

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 has kept 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 sister ARLENE, 49, *putzes* along in a torpor. She wears Goodwill-vintage Levis, hiking boots and a Steelers football jacket. Unlike her sister, Arlene's own humble origins appear to have stalled on that side of the tracks. She randomly 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 couldn't you treat me  
to that?

HILARY

You're nothing but a pill.

A roving SALESWOMAN espies Hilary chinning a 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.

The saleswoman casts an unencouraging look at Arlene as she departs. Arlene's unnerved by it, moves onto another rack, grabs another dress. This one looks like the shredded remnants of a power suit worn during a nuclear explosion.

ARLENE

Hey sis, you think she has shoes  
to match this?

HILARY

That's a mis-rack.

Hilary points to a display sign: "CLEARANCE HALLOWEEN COSTUMES".

HILARY (CONT'D)

Look over there.

Arlene glances over at the accessories department. There, 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'D)

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.

Hilary marches off to the fitting room. Arlene lingers, sees the actress surreptitiously slip a ruby-studded belt into her Saks bag. Afraid she'll get bust, Arlene resolves to go warn the perpetrator of her doom. As she sets off:

HILARY (O.S.)

Arlene, where are you?

Like a tethered ball, Arlene stops dead in her tracks. She snags the first dress within reach, catches up with Hilary.

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. This number calls to mind a Bavarian windmill. Hilary gives it a perfunctory glance, then 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. With several dresses and accessories draped over her arm, she enters the middle of three stalls. Curious, Hilary and Arlene retreat back to theirs on either side.

ARLENE'S STALL

As Arlene 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 sets to work 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 attention. 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. And her Saks bag is bulging. The sisters emerge from their stalls. They check the middle one, 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 retrieve some tissue paper from a trash can, 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 retrieves their own dresses and piles them 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 two guards rushes 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:

RADIO

Wait for the alarm.

But the pretty actress exits the store without a peep.

HAT SECTION

Arlene approaches an ELDERLY MATRON trying on a felt hat with goose feathers. With the old dame distracted, she slips the tags into an open flap on the lady's large purse. Meanwhile, the shoe saleswoman we saw earlier is now bearing down on Hilary. She waves a pair of high heels in the air. Hilary panics and bolts for the exit. Arlene catches up and the sisters leave together.

EXT. GETTY AND CHASE - DAY

As the sisters reach daylight, a Jaguar driven by the actress burns rubber past them on the sidewalk. The sisters cross afterwards into a parking lot. Hilary activates her remote car keys and a Mercedes Benz flashes its lights.

HILARY

Arlene, we could have been arrested.  
What were you thinking?

ARLENE

C'mon, sis, we're still in present  
tense here. Hurry up.

The two guards emerge from the store now, see the sisters climb into the car. The guard set off in hot pursuit. That is, until an ALARM sounds back at the entrance. The guards turn back, see the elderly shopper, who looks mortified. They hesitate, then grudgingly hurry back to arrest Grandma.

As Hilary revs up the engine and peels away. Arlene sees the arrest in her side view mirror, cringes.

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

Hilary changes to the fast lane at a near right angle. She has her eyes on her rear-view mirror, but no one is following them. The sisters relax.

ARLENE

Boy, 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 glances at the logo on her jacket. Then she retrieves a copy of the New York Times from the back seat and starts flipping through 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. Just look around you.

Arlene checks the view out the windows. Many palatial estates dot either side of the highway.

ARLENE

More like Russia before the  
Bolshevik Revolution.

HILARY  
Russia? What are you talking  
about?

ARLENE  
I'm talking about that.

She points out an estate with an elaborate manmade waterfall tucked between two massive Greek columns and a profusion of statuary on the front lawn.

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 there with the bribes they get from the mining companies.

The Westhampton Yacht Club rolls into view outside Hilary's window. The sight of the yachts gives Hilary a sick feeling. But she quickly shrugs it off.

ARLENE (CONT'D)  
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

Nope. The line was too long.

Arlene keeps reading as Hilary exits the highway. She heads up a long, winding hill past more palatial estates.

