



Hiding in plain sight. Did a mysterious illness in 1999 have an effect on Weinstein's criminal behavior?

CRIME

The Making of a Predator, Part I

What hidden demons drove Harvey Weinstein's rise and fall?



BY PHOEBE EATON
ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL DAVIS

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The first in a three-part series. Read Part II [here](#) and Part III [here](#).

They say all families have their secrets. But showbiz families? Their secrets are at a whole other level.

For years, the name Miramax was one of the most revered brands in Hollywood, signifying class and intelligence in the stories it championed. Founded by Harvey and Bob Weinstein, brothers from Queens, New York, the name was an amalgam of Miriam and Max, the mother and father who loomed over their sons in life, and in death. It was his mother's death, after all, that Harvey used as a pretext in November 2016 to lure aspiring actress Jessica Mann to his hotel. Harvey, she claimed earlier this year in court, told her "he needed to be consoled for his grief." When she arrived, Harvey proceeded to masturbate in front of her and put his penis into her mouth.

Jailed now on a 23-year sentence for third-degree rape and a

criminal sexual act, Harvey's battling an additional pile-on of charges in Los Angeles in the midst of a planned appeal (also: a brand-new civil suit alleging two rapes and two additional sexual assaults). A prison union leery of incident declared he had the dreaded coronavirus shortly after he arrived, earning him immediate semi-sequestration in the infirmary. Despite monumental health issues, he's remained asymptomatic. Just another mystery in an endless string that still linger about the case—and his motivations.

Just why would Harvey put his entire business, reputation, and fortune at risk over and over? Why did his partner and brother, Bob, sit on his hands as long as he did? And did he finally help push his brother off the ledge? When were Harvey's wives aware? And what part did Harvey's physical insecurities, and his curiously misshapen genitalia, play in his abuse of women?

These are questions that have only deepened since the day in 2005 when I was working on a story about the Weinstein Company, the brothers' newly founded studio, and sitting on Harvey's now notorious casting couch in his Tribeca office as he told his marketing team why I was there.

And what part did Harvey's physical insecurities, and his curiously misshapen genitalia, play in his abuse of women?

“The magazines think I’m good-looking,” he said to the room jokingly. “I slept my way to the top.”

His staff smiled. They had to. Outside his office, a giant poster for the movie *The Libertine* sat parked on an easel. Its tagline, scripted in red, advertised the bold presence within: “He didn’t resist temptation. He pursued it.”

And now he’s paying for it. Prison’s been hard on Harvey. “He’s always had someone do things for him. So now he’s got to do everything for himself, and he’s not used to it. He has no idea how to do things,” says a source close to Weinstein. “He lived his whole life, a lavish life, where he had assistants take care of everything. Whether it was slice up the chicken for the salad and pick up the dry cleaning. He was such a privileged guy.”



He called her “Mama Portnoy”: Weinstein and his mother, Miriam, at

the Obie Awards in 1996.

He's now living as his assistants once did, in the clutches of a perverse and petty system, overseen by guards who demand utter obeisance, deference, and subjection. Imagine one of the world's foremost consumers of the luxury-hotel suite and capacious bathroom trying to survive an infirmary dormitory with no-seat toilets.

In court, his people had to shut off his iPhone *for* him; he'd never quite mastered the mechanics. But now there's *no* phone—save the one he's allowed to access for only an hour a day as, maintaining his innocence, he orchestrates his appeal from a room he can use only when no one's there. (And after he's done, the space requires disinfecting so as to thwart any spread of the virus.)

He is bewilderedly at the mercy of the same universe he for so long bent to his will. A whole culture outside his prison bars shocked into change.

Family Business

When it comes to siblings, Hollywood has a quirky history of power brothers, from such behind-the-desk deal-makers as the Warners, the Cohns, and the Selznicks to forces behind the camera: the Coens, the Safdies, the Sylberts, and the Russos. And then there's Harvey and Bob.

Growing up in midcentury Queens at the Electchester, a lower-

middle-class housing project, big brother Harvey and little brother Bob shared a room. For years after the two had officially made it, they offered to buy their mother a grander place, but she stayed. The sons would send limousines to pick her up for premieres. It impressed her yenta neighbors.

Harvey would say he started “with nothing,” but neighbors assumed the Weinstains were prosperous, because the father, Max, was a jeweler, making house calls late at night to other kids’ parents. Harvey was Bar Mitzvahed at the event space Ripples, in Arthur Hammerstein’s former Tudor mansion. So they weren’t hurting.

He’s now living as his assistants once did, in the clutches of a perverse and petty system, overseen by guards who demand utter obeisance, deference, and subjection.

They were quite obviously living beyond their means. The parents fought over money, and Miriam was envious of a sister whose own husband wound up quite well-to-do.

“A lot of nice things in the house,” Harvey’s friend Bill Brender remembers. “Filled with tchotchkes. Everything for show.”

There were chairs in the living room the boys weren't allowed to sit on. Miriam got her hair done once a week, an extravagance other mothers would forgo. She always wore heels, not the norm in those parts. The upstairs neighbors could smell her perfume. Miriam was a neat, petite powerhouse to Max's tragically guttered bowling ball.



Back of the line: Bob and Harvey Weinstein (far left) dance the conga at Bill Brender's Bar Mitzvah at Leonard's catering hall in Great Neck, Long Island, 1964.

Max made the boys pay her compliments.

But the family's fortunes yo-yoed as Max tried his hand at various businesses only to be finally beaten back to the same job he'd had at age 18: cutting diamonds.

“Max was a good man,” says Corky Burger, Harvey’s onetime concert-promotions partner. But also a slob or a schlep, depending on whom you ask, a bald version of Harvey who chain-smoked Camels. Max was gruff, “a tough Jewish guy who ran roughshod over everything,” recalls Dr. Joseph Takats, who later lived next door to Harvey for 10 years. “He kind of felt sorry for himself.”

On the one hand, he was the boys’ hero. On the other, he was a loser. (Or: treated that way by their mother.) They were not going to finish up like him.

By contrast, Miriam “had the kind of wonderful outgoing manner with people that Harvey uses to win over people like the Clintons,” Harvey’s long-ago marketing mentor Arthur Manson once told me. An honors student who graduated president of her Williamsburg class, Miriam had a surprising harsh side; her senior-yearbook quote was “Don’t scratch until you see the red of their cheeks.” She had a temper—but she insisted the gentler-souled, proverbial good cop Max be the disciplinarian. Max sometimes faked taking the belt to Harvey, having the boy wail in mock pain from behind a closed door.

Max worked six days a week, and on his one free day he’d take Bob and Harvey to the movies, more an excuse to chow down on popcorn and candy out of Miriam’s sight line and fall asleep. A classmate remembers Bob and Harvey as pretty tight with Max. “They just felt different than father and son—more friends and joking around.” Going to the movies was partly about getting away from Miriam. “Their mother was similar to

my mother,” says Bill Brender, “a very dominating individual because dad was never around.”

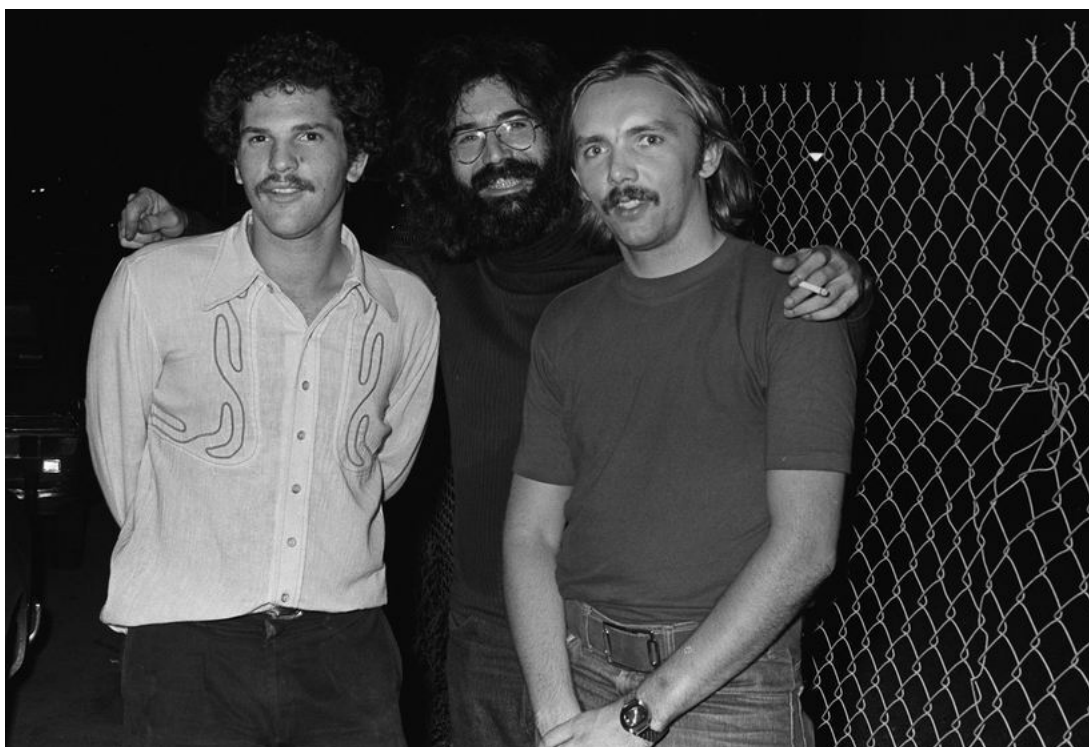
Miriam’s senior-yearbook quote was “Don’t scratch until you see the red of their cheeks.”

