

CHASING VANITY

Written by

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EXT. NURSING HOME - ESTABLISHING SHOT

The Barrymore Home for Retired Actors in Queens.

INT. NURSING HOME - AFTERNOON

VANITY GREY, 109, sits in an armchair dressed as if for a luncheon date, with gold earrings and a pearl necklace over a bright blue Dior dress. Nice antiques abound - this is Vanity's home.

Vanity worked on Vaudeville and in movies since she was a child. A blotch of skin cancer disfigures her left cheek. Vanity preps for a visit from doctors who will test a new gene therapy on her.

NURSE PAT POLANSKI, 62, brushes Vanity's hair. Pat is a professional nurse companion.

Vanity's beautiful great-granddaughter, MIRANDA GREY, 25, sprawls with a leg over the arm of another chair, taps on her iPhone.

Miranda reaches to a side table packed with photos, picks up a studio glamour still of Vanity, circa 1935, and shows it to Pat.

MIRANDA

Try making her look like this again.

Pat looks at the photo, pulls a scraggly gray hair from the hairbrush and holds it to the light.

PAT

You had such beautiful hair...

Vanity runs a hand through her hair, as if Pat said she HAS such beautiful hair.

VANITY

Thank you... it's one reason I'm refusing the chemo for this skin cancer. I pledged my body to science, want them to get a decent looking specimen and not some hairless freak of nature.

MIRANDA

Oh yeah, some medical student will just cream his pants...

PAT
That's enough...

VANITY
So I'm willing to let them try this
experimental gene transfer.

PAT
It's your decision, Vanity dear.

Pat holds a hand mirror in front of Vanity's face. Vanity
steams the mirror with her breath.

VANITY
I'm alive!

PAT
Better ease up on that
morphine.

MIRANDA
You know she almost died of
tuberculosis when she was a
kid...

VANITY
Docs thought I was a goner and then
BAM!...the disease was gone.

MIRANDA
They thought the Spanish flu had
something to do with it.

VANITY
Eh, what could they know?

Vanity pulls a pair of maracas from deep in the big armchair.

VANITY (CONT'D)
But I've been partial to flamenco
ever since. Cha cha cha!

INT. NURSING HOME HALLWAY - DAY

Assistant genetic research lab director DR. CARLY WANG, 36,
hangs a sign on Vanity's door: Human Gene Transfer Protocol
in Effect. Lab director DR. MARTHA HEDGES, 52, wearing large
eyeglasses, knocks on the door.

INT. NURSING HOME (2) - DAY

KNOCK-KNOCK. Pat opens the door. Martha and Carly enter. Vanity sits in the armchair angled to Miranda in a second armchair. Miranda has one leg over the arm and plays with her iPhone.

Pat fusses with a flower arrangement as Martha sets her small black briefcase on the foot of the bed.

MARTHA

Good morning, Ms. Grey...

Nurse, young lady.

Pat steps to the chair and pets Vanity on her head.

VANITY

Miranda, my great-granddaughter.

PAT

Just relax now, old girl.

VANITY

It's not every day I get a DNA transfer.

Carly hands Martha a clipboard with pen attached. Martha removes the pen, leaving its cap on the clipboard. Martha hands the clipboard to Vanity, then notices the pen cap.

Martha tugs at the pen cap but cannot get it off, bends the tiny metal bar until the cap comes loose, lets go of clipboard and stands up straight.

MARTHA

Could you please sign here?

Martha opens her briefcase, revealing a hypodermic needle and vial set deep in foam rubber.

VANITY

Consent and waiver... I hereby release the lab from any and all liability in the event of...

MARTHA

Of a...

CARLY

If anything goes wrong and you or your estate try to sue the lab...

MARTHA

Thank you, Doctor Wang.

Vanity signs the form. Carly steps in and takes the clipboard from Vanity's lap.

VANITY

I'm not clear on exactly what you'll be putting into my body.

MARTHA

We have created a strain of recombinant DNA that regenerates all the cells...

CARLY

Restored a cancer-ridden rat to perfect...

MARTHA

Thank you, Dr. Wang. The genetic material is embedded in a virus, which then reconfigures the protein signature...

VANITY

On with the show, as we say.

Martha gestures to the bed. Pat raises the bed to sitting position and fluffs the pillows, pats on the bed as a signal.

Vanity stands up with some difficulty and waves off Carly's offer of assistance. Miranda does not look up from her iPhone as Vanity walks to the bed by herself.

MARTHA

You can keep your normal clothes on.

VANITY

There's nothing normal about Dior.

Pat puts a hand under Vanity's arm, helps her climb on the stool and onto the bed.

Vanity does not recline on pillows, but sits up straight. Vanity imitates Norma Desmond from Sunset Boulevard, with creepy finger movements and psychotic eyes.

VANITY (CONT'D)

All right, Mr. DeMille, I'm ready for my close-up...

Pat swabs Vanity's arm with alcohol as Martha fills her syringe from the vial.

Miranda jumps up and starts recording video with her iPhone.

MARTHA

We don't expect anything too dramatic here...

CARLY

No pun intended...

Martha injects the serum into Vanity's arm and withdraws syringe, places a piece of cotton on the spot. Pat steps in to tape the cotton down but Vanity waves her off.

MARTHA

(to Vanity)

How do you feel?

Vanity stares into the distance, gauging her inner workings. The blotch of skin cancer begins to shrink.

MIRANDA

You look a little better...

VANITY

I worked with Clark Gable, Cary Grant...

Miranda puts down her phone camera, reaches to the table full of framed photographs, picks up a studio still of Vanity with a young Clark Gable, shows it to Pat and the docs, flicks her tongue lasciviously at Gable.

Miranda turns the Gable photo to Vanity.

MIRANDA

Did Gable let you ride on top?

VANITY

I don't kiss and tell, Miranda dear...

MARTHA

Now ladies...

MIRANDA

Yes you do. Tell me again how you lost your cherry to Milton...

PAT

Someone ought to write a book...

CARLY

This is very disrespectful.

VANITY

If you could take your mind out of the gutter... and all that was long before my contract with MGM.

Vanity suddenly gags and coughs out a capped tooth, which hits Martha's eyeglasses, SNICK, and bounces onto the bed. Martha picks it up.

MARTHA

A tooth!

Carly leans over to take a good look.

CARLY

A maxillary bicuspid.

Vanity gags again, spits out another capped tooth, a crown, then a whole jumble of bridge work and whatnot. Miranda remembers her camera and resumes filming.

PAT

Oh dear Lord.

Miranda snatches up a tooth that gleams.

MIRANDA

This one's gold!

Vanity opens her mouth and stretches her lips, trying to understand what's going on. Many teeth are missing or shaved down, hideous, but the teeth are visibly reforming as everyone watches.

Vanity sees everyone looking at her and claps her hand over her mouth. The skin cancer is gone.

MARTHA

Anyplace with saliva reacts fastest, and look at her skin...

Martha realizes there's a glob of spit on her glasses, removes them, grabs a tissue from bedside table and wipes the lens.

CARLY

An amazing substance, human saliva.

Pat brings a bowl and glass of water to Vanity, who sits up straight, back off the pillows, and rinses her mouth.

Vanity spits into the bowl. Pat wipes Vanity's mouth with a washcloth.

Vanity starts to get out of bed, but Pat reaches over to prevent her. Vanity pauses, totally preoccupied with biological change.

A wrinkle over Vanity's left eye disappears, then the corresponding one on the right. Then another, and another, and another. Her hair begins to change color, turn brown, auburn, golden auburn, shining.

The changes overwhelm Vanity and she slumps back on the pillows, eyes closed.

MARTHA

Her body hasn't caught up with her hair, see how her face is still about sixty...

CARLY

The protein structure of hair follicles is most...

MARTHA

Hope it doesn't go too far...

Vanity's face gets younger... and younger... and younger. Vanity looks about 28 years old, radiantly beautiful and healthy. Her hair is in wild disarray, her young body and full breasts fill the old-lady dress to bursting point.

Pat puts a finger on Vanity's wrist to check her pulse. Vanity opens her eyes.

VANITY

Where am I? What happened? Did I get hurt on the set?

MARTHA

You're in Queens. At the Barrymore Home for Retired Actors.

VANITY

But I woke up in Bel Air, Los Angeles... and who are you?
 (points to flat)
 (TV on wall)
 And why does that hideous blank picture frame have a red light on it?

Vanity moves to get up, but Pat restrains her.

PAT

You better rest a minute,
Vanity dear.

Vanity lies back, sees her blue dress, feels the fabric. Her hand goes to the pearl necklace.

VANITY

I'm in San Francisco, with Gable
and Tracy. What happened?

CARLY

I thought you were in Los Angeles.

MIRANDA

She means the movie San Francisco,
about the earthquake.

MARTHA

Do you know what year it is?

VANITY

How long have I been out?

CARLY

Just a few minutes, clinically
speaking.

PAT

How do you feel?

Vanity stretches her arms, takes a deep breath.

VANITY

Fine... but strangely out of shape.

MARTHA

I think it's time to follow
protocol. Carly, what do we do in a
case like this?

Carly opens her OBA Safety Manual, leafs to the section from earlier scene.

CARLY

Step one... confine the organism.

VANITY

Organism! What's going on here?
Who are you people? And if it isn't
1936, what year is it?

CARLY
 You participated in a medical
 experiment...

MARTHA
 That went better than expected,
 only there seem to be some serious
 side effects.

Vanity looks to Pat for an answer.

PAT
 This might sound funny to you, but
 the year is two thousand and
 nineteen. Today is June 7. Do you
 know your name?

VANITY
 Two thousand and nineteen! But
 that's...that's eighty-three years
 later than... what I thought was
 now.

PAT
 Good at math...

MARTHA
 And your name?

VANITY
 Vanity Parks.

PAT
 Vanity Grey now.

MARTHA
 You actually woke up this morning
 in the present, but our experiment
 made you younger...

VANITY
 Yech! You mean I was over a hundred
 years old this morning?

PAT
 Just a few minutes ago.

VANITY
 Am I going to get old again?

They all look at her.

VANITY (CONT'D)
 Suddenly?

MARTHA

We don't know. Can you remember any of your later life?

VANITY

So I'm younger, but not older and wiser at the same time? What kind of a deal is that?

PAT

A pretty good one, I'd say.

MARTHA

(to Carly)

Step two?

CARLY

Report the event to the Office of Biotechnology Activities.

Vanity picks up the phone from her bedside table, looks at the unfamiliar touch tone buttons, presses '0'.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Operator, how may I help you?

VANITY

Get me Chelsea 2 4398 please.

Vanity holds her hand over the mouthpiece and silently mouths the word 'mother' to the others.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Very funny... Dial it yourself.

DIAL TONE. Vanity looks at the phone, hangs up.

VANITY

I see manners have changed.

Pat pets Vanity on the head.

PAT

Honey, your momma's long gone.

Miranda opens Vanity's purse and takes out an address book, opens it to the 'M' page and shows it to Vanity.

MIRANDA

Look, no mother under M.

Vanity looks at the page and points to a name.

VANITY
Who is Miles?

MIRANDA
He's your lawyer.

MARTHA
We have to study you.
(to Pat)
Nurse, there'll be a nice bonus if
you can stay with Vanity until
we...

PAT
A shot of that formula would cover
the bill.

VANITY
I'm not staying in this old folks
home.

MARTHA
Just for a while. You can't go out
in the world right now, you have no
idea how much things have changed
since... since you were last young.

EXT. NIH - WASHINGTON DC - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

Sign in front of campus-like medical complex: National
Institutes of Health. Move into complex to building with
sign: Office of Biotechnology Activities.

INT. NIH OBA - WASHINGTON DC - DAY

DR. WALTER 'WALLY' BUCHAN, 48, director of NIH Office of
Biotechnology Activities, squats by the door in his large
corner office to line up a practice putt. He holds the putter
lengthwise from his right eye.