INT. 70<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, LOWER MANHATTAN HIGHRISE, NEW YORK - DAY

An espresso machine FOAMS MILK O.S. An elevator door opens, revealing a bushy-blonde beach boy-turned Wall Street heavy weight, DOUGLAS SWANSON, 55, Doug wears tight slacks, a black silk shirt and studded leather blazer. Like his wife, he's in stellar shape for his age. Beside him, a RUSSIAN BODYGUARD cuts off his exit. He pulls out a brush, uses it to remove white powder sprinkled across Doug's clothes and under his nose.

The C.E.O. pulls it together, alights from the lift. He breezes down an office corridor adorned with palm plants and huge murals of ocean waves. A secretary, NATALIA, 26, meets him at his office door and sets him up with a coffee drink.

DOUG'S EXECUTIVE SUITE - DAY

From the floor-to-ceiling windows, we get a tantalizing sweep of the Manhattan skyline. Several restored pinball machines are set up near an. Behind an ash black desk, a surfboard is mounted above a large plaque: "WAVE SECURITIES". Farther into the suite, Doug's attorney, NEIL FEINSTEIN, 75, sits on a sofa with two S.E.C. agents, JEFFREY BROOKS and BOB PARKER.

NEIL

Doug, there you are. These gentlemen are from the Securities Exchange Commission. Jeffrey Brooks and Bob Parker. Did you forget we had a meeting?

DOUG

What's up?

Snubbing his guests, Doug settles in behind his desk, opens a laptop. He slurps his whip cream and waits for a website to come up. A framed photograph of Hilary and him foisting cocktails on a yacht out at sea. He stares at him and sulks.

COUCH

Prominent on a wall is an enlarged photo of Doug as a young man in swim trunks. A surfboard under his arm, he stands on a beach between TWO HAWAIIAN GIRLS. One holds a trophy.

BROOKS

Mr. Swanson, If you don't mind, we have some questions about the Malakoff Mines.

NEIL

He knows. He just needs to check his mail.

PARKER

Wasn't he a bigtime surfer back in the day?

NEIL

Won all the championships. In the same year, no less.

PARKER

How did he end up here?

NEIL

His father passed away few years ago. He took over the firm. Anyway, like I said, someone else handled those transactions. Doug doesn't have a clue. Literally.

PARKER

By someone else, you mean James Ogadipo?

NEIL

That's right. Doug signs off on deals every day, based on whatever James and our other guys - and gals - recommend. That mine promised good returns. So, we invested in it. Not rocket science. Had no idea about a rebel attack on the horizon.

BROOKS

Mr. Ogadipo tells a different story.

NEIL

Ogadipo will tell you Hamas was in on this if it'll save his ass. Doug never should have hired him. Recruiting's not his thing.



BROOKS

Alright. We gotta go. We'll be in touch.

NEIL

Look forward to it, guys. Here, you can use this other door. *Ciao.*

Doug doesn't even notice the men leaving. He fires off another bid as Neil pours some coffee from a decanter.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Well, that went well. Except for the part where you got here a half hour late and basically gave these guys the finger.

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, we can invoke spousal privilege. Don't worry about it.

Doug fires off another bid as Neil walks behind his desk to see what he's working on.

DOUG

She must have something on me.

NEIL

Gee, I don't know, maybe it has to do with that 16-year-old you did down in Cancun last week. What are you bidding on now?

DOUG

Small town in Michigan.

NEIL

Who's going to run it if you win?

DOUG

The guy who cleans my pool.

NEIL

Well, anyway, it's not like we're dealing with the Carnegies here. Isn't her father a retired steelworker?

DOUG

He's an asshole.

Doug types in another bid, waits. Then SHRIEKS in anger, slams the laptop shut.

NEIL

Okey, dokey. You want me to drive out to Westhampton and take care of this? I'll offer her five million, which I'm sure she'll take. Is her sister still there?

DOUG

(pulls out a smartphone)  
No. Leave them alone. I'll take care of this myself.

NEIL

Fine. Who're you calling?

DOUG

Sergey. 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 felony indictments, and you want to play tit for tat with trailer trash. Man. You were crazy in love a year ago. Las Vegas wedding. No prenup. And now this one-eighty. What's going on?

Unnerved, Doug goes over to his arcade, fires a pinball. Neil sets the phone on the desk, goes back to the couch, packs up his briefcase.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Ever since you two went sailing on the Riviera it's been downhill. You're back on the manic-depressive thing. Do me a favor, Doug, call that counselor. I can't go on like this.