In an unreleased statement from December 2017, presumably intended for the media and prepared with the help of his sex-addiction counselor in Arizona, Harvey explains, “My mother always pushed my father to be successful. My father was not successful financially but a wonderful human being. He suffered from physical ailments and deep emotional distress.”

Harvey elaborates: “I was building an empire to please Mom.”

“It was the talk of the neighborhood that Max dropped dead on the front stoop,” neighbor Margaret Kelly told me. It was 1976. Harvey was 24 years old and Bob 21, and Miriam was now *their* responsibility. And they were alone in her gimlet glare. There was guilt. As if to give Max’s existence more heft, Harvey later told journalists that after serving in Cairo as a supply sergeant through the end of World War II, Max made his way to Palestine to support the Jewish state. (A noble gesture, cast in doubt by Max’s discharge from Fort Dix, in New Jersey, in 1946.) Max’s tombstone reads, “You were special,” which sounds like some kind of apology to a husband treated otherwise.

When the Philip Roth novel came out in 1969, Harvey began referring to his mother as “Mama Portnoy.” By all accounts, Miriam was a typical mah-jongg-playing, food-foisting Jewish smother mother. But: hard to please. As a young mother, she relentlessly compared her boys with all the other boys, and Harvey and Bob always came up short. “When they got an Oscar, it would be ‘So, where’s the next one?’” says Ivana Lowell, who worked at Miramax in the 1990s and dated Bob. “It was never quite good enough, whatever they did.”



Sometimes the light's all shinin' on me: Weinstein and his concert-promotions business partner, Corky Burger, with Jerry Garcia, 1973.

Recounting to me the story of how school chum Billy Brender almost took his eye out in a childhood accident, Harvey mentioned, with an edge in his voice, that “Brender is a doctor now, and his brothers. The three of them are doctors. Boy, Mom

would have loved him.”

In sixth grade, an I.Q. test enabled Harvey to skip a year and be placed in the bright-kid classes at John Bowne High School. Bob, an underachiever, didn't place out; back then, friends assumed he wasn't as sharp. Around this time, Bob was being roughhoused by Harvey, and both boys were being roughhoused by some local bully. (Through Harvey's spokesperson, Juda Engelmayer, Weinstein says brothers tend to get into fights once in a while, but his father always stressed the importance of looking out for Bob, too. Despite multiple attempts, Bob Weinstein could not be reached for comment.)

“I remember Harvey looking at his watch, joking, ‘I'm late for an appointment—I'm getting beat up by so-and-so at such and such a place,’” says a former middle-school classmate. “But he did it in a way that we all laughed.”

The boys around the Electchester were dominated by an Irish kid named Billy. With the help of his friend Bill Brender, Harvey finally organized and stood up to Irish Billy, which left Harvey the leader of their little gang. “Queens was not known for its etiquette,” says Brender. Despite having trounced the bully, Harvey still didn't get respect. In high school, girls giggled behind his back, making fun of his voice, his mannerisms. Deep acne dappled his face, and he was built big, and overweight. A guy who just “wasn't at ease with his body,” says a classmate, observing that a “certain amount of creepiness” explains why he regularly got turned down for dates. Still: “It wouldn't stop him from moving on to someone else.”

By the time he arrived at the University of Buffalo in 1969, Harvey had dropped the weight, stocking his refrigerator with soyburgers and Mason jars full of whitefish salad from his adored *bubbe* (Yiddish for “grandmother”), who, like their mother, lived in the projects. He set about building a business with his friend Corky Burger, as concert bookers for their school—a job that would get him notice and respect. As he would say ruefully, years later, “One of the only ways I could meet girls was to be on the music committee.”

“How else could Harvey Weinstein become a campus hero?” jeered *The Spectrum*, the student newspaper, when Harvey booked the Grateful Dead. (Harvey himself was a columnist for the paper, writing under the byline “J. Harvey Weinstein,” with its syllabic echoes of both J. Edgar Hoover and gossip columnist J. J. Hunsecker, from *Sweet Smell of Success*, a favorite movie of his. He shared a byline on a piece with Burger—which Burger has since disavowed—about a hustler sidling up to a woman at a bar, saying, “Look baby, I’m probably the best-looking, most exciting person you’ll ever want to meet—and if you refuse to dance with me, I’ll probably crack this bottle of Schmidt’s over your skull.”)

The two were in charge of “monstrous” amounts of money, according to a Buffalo business partner, Dr. Joe Takats, but were known for not paying promptly.

What with the draft ending in 1973, Harvey dropped out to book concerts full-time with Burger—as “Harvey & Corky”—at the Century, an undervalued X-rated-movie theater in town

they bought with Takats as a third partner and revamped as an event space. Brother Bob soon left the State University of New York at Fredonia to join them. Takats, an emergency-room doctor, was not just an investor; he also treated Harvey for severe cystic acne that was splashed across his back and chest and caused him grief well into his 20s. Visiting the Takats home, Harvey dubbed himself “the Gru” (short for “gruesome”), giving chase to the Takats children around the house. “It was all in good fun,” Takats says.



A 21-year-old Weinstein and O. J. Simpson at the “Aud,” in Buffalo, New York, 1973.

“[Harvey] was not an athletic guy, and he wasn’t Mr. Charisma,” Takats continues. Then he tells me a story about

how, shortly after Max died, Harvey was dating “a gorgeous young thing,” a woman named Debbie. She was the daughter of a Buffalo firefighter and a secretary who would train to become a massage therapist. Harvey took Debbie to the original Broadway run of *Chicago*. Harvey told her he’d make a movie of it one day. She scoffed at the dreams of the small-town concert promoter. Debbie left Harvey for “some guy who was the captain of the football team and the crown prince of the prom. Somebody like that.... It really hurt him. He was down and out for a while.”

As a rosebud, as an *inciting incident*, as a deep razor slash to the psyche, it seems a bit too easy. And Harvey got himself another girlfriend he stuck with even after he left Buffalo. But it’s the late 70s—after this traumatic breakup, after his father’s untimely death, and with his mother now focused exclusively on his and Bob’s success—that appear to be the starting gate to the sexual-assault allegations eventually strewn across the press. (Through his spokesperson, Harvey denied this characterization of his relationship with Debbie or that it was in any way an inciting incident.)

The Big Picture

([EDDY’s] arms tighten their grip around her. KAREN begins to panic.)

KAREN

Eddy! For Christ’s sake!

EDDY (*angry, still pressing hard*)

C'mon baby ... What did you come out here for?

—*From the third draft of The Burning, an original screenplay by Peter Lawrence, Tony Maylam, and Harvey Weinstein*

With competition flaring on Buffalo's events front, as well as with the connections in place for booking theaters, the brothers road-tripped to Cannes in the summer of 1980, coming home with some French and Hong Kong money and notions of cashing in on the slasher-movie trend. *The Burning* is a film based on a rudimentary script Harvey had ginned up that was based on the summer-camp legend of the Cropsey Maniac, a disfigured bogeyman who picks off summer-camp kids one by one using gardening shears. Harvey hired Peter Lawrence to juice the script and Tony Maylam to direct it.