In outer office, Wally's secretary, RITA CANSINO, 38, all
curves in a short red satin dress, rips paper from printer.
Rita is slightly past her prime but still working it for all
it's worth, and it's worth a lot.

Rita knocks on the door and opens it fast. The door bumps
into Wally, who stumbles forward and bangs the putter into
his eye.

RITA
Oh, Doctor Buchan!

Rita starts to close office door and thinks better of it, leaves door open.

Wally scrambles around on knees, hand on eye, takes hand away and with hurt eye squinting closed looks at red shoes and up fantastic legs of Rita. He clammers to his feet.

WALLY

Ms. Cansino, how many times have I told you to slow down? You race around like the office is on fire... and in a red dress.

RITA

Red's my color, and they say it's urgent.

WALLY

Who says? What?

RITA

New York. The genetic research lab in Queens reports...
 (reads from)
 (printout)
 Unexpected results in a human gene transfer. Cancer appears eradicated, but 109-year-old female patient transformed into younger self, about 25 or so. Please advise.

WALLY

Before falling for a stunt like this, did you think of calling to confirm the transmission?

Wally resumes his formal putter's stance over the golf ball.

RITA

I thought it was a joke, too. But no, they say it's true.

Wally taps the long putt, dead on, but it rims off the cup and rolls to Rita.

WALLY

What's standard procedure, in a case like this?

RITA

A formal post-trial review.

Rita taps the golf ball with the side of her shoe and it rolls right in.

Wally leans on putter and thinks.

WALLY

Hmmm. We might get some good press out of this, prime the pump for our budget talks. What's our exact procedure, if you could spell it out?

RITA

(from memory)

A case like this should go through our Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee, which sets up a Biotechnology Safety Event Assessment Team.

EXT. NURSING HOME (2) - DAY

Miranda trots into the nursing home.

INT. NURSING HOME (4) - DAY

Dressed and packed, Vanity closes a wheeled carry-on bag. She hears voices from the living room. Vanity peeks through the crack in the doorway and sees Pat and Miranda whispering hot and furious.

MIRANDA

Look, I'm the only heir to her fortune, or to her biological legacy...

PAT

What I wouldn't give to...

MIRANDA

Which could be worth lots more...

PAT

Shhh, she's right in there, getting dressed.

Vanity doesn't like the sound of the situation, quietly shuts and locks the door.

MIRANDA

I don't care.

Miranda creeps up to the door.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
Nana? It's me...

Miranda pounds on the locked door, shakes the doorknob.

Vanity checks her handbag, counts sixty-five dollars in the wallet, and puts her black address book in the purse. She unlocks and lifts open the window.

Miranda puts her ear to the door, hears the window and turns to Pat.

MIRANDA (CONT'D)
C'mon, the old bag's making a run
for it!

INT. NIH OBA - WASHINGTON DC - DAY

Wally faces Rita over his putting cup.

WALLY
Did they ID the patient?

RITA
Vanity Grey, now Parks.

WALLY
Should I know her?

RITA
Are you a fan of old movies?

WALLY
The media will bite on this...and
big money... Do we get a cut? No,
strike that.

RITA
I'm not taking dicta...

WALLY
I'll just have to chair an
emergency meeting of this board,
what was it?

Wally bends down to pluck the golf ball from the cup and his back locks up - SNICK.

WALLY (CONT'D)
Aaaah! Oh my back, Rita, help.
Stand behind and straighten my
(MORE)

WALLY (CONT'D)

back. It'll hurt like hell, but go ahead and pull.

Rita puts the piece of paper on his desk and moves to Wally's side, puts one hand on his lower back and the other on his upper chest.

RITA

Will this work, sir?

WALLY

You've done it before, damn it. Get behind me, use your body, woman... you need leverage!

Rita moves around behind and spoons herself against Wally's ass.

RITA

I know, I was just hoping...

Rita leans tight against Wally to get purchase on his upper torso when the OBA RECEPTIONIST walks in.

OBA RECEPTIONIST

Oooh, pardonnez-moi...

WALLY

Pain!

RITA

Nothing's going on...

INT. NURSING HOME IC WARD - DAY

Martha holds a syringe up in one hand, watches OLD MAN in bed. Two other old men fill beds to either side, OLD MAN 2 and OLD MAN 3. Carly stands next to Martha.

MARTHA

No reaction... again.

OLD MAN

Maybe I need a double dose.

CARLY

The secret must be in her genes.

OLD MAN 2

Did you hear the one about the farmer's daughter?

Martha does not deign to answer, looks at Carly.

Old Man 3 sits up and shouts at Old Man 2 over the bed of middle guy, Old Man.

OLD MAN 3

You're supposed to lead that joke with hey. Hey, did you hear the one about the farmer's daughter...

OLD MAN

He never did know how to set up a joke...

MARTHA

We have to get her back up on the rack and sequence that DNA.

OLD MAN 2

It's not about a romp in the hay. The farmer's daughter goes to the city...

Old Man 3 makes 'phooey' gesture with hand and lies back down. Old Man in middle starts to SNORE.

CARLY

Perfect scientific protocol.

OLD MAN 2

She gets off the bus, see...or was it a taxi?

Carly's phone RINGS and she answers it.

CARLY

What? Are you sure?

Carly hangs up mobile phone and turns to Martha.

CARLY (CONT'D)

Nurse says Vanity is escaping.

MARTHA

No! We have a conference call with Washington...

Martha pulls Carly out the door by the arm.

EXT. NURSING HOME - DAY

Vanity opens the window, drops her bag to the lawn and climbs out. Vanity snags the front hem of her dress on the sill latch, hangs there with panties showing until she frees herself. Vanity runs to the street and flags down a taxi.

Miranda and Pat come around the corner of the building and see Vanity getting in a taxi. Miranda flags down another taxi.

INTERCUT THREE TAXIS

Vanity turns around in her seat and sees Miranda and Pat piling into a taxi, turns to her TAXI DRIVER, a native New Yorker.

VANITY
Manhattan, and make it snappy.

TAXI DRIVER
Yes ma'am.

Martha and Carly run out of the nursing home and perceive the situation. Martha flags another taxi. Martha and Carly climb in. Martha shouts at her EGYPTIAN driver.

MARTHA
Follow the first taxi.

EGYPTIAN
Right.

Vanity's taxi zooms away. Miranda slaps the dividing window and shouts at her BANGLADESHI driver.

MIRANDA
Step on it, buddy!

BANGLADESHI
Oh madam, I cannot exceed the posted speed limit, it is strictly against the law... and also violates the company policy of the Speedy Taxi Company, and while we aim to please, we also must observe the...

Miranda pulls out her iPhone, inserts a USB Flash stick and holds the phone with stick against the temple of the Bangladeshi driver, pretending it's a gun.

MIRANDA
Follow that car!

The Bangladeshi driver freaks out and loses control of his taxi, crashes into a parked car.

PAT

She found her lawyer in her address book, that's where she's going.

Vanity turns in her seat and sees the wreck, smiles.

Martha and Carly's taxi screeches, slides and almost hits the wrecked taxi. The Egyptian driver backs out of the mess and resumes chasing Vanity.

INT. GENE BOARD MEETING - DAY

Wally chairs an emergency session of the Biotechnology Life Event Assessment Team. The team has only three members - Wally, Acme Bio chief executive JASPER SULLIVAN, 58, and FBI SPECIAL AGENT KEVIN SARK, 47.

The team sits at the conference table, each place with pencil, notepad, glass and bottle of water.

Rita sits against the wall, holds the remote control for video connection with New York. Large screens hang on the walls at both ends of the table.

Wally taps the microphone stalk, but gets no response. Identical ones in front of the other team members glow red around the mike, signaling that they are connected but on mute.

WALLY

Silly wire... didn't you check this, Ms. Cansoni?

RITA

I did, sir. Just a minute.

Rita walks over and Wally ducks under table to check plug in floor outlet, getting back up BANGS head on table.

WALLY

Damn.

Rita pushes power button, activating mike.

RITA

Just the power button, sir. Someone must have switched it off.

Wally settles in chair, resumes self-important pose. Presses button to activate mike, but light goes out. Rita steps up, activates mike with green glow.

RITA (CONT'D)

Here you go, sir.

Wally taps mike, BONK BONK.

WALLY

For the record, this is the first emergency meeting of the Biotechnology Safety Event Assessment Team. The members are...

RITA

Excuse me, sir. Technically, this is the RDAC, Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee, which in turn sets up the Biotechnology Safety Event Assessment Team.

WALLY

What's the difference?

RITA

The RDAC is composed of administrators, the second has scientists.

WALLY

Thank you, Ms. Casoni. This team comprises myself, Dr. Walter Buchan, Acme Bio CEO Jasper Sullivan, and FBI Agent Kevin Sark.

SARK

Special Agent Sark.

WALLY

Right. Both you gentlemen have read the report of an old woman cured of cancer and made young. Any comments before we speak to Dr. Hedges in New York?

Sark twirls a pencil in his fingers.

JASPER

Hard to say which result is more important, curing cancer, or reversing the aging process.

Sark drops his pencil under the table, dips to fetch it.

WALLY

Special Agent Sark?

Sark BANGS head on table, sits up in chair.

SARK

Nice extra-wide table... The FBI views this event for its potential implications to national security. So far I see none.

EXT. QUEENSBORO BRIDGE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

Vanity's taxi enters bridge crossing from Queens to Manhattan.

INT. TAXI - QUEENSBORO BRIDGE - DAY

Vanity sits in the back of her taxi and looks out at the new New York.

VANITY

(points at
Manhattan)

What's that highway on the East River?

TAXI DRIVER

That's FDR Drive.

VANITY

Roosevelt was a cinch to win re-election...

(points south)

See the Manhattan Bridge? I was born just there on Eldridge Street, one year before the bridge was built.

Taxi Driver looks in the side mirror, then the rearview mirror. He raises the separating window, leaves it open less than an inch.

TAXI DRIVER

Before my time, ma'am...

VANITY

Times were rough for most people back then... The economy is doing better, that's clear.

Taxi Driver puts out his hand, palm down, gives the so-so motion.

INTERCUT TWO TAXIS

Pursuit taxi pulls up on right next to Vanity. Martha leans out the window, slaps her palm on her own door to make noise.

MARTHA

Stop! We want to help you, Vanity!

Vanity gives a deadeye snub and taps on the glass divider.

Carly sees the snub and, being small and lithe, vaults through the passenger divider and grabs the wheel with her left hand, tablet in right, and makes the taxi veer towards Vanity's car.

The Egyptian driver pushes Carly hard into the passenger seat.

EGYPTIAN

Madam!

Vanity's Taxi Driver floors it. Pursuit taxi slams into right rear bumper, sends Vanity's taxi in a spin. Both taxis spin to a stop, and all traffic snarls to a confused stop behind them with fender-benders here and there.

VANITY

Can you get us out of here?

TAXI DRIVER

Yes I can.

VANITY

I'll make it worth your while.

Vanity's taxi zooms away, Martha's pursues.

INT. GENE BOARD MEETING (2) - DAY

Wally, Rita, Sark and Jasper sit ready to begin the conference call with New York.

Martha appears on the wall screen. Her face slides off screen and back on, clearly not a steady cam.

MARTHA

She's escaping! Catch her you fool!

SARK

This could be of interest to the bureau.

Martha's face goes off screen again and the screen shows a wild pan of traffic in New York.

WALLY

Who's operating that camera? Can you please just train it on Dr. Hedges?

The screen shows Martha again.

MARTHA

My assistant, Dr. Carly Wang. She's using my tablet.

Screen shows wild camera gyrations and then grinning face of Carly, who clearly holds the device relaying her image. The video image flips back to Martha.

