
32 Park Lane
ONE ACT PLAY

Characters:

AMANDA: Playing age 30 +, shy, god fearing woman, has a past but has turned her life around.

NICOLE: Playing age 30+, Queen B type. Strong and confident. Perhaps gone a little stir crazy in the suburban life she has found for herself. She has some real dark moments in the play.

MICHELLE: Playing age 30+, A normal woman who has found herself in trouble. Always remembers where people have come from. Needs to have a strong emotional range.

JOHN: Playing age 30+, Very small part at the end of the play.

The curtain opens on a basic shed interior. Along the back wall hang some standard tools. An old wooden chair faces the front of the stage. On it is slumped Michelle with a blindfold covering her eyes. There is also an assortment of garden ornaments and items in particular a large ugly garden gnome and a pink lawn flamingo. A set of golf clubs is very visible as well. At the very front of the stage there is a tarp or an old dust sheet that clearly has something beneath it. Nicole sits either on an old stool or milk crate and just watches Michelle. As the lights fade up. A few moments pass where she paces slightly before returning to the seat. Psyching herself up. There is a sudden bustle as a door down stage left opens and Amanda walks in looking at her phone.

AMANDA:

Nicole? I got your text to meet you in here? I thought we were going over to the house to see...

*She suddenly looks up at the situation.
(Audibly shocked and panicked)*

What are you doing? What the bloody hell is this?

Amanda goes and checks Michelle who is slumped in the chair.

I thought we were just going around to have a chat with her?

NICOLE:

Change of plans.

AMANDA:

You should have waited for me. How did this happen? I don't understand, what is going on?

NICOLE:

You took too long.

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AMANDA:

Do we need to tie her up? Why is she unconscious? What have you done? Nicole?

NICOLE:

Shush. Did anyone see you?

AMANDA

I still don't understand Nicole. What is going on? You send me some cryptic text and I walk into this. Lord give me strength.

NICOLE:

I need to know did anyone see you?

AMANDA:

No, I don't think they did. Now tell me what is going on?

NICOLE:

Things got a little heated so I gave her a little something to calm her down.

AMANDA:

Oh my gawd! What did you give her?

NICOLE:

Some of my sleeping pills, I put them in her tea.

AMANDA:

You... you drugged her?

NICOLE:

Stop asking so many bloody questions. Are you going to help me or what?

AMANDA:

I don't really want to, I don't understand what we are doing. Nicole we need to stop this before it goes too far.

NICOLE:

We need to scare her into putting things right Amanda. Affirmative action.

AMANDA:

Maybe we should just put her back and pretend like it didn't happen.

NICOLE:

It is a bit late for that.

AMANDA:

Nicole I can't do this. You said...

NICOLE:

Amanda either you help me with this, or I tell everyone at church about your little secret. Do you want that to happen?

AMANDA:

No.

NICOLE:

Fine. Now trust me.

AMANDA:

Trust you??!! Your threatening to expose the one secret I've shared with you. I hate the fact that you know about any of it. I wish I had never told you.

NICOLE:

Well you did, you can't handle your wine and you did. You were lucky you got let off with a good behaviour bond. The judge and jury bought your little sob story about how your boyfriend made you do it. Fraud is a very serious crime. It is a crime the nice people of this neighbourhood and your church would take very seriously.

AMANDA:

You know I didn't do it knowingly. That he made me do it. People at my church can't find out. I love it there, I can't move again. It would kill me.

NICOLE:

Then your only choice is to help then isn't it? Now wake her up!

AMANDA:

What I told you was a secret Nicole. But you deal in secrets don't you Nicole? I hate it.

NICOLE:

(With authority)

Wake her up!

AMANDA:

Walks over to Michelle and pokes her. Nothing happens. She shakes her gently.

You said we were just going to talk to her about it.Well let's get this over with. We ask her to fix the house and that's all.

Wakey Wakey, eggs and bakey.

NICOLE:

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Are you kidding?

AMANDA:

Well I don't know, do I?

NICOLE:

Just wake her up, you don't need to call her for breakfast.

AMANDA:

She's waking up. What happens now?

NICOLE:

How the hell do I know, do you think I do this often?

AMANDA:

Yes... no... oh I don't know... perhaps.

NICOLE:

No. This just sort of happened.

AMANDA:

Oh, you just carry sedatives in your handbag ALL the time then, just in case?

Michelle begins to stir, she is in a sudden panic as soon as you realises her hands are bound and her eyes are blindfolded.

MICHELLE:

(Panicked ad lib during the previous few lines)

Hello, is anyone there?

AMANDA:

(Whispered, hushed)

What do we do? Does she know it's us?

NICOLE:

(Hissing)

Shut up!

MICHELLE:

Where am I? Where am I? What do you want?

AMANDA:

Can't you give her some more?

NICOLE:

Then what? She has to wake up some time!

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AMANDA:

But...but I'm not ready.

MICHELLE:

Who...are you? If it is money you are after I can get it for you, just let me go.

AMANDA:

(Tries to whisper but it comes out too loud.)

What do we do?

MICHELLE:

Amanda is that you?