In the film, Cropsey is a summer-camp caretaker accidentally torched by a group of young boys. After he emerges from the hospital, his first victim is a hooker, her face wrenched with fear and disgust the moment she catches a glimpse of his face. Cropsey then takes revenge against two girls who have separately humiliated a pair of date-rape-y teenage boys. In a twist on the "final girl" survivor trope, *The Burning* ends with a final *guy*—a bullied nerd voyeur, who gets called a "pervert" and is ridiculed when it is revealed he cannot swim.

On the last day of shooting *The Burning*, the cast and crew flung Harvey into the lake. Only to discover that he couldn't swim.

“Somebody had to go in there and save him. I probably didn’t help,” says Maylam, returning to the subject of Harvey’s still owing him money. “He is a bully. Always has been, always will be.” Maylam remembers especially how Harvey ordered Bob about like a servant.

**In high school, girls giggled
behind his back, making fun of
his voice, his mannerisms.**

“Back then,” says Lawrence, “Harvey was an arrogant, ignorant asshole, frankly. [And] Bob was kind of the passive-aggressive version of the same.”

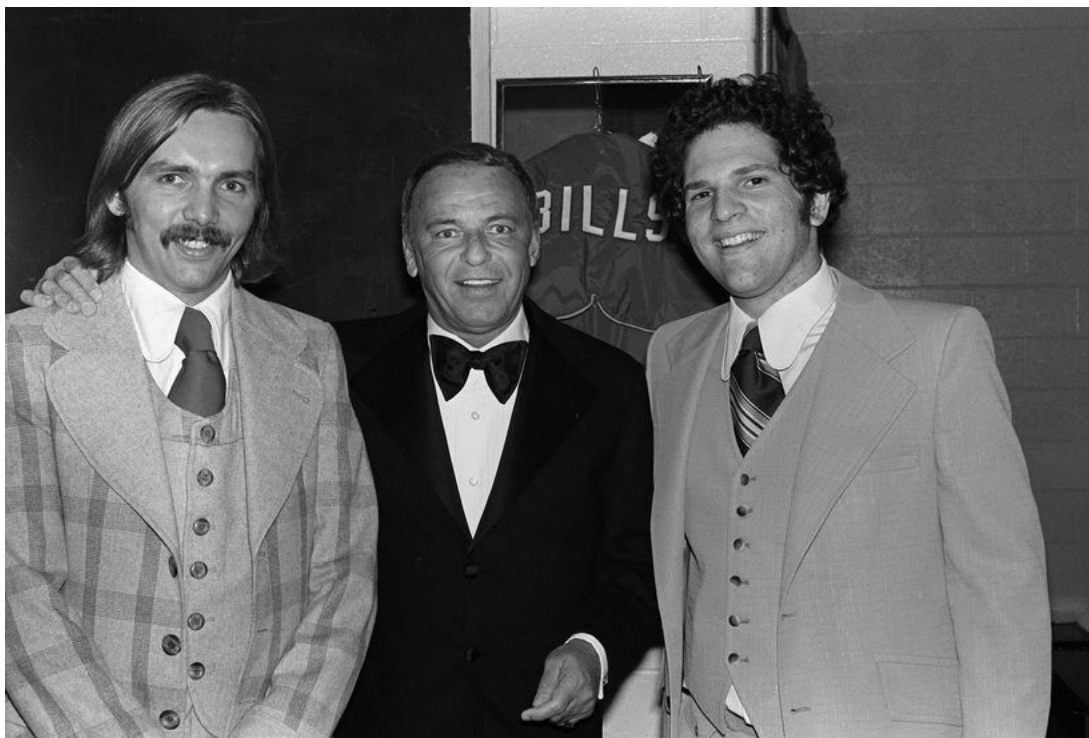
As kids, Harvey and Bob had had their own sleepaway-camp nightmare at Sullivan County’s Camp Wel-Met, a lakeside retreat for working-class families who couldn’t afford anything swankier. The Weinstein brothers were asked to leave early. (They were refusing to shower.) Attending camp, with its group showers and obligatory swimming—these are impossible activities for someone painfully self-conscious about his weight. Camp and its traumas were a Harvey obsession. When I interviewed him in 2005, he said he was reading Christopher Lehmann-Haupt’s summer-camp scream story, *The Mad Cook of Pymatuning*.

In 2020, court papers revealed that a prior bad-acts witness interviewed by prosecutors said that Harvey had threatened to

have him castrated with gardening shears.

Within a few years of launching, the company had such breakout indie films as *The Thin Blue Line* and *Sex, Lies, and Videotape*. Miramax became a place where everyone wanted to be, from established talent to those looking to break into the business. Across the decades, through the company's reincarnation as the Weinstein Company, any work for the brothers was seen as a hot credit. Malia Obama interned for late-period Harvey.

Harvey's alleged compulsion to expose himself in the shower not only to female job supplicants but staff is by now well documented. Unsurprisingly, there was considerable attrition on his desk. For years, fresh faces were funneled to his office by Force1 Entertainment, an employment agency specializing in what were internally referred to as "high profiles," media and entertainment bosses who could be highly demanding. Others landed in Harveywood more organically, via the résumé route. The hook was simple: play your cards right and you *could* end up like some of the other Harvey and Bob protégés: running such desirable departments as acquisitions or production. "Harvey's boot camp," as it was known, always comprised four assistants, each promised a promotion—*if* he or she survived.



My way: Weinstein (right) and Burger with Frank Sinatra in Buffalo, 1974.

Some barely made it a week. There were the rages, the impossible tasks. If you couldn't get someone on the phone for Harvey, he'd go down the line, pitting one assistant against another. And Harvey hated himself after any incident where he'd lost control, from referring to some female as a "cunt" in an interview (then phoning one editor in chief to try to get his colorful word choices excised) to getting up into people's faces, eyes beady. A 2018 lawsuit from New York State's attorney general alleges he thought nothing of addressing employees as "cunt" or "pussy." He was known to aggressively grab men by surprise and give them what he called "noogies."

Malia Obama interned for late-

period Harvey.

Says a former Miramax employee, “The way he operated was he’d be a total asshole about something and his way of dealing with it was to do something for somebody. You understand? This could be flowers. Or a huge thing from Barney Greengrass.”

Harvey went volcanic on an assistant who’d failed to get tickets for the Victoria’s Secret AmFAR pageant delivered to *Terminator* producer Andy Vajna. “He got up a couple inches from my face, spittle flying,” says the assistant. “He was like, ‘I’m gonna kill you.’ Vajna was like, “*Whoa, whoa, whoaaaa!*” Harvey made the assistant round up goodies for an “apology basket” and run it over to Vajna’s yacht. Fabrizio Lombardo, head of Miramax Italy, took the assistant aside and said, “He does this because he loves you,” the assistant remembers. “Which was the most fucked-up abusive thing you could possibly say.” (Through his spokesperson, Harvey says he “never went volcanic.”)

Small wonder that, at trip’s end during the Disney years, Harvey would tip his traveling assistant \$1,500 to \$2,500 cash.

“He was both ashamed but he kind of didn’t give a fuck at the same time,” says an ex-Miramax employee. “It was like there was some big Manichaeian struggle going on. You could see the demons fighting right in front of you in a very obvious way. It was kind of gripping to watch.”

“No one’s saying it, but I think he’s bipolar,” says one ex-assistant, whose sister is bipolar. Harvey seemed to never sleep, screening movies in the middle of the night. (“He stays up for three nights, and then he’ll sleep for a whole day,” former head of production Meryl Poster explained to me years ago.) Harvey speed-talked. (See: the Ambra Battilana Gutierrez hotel-hallway recording.) Harvey is diabetic; many bipolar people have Type 2 diabetes, as they tend to be overweight. He is certainly grandiose. (“I’m glad I’m the fucking sheriff of this shit-ass fucking town ...”) Excessively social? Prone to spending sprees? Check and check. His nickname at the festivals was “the Hungry Hippo.”

“Harvey was an arrogant, ignorant asshole, frankly. [And] Bob was kind of the passive-aggressive version of the same.”

Then there was Harvey’s hyper-sexuality. Assistants were routinely required to book flights and cars for many a perfectly willing female, depositing them at a Central Park South hotel on Harvey’s way home, back when he lived on Central Park West in the showfolks-y Brentmore.