JASPER

We've got to find that woman. Her DNA could be worth... could save billions.

MARTHA

She's running from us now... got a better driver...

Video screen shows Vanity's taxi making sharp turn ahead of garbage truck onto midtown street. The slow garbage truck now blocks the pursuit taxi.

SARK

But the consent form clearly stipulates...

WALLY

I can classify her as a biological haz-mat...

JASPER

This female is now a genetic fugitive.

SARK

Ooh, the nation's first.

WALLY

I'll notify the White House.

Jasper takes out his cell phone and starts tapping out an e-mail.

RITA

She's just a young woman, she's
committed no crime.

WALLY

Try to be a team player, Ms.
Cansoni.

MARTHA

What should we do?

SARK

Putting her on the FBI Most Wanted
list as we speak...

EXT. LAWYER'S BUILDING - DAY

Vanity stands on curb with wheeled suitcase, holding a five-dollar bill in her hand. From Vanity's POV we see the Taxi Driver peeling away and flipping her the bird.

VANITY

A five-dollar tip is more than
generous.

INT. LAWYER'S BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Vanity checks occupant directory and starts walking toward elevators, but a security guard stops her in front of metal detectors and package scanners.

Vanity walks to reception area to register and get visitor pass from MALE RECEPTIONIST wearing headset.

Vanity fumbles in her purse for a driver's license, pulls out Department of Motor Vehicles photo ID, looks at ancient photo, and hesitates.

Vanity puts on her charm, bats her eyes and hands the ID over the counter while talking in her sweetest voice.

VANITY

Vanity Parks to see Miles Winkler,
please. 24th floor.

Receptionist takes ID and calls lawyer's office to confirm appointment, but without looking at ID. Vanity looks at ID and away, notices camera behind receptionist and smiles automatically.

POV security camera, CLICK: Vanity smiling.

Receptionist puts ID into pigeonhole slot next to other cards, pulls out a visitor badge and hands it to Vanity.

INT. LAWYER'S BUILDING ELEVATOR - DAY

A Rastafarian bicycle COURIER with earphones carrying a package and shaking his head to a tune gallantly bows to let Vanity enter the elevator. Vanity wheels her bag into the corner.

VANITY
Where's the operator?

COURIER
(removes earphone)
Say what?

VANITY
Where is the elevator operator?

COURIER
What floor you want?

VANITY
The 24th.

Courier presses 24 and smiles, replaces earphone.

COURIER
Easy-peasy.

VANITY
Thank you very much.

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE - DAY

Law office receptionist ushers Vanity into office of MILES WINKLER, 64, lawyer and sailor. The office décor includes model sailboats, a ship in a bottle, seascapes, and a modest display of silver trophy cups.

Miles stands to greet his client. He holds the same Hollywood studio still of Vanity from 1935 in one hand, raises his other in a stop sign.

MILES
Before you say a word, let me look
at you.
(puts hand)
(over photo)
Well you really look like her.

VANITY
You don't look like anyone.

MILES
I thought this a most unusual scam,
but then the FBI put out an arrest
warrant.

VANITY
They have no right.

MILES
Now if you're who you claim to be,
you'll know something only she and
I know. Back in 1983...

VANITY
I don't remember anything...

MILES
How convenient.

VANITY
Not, actually.

MILES
I suppose you've studied...

VANITY
My nurse filled me in on a few
details, a touch of history.
Landing on the moon, who'd a thunk
it?

MILES
I'm not sure what to say, Ms...
Ms...?

Vanity makes the sound of a fly, BZZZZZZ, and waves pinched
fingers around like a fly, then the HISSSSS sound of snake
while making a snake shape with her fist.

VANITY
Miss. Miss. Basic elocution. You'd
die on stage.

MILES
What?

VANITY
Hard of hearing, too. You may call
me Vanity.

MILES

What do you expect from me?

VANITY

Legal advice?

MILES

Quite right.

VANITY

Maybe a little cash...

MILES

Ah, there's the touch...

VANITY

...since I have to run. Why should I subject myself to this spurious claim...

Miles looks at his wristwatch.

MILES

I'm not a criminal lawyer.

VANITY

Good one-liner.

MILES

I expect federal agents in this office within the hour.

VANITY

Then we'd best hurry. Just because I consented to a medical trial doesn't mean...

MILES

You really are you. God, the whole world...

Vanity looks around the office, sees a sailboat painting by famous yachting artist Willard Bond.

VANITY

Is your wall safe behind that sailboat picture?

MILES

Maxed the one-day limit on your credit...?

VANITY

I don't believe in borrowing from
banks, even if...

Receptionist enters, hands Miles a piece of paper.

MILES

The FBI has frozen your accounts.

VANITY

Feds...
(snaps fingers
three times)
Come on...

Miles reaches into drawer, pulls out a business envelope of
cash.

MILES

I can give you seven thousand...

Vanity snatches it out of his hand.

VANITY

Now we're talking... I can buy
an apartment with this much...

MILES

No, you can't. Seven grand will
barely keep you going in New
York...

Vanity steps to door, pauses with hand on knob.

VANITY

I've always worked... love working.

MILES

You always courted publicity, now
you have to avoid it...

VANITY

I grew up on the road, don't worry
about me.

Vanity blows a kiss and, turning to leave, bumps into the
door. Looks back, smiles, and leaves.

INT. LAWYER'S BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Vanity steps out of one elevator as Pat and Miranda step in
another. Vanity sees Miranda enter elevator.

Pat checks her hair in side mirror of elevator. Vanity pauses, looks at Miranda.

Miranda looks at Vanity, opens her mouth in recognition and begins to point when the elevator door starts closing. Pat sees Vanity and is just opening her mouth when Vanity flips them both the middle finger.

The elevator door closes. Vanity smiles, heads for reception.

MALE RECEPTIONIST pulls photo ID from slot, but this time looks at it.

MALE RECEPTIONIST

Wait a minute, this says you were born in 1908.

VANITY

That's a typo. I was born in 1988.

MALE RECEPTIONIST

That sounds about right, but look at the picture.

VANITY

Oy...

(snatches ID)

And I usually photograph so well.

INT. ACME BIO HQ MEETING ROOM - DAY

Acme Bio RECEPTIONIST shows corporate intelligence commando BEN RIKER, 44, a real bruiser, into a small meeting room, round table with phone and two chairs, no art on walls.

AB RECEPTIONIST

Our CEO, Jasper Sullivan, will be with you in a minute. Can I get you anything, a glass of water, coffee?

RIKER

Got any brass knuckle polish?

AB RECEPTIONIST

Pardon?

RIKER

Nothing.

Receptionist leaves and Jasper enters immediately. He carries a slim case file. Riker does not stand.

JASPER
Don't get up, Riker. This won't
take a minute.

Jasper opens folder and slips large glossy of Vanity onto the
table, the same studio glamour shot that Miles had.

RIKER
History lesson?

JASPER
She's your target. And here's the
background info.

Jasper slides folder over to Striker.

RIKER
Hey, I'm no grave robber...

JASPER
Vanity Parks, was 109, now she's in
her twenties.

Riker rolls his eyes, opens the folder.

JASPER (CONT'D)
Genetic experiment. Don't ask,
it'll be all over the news before
you can...

RIKER
Rabbit escaped from its cage, eh?

JASPER
Hutch... hutch is the proper term.
(taps on)
(photo)
This is the best idea we have of
what the woman looks like. She saw
her lawyer this morning and
disappeared into the city.

RIKER
Do you want the pelt, or...

JASPER
We need the secret in her genes, in
her living DNA.

INT. FBI NEW YORK OFFICE - DAY

FBI Special Agent Sark stands with a pointer before a screen showing old Vanity and new photo of Vanity from lawyer's office building security camera.

Sark lays his pointer on the table and straightens two file folders as female AGENT BOBSON, 32, enters.

SARK

I'm here to lead a task force to hunt the nation's first genetic fugitive...

Sark picks up the pointer, taps on the screen and drops pointer. Sark picks up the pointer.

SARK (CONT'D)

...a woman on the FBI Most Wanted list, and this is what I get, one agent?

AGENT BOBSON

If I may, sir...

SARK

Special Agent Sark.

AGENT BOBSON

Yes, sir, Special Agent Sark. It's my understanding that the Most Wanted list is more a publicity mechanism. The Bureau has always relied on local law enforcement to apprehend the suspects.

SARK

This woman's flight threatens federal clean-energy subsidies worth millions of dollars, wouldn't that demand our best resources?

Sark leans on the pointer against young Vanity photo for emphasis. The telescoping pointer collapses and he stumbles.

AGENT BOBSON

Sir, I believe you're confusing this with the prismatic battery cell case in Connecticut. This is genetics, the National Institutes of Health... the other is chemistry, Department of Energy.

Sark extends pointer too far and it separates. He fumbles to fit the sections back together.

SARK

I'm sure chemistry is involved here...

(snags pointer on tie)

Or mechanical engineering, but you're right... See? They overwork me, too. But when we catch this woman they have to notice me...

Agent Bobson gives Sark a blank stare.

SARK (CONT'D)

Notice us, both of us. Of course it's only natural when the team leader gets singled out for commendation...

INT. LAWYER'S OFFICE (2) - DAY

Pat and Miranda sit across from Miles, who sits at his desk with hands folded, twirling his thumbs.

MILES

You ladies don't really expect me to violate the confidentiality of a client...?

MIRANDA

Can we have her declared dead, for probate purposes?

Pat snorts in contempt.

PAT

She's in better shape than you are, honey.

MIRANDA

The old woman named Vanity Grey no longer exists.

Miranda stands up and starts looking round the office.

PAT

I want my bonus and the shot, not to steal your Nana's...

Miles stands to conclude the meeting.

MIRANDA

No wait. How about incompetent? We get a shrink to declare her mentally incompetent, then I, as her only living relative...

MILES

All right, ladies.

MIRANDA

You could at least act as agent for my video.

MILES

That's enough...

Miranda goes to painting of sailboat, lifts the bottom of the picture off the wall as if looking for a safe.

MIRANDA

Bet he stashed her on his boat.

MILES

I am not in the habit of harboring fugitives.

EXT. UWS APARTMENT BLDG - DAY

Vanity stands in front of an apartment building south of 96th Street on Broadway. A hair salon flanks the building on the left, an eyeglasses place on the right.

VANITY

Mother... wonder who lives here now...

Vanity sees the beauty parlor and touches her scarf, decides to get her hair done before checking her mother's old apartment. Vanity enters, gets wheeled bag stuck in the door.

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Vanity sits in the middle chair of three, facing a huge wall mirror and flanked by CUSTOMER ONE and CUSTOMER TWO. Gay salon owner, FERNANDO, 49, takes care of Vanity, while younger female hairdressers do other customers.

Muted TV hangs from opposite wall for waiting customers. Salon owner fluffs out Vanity's incredible head of hair. Vanity's wheeled bag sits by the wall.

VANITY

I was thinking a wavy bob. A thirties look.

FERNANDO

Retro is one thing, but you're not going to a costume party...

VANITY

I'm not committed to it, just want to feel like myself.

FERNANDO

Trust me.

In TV reflected in mirror, Vanity sees a photo of herself at lawyer's building, full screen. Breaking News banner... FBI Hunts Genetic Fugitive in New York.

VANITY

OK, forget nostalgia... just different, way different.

TV news changes to weather, Vanity relaxes. Customers on either side chat across Vanity.

CUSTOMER ONE

My first gay wedding, in fact.

VANITY

A gay wedding! Aren't they all?

CUSTOMER TWO

I think that's a subcategory of its own, a transgender wedding. You said the bride had the sex change...

VANITY

Sex change? What's that?

CUSTOMER ONE

What planet have you been living on?

CUSTOMER TWO

Maybe she's from out of town.