As Neil depart, Doug ignores him. Then he retrieves the phone, redials the call.

DOUG

Yeah, Neil, go back to your law library and suck lemons.

INT. SECURITY ROOM, SWANSON ESTATE, WESTHAMPTON - DAY

On the second floor, with a balcony overlook. Inside the room, Doug's house security chief, SERGEY, 40, watches a porn video on a console. Other screens show surveillance shots around the estate, including one of Hilary and Arlene sunning themselves beside a pool. Sergey's cell phone RINGS.

SERGEY

Yes, Mr. Swanson.

EXT. POOLSIDE - DAY

JAZZ MUSIC plays on a boom box O.S. Arlene lies on the diving board, on her back, with a Heineken balanced on her stomach. Two empties nearby. Doug's POOL GUY, 62 and lethargic, skims leaves from the water.

Hilary reclines in a lawn chair in some Nike sweats. She sips a banana daquiri, skims a *Land's End* catalog.

HILARY

I need a ski jacket.  
(reaches for a pen)  
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

(sticks 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 felt tip pen from the pocket. She circles a ski jacket with fir trim in the catalog.

ARLENE

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

INT. SECURITY OFFICE

Sergey closes his smartphone.

SERGEY

Igor!

IGOR, an overweight thug, leaning over a balcony above the pool, steps inside. spot. Beyond him, we see Highway 27 and the yacht club in the distance.

POOL

The housekeeper, LOURDES 47, brings out a lunch tray. Arlene springs to her feet, reaches the table before Hilary has closed her catalog. Adjourning to lunch in a more dignified manner, Hilary arrives, looks over the food.

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 material.

HILARY

Ms.? Don't insult me.

ARLENE

Alright, Good Housekeeping.

HILARY

Tuh!

ARLENE

Fish and Game?

The breeze suddenly picks up, blows leaves blows across the patio. They both sense something ominous about that.

HILARY

You remember that Nigerian who came over last week to see Douglas? He had a name like Home Depot.

ARLENE

Yeah?

HILARY

He called the next day and left a long message on our land line. Doug has the same greeting on his cell. It was right after that when Doug sold all his shares in that mine in the Congo.

Listing to one side of her chair, Arlene's face is turning white. She is barely listening.

HILARY (CONT'D)

Arlene! Pay attention. I taped the message on my voice recorder, then saved it as new. Smart, huh? Now I have the evidence I need to put me behind a Maserati and Cokehead behind bars. But that stupid recorder's the size of my thumb and I can't find it now. Have you heard anything I just said?

ARLENE

(rousing; whimpering)

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

HILARY

(as Lourdes approaches:)

Look. Groucho's back. Now get a grip.

(to Lourdes:)

Well, that's more like it. 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 signals the pool man to follow her. Arlene picks up a garlic fry, bites into it. It's frozen. As Hilary sets the napkin across her lap, she sees sauce oozing from Arlene's mouth.

HILARY (CONT'D)

How repulsive.

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

HILARY (CONT'D)

What on earth! Let go of me.

ARLENE

We didn't steal anything from that store.

As Igor restrains both sisters, Sergey rifles through the purses, doesn't find what he's looking for. He takes Hilary by the arm and walks back toward the house.

EXT. ENTRANCE, SWANSON ESTATE - DAY

A few minutes later. An iron gate rolls open. Sergey drives Hilary's Mercedes down from the house and parks. The two guards pull the sisters from the back seat and toss them onto the main road along with their purses. Hilary and Arlene notice an old BMW parked on the side of the road. Sergey tosses some keys at it. Then two men return to the Mercedes. As the gate to the estate rolls shut:

HILARY

You'll be sorting garbage down at the landfill when I'm through with you, Sergey!

Sergey translates what she says. The men laugh, climb into 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. I'm filing charges. Damn, I left my phone on the table. Give me yours.

ARLENE  
It's in my room.

HILARY  
In your room? 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.

HILARY  
That's the servants' car.  
(Arlene hands over 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. A BEAT.

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  
(To driver:)  
We're fine. Thanks.

Before Arlene gets a word in edgewise, Hilary rolls up the window and the truck moves on.

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. Have you no shame?



Arlene drops her head on the steering wheel, MOANS.

***End excerpt; Info: [rregello@thecityedition.com](mailto:rregello@thecityedition.com)***