The assistants did as they were told. “This is an actress who is choosing to have some kind of sexual relationship with Harvey in an effort to advance her career. Did that gross me out? Yes, it

did,” one ex-assistant told me. “Also, adults are allowed to make decisions.... These people appeared to be doing this with their eyes wide open.” (Their actual names would surprise you.)

Actors’ careers are athlete-short, and the right part can make all the difference. Successful actors and those whose careers had hit a speed bump would call Harvey’s office regularly. Some of Harvey’s success can be chalked up to good (or good enough) relationships with talent. He organized lavish gifts: a \$100,000 necklace for the birthday of an A-list actress who hasn’t peeped since the scandal broke, says the former assistant who arranged it.

Whom Harvey was sleeping with was the subject of much conjecture among some of the staff, who nicknamed the front-runners “Harvey’s Hookers.”

Small wonder reviews like these for the Weinstein Company drifted onto the Web site Glassdoor, a kind of Yelp for job seekers.

Pressure 24/7.

Everyone is a little scared of Harvey.

Assistants who became VPs overnight was too often.

Sexual harassment was the norm.

Land of Imaginary titles.

Some of the higher ups here are extremely volatile (to put it mildly).

Some employees ... tell you to avoid eye contact [with Harvey and Bob].

And then there were the hapless assistants who had to procure Harvey's meds, such as Caverject, for erectile dysfunction. Shortly after Christmas 1999, Harvey Weinstein was medevaced out of St. Barth's with what the company only ever allowed was a bacterial infection. At the time, Harvey blamed something he ate. But for years after, a tracheotomy scar from the scary, near-death experience was impossible to hide. He had been stricken with Fournier's gangrene, an acute infection of the genital region that diabetics and middle-aged men are prone to. Some patients need skin grafts to repair the affected area, while extreme cases can require an orchiectomy, the removal of the testicles. Deterioration of sexual function is another common side effect.

"My body has trauma. Vets tell me I have PTSD," Harvey wrote in his unreleased 2017 public statement, attempting to explain all he'd been through psychically, what lay behind his anger and sex addictions. Through a spokesperson, Harvey said he's had numerous operations and is "lucky to be alive."

All of which explains accuser Jessica Mann's first impression that Harvey was perhaps intersex, lacking testes (also corroborated by actress-model trial witness Lauren Young), and appeared to have scarring as if from burns in his nether region.

"They want to have it both ways. If he has a vagina, then he couldn't rape her, so it can't be both stories," says a spokesperson

for Harvey.

A paraplegic with no function from the waist down can get an erection with Caverject. But a peculiarity of this drug is that, once injected directly into the penis, it takes from 5 to 20 minutes to take effect and lasts only about an hour. All of which could account for the incredible dispatch with which Harvey is said to have approached some of the complainant women.

He had been stricken with Fournier's gangrene, an acute infection of the genital region.

In recent years, Harvey worked Europe's festival circuit accompanied by various actress-model assistants stationed in London, holed up in hotel suites the size of small apartments, rigged with a fax machine, extra phone lines, and so forth. Many meetings occurred in these rooms for privacy's sake. Says one major talent manager, "I guarantee you that, for everything that was inappropriate, there were a hundred appropriate things going on."

The boot-camp bible for Weinstein employees, passed from generation to generation, catalogued the preferred rooms. And if they weren't available? "We were expected to just make it happen," says an ex-assistant. "Never take no for an answer." That included getting somebody into Canada without a

passport. That included getting Mayor Giuliani's office to lift the barricades off some street so Harvey could use a more private entrance to an event.

The attorney general's lawsuit references a tier of payroll employees with desks in every company location known as Harvey's "roster," who had no apparent role other than to broker introductions to women. A London member of the roster was flown to New York City to school Harvey's assistants in "wearing skirts or dresses, looking feminine, showing more leg or a shoulder, wearing high heels, smelling 'good,' and introducing him to women."

Some would say of the phalanx of employees around him that Harvey created a caste of deputy bullies, much as the lawyers firing off letters for him were bullies by extension: "You would see them getting so abused that your heart would go out to them," says someone who worked with the company on its 2015 Broadway show, *Finding Neverland*. "But then, suddenly, they would be his loyal henchmen, yelling at somebody [on his behalf] or doing something underhanded. It always just felt like they were so complicit in their own misery."

Harvey created a caste of deputy bullies.

Like the female junior executive he had elevated to executive producer on his Broadway show but would dismiss at every

turn as she was starting to assert herself as a creative professional. At a marketing meeting with the P.R. firm O&M Co., brought in to promote *Finding Neverland*, Harvey was told Broadway talent doesn't usually get magazine covers. He lost it and started shoveling cookies into his face, his executive producer gently pushing less glyceemic fruit instead, while Harvey barked, "*I don't want any fruit! I want a cookie!*"

After the agency resigned from the account, she called to explain, "He's back on the sugar, and we can't get him off of it."

Granted, *Finding Neverland* was Harvey's first outing as the sole lead producer of a Broadway show. But he was consumed by the success of another notably aggressive and temperamental moviemaker who had theater down cold. "All Harvey talked about was Scott Rudin," says publicist Rick Miramontez. "Harvey wanted to *be* Scott Rudin. He would say, 'Scott Rudin would never do this.'" When he started a fight with *The New York Times* over whether the show should be reviewed in Boston, he'd say, "Even Scott Rudin's going to have to thank me for that." (Through his spokesperson, Harvey said he admires Rudin and calls him "one of the best producers on Broadway.")

Longtime senior female employees who worked for the company advised one executive to e-mail human resources every time something discomfiting went on with Harvey. "Nothing will happen, but save the e-mail. One day you might need it," she was told. She says she did that. A couple times. "But nothing ever happened. I suspect that H.R. saw the e-mail and deleted it or stuck it in my file. No one saw it."

No one ever imagined there would be a reckoning. And Harvey never imagined he'd be left wondering whether his own brother played a primal role.

Phoebe Eaton is an investigative journalist, playwright, and author of [In the Thrall of the Mountain King: The Secret History of El Chapo, the World's Most Notorious Narco](#)

The first in a three-part series. Read Part II [here](#) and Part III [here](#).

Illustration: Barbara Alper/Getty Images (art reference). Photos: Catherine McGann/Getty Images (with Miriam); courtesy of William Brender, M.D. (Bar Mitzvah); Mickey H. Osterreicher/Getty Images (with Garcia, Simpson, Sinatra)

THERE'S MORE



PALACE INTRIGUE

Is Meghan More Bully than Bullied?

BY STUART HERITAGE





What about Bob? Though Harvey often took center stage, his brother toiled offstage.

CRIME

The Making of a Predator, Part II

How Bob Weinstein played a primal role in Harvey's rise and—perhaps—fall



BY PHOEBE EATON
ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL DAVIS

JUNE 20, 2020

READING TIME: 12 MINUTES

[*Read in Italian*](#) ›

[*Read in French*](#) ›

In [Part I](#), Phoebe Eaton examined the drama behind Harvey and Bob Weinstein's childhood, and the frenetic early years as they broke into Hollywood. She also revealed Harvey's pattern of abuse—and the disfigurement of his genitalia. In Part II, she looks at how the noose tightened around Harvey, and why the brothers came into conflict. Read Part III [here](#).

Through the years, Bob and Harvey had grown apart. Bob, always the withdrawn, less social of the two, at first moved his office to another floor, then to a separate building. Their bickering was infamous. Bob's ex-girlfriend Ivana Lowell recalls that one of his offices had a hole in the wall, a reminder of that time he threw a telephone at Harvey. Yet the brothers remained united, feuding constantly but always locking arms when they needed to. As one former Miramax employee said, "Do Bob and Harvey go through periods of not talking? All the

time. But at the end of the day they're going to come back and fuck you instead of fucking each other.”

Bob needed Harvey to stay a success. It was Harvey who hopped the red-eye to rock around the clock on the white-whale yachts of Cannes, charming the buttoned-up bankers, Arab princes, eccentric directors, “living his life with the volume controls as up as you dare turn them,” as Anthony Minghella once told me. Quentin Tarantino would second this, telling me in 2005 that Harvey was “sooo much fun to hang out with.” Before the fall, that is.

Harvey put on a great show for investors. And then Bob would pass the hat.