(to Vanity)

In this bride's case, as I understand the procedure, they tuck the penis into the body, and uh, that becomes the vagina.

VANITY

Drag queens are one thing, but
that's disgusting!

FERNANDO

Someone I know needs a lesson in
political correctness...

Customer One reaches in her purse for a camera.

CUSTOMER ONE

I took pics on my digital camera,
see if she doesn't look like a
perfect June bride...

VANITY

Digital camera? Don't you need your
fingers for any camera?

SALON OWNER

(cutting hair)

If you insist on playing the dumb
blond I can get the bleach...

INT. GENETICS LAB (2) - DAY

Carly restrains a male lab monkey as Martha injects the gene
formula. Carly places the monkey back in a large cage with
its mate. Carly and Martha step back to observe the results.

CARLY

Why even bother with more animal
testing?

MARTHA

Since little miss faded movie
starlet broke her contract...

CARLY

She's probably in shock...

Male monkey starts trying to hump the female, who is startled
and does not share the sudden change of mood.

CARLY (CONT'D)

That's a sign of youth, or at least
renewed vigor.

ACME BIO CEO Jasper walks up behind them, overhears
conversation.

MARTHA

(holds up needle)

I should have had a child or two...
would have made a great mother, but
I sacrificed all for science.

JASPER

Who knows, Dr. Hedges? Get this
formula set and you might have a
second chance at motherhood.

Jasper pinches Martha's ass and she jumps.

MARTHA

Mister Sullivan! That's hardly
professional.

JASPER

Grrr. Something here brings out the
animal in me.

MARTHA

Snake, I'd say.

Carly giggles.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

This DNA is not ready for
commercial development, for lust or
money.

JASPER

Martha, you're doing good here...
and I'm trying to help you do well.

MARTHA

I need my patient.

Jasper puts his arm around Martha's shoulder and steers her
toward the door.

JASPER

And I'm working on it. Come, let us
reason together...

EXT. 6TH AVENUE HOTEL - EVENING

Signs and banners announce New York Fashion Week. Paparazzi
flash cameras as limos pull up and disgorge well-dressed men
and women - models, buyers, designers.

Taxi pulls up under entrance canopy. From passenger door behind driver climbs Wally, whose umbrella handle catches on inside door handle. It's not raining. He frees himself and... paparazzi look away, then look again.

HOTEL DOORMAN opens rear passenger door on hotel side and a long leg comes out, followed by the luscious body of Rita. She wears a red dress, and a red hat with a yellow dot on top. Cameras flash.

Doorman makes a slight but clearly audible WHINNY sound, then holds his stomach as if the noise came from an involuntary body function.

HOTEL DOORMAN

Pardon me, ma'am.

The trunk lid pops open and Doorman pulls out two bags...

Wally trips on the curb and drops his umbrella, which skitters to a toy poodle sniffing the outstretched leg on a bare mannequin next to an easel poster of a model with logo FCUK (Fashion Centre UK).

The easel leans against the lobby window, and inside stands Acme Bio commando Ben Riker, watching.

The little poodle begins humping the mannequin leg. Rita walks over to Wally. Wally moves to retrieve his umbrella, hesitates.

RITA

Best let sleeping dogs lie.

WALLY

He's humping, not sleeping.

FBI Special Agent Sark walks up behind them.

SARK

Ms. Casoni, Dr. Buchan! You staying here, too? What a small world...

RITA

Dr. Buchan wants his umbrella back but I told him...

Sark steps over to fetch the umbrella.

SARK

That's ridiculous, the dog's too preoccupied to even...

The poodle hops off the mannequin and bites Sark's leg.

SARK (CONT'D)

Ow! ...Damn!

Sark kicks the poodle, which yelps and runs off. Sark lifts his pants leg. The bite has broken skin.

WALLY

That's a pedigree dog. I'm sure he's been vaccinated...

SARK

(massages leg)

Jesus!

Rita kneels by Sark's leg, examines wound.

RITA

I'm trained in first aid.

SARK

You're a natural.

EXT. UWS APARTMENT BLDG - DAY

Vanity walks out of opticians disguised in a pair of huge eyeglasses to go with her new hairdo. Vanity walks next door to the apartment building and rings the bell.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

HARRY MENSCH, 44, an entertainment law professor at Columbia, widowed, stands at the video intercom in his lovely apartment, sees Vanity in the monitor and BUZZES her in.

Harry looks at himself in the hall mirror, straightens his hair, tucks shirt in between belt and pants, struggles to get it right. Rearranges jewelry department and stands up straight, strikes a natural pose.

DING DONG. Harry opens the door to reveal Vanity in her new hairdo, looking swell.

VANITY

Oh, Mr. Mensch?

HARRY

Can I help you?

VANITY

No, well, my mother used to live here, back in the thirties.

HARRY

Really? Well, I don't know...

Vanity starts to enter, bumps suitcase on doorframe, trips into the apartment.

VANITY

May I?

HARRY

Well... let's sit in the living room.

Vanity struggles to untangle her handbag strap from the suitcase handle, follows Harry into living room.

VANITY

What a lovely home, and such a woman's touch. Are you a... a confirmed bachelor?

Harry pats the cushion on the single armchair. Vanity sits there, then Harry sits on the sofa.

HARRY

My wife passed away...

VANITY

I'm sorry.

HARRY

Three years ago.

They sit in silence for a few moments.

HARRY (CONT'D)

I was going to get a dog for company. Ruthie's poodle died a year after she did, my wife, but then I remembered how I hated walking that mutt.

VANITY

Meow?

Harry halfway laughs, uncomfortable.

HARRY

I haven't put the ad in for a tenant... did Fernando tell you? How did you find me, Ms...?

VANITY

Miss! Miss! Miss Vanity. No, I just wanted to see the old neighborhood, but I do need a place in the city. How much you asking?

HARRY

Thirteen hundred and forty-one dollars a month, including utilities.

VANITY

Why thirteen forty-one? Why not just thirteen-fifty?

HARRY

Usually I should do the, uh, it's the other way round...

VANITY

Oh, come on...

HARRY

I set the price as Ruthie's favorite year. She taught medieval history, was a scholar... early Italian renaissance.

VANITY

So what happened in 1341?

HARRY

Her beloved Petrarch was made poet laureate in Rome.

Vanity pulls the envelope of cash from her handbag.

VANITY

I have cash on me.

HARRY

But you didn't come here...

VANITY

I'm an actress. And dancer, comedienne...

Vanity jumps up, bats her eyes as if in a silent movie romantic scene, dances a few steps of the Charleston, fumbles a bit switching her hands from knee to knee.

VANITY (CONT'D)

I can do it, just been a while.

HARRY

I teach entertainment law at Columbia.

Vanity flops back down in the armchair.

VANITY

I do need a new agent...

HARRY

I don't represent clients... I have friends, of course. You're such a very pretty young woman, self-confident, I'm sure you...

VANITY

So that's all you do, teach?

Harry stands up and spreads his arm to show off his full bookcase, pulls out a big one titled Great Theaters.

HARRY

I didn't say that. This is mine. And I'm writing a history now, of early twentieth century theater producers... vaudeville, burlesque, the legitimate stage...

VANITY

Funny, your wife's high-falutin' poetry...

Harry struggles to fit the big book into the bookcase.

HARRY

Now listen, young lady...

VANITY

And you slumming on the circuits.

HARRY

You know about the vaudeville circuits? This is uncanny. Most young people these days don't even know who Milton Berle was, much less...

Harry sits again, eager to hear more.

VANITY

Oh, I know him very well, better than most.

HARRY

OK, name the best theater in the city in 1914.

VANITY

The Palace, stage door entrance on Forty-seventh, after the courtyard, seats seventeen hundred and forty. Course I didn't play it until years later... Farthest out of town we made it was the old Opera in Kirksville, Missouri. Had to share one egg with my little sister for breakfast. Worst act I ever saw, if you can call it an act, was a couple of fiddlers with a trained mule... Burk and Andrus, real clodhoppers!

HARRY

Is this a role you're playing in a show now?

VANITY

It's a long story...
(straightens skirt)
So... you teach and write. Must be very quiet here.

HARRY

I'm also a Yankees fan.

VANITY

Oh! I'd love to catch a game! The Babe! I mean... whoever.

Harry slaps his forehead.

HARRY

God, the big game's starting right now, we're playing the Red Sox, in Boston.

Harry picks up the remote and zaps TV. The news channel comes on and before Harry can change channels he sees the newscast. Banner at bottom: Frankenstella Escapes.

Half the screen shows the photo of Vanity taken at the lawyer's building, the other half shows film footage from the 1920s and '30s as NEWS ANCHOR talks.

NEWS ANCHOR

Born Estelle Franken in 1908, she adopted the stage name Vanity Parks in 1916, performed in more than forty silent films, and in thirty-seven movies with sound. She married chemist Daniel Grey in 1938, who died in 1987. Vanity Parks outlived their only child and grandson, and her only surviving relation is a great-granddaughter, Miranda Grey, 25, of Manhattan.

VANITY

Hmm... the Greys tend to fade.

Harry mutes the TV and turns to Vanity.

HARRY

Guess the jig is up.

VANITY

Meow?

HARRY

You have no idea how dated that is...

Vanity pulls out her envelope of cash. Harry waves her off.

HARRY (CONT'D)

We just crossed to a whole new level.

VANITY

But you wanted a tenant.

HARRY

Does it look like I need the money? If you advertise a free room in New York they think you're nuts... might as well hang a crazy magnet on the door.

Harry stops and looks at Vanity, who wants to know.

HARRY (CONT'D)

My shrink told me to get a roommate, a tenant.

Vanity stands and does a vaudeville act concluding dance step, stops with arms spread wide.

VANITY
Ta, da, bump-a-dum-bump!

INT. NY POLICE DEPT - NIGHT

Riker scours surveillance footage with a police lieutenant, sees Vanity enter the hair salon on the Upper West Side.

RIKER
Going in, but no video of her
coming out?

The lieutenant shrugs.

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - MORNING

POV pigeon drone camera. Riker disguised as a birdwatcher trolls the neighborhood around 98th and Broadway. Riker lifts his binoculars to the drone and zooms in.

Enter pigeon drone camera lens, move through circuitry to...

INT. FBI HQ NEW YORK (2) - MORNING

Sark stands over Agent Bobson at desk, whose hand is on a joystick, guiding the drone. Martha sits across from Sark and Bobson, her lips pursed.

AGENT BOBSON
Riker's spotted us, sir.

SARK
Special Agent Sark. It's best if
you address me by my official
title, keep the chain of command
clear at all times.

AGENT BOBSON
What should I do, Special Agent
Sark? We don't have much time...

SARK
A good leader always has time to
train. You're operating a simulated
pigeon drone. What function is
built into this machine precisely
for these circumstances?

AGENT BOBSON
The pooper?

SARK
Well done, Agent Bobson.

Agent Bobson presses pooper button on console and...

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE (2) - MORNING

The pigeon drone releases a squirt of white goo... laser guidance system of crosshairs directs fake bird shit to PLOP on Riker's binoculars.

INT. FBI HQ NEW YORK (3) - MORNING

Martha, curious, walks behind desk to see the hit on the computer monitor.

SARK
Payday!

MARTHA
What do you use for the bird shit?

SARK
White-Out. The typewriter correction fluid.

MARTHA
But no one uses typewriters anymore.

SARK
We slapped some federal subsidies on that company just to ensure our source of supply...

MARTHA
And if someone examines the...

SARK
How many people really look at bird shit?

AGENT BOBSON
And it doubles as a tracking device. We imbed particles of...

Sark raises his hand.

SARK
Strictly need-to-know, Agent
Bobson.

Sark takes Martha's elbow and guides her back to her seat.