AMANDA:

(Unconvincingly)

No.

NICOLE:

Well now you've stuffed it up. She knows who you are now.

MICHELLE:

Nicole? What is going on? Is this some sort of joke?

NICOLE:

I could ask you the same question.

Nicole moves to take the blind fold off Michelle. Amanda pulls over a small step stool and perches on it.

MICHELLE:

What are you on about?

NICOLE:

Your house.

MICHELLE:

What about it?

AMANDA:

It's pink.

NICOLE:

It's neon pink.

MICHELLE:

Yes and?

NICOLE:

And a pink house is against the rules of the home owners association.

AMANDA:

Not to mention, it's so bright you can probably see it from space.

Amanda stifles a chuckle almost hysterically. It's clear the other two do not find it funny.

NICOLE:

Yes alright Amanda, now is not the time for humour. The community guidelines clearly states that the only acceptable colours are duck egg blue, mineral white, or natural stone. Anything else ruins the aesthetic for the street. As this year's president, I have a standard to uphold.

AMANDA:

Not to mention, everyone I know at church is talking about it. Asking me what it is like living next door to the crazy woman who painted her house pink.

NICOLE:

This is not about you, thank you, Amanda.

MICHELLE:

So, you kidnapped me and locked me in... Hang on is this your shed.

NICOLE:

That hardly matters.

AMANDA:

Won't your husband notice a woman tied up in the shed?

NICOLE:

No, Paul is away... golfing this week.

AMANDA:

Oh lovely, anywhere nice?

NICOLE:

He's gone out of state with some friends. They left on Wednesday, not sure when he will be back.

AMANDA:

(Pointing out the golf clubs)

Without his golf clubs?

NICOLE:

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Oh, silly bugger must have forgotten them. I have always suspected it is more about drinking than golf when he goes on those weekends.

MICHELLE:

Excuse me, can we get back to me?

NICOLE:

(Overdramatic)

Wow. I did not expect you to be such a diva as a hostage!

AMANDA:

Honestly Michelle, how can you be so selfish at a time like this?

MICHELLE:

Are you kidding?

NICOLE:

(Still being dramatic)

I feel like I need a lie down after all this excitement.

MICHELLE:

You have got to be joking Nikki? You kidnapped me because of the house colour? I don't remember walking over here. Hang on, did you put something in my tea?

NICOLE:

Just a mild sedative.

MICHELLE:

Oh my gawd.

NICOLE:

Don't be so melodramatic. I take it all the time when I have one of my episodes.

MICHELLE:

Nikki, you can't just kidnap people if you don't like the colour they have painted their house!

AMANDA:

(Quietly)

She has a point.

NICOLE:

Shut up Amanda, and will you stop calling me Nikki, my name is Nicole, thank you very much.

MICHELLE:

You didn't mind being called Nikki when you lived on the other side of the tracks. What was that nickname you used to have when we were in school? Oh that's it "Nympho Nikki!" That is what everyone used to call you isn't it?

NICOLE:

(Offended)

No they didn't!

MICHELLE:

Well not to your face anyway. They used to call you that because of what someone saw you doing in the back of David's old Dodge Challenger. Oh and then there was Michael, and Damien oh and Nick – the stories they told us. We all laughed at you. You are a far away from that now aren't you? Married up and away from that life. Here on Park Lane with Paul.

NICOLE:

I don't think you are in a position to be bringing all of this up... do you?

Pause.

MICHELLE:

Are you going to let me go or what?

NICOLE:

Are you going to re-paint your house?

MICHELLE: No.

NICOLE:

Then no. You are going to stay here as long as it takes for you to change your mind.

MICHELLE:

I won't!

Pause.

Michelle is looking around the shed and eyes the gnome.

Is that my garden gnome from last year? Did you steal it?

NICOLE:

I moved it. It is unsightly.

MICHELLE:

I liked him.

NICOLE:

He is not up to code.

MICHELLE:

Right.

Pause.

Amanda has begun to look around and she spots the flamingo.

AMANDA:

Hang on, that is my flamingo!

NICOLE:

It certainly is. I told you to take it down.

AMANDA:

My daughter got me that.

NICOLE:

I don't care if the pope gifted it to you as a holy relic. It is vile and...

MICHELLE:

Not up to code? I know you and your bloody code.

Pause.

NICOLE:

You know we'll have to punish you, if you don't repaint the house Michelle.

AMANDA:

(Steps in quickly)

Wait Nicole... I want to get to the bottom of this. Michelle, can I ask you something?

MICHELLE:

Do I have a choice?

AMANDA:

Why did you paint your house that awful colour?

MICHELLE:

Erm... well...

NICOLE:

There is really no valid excuse for that level of crazy if you ask me.

AMANDA:

Please tell me why? Maybe then I could understand it. I mean it really is an awful colour.

MICHELLE:

Okay, fine. John's left me.

AMANDA:

What?

MICHELLE:

Yes, on Wednesday. He woke me up in the middle of the night and said he just couldn't do it anymore. He said he had met someone else. He packed his stuff and went to live with them.

AMANDA:

Oh my gawd. Who?