But where Harvey projected his mother's frenetic sociability, Bob had inherited his father's brusque unease. In 2005, Bob was the most successful producer in Hollywood, from a cash-on-cash return perspective. A high-level studio executive recalls a meeting Bob blew with MGM's Kirk Kerkorian during this time, where he sat there “sweating, and his knee going up and down. Afterward, he said to me, ‘It was like you and Kirk and Harvey were speaking English and I was speaking Martian. I didn't even know what I was saying.’ When he's nervous, he babbles a bit.” (Bob says this is “not true.”)

Even the talent viewed Bob with not a little anxiety.

“He's fair the way an alligator is fair,” Billy Bob Thornton once told me. “If you're swimming across his pond, and you make it

to the other side, and you do something really cool to avoid him, he looks at you and goes, 'O.K., I didn't get you. Hats off.' But if you go out there and you're weak, and he eats ya, then he eats ya."



Side by side: Harvey, left, and Bob at the Miramax offices in New York City, 1989.

To preserve his own relationships, Harvey quite intentionally cast himself as the company good cop and Bob as the bad cop. "Harvey used Bob as the enforcer with [partner company] Disney," says a former high-level Disney executive. Which today Harvey denies. But there was a time when "Bob and Dick Cook [president of theatrical distribution at Disney] almost came to blows," according to the executive in whose office it happened. "They got up and pounded their chests together. Spit was literally flying all over my table." (Bob denies this account.)

Jeffrey Katzenberg has said he remembers rebuking only Bob for abusing his people. Inside Miramax, it was Bob who was blamed for the reopen clause that Disney's then C.E.O., Michael Eisner, inserted in their 2000 employment contract, and then exercised, allowing Disney to toss the Weinsteins from Miramax in 2005, two years early. Harvey told me of this period with Eisner that "Bob just went about his business, did his numbers, but personally their relationship was terrible. *Terrible! Horrible!* I mean, if possible, worse than mine." (Bob denies both that he was abusive toward Disney staffers and that his relationship with Eisner was horrible.)

For a very long time, Harvey considered Bob his in-house fixer. When I first interviewed Bob, in 2005, one of his concerns was to avoid "treading on Harvey's toes or being in competition." No matter their differences, Bob craved Harvey's approval and validation, signs Harvey "took [him] seriously," he would say. (Bob denies he craved Harvey's validation.)

For too long, Bob backed Harvey right or wrong. Producer Joe Simon remembers sitting down next to Harvey at a Miramax pre-Oscars dinner, "and then my date, a very pretty blonde girl, came over to sit with me, and Harvey leaned into me and, spitting in my face, said, 'Don't you ever, *ever* have a girl like that sitting here with my wife in the room again.'"

Harvey turned back to the table, reverting to being perfectly charming. It was then that Bob, who had been all the way across the room, cornered Simon "and absolutely rips into me. How dare I have that girl with his wife sitting there?" (Bob says

Simon's account is "not true"; Harvey calls it "complete bullshit.")

It was Bob who was blamed for the reopen clause Disney's then C.E.O., Michael Eisner, inserted in their 2000 employment contract, and then exercised, allowing Disney to toss the Weinsteins.

Bob now likes to call Harvey the bully, but the truth is Bob was a supersize bully, too. Losing it if the elevator didn't come fast enough, screaming "Fuck this" and "Fuck that." (Bob denies this account.)

It was Bob's job to walk back the three-picture deals Harvey dangled to actresses. Dawn Dunning testified that when "open robe" Harvey lured her to his hotel room in 2004, he offered an even trade: a three-picture deal for a threesome with him and an assistant. In flight from Harvey's hotel bathroom, actress-screenwriter Louissette Geiss remembers his saying he'd introduce her to Bob for that three-picture deal and a greenlighted script.

"Bob was always having to, at times, backpedal because Harvey would just offer people, like, Oh, I'll give her a three-picture

deal,” says Ivana Lowell. “Bob would always have to pick up after Harvey’s mess.” (Bob says this is “not true.”)

But in the fall of 2017, after years of media visiting and revisiting the rumors then folding like cheap tents when Harvey’s lawyers rang up, *The New York Times* was slipped an internal company memo authored by a junior production executive named Lauren O’Connor taking measure of Harvey’s alleged harassments. Two officials with the company also confirmed that at least eight payments had been made to settle harassment and unsolicited-physical-contact complaints brought against Harvey. More than 100 women would eventually accuse him of a range of sexual-abuse offenses.

Cain and Enabler

For more than a year, the board had seriously discussed splitting the company between the two. But no one could generate a viable blueprint. Or maybe one wasn’t genuinely desired: “Bob and Harvey have a deep emotional attachment to each other,” says a source close to the brothers. “They don’t know how to exist if they’re not in conflict.”

“I had a fight with my brother,” Harvey told the court before sentencing as he explained that he, too, is a victim.

That July, Ronan Farrow’s story on Harvey was gearing up to run on NBC. Until it wasn’t, Harvey reportedly exercising his influence, Farrow frantically trying to save the segment, shoring it up with more sources. Several months later, with Harvey in

the pincers of *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*, the head of human resources told Harvey that, on July 21, the Weinstein Company C.O.O., David Glasser, told him to overnight Harvey's personnel file to him in Los Angeles—along with a damning Lauren O'Connor memo from November 2015 that contained allegations of inappropriately sexualized workplace conduct, withdrawn for a settlement. (In his book, Farrow mentions being after O'Connor in the summer. That he has related "documents.")

Based in Los Angeles, Glasser was generally out of Harvey's sight line—same as Bob, human resources, and executive vice president of accounting and financial reporting Irwin Reiter; their offices were on the same floor of a different Tribeca building. And Glasser and Reiter are joined together in the hatred of Harvey. A serious poker player enrolled in law school, Reiter was generally only on the premises three days a week, but still pulling \$300,000 a year. In certain precincts of the fourth floor inside 99 Hudson, Harvey was referred to as *El Grande Fatso*. Meanwhile, the fast-talking Glasser, who is short of stature but long on charisma, was jokingly referred to as *El Chapo* by some of the old board members.

Among this bunch, alliances were constantly shifting, right up through the final bankruptcy. A company insider compares this crew to "a circular firing squad." There was a persistent feeling that *kompromat* drove the place, the blackmail culture starting at the top with Harvey himself as he tried to amass information on employees and board members. And that employees with leverage on *him* parlayed their dirt into perks and promotions.

“The guys were so dysfunctional individually there are not enough psychiatrists in New York to figure out the whole dynamic,” says a source close to the board.

Harvey believes David and Bob were somehow involved in “Round One, the devastating round,” he says via a spokesperson from the phone room at Wende Correctional Facility, outside Buffalo, New York. According to a source close to Harvey, he believes they weren’t intending to crash the company, but “they thought they would just embarrass the shit out of Harvey. And he would resign. Ronan was supposed to be the first one out with this.” (Bob says this is untrue, and attempts to reach David Glasser on this question were unsuccessful.)

Is it coincidence that, just as it became clear to Farrow that *The New Yorker* had decided to let *The New York Times* lead the way, Reiter began meeting with the *Times*? At first he was purposefully vague, dispensing only the initials of accusers, according to Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey’s book *She Said*. Finally, he turned over the Lauren O’Connor memo to the *Times* team, the piece it deemed critical to making the case for abuse.

With Harvey deposed, Bob told *The Hollywood Reporter* he had a quote-unquote plan. “Me and David Glasser and the board members have an idea of what we’d like to do ... ”

“No way Bob was the ringleader,” says someone who participated in an internal inquiry. “Bob would know better.” It is true that Glasser and Reiter were in the habit of e-mailing

themselves company documents, which was noted when the company made a forensic review of company servers after Harvey was axed. "It was to protect themselves," says a source close to both men, who are aware that companies firing people immediately shut down e-mail accounts. (Reiter didn't respond to requests for comment.) And Harvey knew Reiter and Bob were close, and that Bob was a protector of Reiter's.

"The guys were so dysfunctional individually there are not enough psychiatrists in New York to figure out the whole dynamic," says a source close to the board.

In the revise of the company, it wound up in the press that Bob would cede the role of C.E.O. to Glasser, who had helped build the lucrative television division and put together many of the firm's deals. But the ambitious Glasser was soon shoved out of the way himself.

Harvey admits via a spokesperson that, in 2017, the studio was "on the brink," financially. Not that he didn't contribute to the problem. His own spending was jaw-dropping: \$3 to \$6 million a year for travel; \$200,000 to \$300,000 at the Cannes Film Festival for suites at *both* the Hotel du Cap and the Majestic, according to a company insider.