SARK (CONT'D)
Please, Dr. Hedges, take your seat.
We're borrowing a page from you
docs here, instead of predictive
medicine we do predictive crime
analysis.

MARTHA
But there's no crime going...

Sark raises finger to stop Martha.

SARK
Let's look at our suspect. Jewish,
lower East Side tenements,
vaudeville, theater and movies.

AGENT BOBSON
So where's our predictive crime
element?

SARK
We're pioneering here... and
tracking Riker, which may help us
develop an idea.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT (2) - MORNING

Harry and Vanity sit at his dining room table over remains of a hearty breakfast, plus all the New York papers in a pile. Harry gets the Times but bought all the others to check their coverage of Vanity.

VANITY
...dressing room was a nail, and
there's Groucho Marx dressed as
Napoleon, running down Chestnut
Street to make the curtain, and
three out-of-shape Philadelphia
cops chasing him...

HARRY
What year was that?

VANITY
Hmm... must have been 1924 or
'25...

(MORE)

VANITY (CONT'D)

Oh, of course, it was '24, I had my
sixteenth birthday party at
Bookbinders with...

Harry looks at the front pages of all the papers spread out
on table:

Daily News: Mutant Freak On The Loose

The New York Post: Dems Fail Genetic Test

NY Times: Genetic Experiment Yields Unexpected Results

Wall Street Journal: Chinese Bid for Youth Formula

HARRY

Must be like reading your own
obits. Like you're someone else.

VANITY

Surreal.

HARRY

They say we never really know
another person.

VANITY

I was married to a man for over
fifty years and don't remember a
thing about him.

HARRY

And you married a businessman. You
seem more the type to find someone
in theater, a fellow actor, or a
musician in the band...

VANITY

Musicians, please. Looking in the
band for a husband is like going to
the market and picking the dented
can of tomatoes.

INT. HAIR SALON (2) - MORNING

Riker sits with pencil and sketch pad, interviewing Salon
Owner and drawing what Vanity looks like in her new hairdo.

EXT. MANHATTAN CAFÉ - DAY

Martha sips lime frappuccino at Starbucks on 3rd Avenue when
Pat and Miranda walk up to her table.

MIRANDA
I want to make a deal.

MARTHA
(to Pat)
We had a deal, but you didn't keep
your end of it.

PAT
She climbed out the window...

Martha checks her wristwatch.

MARTHA
I'd love to chat, ladies, but
Wally's due here in a minute and we
have to go up to the studio right
away. We're on the...

MIRANDA
Who's Wally?

PAT
Dr. Buchan, from the NIH.
(on blank stare
from Miranda)
National Institutes of Health.

Pat's phone BEEPS, she pulls it out and looks at screen.

PAT (CONT'D)
I signed up for news alerts. You're
taping an interview.

MIRANDA
Dr. Carly told us you'd be...

MARTHA
She's back in the lab, determined
to win the Nobel Prize.

MIRANDA
By the glint of those eye-tucks,
I'd say you're in it for...

MARTHA
It's clear from your knock-off
designer jeans that...

PAT
I'm in for the health benefits.

INT. HARRY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Harry cleans up the dishes and puts away food.

VANITY

Those Thomas's English muffins
taste just as good as they did in
the '30s.

Harry closes the fridge door, which has several magnets from
his wife's time. One magnet is the word CRAZY.

Harry smacks his forehead with his hand.

HARRY

God, why didn't I think of him
before?

Harry rubs his forehead.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Ouch.

VANITY

Who?

HARRY

Mitch! He's perfect... well...
anyway, Mitch has a late, late,
late show on cable, and it's all
about silent films. You'd be
priceless for him.

VANITY

I made the transition to talkies,
you know... Not everyone could.

HARRY

The main thing is to keep a low
profile. No one would ever find you
in Mitch's hideaway...

VANITY

Where is it?

HARRY

Silky Screen Studios... at the
Hudson Piers. C'mon, we can walk
over to Central Park West and take
the subway straight down to 23rd
Street.

INT. FBI HQ NEW YORK - AFTERNOON

Sark stands over Agent Bobson, whose hand rests on a joystick guiding the pigeon drone. On screen, Riker appears across the street from Penn Station, dressed as if on safari, in pith helmet, tan shorts and shirt.

Riker sees Vanity and Harry, pulls out a pair of binoculars.

SARK
Switch to Nocs View.

AGENT BOBSON
Yes, sir... Special Agent Sark.

POV Riker's binoculars, Vanity and Harry enter station.

SARK
Get me access, Agent Bobson...

EXT. PENN STATION - AFTERNOON

Harry and Vanity approach station entrance. Vanity looks up and sees a huge TV screen billboard.

VANITY
Where's the projector?

INT. PENN STATION - AFTERNOON

Vanity hesitates stepping onto a long escalator. She steps back, scared and uncertain, sees red stop button and presses it. People on the escalator stumble as it jerks to a stop.

Immense FAT LADY looks at Vanity.

VANITY
Sorry! I'm not used to moving stairs.

FAT LADY
Well get with it, I can't climb two flights in these shoes.

Vanity presses the green button but nothing happens. Harry and Vanity begin to climb, then the escalator starts. Vanity SCREAMS.

Riker runs to the bottom of the escalator, aims a Taser at Vanity.

Vanity and Harry squeeze past the Fat Lady and hide behind her. Vanity sneaks a peek at Riker.

VANITY
That's no hunting gun!

Vanity sticks her tongue out at Riker.

VANITY (CONT'D)
(to Harry)
Did a Tarzan movie in '34...
Not Jane, I was the safari guide
girl.

Riker fires and hits the fat lady, who crumples, quivering from the electric cable like a shaken bowl of Jello.

RIKER
Big enough to bag an elephant!

VANITY
(to Harry)
What the hell is that?

HARRY
A Taser, new since your time.

The stairs carry Vanity and Harry to the top, and Vanity presses the stop button. Fat Lady blocks the width of the escalator.

Riker starts running up the escalator. Vanity pulls Fat Lady up to sitting position on a step and starts to tip her down the stairs.

Riker stops.

RIKER
You wouldn't.

VANITY
Try me.

HARRY
Would you really?

VANITY
Get back, I'm bluffing.

Riker starts to charge up again. Fat Lady starts to roll forward. Vanity grabs Fat Lady's dress by the back but can't stop the momentum. Dress RIPS and 330 pounds of human flesh snowball down.

Riker turns to run but not fast enough. The human snowball flattens Riker at the base of the escalator.

INT. PENN STATION SUBWAY ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

Harry and Vanity walk past a news shop advertising mobile headsets for \$19.99. Vanity looks at the sign.

VANITY

If a dollar is worth so much less,
why do they still have pennies?

HARRY

To make people think a buck is
still worth something.

INT. PENN STATION ESCALATOR - AFTERNOON

Fat Lady rolls off escalator entrance, but Riker's body moves all the way up the long flight. Metropolitan Transit Authority police officers stand Riker up, his face grooved from the metal plates.

INT. PENN STATION SUBWAY ENTRANCE - AFTERNOON

Harry taps Vanity on the shoulder.

HARRY

Wait here a second, I want to buy
some gum.

VANITY

Do they still sell Juicy Fruit?

Harry enters newsstand... and two FBI agents grab Vanity. Harry steps out and sees the FBI agents leading her away.

EXT. FEDERAL PLAZA - DAY

Hundreds of people protest in front of the FBI building. Two black SUVs avoid the demonstration, turn from side street and go down ramp to underground parking.

EXT. FEDERAL PLAZA SIDE STREET - FBI BUILDING - DAY

Harry enters service door disguised as food attendant, with little white cap, scraggly wig, and huge eyeglasses.

INT. FBI DETAINEE PROCESSING ROOM - DAY

It's crowded. Two cops have brought in three protestors. A computer problem is delaying the processing. Sark, Vanity, Agent Pat, and Riker add to the crowd. Sark bulls his way forward to the officious CLERK.

SARK

These people don't belong here,
they're not...

CLERK

They threw bottles at the building,
attempted to deface federal
property.

SARK

My case takes priority. Now log in
this evidence and photograph my
prisoner.

PROTESTOR #1

We'll all be prisoners if you make
people carry a national ID card.

PROTESTORS #2 AND #3

No ID! No ID! No...

SARK

Shut up!

CLERK

The fingerprint scanner works fine,
and we can log in evidence, but the
digital camera is broken, and every
detainee must be photographed prior
to incarceration.

Vanity stands at the fringe of the crowd, snaps off a piece of her sunglasses stem to fiddle with the handcuffs. She looks at the open hallway, her eyes say no...

INT. FBI OFFICE - DAY

Harry sells a donut to an agent, sees a handcuff key on the desk and drops a dollar bill. Agent bends to pick it up and Harry pockets the key.

INT. FBI HALLWAY (1) - DAY

Harry appears in Vanity's line of sight, rolling a food cart. He smiles at her efforts to open the cuffs, rolls her eyes and slips the actual handcuff key into her palm... and rolls the cart down the hall...

INT. CYBERCOM HQ - DAY

A crew of technicians sits at computer terminals with central area showing large screen displays of federal building in New York. One female CYBERTECHIE hesitates to follow orders, and COMMANDER sees her pause.

COMMANDER

Got a problem, Spec 4?

CYBERTECHIE

Well, sir, are you sure what you're asking? This is FBI headquarters in New York...

COMMANDER

We're not shuttin' 'em down, woman, just a little systems disruption, you know, lights, cameras, no action. And I'm not asking, I'm ordering.

INT. FBI DETAINEE PROCESSING ROOM (1-A) - DAY

Cops push the arrested protestors aside, but chaos reigns.

SARK

Scan her driver's license, for Chrissake... that's a photo taken by the state.

AGENT PAT

Just a minute, Sark... I thought you were going to throw her in a hole and toss the key, and here you can't even open the cave door...

RIKER

Maybe I can fix the camera...

Vanity starts stepping backwards toward the open door and hallway, backs out, forces herself not to run.

INT. FBI HALLWAY (2) - DAY

The elevator door is closing, but Vanity just manages to open the one cuff on her left wrist and she puts her foot in. DING! The door opens to reveal COP IN ELEVATOR.

VANITY

Geez.

COP IN ELEVATOR

Going up?

VANITY

Sorry.

Vanity presses the down call button, and another elevator comes, right away, DING! Empty... she fusses with her remaining cuff and drops the key... it bounces right into the crack between door and floor.

Vanity leans down, hears faint TINK, TINK as the key falls. She steps in and the doors close.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

The elevator's digital progress panel shows going down, passing 10th floor... the elevator stops at 9th and a MOTHER gets on carrying a small, menacing BRAT.

MOTHER

Press the button, dear, L for lobby...

(to Vanity)

He loves buttons...

VANITY

I'm sure he's very bright, for his age.

In no time Brat presses many buttons: 7, 6, 5, 3 and 1. Vanity gasps... sees the STOP button and presses it.

The elevator stops and the buttons all go blank, effectively reset to non-active. Immediately a VOICE comes via speaker in the ceiling. The steel mesh vibrates, showing a lens behind.

VOICE (O.S.)

Is there a problem with your elevator?

VANITY

Nothing our 3-year-old can't fix.

VOICE (O.S.)

Ah, I see... have a nice day, then.

VANITY

Thanks.

(to BRAT)

Try again, Sport.

Brat presses L and the elevator resumes going down.

INT. FBI DETAINEE PROCESSING ROOM (2) - DAY

The muddle continues.

CLERK

It's like a crossed wire somewhere,
the scanner works, but I can't buzz
open the door... which isn't even
closed, thank God...

ALL look to door and Sark realizes that Vanity is missing.
Riker smiles. Sark leans over the counter and slams the
security alarm... nothing.

SARK

Jesus Christ!

CLERK

I told you, some things work and
some don't. The whole system's gone
haywire. Up to this morning I've
been quite proud of our smart
building...

