

"THE CEO'S WIFE"

This excerpt begins on Page 14 of the script.

INT. POOLSIDE - DAY

Jazz plays on a boom box. Despite brisk and breezy November weather, Hilary is decked out on a lawn chair in a one-piece bathing suit. Over that is a terry-cloth bathrobe with the insignia of a luxury hotel. She reads a *Land's End* catalog between sips of her banana daiquiri.

Still dressed as we last saw her, Arlene lies prone on the diving board, a bottle of Heineken balanced on her stomach. Her head hangs over the edge.

Hilary struggles to extract a pen from her robe.

HILARY

Damn it, these pockets are like Hobbit burrows. Arlene, the food will be here any minute.

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) Jeez, it'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 fills out the order form for *Land's End*.

ARLENE

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

SECURITY OFFICE

Sergey finishes his phone call and motions his subordinates
to join him.

POOL

The housekeeper, LOURDES, brings lunch. Arlene is so
hungry she springs off the diving board and over to the
table before Hilary has even closed her catalog. Hilary
adjourns to the meal in a more dignified manner.

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.

Lourdes reaches for the plates.

ARLENE

I'll keep mine.

HILARY

No, take them both.
(She wrestles away Arlene's
plate.) And tell Cook if he can't
follow my instructions, he doesn't
have to worry about dinner.

Lourdes withdraws.

ARLENE

Jesus, Hilary, what do I care about garlic fries? I'm starving here. I've downed three of these already.

She indicates the empty Heineken bottles on the table.

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. When a MAINTENANCE SERVANT cleaning the pool moves to the far end, Hilary decides to share a secret.

HILARY

You know Howard Petrie, don't you? He called here in September and left a message. I don't think he realized that he'd dialed the general line. Douglas has a private one with the same announcement. Anyway, the next day Douglas sold his shares in Malakoff Diggings.

Arlene's face is turning white.

HILARY (CONT.)

So I taped the message on my recorder, then saved it as new. Smart, huh? I have evidence to put him behind bars. Or me behind a Mazzerati. But now I can't find the cassette... So, Arlene, what do you think?

Arlene has not heard any of this. She's starting to list to one side. Whimpering:

ARLENE

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

Lourdes reappears with the food.

HILARY

Get a grip.

(to Lourdes)

Well, that's more like it.

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

HILARY (CONT.)

Now you see, dear, that wasn't so difficult.

LOURDES

No, no trouble. If that will be all.

HILARY

For now. But stay within range.

Hilary indicates the bell on the table. Lourdes leaves, signaling the maintenance man to follow her. As Hilary sets her napkin daintily 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 the fry. That's when Sergey and his muscle men burst onto the patio, yank the women from their chairs.

HILARY (CONT.)

What on earth! Let go of me.
Sergey, call off these beasts.

ARLENE

We didn't steal anything from that
store.

Sergey rifles through their purses, doesn't find anything
of interest. He motions his men follow with the prisoners.

EXT. ENTRANCE, SWANSON ESTATE - DAY

An iron gate rolls open. Hilary's Mercedes speeds down
from the house and parks. The sisters are pulled from the
back and tossed onto the main road along with their purses.
Sergey throws them some car keys. The gate rolls shut and
the three men return to the Mercedes.

HILARY

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

Sergey translates what she says for his grunts. They
laugh, board the car and 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 cell 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 was for us to
take that.

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

HILARY

That's the servant's 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, in the driver's seat, inserts the key but doesn't turn the ignition. Something doesn't feel right.

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 unrolls her window.

HILARY

We're fine. Thanks.

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

HILARY (CONT.)

That rubbernecker would have called
the *New York Times* if we told him
what happened. I can just see Page
One tomorrow.

END EXCERPT

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