look forward to it, guys. *Ciao*.

Doug doesn't even notice the men withdraw. He feverishly fires off another bid as Neil pours some coffee.

NEIL

Well, that went well. Except for the part where you got here an hour late.

DOUG

She's wants a divorce, Neil. And sixty million dollars.

NEIL

Who, Hilary? You don't think she knows anything about this, do you?

DOUG

She wouldn't know a junk bond from a breakfast bar. She might have overheard me on the phone.

NEIL

Well, whatever it was, she's got no ground to stand on. We can invoke spousal privilege.

DOUG

She must have something on me. I just know it. Why else would she get a lawyer?

NEIL

Gee, I don't know, maybe it has to do with that 16-year-old you did down in Cancun last week. Trust me, she's not going to turn state's evidence. It's her money, too.

DOUG
She'll spite me for a nickel.

Neil walks behind Doug's desk, checks the screen as Doug types in another bid.

NEIL
What are you bidding on now?

DOUG
A small town in Michigan.

NEIL
Who's going to run it if you win?

DOUG
The guy who cleans my pool.

NEIL
So, why don't we go ahead with the press conference first thing Monday and announce Ogadipo's out.

Doug types some more, waits. He SHRIEKS in anger, slams the laptop shut and skulks over to the window.

DOUG
It's just so devious, what she's doing. Like a cheetah waiting to lunge.

NEIL
Calm down. It's not like we're dealing with the Carnegies here. Isn't her father a retired steelworker? Anyway, as soon as Ogadipo gets on that boat next week, we can relax.

DOUG
(dials his cell phone)
I'm taking care of this myself.

NEIL
Fine. Who're you calling?

DOUG
Sergey.

NEIL
What for?

DOUG
She needs to be taught a lesson.

NEIL

(swipes phone away)

What do you mean, a lesson? What's going on?

DOUG

Nothing. Give it to me.

NEIL

I'll give it to you, alright. We're this close to five indictments, maybe more. And the U.N. Security Council's about to stick its oar into this. Meanwhile, you're trolling Ebay auctions and playing tit for tat with trailer trash. You should have got the pre-nup like I told you.

Doug grabs the yacht portrait, smashes it in frustration. Neil goes back to the sofa, packs up his gear, then walks back to the desk.

NEIL

Boy, I can't believe this one-eighty with you and Hilary. You were crazy in love six months ago. Las Vegas wedding. Isn't that where you met her? No prenup. You wouldn't even let me handle the paperwork.

(picks up the portrait)

You take her big-game hunting in Africa. Then this trip to the Riviera. She falls off the boat while it's going forty knots -

DOUG

I wasn't going that fast.

NEIL

But you dove right in and got her. And that was the swan song of the marriage. Tell you what, I'll offer her five million bucks, which I'm sure she'll take. Then that'll be the end of it. Is her sister still at the house with her?

DOUG

No, stay away from them. They're history.

Doug goes over to his arcade, fires a pinball.

NEIL

That better mean you're giving her the divorce. Otherwise, I'll turn you into the Feds myself. Remember what your shrink said. You always get started on coke when you're suppressing something. Go see him, will you?

No answer. After Neil's out the door, Doug retrieves his cell and redials his call. While he waits:

DOUG

Go back to your law library and suck lemons.

INT. SECURITY ROOM, SWANSON ESTATE, WESTHAMPTON - DAY

Located on the second floor, with a balcony overlook. A PRIVATE SECURITY THUG leans against the rail, smoking. Inside the room, Doug's chief security guy, SERGEY, 40, sits before a maze of electronics and surveillance screens. He's watching a porn video when his cell phone RINGS.

INT. POOLSIDE - DAY

Jazz plays on a boom box at a table with an umbrella. Doug's "pool guy", 51 and heavysset, skims dead leaves from the water. Arlene lies across the diving board on her back, a bottle of Heineken balanced on her stomach. Two empties sit next to her on the concrete.

Hilary reclines in a lawn chair, reading a *Land's End* catalog and sips a banana daiquiri with a straw. She's wearing baggy Nike blue sweats and has trouble extracting something from the sweatshirt.

HILARY

Damn it, these pockets are like Hobbit burrows.

ARLENE

Does anyone ever actually swim in this pool?

HILARY

What business is that of yours?

ARLENE

I've just never seen anyone.

HILARY

It's autumn. Who swims in the fall?

ARLENE

Nobody swam here in July, either.
 (sticking hand in water)
 Wow, that's hot. Boy, if I had this much money to throw around, I'd --

HILARY

You don't. Now I'm trying to work.

Hilary finally retrieves a pen, sets it in motion filling out the *Land's End* order form.

ARLENE

I'd give it all to the Global Fund for Women. And the Dalai Lama.

SECURITY OFFICE

Sergey hangs up the phone, waves his subordinate inside, briefs him in Russian.