INT. ELEVATOR/LOBBY - DAY

Elevator goes straight to the lobby. Doors open to pair of US
Marshals in full battle gear... who step aside for the women
and child.

Vanity, Mother and Brat walk through lobby. Brat notices
shiny bit of handcuff at Vanity's right sleeve, pulls at
it...

VANITY

I'm ready to arrest someone...

Mother laughs, Brat laughs, Vanity laughs... all exit to
street together.

EXT. FEDERAL PLAZA (2) - DAY

Hundreds of people protest the FBI plan to institute national ID card policy. Protestors carry placards that read: NO ID CARDS; NO POLICE STATE; NO BIG BROTHER; GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH.

Vanity, Mother and Brat pass through crowd, get lost in throngs of people as Sark runs out the main door.

EXT. DUANE STREET - DAY

Mother's car is parked around the corner in front of a Kinko's copy shop on Duane Street. A homeless mental patient sleeps on a warm air grate in front of the building.

Mother owns a little Honda Civic, a clunker - driver's side has a replacement body panel rust-proofed but not yet painted. Mother puts Brat in car seat in back and hops in front passenger seat. Vanity gets behind the wheel.

INT. HONDA DOWNTOWN (1) - DAY

Vanity adjusts seat and checks mirror, controls. Vanity sees fuel gauge needle hovering in the reserve red zone.

MOTHER

Story of my life...

VANITY

Where do you live?

MOTHER

South Bronx... I guarantee you never heard of the address, Manida Street.

VANITY

Sure, Hunt's Point...

MOTHER

How could you know...

VANITY

Astoria Studios used that place for films back in... uh, back in the day.

MOTHER

Where do you live?

VANITY
Upper West Side.

MOTHER
Ohhh... I didn't know the FBI paid
that well...

Harry opens the back door and gets in next to Brat.

VANITY
My colleague... don't think we'll
go all the way home with you.

HARRY
(waves hands,
move, move)
A few blocks anyway...

INT. FBI OFFICE (1) - LATE AFTERNOON

Sark, Agent Pat and Riker watch INFORMATION ANALYST type furiously to get what he can on the fleeing suspect. High-definition screen pulls up map of lower Manhattan, shows blinking light on Duane Street.

INFORMATION ANALYST
She still has her phone on...

RIKER
She's right here.

SARK
(points to screen)
Whoop... she's on the move.

EXT. HONDA DOWNTOWN (2) - LATE AFTERNOON

Vanity drives toward the West Side Highway to shoot uptown, sees a garbage truck on the left side of Chambers Street and tosses her iPhone into the cruncher. Mother looks surprised.

VANITY
A case I'm working... listen, I'll
fill 'er up and then we'll catch a
taxi.

EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN - LATE AFTERNOON

The garbage truck that ate Vanity's cellphone turns north onto Westside Highway, heading for 59th Street Waste Transfer Station.

INT. FBI OFFICE (2) - LATE AFTERNOON

Sark, Agent Pat, Riker and Information Analyst watch blinking light head north on Westside Highway.

SARK

Get video of Duane Street, see if we can ID the car.

INFORMATION ANALYST

The police camera feed is down, we've only got our own, covering one block...

SARK

(looks at Riker)

A lot going right for this bimbo...

The high-definition screen shows Harry getting into back of Honda and car pulling out.

RIKER

Look at that piece of shit.

SARK

Zoom in on the plate for Chrissake!

EXT. HONDA DOWNTOWN (3) - LATE AFTERNOON

Vanity pulls out of a gas station on Leonard Street, then turns right onto Broadway. We see fuel needle hard right at FULL.

HARRY

Why didn't we get out there?

VANITY

Don't worry, I'll just pop up closer to the Holland Tunnel...

A MOTORCYCLE COP pulls the Honda over on Broadway, comes to Vanity's window, looks down through mirrored sunglasses.

VANITY (CONT'D)

Is there a problem, officer?

MOTORCYCLE COP

I just need to see your license and registration, ma'am.

Vanity negotiates her wallet out of her purse, hiding cuffs on her right hand.

VANITY
 Sorry, officer.
 (Hands wallet
 to Mother)
 Could you dig my license out of
 there?

MOTORCYCLE COP
 Technically, we have a failure to
 indicate... you didn't signal your
 turn off Leonard.

MOTHER
 I haven't had time to get the
 blinker...

Vanity shuts her up with a look. Mother pulls registration
 out of glove compartment, hands it to Vanity with her wallet
 open showing driver's license and Delta team ID

Vanity passes the documents to cop... who stands back and
 looks at the disreputable vehicle.

BRAT
 (points at Vanity)
 He's a policeman!

VANITY
 Everyone knows the economy's
 down, officer... but...

Car engine knocks, sputters and dies, with underwater bubble
 sound burps tiny smoke ring from exhaust.

BRAT
 He's wearing handcuffs!

We can see the cop's handcuffs on his belt, but Brat is
 pointing at Vanity's right hand. Cop leans in window and
 grins at Brat.

Vanity unobtrusively grips right sleeve to hide cuffs,
 unwilling to reach for key to restart car while cop is
 standing next to him.

MOTORCYCLE COP
 OK, Colonel Wright, I'll let
 you off with a warning.

VANITY
 Thank you, officer.

MOTORCYCLE COP
Have a good day, now. And

remember, fix your blinkers.

BRAT
But he doesn't have a gun!

Cop hears Brat and does the point and shoot with his hand, blows on his fingertip like the end of a six-shooter.

VANITY
New York's finest.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - GARBAGE SCOW - NIGHT

FBI agents in police boat stop garbage scow in mid-river, start boarding to search for Vanity, or at least his phone.

INT. HOMELAND SECURITY HQ (2) - DAY

Director Bronson and deputy director Riker sit working with the huge interactive screen.

RIKER
I've lost the New York end,
they've dropped below the
radar.

BRONSON
Someone is helping Vanity and
company...

RIKER
They can't hide for long...

Riker's phone BEEPS - short burst of Looney Tunes intro - to signal an incoming text message. Riker reaches into jacket pocket for phone, presses buttons and we see as he reads:

RIKER (CONT'D)
Sam Goldwyn said: Give me a
smart idiot over a stupid genius
any day.

Riker looks puzzled... Bronson hesitates to ask...

INT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - EVENING

Brat looks as Agent Pat shows badge through the video monitor.

AGENT PAT

Can you tell your mommy I'd

like to see her?

BRAT

MOMMY! Another policeman!

INT. TALK SHOW STUDIO - LATE AFTERNOON

Pat taps Rita on her shoulder, Rita taps female PRODUCER on her shoulder, gestures with hand down, hurry up.

Producer gives the 'go' sign to her boss, TALK SHOW HOST, who has his guests, Jasper, Martha, Miranda, and Wally, sitting at a round table to discuss Vanity's case.

TALK SHOW HOST

Should we worry that there's a genetic freak on the loose?

MARTHA

Vanity owes it to humanity to turn herself in.

WALLY

This gene therapy may not only cure cancer, but all diseases...

TALK SHOW HOST

Will this actress respond to the moral imperative to let science learn from her body?

MIRANDA

She practically cut me out of her will, if that gives you any idea...

WALLY

Even if a rattlesnake bites you, or some nasty jungle virus...

MARTHA

We also have to look at the implications. You can't have a perfectly healthy world...

TALK SHOW HOST

Good point. It would be a challenge for the planet. We can barely sustain life as it is...

WALLY

Of course if you get hit by a bus, you're on your own.

TALK SHOW HOST

Let's address the financial aspects. Acme Bio CEO Jasper Sullivan has just acquired the genetic research lab of Dr. Hedges for an undisclosed sum.

Jasper holds his Blackberry just below the table edge, checking e-mail. Jasper pauses when he hears his name.

TALK SHOW HOST (CONT'D)

Jasper, how much do you think this formula could be worth, ultimately?

JASPER

Acme Bio's market cap today is seventy-four billion dollars... This new discovery could be a multiplier factor of ten.

WALLY

He means ten times the size... mathematically a factor of ten would be ridiculous. Everyone pauses to multiply 74 billion by ten.

TALK SHOW HOST

Come now. You can't expect us to believe that one formula could be worth three-quarters of a trillion dollars?

JASPER

Read my lips. Ten times current market cap.

WALLY

Look what we in the U.S. spend on health care each year... trillions.

JASPER

But don't let the numbers distract you. The real value is in life force.

(MORE)

JASPER (CONT'D)

Think what it will mean to millions
of people to get a second chance at
life, at living.

INT. TV STUDIO - NIGHT

Miranda shows talk show producer the video on her iPhone,
over her shoulder we see a few seconds of the miraculous
transformation of Vanity from old to young.

PRODUCER

This is dynamite, this is
priceless.

MIRANDA

Priceless, I wouldn't choose
exactly that word.

EXT. HARRY'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Black SUVs pull up, Riker gets out of one, Jasper from the
second. Riker presses Harry's buzzer, holds up photo of
Vanity in front of video intercom.

INT. HARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Harry in pajamas walks to door, rubbing eyes and yawning.
Sees photo of Vanity and BUZZES door open.

HARRY

Sorry, forgot to give you a key.

Harry opens door and pauses in reflection, realizes he was
looking at a photograph of Vanity and not the real woman.
Gets nervous and starts to close the door when a boot stomps
in the jamb.

Riker enters, stripes from escalator fading on his face.
Riker points to the living room and Harry walks. Jasper
enters and Riker closes the door.

Harry turns in living room and sees Jasper.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Who are you?

JASPER

Who do you think I am?

Harry points to Riker.

HARRY

He was chasing us in Penn Station today. You must be his boss.

JASPER

Not for nothing are you pulling down full professor pay.

RIKER

Where's the girl, Harry?

Jasper waves him off.

JASPER

Let us sit and reason together.

Riker shoves Harry down onto the single armchair. Jasper sits on the sofa. Riker remains standing.

JASPER (CONT'D)

Forgive my associate, he lacks the social graces.

HARRY

He's not very good on escalators, either.

Riker rubs the vertical lines on his face.

RIKER

Second-degree friction burns.

Riker whips out his Taser and fires a shot into Harry's leg. Harry slides to the floor, twitching.

EXT. HUDSON BOATYARD - 3:30 A.M.

Pat and Miranda, dressed as fishing enthusiasts, stand on dock while YARD MASTER in skiff pours gasoline into outboard motor's tank. A wicker picnic basket sits on the dock next to Miranda.

PAT

If you want to get near the lawyer's boat, why don't we just drive over to Jersey like normal people?

MIRANDA

Miles can't see us coming from his yacht club. If we're seen I want it to look like an accidental meeting.

PAT

Likely to be an accident all right.

Yard Master finishes topping off the tank, slides gas can onto dock and steps out of skiff.

Miranda peels bills off huge wad of cash and hands a few to the Yard Master, puts wad back into combo fishing bag handbag.

YARD MASTER

She's all set, got about an hour and a half of running time, so be careful the current doesn't take you too far toward the harbor.

MIRANDA

Oh no, we're just going to sail between here and the Jersey shore.

PAT

It's called the bank.

Miranda clutches her handbag, anxious.

MIRANDA

What?

Pat points to the other side of the river.

PAT

That's the other bank of the river, the Jersey shore is at the shore.

YARD MASTER

Are you ladies sure you know what you're doing?

Miranda picks up the picnic basket and steps down into the skiff. The boat rocks and Miranda teeters before plopping down by the tiller, the basket in her lap.

MIRANDA

Oh, yeah, sure we...

YARD MASTER

And where's your gear and tackle?

MIRANDA

Don't you have fishing poles in the boat?

Yard Master points to bare skiff.

YARD MASTER

See any?

Miranda looks around her.

MIRANDA

Maybe in the trunk?

