



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

CRIME

The Making of a Predator, Part II

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



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

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 Bob, always the withdrawn, less social of the two, at first moved his office to another floor, then to a separate building.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

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

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

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

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

Even the talent viewed Bob with not a little anxiety.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cain and Enabler

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

All in the Family

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

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

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

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

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



Foreground and background: Harvey and Bob in 2002.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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