POOL

The housekeeper, LOURDES, 47 and irritable, brings lunch. Arlene springs off the diving board, lands at the table in a heartbeat and digs into the food before Hilary has even closed her catalog. Adjourning to the meal in a more dignified manner, Hilary opens her cloth napkin.

HILARY

This isn't right, Lourdes.

LOURDES

It's fish and chips.

HILARY

I asked for garlic fries.

LOURDES

I don't know, Mrs. Swanson, I just bring it out.

HILARY

Well, are you skilled enough to take it back?

LOURDES

If you want.

ARLENE

I'll keep mine.

HILARY

No, take them both. And tell Cook if he can't follow my instructions, he doesn't have to worry about dinner.

ARLENE

Jesus, Hilary, what do I care about garlic fries? I'm starving here.

HILARY

You're a guest in this house, now start acting like one.

ARLENE

It's only till I get back on my feet.

HILARY

What feet? You were born with a tin cup in your claws.

ARLENE

Well, it's not like you're fricking *Ms. Magazine* cover material.

HILARY

Ms.? Don't insult me.

ARLENE

Alright, *Good Housekeeping*.

HILARY

Tuh!

ARLENE

Fish and Game?

They wait. The breeze picks up and a swirl of leaves blows across the patio. They both sense something ominous about that. As the pool man moves to the far end of the pool, Hilary lowers her voice.

HILARY

You remember that man who came over last week, Ogadipo? He called here the next day and left a message. I don't think he realized it. Douglas's cell has the same announcement. Anyway, Doug sold all his shares in the Katanga mine right after that.

(MORE)

HILARY (CONT.)

So, I taped the message on my voice recorder. Now I have the evidence I need to put that statutory rapist behind bars. Or me behind a Maserati. But now I can't find the recorder. Have you seen it? It's only the size of my thumb. Arlene! Have you heard anything I just said?

Arlene's listing to one side in her chair and her face is white. Whimpering:

ARLENE

I wouldn't have drank this much knowing lunch was gonna take so long.

HILARY

Look, Groucho's back. Now get a grip. (to Lourdes)
Well, that's more like it.

Arlene immediately bites into a garlic fry. It's frozen.

HILARY (CONT.)

You see, dear, that wasn't so difficult, was it?

LOURDES

No, no trouble. If that will be all.

HILARY

For now. But stay within range.

Hilary indicates a servant bell on the table. Lourdes leaves, signaling the pool man to follow her. As Hilary sets her napkin across her lap, she sees tartar sauce oozing from Arlene's mouth.

HILARY (CONT.)

How repulsive.

Hilary gently lifts one fry, as if to suggest that this is how civilized people eat. Then she discerns the tiny ice crystals on it. Suddenly, Sergey and his partner burst onto the patio and yank the women from their chairs.

HILARY (CONT.)

What on earth! Let go of me.

ARLENE

We didn't steal anything from that store.

Restraining Hilary with one arm, Sergey rifles through their purses, doesn't find anything of interest.

EXT. ENTRANCE, SWANSON ESTATE - DAY

An iron gate rolls open. Sergey drives Hilary's Mercedes down from the house and parks. He and his cohort pull the sisters from the car and toss them onto the main road along with their purses. Sergey sets some keys onto an old BMW that's parked there. Then the two men walk back to the Mercedes. As the gate to the estate rolls shut:

HILARY

You'll be sorting garbage down at the landfill when this gets straightened out!

Sergey translates what she says. The men laugh, board the car, accelerate back up the drive.

HILARY

He must have found it.

ARLENE

Found what?

HILARY

Wake up Arlene. The world's going by. We're filing charges. Damn, I left my phone on the table. Give me yours.

ARLENE

It's in my room.

HILARY

In your room? Well, what good is it there? The whole point of a cell phone is its mobility. It goes where you go. Now what?

ARLENE

I guess the idea is for us to take that.

There's an old, beat-up BMW parked on the side of the road.

HILARY

That's the servants' car.

(Arlene offers her the keys.)

No, you drive. I'm beyond upset.

ARLENE
And I'm just a little plastered.

INT. BMW - DAY

They get in and fasten their seatbelts. Arlene inserts the key but doesn't turn the ignition.

HILARY
Well, what are you waiting for, the green flag?

ARLENE
It just seems like - this car - this is happening too fast.

A delivery truck comes rumbling down the road. The DRIVER stops alongside the BMW. He has a cell phone.

ARLENE
Hil, unroll your window quick.

HILARY
(complying)
We're fine. Thanks.

Before Arlene gets a word in edgewise, the truck drives away. Arlene drops her head on the wheel.

ARLENE
Why did you say that?

HILARY
That rubbernecker would have called *People* magazine if I told him what happened. And taken photos of us in this jalopy. What's the matter?

ARLENE
Nothing.

END EXCERPT