So there was a cash crunch, but a bankruptcy filing shows Glasser taking “advances on bonuses,” eight new such advances amounting to more than \$600,000 in the run-up to the scandal—four in the month of September alone (that an internal e-mail from September 27, 2017, indicated he was owed). And all right before scandal swamped the place, with Farrow now relocated to a receptive *New Yorker* magazine, where he was preparing the second wave, an ever expanding portfolio of assault accusations which had grown to include rape.

By early September, Bob was shearing the price of his for-sale Greenwich manse by 32 percent, and *Variety* had featured an item on the “baronial duplex” in Central Park West’s Beresford that he was suddenly floating onto the market for \$29.5 million. Looking to get liquid. From August 2017 through mid-February 2018 (just before the failed sale of the studio), a court filing shows, Bob requested and was repaid more than \$2.2 million in personal loans and advances to the company. This is what’s called a “preference” in payback—the stuff of creditor lawsuits in bankruptcy court, though none is filed.

While perhaps well intentioned, Bob put himself in a potentially conflicted position by lending money to a company in distress, a company where he was now simultaneously a creditor, co-chairman, co-C.E.O., and, along with his brother, the largest shareholder.

Facing bankruptcy in February 2018, the company failed to sell to a group backed by supermarket mogul and Harvey friend Ron Burkle after Bob and what remained of the board fired

Glasser, a Burkle favorite. (Bob telephoning prospective buyer Burkle during the Christmas holidays to curse him out over some deal terms certainly didn't help matters, say two company insiders. Neither did the meeting in Burkle's Soho Beach House suite in Miami, when Burkle dismissed Bob's \$32 million price to exit the company. Bob shouted, "Fuck you! I'll blow the place up! I'll burn the place down!" says a witness. Bob denies saying any of this.)

And Bob wouldn't go quietly or cheaply. A state attorney general's lawsuit and subsequent press conference questioned Glasser's fitness, saying he knew of complaints in the main. And Bob was in New York actively meeting with the attorney general to try to make this sale happen. Though not himself named in the suit, Glasser was terminated two days after the attorney general's press conference where he was referred to by name "for cause"—which never is publicly released. The company tumbled into bankruptcy, investors suffered staggering losses, and Russian billionaire Len Blavatnik ultimately lost \$45 million on a loan he'd extended to Harvey.



Hollywood sure is fun: Bob and Harvey at the premiere of their film *Dogma*, 1999.

In a rambling phone interview with *The Hollywood Reporter* shortly after the scandal broke, Bob referred to himself as a “victim,” citing Harvey’s verbal and physical abuse over the years and admitting his own longtime cowardice: “This is the nature of that whole syndrome.... I had to divorce myself to survive.” As to his own anger issues, Bob said he’d “done enough work.” He’d joined A.A. Lost weight. Says a former employee, “He got his shit together and then got really tired of this.”

He also claimed he and Harvey had not spoken in five years. That is, except for three years earlier, in 2015, when Bob told *The Hollywood Reporter* they *were* talking. That particular story ran on the eve of a billion-dollar deal with ITV, the British broadcaster looking to buy their TV unit and needful of

reassurance, a deal Harvey scuttled the following month when he made the papers in a sting operation police put together with Italian underwear model Ambra Battilana Gutierrez, who was alleging he'd grabbed her breast in a prior meeting (and captured him on tape admitting as much). A lot of people were livid, including Bob and Glasser, first and foremost.

All in the Family

But when it came to women, Bob's own record was secretly problematic, something that remained undetected through Harvey's public meltdown.

Court papers allege that, in September 1992, Bob "choked and kicked" his then wife, Vickie, with whom he was in the throes of a nasty divorce. A letter from Vickie's lawyer, Jacalyn Barnett, to Bob's lawyer, Stanford Lotwin, references a petition that went to Nassau Family Court telling the grim tale of their seven-year-old daughter, Nicole, having to peel Bob off Vickie as their 12-year-old, Sarah, called police "during an altercation about the children." (Bob says this account is inaccurate.)

In exchange for his wife's relinquishing her right to a related trial, Bob was meant to confess to this behavior in front of the judge, as per a deal negotiated by their lawyers, states the October 21, 1992, letter. Barnett went on to complain that Bob failed to honor this agreement, choosing only to "halfheartedly" state that he "shoved his wife down on the couch to prevent her from calling the police." (Bob denies that he failed to honor the agreement.) The very day of Barnett's letter to Lotwin, the

judge signed an order of protection instructing Bob to stay away from Vickie “at her residence or wherever she may be” and also “abstain from disorderly conduct, harassment, menacing, reckless endangerment, assault, or attempted assault” against her. Children were to be picked up and returned curbside for visits.

Initially, Bob had offered Vickie a \$750,000 settlement. The final figure was \$15 million. As Bob was a Disney employee by the time of the 1994 divorce decree, he was terrified he might lose his job if details of his alleged abuse were ever aired, and so he worked a \$1 million penalty for tattling into this final agreement. It's possible Bob's abiding fear of this hitherto unreported event coming to light explains why he told the *New York Times* reporter Megan Twohey that, during this divorce, he began to drink himself to sleep every night.



Foreground and background: Harvey and Bob in 2002.

The incident is also quite possibly what Harvey is alluding to when, as Ronan Farrow reports in his book *Catch and Kill*, Harvey shouted back at Bob in a board-meeting phone call just after the *Times* story broke, “We’re gonna open up the books on you!”

Bob, in his way, was as sly as his brother at manipulating the press. In 2012, Bob’s second wife, Annie Clayton, described by her former intern, Rachel Pine, as “a guileless, Snow White kind of person,” filed for divorce. Only Bob, a day earlier, got out ahead of the story with an item in the *New York Post* saying he’d had to orchestrate an intervention for Annie over her drinking.

Annie had been seeking an order of protection, reportedly saying she feared bodily harm. There was a quick settlement. Bob also handed Annie’s parents a house he’d bought them.

Harvey and Bob sought to cultivate the mothers of whomever they were seeing. Lady Caroline Blackwood, the mother of Miramax Books’ Ivana Lowell, was famously a drinker and would say what she thought. And Lady Blackwood thought Ivana was too good for Bob. And told him so. “He hung up the phone and was furious with me,” says Lowell. But it was Bob who put her mother up in the Mayfair hotel when she was dying. “Bob was actually in the room when she died,” says Lowell, again noting Bob’s generosity.

Bob, says Lowell, couldn’t have been more different from Harvey. Bob was less impressed by big names. “I mean, I was in

London and mentioned I was on my way to dinner with the Queen Mother,” Lowell remembers, “and he said, ‘Oh, that’s funny because I’m having dinner with my mother from Queens.’”

Still, it was Harvey who was the confirmed Anglophile. It would be a British girlfriend rising above the pack who would ultimately become the second Mrs. Weinstein.

Phoebe Eaton is an investigative journalist, playwright, and the author of [In the Thrall of the Mountain King: the Secret History of El Chapo, the World's Most Notorious Narco](#)

The second in a three-part series. Read Part I [here](#). In [Part III](#), Eaton explores Harvey’s unlikely marriage to Georgina Chapman, and his desperate bid to avoid prosecution.

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THERE'S MORE



Curtains.

CRIME

The Making of a Predator, Part III

Just why did Georgina Chapman marry Harvey? And what did she get out of it?



BY PHOEBE EATON
ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL DAVIS

JUNE 27, 2020

READING TIME: 12 MINUTES

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“It can be very scary to stand up to bullies.”

—Georgina Chapman, in her 2012 anti-bullying public-service announcement

The Other Woman

Anybody in the vicinity of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Weinstein at the 2003 Oscars knew his wife, Eve, was in a foul mood. By then, Harvey’s interest in Georgina Chapman was a loosely held secret. Nobody is entirely sure how they met. “He’s friends with her mom” was how people were instructed to explain sightings of Harvey with the Ingres-shouldered ex-model he called “George.”

Harvey had been talking to Jackie Chan in the spring of 2002 about a potential Miramax channel when Georgina turned up on-screen as a buxom saloon girl Owen Wilson picks up in Chan’s *Shanghai Knights*. The following year, Georgina, then 26,

was cast in a number of films where Harvey was in talks with directors. As Darcy's New York girlfriend in Bollywood's *Bride & Prejudice*, Chapman wound up entirely dubbed, not nearly as convincing an American as her boyfriend Harvey, pacing with a cell phone in a cameo in the credits. To the excitement of the film's producers, he'd bought the U.S. distribution rights, then wound up funding the movie.

