ACT 1

Setting: A young woman’s well-appointed bedroom complete with balcony and adjoining bathroom; the books, decorations and stuffed animals on the bookshelves are left from a time when the woman was younger. Two half-unpacked suitcases sit on the settee and floor.

At Rise: Sitting on the frilly bed is that very same young woman: AMANDA WESTGATE, now 25. She is thin, pretty and currently in a bathrobe, bound and gagged with articles of her clothing.

After a few moments RAMÓN MARTINEZ (25) nervously enters with a small bag.

RAMÓN

Man, I thought in a house like this there’d be money and jewelry lying around everywhere. But there’s nothin’! I mean, those paintings downstairs…you know, the weird-looking ones… they’re prolly worth a lot, right? Ah, never mind; I don’t think any pawn shop would want ‘em. So great! This is it: a bag of silverware.

(He holds up the bag and jiggles it.)

This IS real silver, right?

AMANDA *(shrugging)*

Mf gff zp.

RAMÓN

Personally, I just use the plastic stuff from take-out, you know? I mean, you rinse it off and it’s as good as new. But this stuff…I can hock this, right?

AMANDA

Zr wdn ng.

RAMÓN

OK, if I take off the gag, you promise not to yell?

AMANDA

Mm hm.

RAMÓN

‘Cause I am one dangerous *hombre*, OK? Don’t try anything.

(He removes the tank top that was tied around her mouth.)

AMANDA

Oh thank God. I was having a hard time breathing. I have a slightly deviated septum.

RAMÓN

Oh, sorry. Actually I don’t even know what that is. But when you started screamin’, you know, I didn’t have time to ask about your… deev…your deevee…whatever that is. I had to shut you up.

AMANDA

Well, you can’t blame me for being startled! I thought I was alone.

RAMÓN

Hey, I thought I was alone too!

AMANDA

But it’s my house!

(beat)

RAMÓN

OK, good point. It’s just that I never seen you around here before.

AMANDA

Well technically, it’s the house I grew up in. I’ve been away for years…I just got back in town two nights ago. Just in time for my parents’ going to a political fund raiser tonight.

RAMÓN

Yeah, I know. That’s why I thought this joint would be empty.

AMANDA

How do you know about my parents’ plans?

RAMÓN

I been cleanin’ the pool here for better part of a year now.

AMANDA

You work for my parents? They know you?

(beat)

RAMÓN

No! I meant, uh…this other guy who cleans the pool…he told me about it. Said they was arguin’ about that…what was it again?

AMANDA

A $10,000 a plate dinner so some asshole donors can suck up to some asshole politician who will then write some asshole legislature that says they don’t have to pay taxes.

RAMÓN

Sweet. Anyway I thought, “Hey, perfect.” When they come back, they prolly won’t even know all those piles of dough are missin’ ‘cuz they got so much.

AMANDA

Mommy and Daddy do not leave ‘piles of dough’ lying around the house.

RAMÓN

No, huh?

AMANDA

No. The maid, the cook and the cleaning people would probably just help themselves each week.

RAMÓN

Oh yeah. Hey, none o’ them are comin’ by here, are they?

AMANDA

No, they have the weekend off.

RAMÓN

Good. You sure you don’t have anything else that’s valuable around here?

AMANDA

Sorry.

RAMÓN

Come on, they gotta have a safe or somethin’.

AMANDA

No, Daddy doesn’t keep any money here. It’s all invested in off-shore drilling, strip mining and various other ways of destroying the planet.

RAMÓN

How about furs? Ya got any furs?

AMANDA

Oh please, nobody wears fur anymore; it’s so wrong! (beat) I mean unless it’s really, really cold out; then it’s OK. My girlfriend Tammy and I once saw a woman wearing a fox stole and we threw ketchup on her.

RAMÓN

Wha-a-at?! What are you, *loca*?

AMANDA

It was supposed to be symbolic. It was supposed to look like…you know…

RAMÓN

What, blood?

(Amanda gags.)

What’s the matter?

AMANDA

Nothing. Look, could you please untie me?

RAMÓN

Why? So you can get away?

AMANDA

No, I promise not to go anywhere. I’m just starting to hyperventilate a little.

RAMÓN

Really? OK. I’m trustin’ you.

(He sits next to her and unties her wrists.)

AMANDA

Thank you.

RAMÓN

Just remember, I could always use this!

(He pulls a pistol from his jacket pocket.)

AMANDA

Oh my God!

(She faints against him.)

RAMÓN

Hey! Get offa me! What are you doin’? Hey!

(He puts the pistol back in his jacket and shakes her awake.)

AMANDA

What? Oh, sorry. It’s just…guns. I hate guns. It means there's probably going to be shooting and bleeding… Oh God, I said the 'b' word!

(She gags.)

I’m sorry, but just the thought of…you know…

RAMÓN

What, blood?

(She gags again.)

AMANDA

Sorry, it makes me want to throw up. Or pass out.

RAMÓN

You should see a doctor.

AMANDA

Oh, I see several. My therapist Dr. Kishner thinks I'm actually progressing very well. Oh that reminds me, I'll have to ask Dr. Matthews if he can see me again while I'm back in town. Oh, I hope Dr. Melman doesn't think that I stopped seeing him on purpose. Although if he does feel that way, I could always go back to Dr. Silverman. God, maybe I shouldn’t have stopped seeing Melman because…

RAMÓN

Oh, *Díos mío*! Are you serious? You see all those guys and none of them have fixed you up? You should dump all of them.