PAT

Do you rent poles?

INT. 6TH AVENUE HOTEL - NIGHT

Sark bonks Rita in hotel, she on top facing headboard, he watching TV with one eye. They are reaching climax as Sark sees Vanity turn around on the sofa on late, late, late show. Sark grips Rita by the ass as he shouts.

SARK

Vanity!

Rita slaps him.

EXT. SKIFF ON HUDSON - PRE-DAWN

Miranda steers the boat as Pat digs in picnic basket, pulls out a ham and cheese sandwich.

PAT

Say we do find your Nana on that boat, how you gonna get her off?

Breeze blows Miranda's hair and she exults in the feeling.

MIRANDA

Look at dawn's early light on the water. Nature... who knew?

PAT

Do you know where we're going?

Miranda accepts sandwich from Pat, takes a bite.

MIRANDA

We've got time, maybe we should anchor here and do some fishing.

Pat looks around the small skiff.

PAT

We laid out good money for the poles, but I think he forgot to give us an anchor.

MIRANDA

No harm in drifting a bit.

EXT. JERSEY YACHT CLUB - ESTABLISHING SHOT - PRE-DAWN

The 54-foot Fiberglass Slipper is berthed near river entrance to marina.

INT. MILES'S YACHT - PRE-DAWN

Miles sleeps with arm around young BIMBO on big bed. They both wear sleeping masks.

EXT. SILKY SCREEN STUDIOS - DAWN

Three black SUVs pull up and out pile Riker, Jasper, Harry and Sark. Sark flashes badge to guard.

Jasper, Riker and Sark charge into the lobby, but Harry slips around the building to stairs leading to the river.

INT. MITCH'S STUDIO - DAWN

Vanity walks around behind Mitch's chair and rubs his back.

VANITY

You know, Mitch, I could stand a good man about now.

MITCH

Please don't go there... what if you suddenly turn old? Imagine the psychological damage that could do me...

VANITY
Oh, stop being such a prude.

What are you doing, anyway?

MITCH
I'm uploading your emotional
plea onto YouTube. We'll let
the court of public opinion
judge your case.
(pushes button)

There, done.

Vanity looks onto YouTube page and sees advertisement for herself in Miranda's video.

VANITY
Is that what I think it is?

Mitch clicks on item and video starts rolling.

MITCH
Wow.

VANITY
Bet she sold this, and I'm
entitled to at least half...

Mitch sees Sark and company on security monitor, jumps up and pulls Vanity toward an emergency exit.

MITCH
I need some exercise. C'mon.

VANITY
A sporting proposition... but
what's wrong with your big
sofa?

INT. SILKY SCREEN STUDIOS - DAWN

Riker, Sark and Jasper run down the corridor to Mitch's studio.

EXT. HUDSON PIERS - DAWN

A small rowboat bobs on the Hudson at the bottom of stairs by emergency door from Mitch's studio. Harry jumps the last step. Harry reaches back to bang on the door just as Mitch and Vanity push it open.

MITCH

Harry! What are you doing

here?

VANITY

Did you tell them where to

find us?

Mitch closes door and unties his rowboat.

HARRY

They zapped me... but I...

MITCH

No time, get in kids.

Vanity and takes seat in bow, Harry in stern, and Mitch in the middle starts to pull away from dock.

VANITY

Don't you at least have a

motor? Gee, Mitch, you own

the studio...

MITCH

This is my exercise boat.

Jasper, Sark and Riker burst through emergency door. Riker makes to dive in river and tip the rowboat...

HARRY

So stretch already. Pull,

pull!

Mitch pulls hard on the oars. It's no go for Riker, who stays on shore.

SARK

Stop, in the name of the law!

MITCH

Come and get me, copper!

Sark sees a huge yellow water taxi docked about a hundred meters upriver.

SARK

We'll have to commandeer a vessel.

VANITY

Is this boat safe?

Mitch pauses rowing a second, slaps the gunwale with his palm.

MITCH

More watertight than a fish's pussy.

HARRY

Mitch, come on, Vanity is a real lady.

MITCH

I'll say...

Mitch resumes rowing.

HARRY

Think of her as your grandmother.

MITCH

Oh now you've gone and ruined it, man, probably forever.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - DAWN

Miranda and Pat drift with the current in midstream as Mitch rows across. The boats' paths will intersect. Miranda arcs her fishing pole back to cast, sees the rowboat coming into her field.

MIRANDA

Ahoy there! Make way for my fishing line.

Harry stands up in bow, rocks boat and sits back down.

HARRY

(shouts)

Motor makes way for sail!

(turns back,

in normal voice)

We had a summer house on Lake

Wallenpaupack when I was a kid.

MIRANDA

You're not a sailboat!

HARRY

No motor, same principle!

EXT. HUDSON WATER TAXI AT DOCK - DAWN

Black crepe bedecks the hydrofoil water taxi. A French family has rented the vessel for a burial at sea. French family members in mourning black, including two bruisers, chat with CAPTAIN RICK at the stern.

The boat is tied lengthwise against the dock, bow upriver. On the starboard corner of the stern a coffin is rigged with a hatch to let the body slide out. An inflatable dinghy hangs from the stern proper.

Sark, Jasper and Riker run past a ticket booth where MIDGET ticket seller on stepladder changes numbered cards of departure times.

Sark, Jasper and Riker run up the gangplank, Sark flashes his badge at FIRST MATE and they all run toward the stern.

Sark pushes his way through the throng of family around WIDOW and bumps into coffin, knocks askew a photograph of the deceased wedged under some flowers. The 8x10 glossy shows an Olympic diver in bathing suit, circa 1956.

SARK

Excuse me.

Sark sees the coffin and photo, realizes that he has just apologized to a dead man.

SARK (CONT'D)

Oh.

CAPTAIN RICK

What is the meaning of this?

SARK

I am commandeering this boat

in the name of the law.

CAPTAIN RICK

A fine French family has leased

this vessel for a burial at sea.

Riker steps up to lever and pushes it forward. The hatch opens on tilted coffin platform and the tightly shrouded body slides out head first, part way, and stops.

CAPTAIN RICK (CONT'D)

Should go feet first...

WIDOW

My dear husband was an Olympic

diver... he won the gold medal

in nineteen... in nineteen...

Widow breaks down in sobs.

First Mate pushes the start button. The engine RUMBLES to life and vibrations dislodge the corpse. The body flies head first, CONK, into the dock and falls perpendicular to dock...teeters half on and half off.

Midget ticket seller on dock lifts numbered cards, gives the dive a score of 4.6.

Riker unties a rope on the stern and flings it to shore. The end of the rope hits the waterside half of the corpse. The corpse tilts off the edge and slips into the Hudson River.

Midget ticket seller on dock reverses numbered cards, gives the dive a score of 6.4. Sark leans over the rail to address Midget.

SARK

What are you thinking?

MIDGET

He improved his technique...

CAPTAIN RICK

We can't leave a body in the

river.

RIKER

Tide'll take him out.

Two French bruisers from the family move on Riker, but Sark pulls his gun and fires BANG into the inflatable lifeboat. PSSHHHHHHHHH - the air goes out of dinghy.

SARK

Non! Aha, you see, I speak

French, too.

Captain Rick gestures at the deflated Zodiac.

SARK (CONT'D)

It's against regulations to

fire into the air.

Sark makes whirlybird signal with finger and Captain Rick nods. Captain Rick signals first mate on bridge, who pushes throttle.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - DAWN

The rowboat and skiff converge.

HARRY

Did anyone hear a gunshot?

VANITY

Hey! That's my nurse companion

and creepy great-granddaughter.

MIRANDA

Nana! What are you doing out

here?

PAT

We're coming to rescue you

from Mr. Miles's yacht.

VANITY

You're just trying to suck my

blood, to get rich and young.

Mitch stops rowing and the boats are about to collide.

HARRY

Cast off! Abeam there, stay

away!

MITCH

Boating days are some way
behind you, eh matey?

VANITY

Look, the taxi is taking off.

All look to Manhattan shore and see huge yellow water taxi
leave dock and turn toward them.

MITCH

C'mon, you've got the motor
here...

MIRANDA

Oh yeah, what's in it for me?

MITCH

I'll put you in pictures, kid.

VANITY

He really does own a studio.

MIRANDA

OK, deal.

Mitch climbs aboard and ties his dock line to a cleat on the
skiff. Mitch takes the tiller and starts leading them toward
New Jersey.

MITCH

Where are we going to land?

MIRANDA

Yacht club, straight ahead.

VANITY

We can't outrun them.

Vanity points at the water taxi. All turn to see the
hydrofoil lift out of the water as it gains speed.

MITCH

That's a New York taxi,
probably not licensed to
operate over the state line.

VANITY

Harry's a lawyer...

HARRY
It's most likely licensed by
the Metropolitan Transit
Authority, run by New York
and New Jersey.

EXT. HUDSON WATER TAXI - DAWN

Sark, Jasper and Riker stand on the bridge with Captain Rick,
see skiff towing the rowboat into marina.

SARK
Pedal to the metal, run Ôem
down.

JASPER
No, we need her alive.

SCREAMS as distraught French widow jumps into the river from
the stern.

FIRST MATE
Woman overboard!

Captain Rick turns hard to port to rescue his passenger,
throwing everyone off balance. Riker leaps to the wheel and
turns the boat the other way.

SARK
I commandeered this vessel.

CAPTAIN RICK
But it's the first law of the

sea...

A power boat in the river stops and men aboard pull the
Frenchwoman from the water.

JASPER
She'll be fine.

SARK
She'd had enough of this vale

of tears.

Riker spits in the water, but the wind carries the glob of
spit back on board to Sark's jacket.

RIKER

Poetry.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - DAWN

The small boats cross the entrance to the yacht club marina.

PAT

Get in here with all the other

boats. They can't run full

speed into a marina.

Mitch turns to see the water taxi veering wildly.

MIRANDA

There's Miles's yacht, the

Fiberglass Slipper.

HARRY

Look, a ladder thingie on the

back.

MITCH

It's a boarding ladder, on

the stern, built-in.

Mitch cuts the motor. They glide to the stern ladder and climb aboard.

VANITY

I'll go cast off the lines.

MITCH

Good girl.

Mitch runs to the bridge and starts the engine. Vanity throws off the lines and boards again, goes to the bridge. Mitch eases the boat from its berth and turns toward the Hudson. Harry, Miranda and Pat stand behind Mitch.

HARRY

I have to pee.

MITCH

Mind the wind direction, Harry.

HARRY

I was thinking bathroom.

Pat gestures for Harry to go look for himself, and he does.

INT. YACHT BEDROOM - DAWN

RUMBLE of engine wakens Miles and Bimbo. Miles gets out of bed, pulls a handgun from the bedside table drawer.

MILES

Stay here.

Mile goes forward on the starboard side as Harry comes round on the port side. Harry enters the master suite and Bimbo SCREAMS.

HARRY

Don't worry, I'm a lawyer.

BIMBO

Oh. Is this a convention?

EXT. WATER TAXI BRIDGE - DAWN

Sark, Jasper and Riker stand on the bridge with Captain Rick, see skiff and rowboat adrift as yacht powers forward.

SARK

I command you to ram that ship.

CAPTAIN RICK

How about if I block? That

yacht will cut my bow in

half.

EXT. YACHT BRIDGE - DAWN

Mitch at the wheel sees the water taxi slide sideways to block his exit from the marina. Mitch throttles up to slip between the taxi and the end of dock, damage be damned, when Miles enters the bridge and points his gun at Mitch.

MILES

Stop this vessel.

VANITY

Miles!

MILES

Vanity. Miranda, Nurse. What's

going on here?

MIRANDA

They're trying to get away
from the police.

PAT

And Acme Bio.
(points to Jasper
on water taxi)
See him?