The next year (and, indeed, the next), Georgina found a number of roles as hookers or molls, including a dizzy tart decanted from a car for slam-around sex with Bob Hoskins in Luc Besson's *Unleashed*. Then came a bigger, better part in a gangster feature called *The Business*. In his 2013 memoir, *The Films of Danny Dyer*, Georgina's co-star said that Harvey had picked up the U.S. distribution rights via a company he bought into just after the film's release.

Georgina was so nervous at the 2004 audition that her eye was twitching, Dyer remembers, declaring Harvey was obsessed with her: "He flew fucking sushi over from France for her!" Harvey showed up on set for Dyer and Chapman's one sex scene, with such purring dialogue as "I'm gonna fuck you so good you're gonna be buying me diamonds from Cartier by the morning."

Small wonder Georgina soon ditched acting. Not that she didn't have talent, but as Harvey explained to me after yet another turn for Georgina as a hooker, in *Derailed*, "She's not really an actress. She kind of likes to act."



Very distinguished: Weinstein with his mother, Miriam, left, and his then wife, Eve, in January 2001 at the French Embassy in New York, where he received the Order of Arts and Letters.

In March 2004, the mistress and her partner, Keren Craig, incorporated a company in Britain just as a separate Westport home was being eyed for Harvey's wife, Eve. By July, the Weinsteins' split was being announced in the *New York Post*, the impending divorce blamed on his being "married to his work."

As that paperwork was being finalized in New York in December, paperwork in the U.K. formally announced the name of Chapman and Craig's new company: Marchesa.

Because of Georgina, Harvey was now turning up all over London, at *every* party, losing his luster, strolling through Claridge's restaurant on his cell phone, absentmindedly picking at the leftovers on a recently vacated table. He'd stocked a lot of his creative stable there: Anthony Minghella, Stephen Frears, John Madden; it's why he was named a Commander of the British Empire in 2004. In and out of her boyfriend's London office, Georgina acquired the nickname "Madame Mao," says a former Miramax employee who dealt constantly with the London staff. (Her diva ways, people said.)

A middle-class girl whose father is a self-made millionaire and who had some money lavished on an art-school education, Georgina has said she financed college by waitressing, ski-sharpening, and working as a coat-check girl before graduating to some minor modeling. Yet when I wrote about Harvey and Bob in 2005, Harvey was intent she be portrayed as some kind of heiress, even though her father was a small-businessman who had grown up on a council estate (public housing) and found some success with a fair-trade-coffee label. Georgina's mother was a late-in-life film-set runner now being thrown Weinstein Company gigs.

Because Harvey assumed that everybody else assumed Georgina was a gold digger, he would paint her as independently wealthy to anyone who would listen, telling me, "This is a girl who grew up with money and has wealth and whatever, for her own stupid reasons, likes me."

Georgina acquired the nickname “Madame Mao.”

Georgina would talk about how she grew up in a very successful family, “but she never expected anything to just be handed to her and that she was going to have to build something on her own,” recalls a former Weinstein Company employee.

Harvey underwent a kind of makeover for Georgina, losing weight. At Cipriani Downtown, Georgina would be whispering over a chicken curry, “Do you know how fattening that is? You can’t eat that. You told me you weren’t going to eat that.”

The plate would go to someone else.

Effectively running his girlfriend’s high-fashion business didn’t stop Harvey from trying to seduce another actress, who reports that he flashed her Georgina’s headshot, proclaiming Georgina a classic beauty and this woman a quirky beauty. “Like he was trying to put me into competition,” she told me. (“Being manipulative is not a crime,” says a spokesperson for Harvey Weinstein.) And being with this young lady was making him question his relationship with Georgina, he said. To hear Harvey effuse over Georgina, one might imagine he’d abandoned the playing field. But several incidents banging around in the press and in lawsuits date from this going-steady period.

For Better or for Worse ...

When Harvey and Bob started the Weinstein Company, in 2005, corporate setup explicitly forbade Harvey from any “side deals.” But Marchesa was exactly that, a side deal. Through a spokesperson, Harvey calls this a “personal investment,” while a source close to the board says this was meant to be a “passive financial interest.” Yet it was Harvey who would personally will Marchesa into success. Harvey himself made the initial deal with Neiman Marcus to get the first season’s nine or so dresses into Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman stores, says a source close to the deal. He also worked one of his other gears, calling writers to quash bad reviews when an ill-considered harem number imposed on Diane Kruger for the Golden Globes was on the verge of being booed. (“That’s what a protective husband does, and he was protecting his wife’s brand,” says a spokesperson for Harvey Weinstein.)



Don't look back: Weinstein and Georgina Chapman at Cannes in 2016.

Partner Keren Craig designed the fabrics and Georgina the clothes. Georgina has “magic hands,” insists Mary Ann Wheaton, Marchesa’s interim C.E.O. until Harvey was instrumental in crowning Georgina’s younger brother, Edward, a Weinstein Company gofer, with the title. (He had no prior retail experience, according to his LinkedIn profile.) But it was

clear who was in charge. At one point in the early days, a roomful of people, including Georgina, watched helplessly as Harvey laid into Edward, who was quietly taking notes: “What the fuck are you writing down? Are you insane? Are you writing a book?” It was as if the *omertà* dynamic Harvey enjoyed with his brother, Bob, was now replicating itself with the Chapman siblings, when, in 2012, Edward reportedly broke down a door and allegedly choked a girlfriend who later claimed it was a misunderstanding. Harvey was irritated by the scandal, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*; a settlement was made and an N.D.A. signed. (Edward did not reply when asked for comment through his spokesperson.) “The brother is unimpressive,” says someone who knows him.

Harvey underwent a kind of makeover for Georgina, losing weight. At Cipriani Downtown, Georgina would be whispering over a chicken curry, “Do you know how fattening that is? You can’t eat that.”

None of these displays of control put Georgina off marrying Harvey in December 2007, at his Westport estate; her flower girls were the two daughters Rupert Murdoch had with his then wife, Wendi Deng. The touring company of *Chicago* performed. Harvey had picked another *shiksa*. (“Like so many men, because the mothers were so overpowering and belittling,”

remarks someone who has observed the couple at close range.) It wasn't long before Harvey was bugging Bob's ex-girlfriend Ivana Lowell to get Georgina painted by Lucian Freud, who had once been married to Lowell's mother, even though Freud tended toward subjects looking more like Harvey.

At pains to depict himself as a "little minor investor," Harvey funded the entire operation for some time. He was now (impossibly) being lionized in the pages of *Women's Wear Daily*. His other efforts to also develop Halston and the Charles James label failed loudly, the trademark owner of the latter telling the *Daily News* that dealing with Harvey was like "being in a mob movie."

If it was like a mob movie, it's because Harvey used his muscle. In 2013, brand consultant Tina Bolland was working with one of China's biggest actresses, who was going to the Oscars and had already picked a dress, when the phone rang up in the room.

Weinstein. Down in the lobby. For Bolland it was a WTF moment.

Bolland remembers him barreling in. "I said, 'What are *you* doing here, Harvey?'" (Later, back at the office, Harvey would shout, "*Give me everything we have on her!*" his assistant would tell Bolland.)

Naturally Harvey wanted the star in Marchesa. A single suitable dress was understood to be in China. Harvey asked Bolland to step outside, where he got up in her face, saying, "*There's going to be a plane leaving this fucking country in half an hour. It's going to pick up that fucking dress, and you're going to get*

the dress on her. Get the fucking job done!"

“And if I don’t?,” Bolland asked.

“You will never work in Hollywood again.”

And the star wants to work with Weinstein. Because Weinstein has *also* promised a script at her door Monday morning. And Weinstein delivers. Because she wears his dress, the woman gets the part in this major studio film Weinstein was neither producing nor distributing. Through a spokesperson, Harvey denies this exchange ever took place, calling Bolland “just a stylist” and referencing a deal the star had with Marchesa, though Bolland says they’d had no prior contact.

Madonna was wearing Marchesa. Michelle Obama was wearing Marchesa. And soon: Kate Middleton was wearing Marchesa. Harvey would aw-shucks it with the stars, Bolland recalls: “I’m only doing this because I want my wife to be happy. She’s an amazing woman. Look at these amazing gowns.”