MICHELLE:

I don't know. I think it is someone local though, because he didn't take the car. I woke up Thursday morning, went to Bunnings and got the paint. Pink. John hates pink. He says its vulgar.

NICOLE:

He is right. It is. Oh dear, always with the drama aren't you Michelle! I assume you have no clue who it is he has left you for?

MICHELLE:

No. I don't think I want to know either. I just hope he sees the house and it makes him think. I hope he regrets leaving me for whoever she is. I hope he regrets throwing away 15 years of marriage.

It begins to get a little heated as Nicole loses her cool.

NICOLE:

So through temporary insanity you painted the house pink? Well you have to paint it back now. You've had your little tantrum, now fix it. You are acting like a spoilt brat.

MICHELLE:

No. It's not like that. It's 15 years down the drain. I just feel so...

NICOLE:

Yes it is. I'm not surprised John left you. Especially if you used to act this bat-shit crazy with him there!

MICHELLE:

What would you know about it Nikki? You say I'm crazy, you are the psycho who drugged me... and kidnapped me. And all because I painted my house a colour you didn't like? Or is it more than that? Are you jealous or something? I know John

just left me but I see how Paul treats you. My husband may have run off with another woman but at least he was nice to me whilst we were married! I tell you what, when I get free from here I am going straight to the nearest police station and telling them...

NICOLE:

Don't you dare! For the last time, my name is Nicole!

MICHELLE:

You will always be Nympho Nikki. You are a poisonous bitch as well!

NICOLE:

(She gets in very close to Michelle in anger.)

How dare you! You...

Nicole slaps Michelle in the face.

AMANDA:

Nicole! Stop it!

Amanda grabs Nicole and pulls her forward out of the way to prevent Michelle hearing.

AMANDA:

This has all gone too far. We were just meant to talk to her, maybe scare her a little but this...

NICOLE:

I think we have gone far past that.

AMANDA:

What has gotten into you?

NICOLE:

I can't help it Amanda, I just can't justify what she has done to the reputation of this neighbourhood.

AMANDA:

She has clearly had a mental breakdown. Now that we know what has happened its clear she needs friends not kidnapers. Drugging someone and kidnapping them is a sin and I already have a few things to confess this week. I certainly don't need to be adding anymore Hail Mary's to my penance! Let's set Michelle free and go on with our lives.

NICOLE:

Can we drop the holy than thou routine?

AMANDA:

Excuse me!

NICOLE:

Look you heard her. She will go to the police.

AMANDA:

She wouldn't.

NICOLE:

She said she would.

AMANDA:

We can't be arrested, what would my daughter say?

NICOLE:

(Playing into Amanda's obvious worry)

And all the neighbours and your churchy friends, especially when they see the flashing reds and blues. The handcuffs slapped tight on our wrists.

AMANDA:

(Thinking)

We could...We could say it was a joke.

NICOLE:

Who would believe us? The drugs in her system, the rope marks on her wrists? No one would think this was a joke would they? Especially with a record like yours. They would cart you off to jail. Don't forget the police know you as a fraudster.

AMANDA:

But that wasn't my fault.

NICOLE:

You have it written all over your record! You forget that I know all your little secrets Amanda. I could tell the police this was all your idea.

AMANDA:

You wouldn't.

NICOLE:

Oh I would. I could pin all of this on you.

AMANDA:

But I didn't want to do this!

NICOLE:

It makes me laugh how easy it was to find out all about you Amanda. Like, did you really think changing your name would mean that no one could find out. Once you

told me that little juicy detail after one too many glasses of Merlot, it was easy for me to look you up. The thing is with a criminal past like that, the police will believe that you did all of this. That you finally snapped. You don't know what the last few months have been like for me. All you think about is your daughter and your stupid church. I have had to put up with so much. Paul barely noticed me, he barely even talked to me. All he wanted to do was drink with his buddies and go to strip clubs on his golf weekends. I had to put up with so much. But I've gotten rid of him now. Then someone finally noticed me. Finally loved me the way I deserved to be loved. There was a huge catch though, he was married. He kept promising to leave her, but it always came down to bad timing or money. So, I came up with a plan. A plan that meant we could be together. Amanda, put the blindfold back on Michelle.

AMANDA:

Nicole what is really going on here?

NICOLE:

Just put the blindfold back on, Amanda.

Amanda doesn't move she is in shock.

MICHELLE:

(Panicking she begins to beg)

What are you doing? Just let me go. I didn't mean it about the police. I promise I won't tell anyone.

Nicole shakes her head before moving to put the blindfold on Michelle forcefully.

She struggles. Nicole walks behind her and pulls a hammer off the back wall. She raises it above her head.

AMANDA:

This can't be happening! Nicole! Please!

JOHN:

(Talking as he enters the shed)

Nicole, my darling, is it done yet?

MICHELLE:

(Panic and relief mixed in her voice)

John? John is that you? Please you have to help me, they've gone mad! John? Please help...

JOHN:

(Almost shouting, a slight mad look in his face.)

Do it!

The last line is said as Nicole goes to swing the hammer at Michelle's head. There is a blackout before as she brings it down.