Mitch throttles up again and Miles can't stand to see his
beloved yacht damaged, leaps to cut throttle.

MILES

No, she just came out of
dry-dock!

Harry pushes Miles, who bumps into Mitch, wheel turns and
yacht slams right into water taxi. The jolt sends everyone
stumbling just as Bimbo enters bridge in panties.

VANITY

Miles! I didn't know you had
it in you.

MILES

Neither did I.

MITCH

Yech, he's old enough to be
her grandfather.

BIMBO

He wasn't bad.

Sark, Riker and Jasper step across to the yacht from bow of
the water taxi. Sark points to Mitch at the wheel.

SARK

You, steer this vessel to the
Hudson Piers.

(points to

Vanity)

She's going to Queens...

(points to
Miranda and Pat)

And so are they.

(points to
Mitch and Harry)

You two are going with me to
lock-up.

INT. GENETIC RESEARCH LAB - MORNING

Vanity stands splayed on a wheel frame like Leonardo da Vinci's man, strapped down for genome sequencing and surrounded by animal cages.

Martha and Carly stand with Jasper as Miranda and Pat listen nearby.

MARTHA

...patient experienced a
miracle cure of tuberculosis
when she was just a child, in
and she tests positive
for immunity to the Spanish
flu from the pandemic of 1918.

MIRANDA

That's what she told me.

CARLY

I hypothesize that the Spanish
flu saved her life. Her immune
system kicked into overdrive
and killed the TB, but was not
so strong as to kill the host.

JASPER

You mean her, herself?

CARLY

So if we immunize people with
the vaccine for Spanish flu...

MARTHA

It's not so simple. We not
only have to vaccinate, but
induce a controlled cytokine
storm, for it's the hyper
reaction of the immune system
that changed the protein
structure of her cells...

JASPER

Are you telling me she's one
in a million? That only she
can...

MARTHA

More like one in a billion,
or one in ten billion, but I
can replicate the process.

CARLY

But we can still figure out
exactly how the gene transfer
cured her cancer, made her
young and healthy.

PAT

I'm willing to volunteer.

JASPER

Forget cancer, even healthy
people want to be young and
beautiful.

VANITY

I was born beautiful, not made.

Martha fills hypodermic syringe from small vial and holds the syringe up to the light.

MARTHA

I mixed the formula with
bacteria that causes a strong
immune reaction, Borrelia
burgdorferi.

JASPER

What in God's name...

CARLY

Lyme disease, might work.

PAT

I said I'd volunteer, but now...

MARTHA

Medical ethics call for me to
test the formula on myself.

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - MORNING

Wally in a sweatsuit jogs up Central Park West, next to the low stone wall. Rita trails him in running shoes, wearing another stunning red dress.

RITA

Why don't we run in the park?

Wally points to the stone wall.

WALLY

I don't like enclosed spaces.

Wally's iPhone in Rita's bag RINGS (loud, old-fashioned telephone ring). She pauses to get the phone out, but Wally keeps jogging. Rita sees the name SARK displayed on screen and runs to hand it to Wally.

It's a relay race as Rita stretches out her hand and Wally reaches back for the iPhone, but Wally fumbles the relay. He trips and drops the iPhone. The chrome mirror phone skitters into street.

Step van driver sees the phone and makes face of idiotic glee, veers to run over it. The front wheel flips the phone, and the rear wheel crushes it.

Wally scrambles out to fetch the cellular wreckage. He picks up the smashed iPhone and it RINGS. Wally gingerly holds mess and swipes screen to answer. Pulls away bloody finger. Phone continues to RING.

Wally puts his eye to the screen, winds up for the pitch and wings the tip of his index finger onto the spot for answer. The call comes through.

Wally holds up bleeding finger and shakes it at Rita, nods at it for her to do something. Rita rummages in handbag and pulls out pair of lace panties.

WALLY (CONT'D)
Hello? Sark? You wouldn't

believe what just happ...

yes, Special Agent Sark.

Rita shrugs and holds panties out for Wally to let her wrap his finger. Wally sees the day of the week embroidered on the panties: Sunday.

SARK (O.S.)
Vanity's been taken to the lab

in Queens, meet us there ASAP.

WALLY
(to Rita)
No, that would be a sin.

SARK (O.S.)
What do you mean?

WALLY
Not you, Rita wants me to put
my finger in her panties here,
I mean, uh...

SARK (O.S.)
Why that two-timing...

WALLY
No, we're on the sidewalk...

INT. TAXICAB - MORNING

Sark sits between Harry and Mitch as taxi comes round southern end of Manhattan on waterfront drive. Sark talks on phone with Wally.

SARK
Ooh, never tried that.

WALLY (O.S.)
We'll hop in a taxi now.

Mitch makes a sign to Harry, let's take him.

SARK
The more the merrier.

Sark hangs up and Mitch grabs a choke-hold on Sark.

MITCH
His cuffs, Harry! Get his
cuffs...

Harry fumbles around Sark's belt, cannot find any cuffs.

SARK
Na na na na na nah! Fooled
you. I left my cuffs at the
office last night.

Mitch grabs Sark's revolver and whips it out the window into the East River. Mitch releases Sark.

SARK (CONT'D)
You can't dispose of a firearm
like... hey, that belongs to a
special agent of the FBI.

MITCH
Yeah, Special Agent Sark, who
lost his gun in a taxi...

HARRY
(to driver)
Queensboro Bridge, and step
on it.

Mitch pulls out his telephone.

MITCH
My roadies live in Queens.

Give me the address, I'll
have them meet us there.

INT. GENETICS LAB - MORNING

Martha leans down to look in rat cage and the corner
adornments on her eyeglass frames hook on steel mesh of cage.

MARTHA
The tumor's gone... does this
rat look younger to you?

Martha stands up and blinks... realizes that her glasses are
missing. Martha picks them from the cage.

Carly doesn't notice as she leans in to look at rat.

CARLY
Hard to say...
(to rat)
Gootchie-gootchie-goo!

Martha wets a cotton ball with rubbing alcohol, swabs her
arm.

VANITY
Hardly sanitary, with all
these animals around.

CARLY
This lab is clean.

MARTHA
I have no choice...

Martha picks up hypodermic needle and injects herself.

Carly grabs rolling office chair and slides it under Martha.

CARLY
You should at least sit down,
Martha, don't you remember
what happened to...

Martha drops syringe on tile floor and leans back in chair, closes her eyes.

JASPER
Is she all right?

MIRANDA
We can still make a deal...

Martha opens her eyes, sits up.

MARTHA
I don't feel so well.

Martha begins to choke and gag, spits out a tooth, which TINGS on monkey cage.

CARLY
This is just what Vanity did.

It's working!

Martha coughs again and spits up bloody mess of bridgework and capped teeth, rotten teeth.

VANITY
I didn't spit up any blood.

Martha opens her mouth and stretches her lips, moves her tongue around trying to understand what's going on. It's hideous, with many teeth missing, but this time they are not growing back.

Martha slumps back into chair as biological change overwhelms her. Close-up on her face shows wrinkle appearing over left eye, then it's twin over the right.

Martha ages five decades in a minute, from fifty-two to over a hundred. Her hands become not just old, but extremely arthritic, curled up in lumpy claws.

Martha comes to, tries to sit up but can't, MOANS.

CARLY
Oh dear Lord.

VANITY
Back to the old drawing

board, eh?

Jasper heads for the door, turns before leaving.

JASPER
I'll see you get the Medal of
Freedom for this heroic...

MARTHA
Stick it on my coffin, from
the way I feel.

MIRANDA
This is going to be a hard
sell...

JASPER
Stay here, Riker. I have to
make a few private calls.

EXT. GENETIC RESEARCH LAB - MORNING

The taxi pulls up just as a van does. Mitch, Harry and Sark
get out of taxi as roadies get out of van. Mitch pushes Sark
to ROADIE BOSS.

MITCH
Keep a grip on this one.
Roadie Boss turns to crew.

ROADIE BOSS
Grip!

INT. GENETIC RESEARCH LAB - MORNING

Mitch and roadies storm into the lab. Mitch points to Riker,
who starts to run. Two roadies tackle Riker. A row of large
cages runs along one wall, with only two monkeys together in
one of the cages.

VANITY
Mitch! Thank God.

Mitch points to Vanity on the wheel frame and the roadies
start to free her. Harry walks in the lab.

VANITY (CONT'D)
And Harry! My new best
friends.

(points to
computer)

My genome sequence is in that
machine, that's what they're
after.

Mitch sees ancient Martha next to computer, steps over and
picks up her wrinkled hand. Carly stands silent.

MITCH

The next lucky patient, huh?

Don't worry, honey, you'll be
tap dancing before lunchtime.

VANITY

She's the doctor. Tried the
formula but it worked
backwards.

Mitch drops Martha's hand.

MITCH

Well, what's all the fuss
about? This trick doesn't even
work right.

CARLY

There are some wrinkles.

MITCH

Good line.

VANITY

Just copy the formula and
publish it in the paper, then
it won't be a secret. I need
to be free.

MITCH

Oh, I think we can spread the

word without printing.

Wally and Rita enter the lab. A roadie blocks the door behind them.

MITCH (CONT'D)
OK, Vanity, push the button.

This will send your genome
map all around the world
via the Office of Biotechnology
Activities mailing list.

Vanity steps to the keyboard. Mitch points to the 'Enter' key and Vanity pushes it.

WALLY
That's government property.

VANITY
It's my body.

Mitch's iPhone BEEPS and he looks.

MITCH
Your video went viral. The
White House just issued a
presidential pardon.

Vanity hugs Mitch and plants a big kiss right on his lips. Mitch pushes Vanity away, holding her by the shoulders.

Mitch makes a face of disgust, then realizes that he rather enjoyed it, and that Vanity is indeed beautiful. Mitch returns the kiss with fervor.

Vanity and Mitch kiss for a long minute until Harry coughs to break up the hot and heavy action.

HARRY
What should we do with all
these people?

A pause. Vanity notices the OBA manual on the counter.

VANITY
Confine the organisms.

Harry and Mitch and Mitch's roadies herd Riker, Wally, Rita, Pat, Miranda and Sark into large cages.

VANITY (CONT'D)

(points to
Rita)

Leave her out. That red dress

is too wild to put in a cage.

Miranda shouts from the cage she is about to share with Pat.

MIRANDA

What about me, Nana, your own

flesh and blood?

VANITY

In you go.

MIRANDA

(to Mitch)

Hey, what about my picture

deal?

Mitch tosses a banana to Miranda.

MITCH

We'll do lunch.

Two lab monkeys begin to have sex in their cage.

CARLY

Can't someone stop those

animals?

WALLY

Hose that monkey down, cool

him off!

Sark makes eyes at Rita from his cage, raises eyebrows.

Wally throws a banana at the male monkey's head, narrowly misses. No reaction.

Miranda throws her banana hard, BONK, and hits the monkey on the head.

The male monkey pulls away from female and ejaculates out of the cage onto pink tile floor.

WALLY (CONT'D)
That's disgusting.

Male monkey peels the banana and breaks it in half, gives one piece to mate and starts eating the remaining half.

SARK
Well, that's sweet.

PAT
More thoughtful than my
husband.

Rita starts dancing hot number.

VANITY
What good is half a banana to
her?

MARTHA
I want to have a good cry...
just not sure I can spare the
moisture.

Male monkey tosses banana peel on floor next to sperm.

Jasper walks into lab in take-charge manner.

JASPER
What a collection of misfits.

If you want a job done right,
you have to do it yourself.

Jasper sidesteps banana peel and slips on monkey semen - BAM.

Rita WHOOPS. Vanity, Mitch and Harry start laughing. Confined organisms, including monkeys, screech and howl with laughter.

Martha starts to smile, then cracks up laughing.

FADE OUT

THE END