AMANDA

No, that would not be a good idea, trust me. In fact…

(She crosses to an open suitcase, extracts a small bag and crosses to her

dresser where she removes and sets up various prescription bottles.)

RAMÓN

What are you doin’?

AMANDA

Just saying hello to my little friends: Prozac…Zoloft…Paxil…Celexa…

RAMÓN

You’re really sick, huh?

AMANDA

Hey! That is a very judgmental word.

RAMÓN

Sorry, I didn’t mean anything bad. I just never knew anybody who needs that much medicine.

AMANDA

I don’t know anyone who doesn’t. Um…Aderol…Xanax…hmm. Eeny meeny miney…OK, you and…you.

(She throws the two pills in her mouth and swallows.)

RAMÓN

You don’t need water or nothin’?

AMANDA

No, I’ve always been very good at swallowing*.* (beat) You’re not going to make a sexual joke about that?

RAMÓN

About what?

AMANDA

Never mind. Is this going to take much longer? Because I really should talk to Dr. Kishner about it as soon as possible.

RAMÓN

Yeah, all right. If there’s nothin’ else around, I may as well bounce before your folks get back. But… (He pats the gun in his pocket.) …you’re not gonna say nothin’ about me, right?

AMANDA

Fine, I won’t. (beat) You know what Dr. Kishner says about guns? They're just an extension of a man’s penis.

RAMÓN

Hey! That’s some bullshit, aw’ight? I don’t need no damned extension. I never got no complaints before.

AMANDA

That’s not what he meant; it’s a symbol of male aggression. Although that’s not always a bad thing. In fact, I told him about this really hot dream I had once about this guy with a really big gun…

RAMÓN

Whoa, whoa, whoa! Too much; I don’t need to hear any more. Personally, I think all this faintin’ and shit is prolly just low blood sugar. That’s what my Auntie Rosa has, so she needs to be eatin’ all the time so she’s not passin’ out all over the place.

(He reaches into the bag and throws her a granola bar.)

So before I go, eat somethin’.

AMANDA

Where’s this from?

RAMÓN

Downstairs. I told you, I was lookin’ through all the drawers and cabinets. Not only is there no money here, you don’t even have food! Just that! At least there was some liquor.

(He pulls out an open bottle of brandy and takes a swig.)

AMANDA

Mommy and Daddy are probably planning on eating out all weekend so they told María not to bother shopping.

RAMÓN

María, huh? Let me guess: the other help is Juan and Juanita.

AMANDA

No! (beat)It’s Carlos and Consuela.

RAMÓN

I knew it!

AMANDA

What?

RAMÓN

What?! I bet Carlos and Consuela don’t even have their papers, huh? That way Mommy and Daddy get their help real cheap.

AMANDA

I would think you’d be grateful that some of your people had jobs.

RAMÓN

Oh!!! You did NOT just say that! My people? Just cuz my name’s Ramón Martinez, we must’ve all swum across the Rio Grande together?

AMANDA

You realize you just told me your name.

RAMÓN

DAMN IT! (beat) It’s…it’s an alias, OK?

AMANDA

Sure. Look, I don’t know if they’re here illegally or not. Or you.

RAMÓN

I’ll tell you who’s here illegally: you!

AMANDA

I beg your pardon?

RAMÓN

Unless your name’s Sacajawea.

AMANDA

It’s Amanda.

RAMÓN

Then your peeps weren’t here 500 years ago when all the *gabachos* started invading.

AMANDA

I am not a...whatever that word is.

RAMÓN

*Gabacho.* It means foreigner. Anybody who’s not Native American.

AMANDA

Oh. Well, you’re not Native American.

RAMÓN

Say what?! I’m Mestizo on my mama’s side. *Viva la raza,* baby! So yeah, me and my bro’s been here for thousands of years. And then all you foreigners start illegally invading our country. You know where you are, right?

AMANDA

Beverly Hills.

RAMÓN

No, I’m talkin’ about the real name: el Norte de Méjico! California, *Téjas*, Arizona, Nevada. That was all ours. Then all you *illegales* come west, look around and say, “Well golly…this is real nice…so we’re gonna take it! All you brown-skins…”

(He sets the bottle on the night table and pulls out the pistol.)

“…get across that river!”

AMANDA

A-a-h!!!

(She faints onto the floor.)

RAMÓN

Ah shit. Hey, come on, I got carried away…

(He puts the gun on the bed, then kneels down straddling her.

He shakes her shoulders.)

Come on, wake up.

AMANDA

What happened?

RAMÓN

You fainted again.

AMANDA

Oh.

RAMÓN

You really do have to eat something. Here.

(He hands her the Granola bar.)

AMANDA

No, I have a sort of eating disorder. I'm not really into food.

RAMÓN

That’s crazy. Come on, you gotta eat…keep your strength up. I don’t wanna see you fallin’ down again and gettin’ hurt.

AMANDA

Really? That’s kind of sweet. O.K., I guess I could have a little. I can always throw it up later.