Running his girlfriend’s high-fashion business didn’t stop Harvey from trying to seduce one actress, who reports that he flashed her Georgina’s headshot. “Like he was trying to put me into competition.”

He and Georgina were soon living in a West Village brownstone populated with Zen Buddha heads (so much wishful thinking) and a Chinese emperor and favorite consort gazing down from over the sofa. There were what appeared to be his and hers bedrooms, one bathroom sporting a supersize shower and a William Howard Taft–proportioned tub. Soon two children were added to Harvey’s existing three from first wife Eve, the extended brood now turning up during the winter in Gstaad, where Harvey, the non-skier, hoped to seduce free-spending Saudi princes and assorted oligarchs, turning up for lunch at the Eagle Club fashionably attired in a T-shirt.

Society writer Taki Theodoracopulos, an unlikely après-ski friend of Harvey’s, admits finding Georgina “rather cold and imperious.” Or was it a terrified silence? A defensive regality dating from her days as Harvey’s mistress? Some believed they detected a genuine sadness as they watched her be swept along.



Snakeskins: Weinstein and the editor of American *Vogue* at a Marchesa show in 2017. After he was accused of sex crimes, she published a profile of Georgina Chapman in which Chapman said she knew nothing of her husband's criminal behavior.

On Ron Burkle's Boeing 757, en route to Boston to see a tryout of Harvey's musical *Finding Neverland*, Broadway folk accompanying Harvey and Georgina weren't just scandalized to discover they were flying in Burkle's fabled "Air Fuck One." Or: that the woman they'd assumed was Burkle's daughter turned out to be his girlfriend.

No, it was Georgina's reaction when Harvey started in on a female Weinstein Company executive over an e-mail that had

gone out lacking a critical attachment. Impassive. As if it weren't happening. Harvey had started a fight with *The New York Times* over whether *Finding Neverland* should be reviewed in Boston. "Even Scott Rudin's going to have to thank me for that," he was saying as he impulsively shot out an e-mail to his stable of A-listers asking for them to support him—but with nothing appended for their signature. When the stars e-mailed back, mystified as to the whereabouts of any kind of letter or petition, his executive caught hell intermittently over several hours: "Didn't you even graduate from elementary school? What a fucking moron you are!" (Harvey's spokesperson had no comment on the incident.)

"You'd never even catch a dirty look on her face. She just ignored it," says a witness, explaining that it was always like that with Georgina. ("But you never saw him yell at *her*," recalls an employee who was often in their ambit.)

**Madonna was wearing
Marchesa. Michelle Obama was
wearing Marchesa. And soon:
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Marchesa.**

Knowing he was a bully, concerned the stink of sexual impropriety surrounded him, the occasional journalist making inquiries, Harvey laid hands on two documentaries related to these subjects and made a big noise distributing them. He got a bounce from New York governor Andrew Cuomo, who

screened *The Hunting Ground* repeatedly throughout 2015 in support of legislation keyed to campus sexual assault. Harvey also saw to it that 2011's *Bully* was screened at the White House even as he was noisily bullying the M.P.A.A. into giving it a PG-13 rating. *Time* magazine cited his "vehement support" of the movie when, in 2012, they named him one of the world's most influential people.

Wife Georgina recorded an anti-bullying public-service announcement posted that spring on YouTube. Georgina would Instagram about bullying, now her special cause, even as she sat stone silent, as silent as Silent Bob, when she was partnered in life and in business with someone who will go down in history as one of the biggest bullies of all time.

But privately, afterwards, gestures were made to deodorize the bad juju, says a former Weinstein Company employee:

"Georgina would take me aside and give me rides places. Ask how I'm doing. Treat you like a human being after he just eviscerated you and ask questions about your life and where you grew up. It was almost everything in that moment."

"Georgina seemed like a private person, and she kept her dignity in situations where Harvey often talked down to her in a demeaning way in front of his staff, which felt pretty embarrassing and humiliating to her," says a source close to the family. "Harvey would be berating a staff member like me, and Georgina would step in to defend the person being attacked. She'd say, 'You can't talk to people like that.' It would have an effect."

"I had what I thought was a very happy marriage. I loved my

life,” Georgina later told *Vogue*, denying she ever suspected anything, while allowing that Harvey traveled constantly. But in two drafts of Harvey’s unreleased statement from December 2017, defining what ails him as both sex and anger addictions, he wrote, “Both my wives stood by me and helped me through my sickness.” (Attempts to reach Harvey’s first wife were unsuccessful.)

“Prior to the public disclosure by the media in 2017, Georgina was unaware of any issue regarding sexual abuse of other women or his sex addiction,” says a spokesperson for Chapman. “It is offensive to ask or suggest otherwise. When articles in the press revealed issues of sexual abuse by Harvey of women, she promptly started divorce proceedings.”

“Georgina fought really hard to get Harvey into therapy to address his anger issues, and his issues with food, which were all connected,” says a source close to Georgina. “It’s also worth saying that Georgina was in no way exempt from Harvey’s rage.”

In the end, it seemed that Harvey and Georgina were so eager to protect Marchesa from the scandal’s radioactive spillage that, just three months after the initial flash flood of accusations, they announced that an eight-figure divorce settlement was already “inked”—this before liquidations of property and knowing the ultimate fate of the film studio (bankruptcy).

Today the label abides, albeit with a far lower profile, still in Bergdorf Goodman, Georgina having removed herself and the children to Bedford Hills. She is reportedly seeing actor Adrien Brody. Keren Craig resigned last June.

Back when Harvey and Georgina were dating, something in my conversation with him got him rolling on *The Americanization of Emily*—a movie he now helpfully synopsisized for me: “James Garner is a World War II cat, and Julie Andrews is an uptight, priggish Englishwoman. Finally he says, *I’m sick of your pedantic bullshit*, and she falls for him.”

But not before Julie Andrews chides this workplace ass-slapper of a suitor: “Don’t show me how profitable it will be to fall in love with you.”

Weinstein Agonistes

“I’m innocent. I’m innocent. How can this happen in America?”

—Harvey Weinstein, found guilty of third-degree rape and a criminal sexual act, February 24, 2020

After the thumbs-down verdict, Harvey passed the time whipping through a biography of the highest-profile persevering bipolar in history, Winston Churchill. In the years that passed between the scandal and the trial, Harvey’s daily phoners with a female therapist had him copping to the things he’d do that weren’t O.K. A mindfulness came. He learned how to just be there as the father of his two young children without multi-tasking, creating elaborately themed family nights and trivia games. His three elder daughters refuse to speak to him still. He tries to be in touch regardless, no-pressure messaging on birthdays. In the medical unit, he receives counseling. He’s trying his hand at writing screenplays. (Not about this experience, however.)

Beset by health issues, he’s been getting shots in his eyes, to

stop him from losing his sight like his father. He's had a stent put in to open his heart. He's being kept in semi-isolation in a prison-infirmiry dormitory, the correctional facility's union maintaining he'd caught the coronavirus, then keeping him there. They want to keep him from harming others and keep others from harming him. The examples of Jeffrey Epstein and Whitey Bulger are nothing anyone wants to see replayed.

But the fight's still in him. He's filing an appeal, hoping to see that 23 years whittled to something more bearable, if not completely reversed. And once the pandemic winds down, he'll be attending to those rape charges in Los Angeles from two separate women on two consecutive evenings. A flotilla of civil suits.

Ensconced for a spell in sex-addiction rehab, Harvey informed Bob he was not to call him—that they were officially no longer on speaking terms (again). Bob ranted over e-mail that his brother had “disgraced the name Weinstein.” The company was besieged by lawsuits; there would be no buyers. But there *would* be bankruptcy. Just as their father had suffered before them.

Harvey once told me there were two movies he keeps coming back to: *Singin' in the Rain*, which was supposed to be his next big Broadway show, and the *noir* thriller *Double Indemnity*. At the end of *Double Indemnity*, smooth-talking salesman Walter Neff sits with a bullet wound in his shoulder, confessing the tangled cover-up, the silencing of dames that got him in this jam. Neff didn't get away with it, and neither, in the end, did Harvey Weinstein.

Thrall of the Mountain King: the Secret History of El Chapo, the World's
Most Notorious Narco

The third in a three-part series. Read Part I [here](#) and Part II [here](#).
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Smiling

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