



FIRST ACT – SAMPLE

By Robert J. Wheeler, 15 Windsor Cres., London, ON N6C 1V6 Canada – Revised May 1/25

Setting – A bank. Run time – Approximately 90 minutes.

Actors – 6 M – 2 F – 4

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My scripts are on PGC site.

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Email robwheeler999@gmail.com if you would like to read the play for a possible production and I will send it to you.

CHARACTER	DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
WILLIAM	Nervous, naïve bank teller	25-40	Male
TED (a.k.a. OLD MAN)	Bank robber/philosopher	45-60	Male
MS. (MEZ) SAMUELS	Demanding bank manager	40-50	Female
MARILYN	William's fiancé (<i>voice</i>)	25-30	Female
JENNIFER	William's co-worker, secret love	25-30	Female
TERESA	Ted's girlfriend	30-40	Female

Music is optional.

The sound of gunfire can be recorded, produced in the booth.
The playwright can produce any weapons needed (wooden).

SIX ACTORS REQUIRED

FIVE ACTORS IF DOUBLING -- One actor can play Marilyn and Teresa.

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

LIGHTS UP:

Time: Late Afternoon

Place: Inside the Americana Bank and Trust Company

A few bars of the song “MONEY, MONEY, MONEY” plays.

Starts . . . “Money, money, money, must be funny in the rich man’s world . . .”

A bank teller station is DC (diagonal, with left end more US, and right end more DS) with ledger book and phone.

There is a DL entrance doorway. Beside the doorway is a hall tree with many coats and a tall potted artificial plant, also a garbage can with four folded paper airplanes at it’s base. There are a couple chairs DR.

There is a DR doorway with a sign “Utility Room”.

UC is an opening into the back of the bank.

A thermostat and fire alarm are on a wall.

Teller, WILLIAM, 23ish, the ultra-nerd in plain business suit and tie, stands behind his workstation, throws paper airplanes at the waste basket.

An OLD MAN with scraggy beard, in a worn trench coat two sizes to large, with cane and bowler hat which is pushed down to his eyebrows ENTERS through the DL door.

The song ends.

During the following conversation the Old Man slow weaves to the waste basket, bends over, places a paper plane from the floor into the bottom of the can.

William’s phone RINGS. He answers it.

WILLIAM *(enthusiastic)* Americana Bank and Trust Company. In money we trust. *(normal)* William speaking. *(pause as he looks at his watch)* That is correct, the bank will be closing soon. *(pause)* In the next two minutes. *(frustrated pause)* You'll have to wait until Tuesday! *(long pause, agitated)* Mr. Harris there's nothing I can do until 8 a.m. Tuesday, sorry! *(pause)* This is the long weekend! Monday's a holiday, so . . . *(pause)* Listen! I have work to do before I can leave.

William becomes more agitated regarding the caller.

The Old Man shuffles to the DR Utility Room doorway and ENTERS the Utility Room without William noticing.

You won't want to speak to my manager! *(pause)* You're sure?! *(pause)* Be happy to. *(pause, gleefully)* Ms. Samuels is known as our wicked witch ego shredder. *(Ms. is pronounced Mez!)*

William holds phone at arms length, speaks toward the phone with crazy eyes.

Gretchen! Oh, Gretchen!

William keeps phone at arms length, imitates a shrill, woman's grating voice.

Get to work you lazy bum! I'll get the whip out! *(cackles)*

William returns the phone to his ear and with his normal voice.

(sounding terrified) She's coming! *(joyful)* I'll put you on speaker, so the entire staff can enjoy your humiliation.

William presses a button on the phone, listens for two seconds, then the SOUND OF DIAL TONE.

William smiles, hangs up the phone, moves from behind his workstation, moves DC, wild dances and sings to "ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST".

(MORE)

William is into his wild dance when MS. SAMUELS, 40-50ish, in a dark business suit, (slacks, not skirt), dark, long hair that sticks up from her head like two sheaths of hay, ENTERS from UC door. She is quite attractive but has made herself appear hard. She stands behind William, watches him with hands on her hips.

(joyful, sung to “Another One Bites the Dust”) Another bum bites the dust. Another bum bites the dust. Another bum’s gone. Another bum’s gone. Another bum bites the dust. Hey, hey, hey, I’m goin’ to get you too, another bum bites the . . .

MS.

SAMUELS *(interrupting, shout)* William!!!

William freezes in the middle of a dance step, standing on one foot, the other in the air and both arms extended in weird angles. William is frozen in fear.

WILLIAM . . . dust?

Ms. Samuels seethes as a few bars of the song “WITCHY WOMAN” plays.

SAMUELS Sometimes I think you’re a no good, good for nothing, useless article!

WILLIAM *(still frozen)* W-w-hen would that b-b-be Ms. Samuels?

SAMUELS Now!!!

WILLIAM S-s-orry, Ms. Samuels.

SAMUELS At ease!

William returns to behind his workstation, looks into his ledger book. Ms. Samuels moves toward the UC door.

I have a fabulous long weekend planned, so once you’ve balanced your cash, you can leave.

Ms. Samuels EXITS out the UC door.

The Old Man ENTERS from DR utility room door, weaves his way toward William’s workstation.

When the old man gets halfway to the workstation William sees him, places a large "CLOSED" sign on the workstation, turns, starts to move UC.

The Old Man continues to the workstation, bangs his cane on the workstation.

William returns.

The Old Man passes a plastic card to William.

OLD MAN Sunny, I'm going to need two hundred dollars.

William holds up the closed sign.

WILLIAM It's past closing time.

William passes the plastic card back to the Old Man.

OLD MAN I need to pay the vet bill! A while back, my dog Cuddles, got in a mix-up with an aggressive Chihuahua!

WILLIAM *(smiles, sarcastic)* Still closed.

William stares into a ledger book, ignores the old man.

OLD MAN Animal hater.

William stares into his ledger book, ignores the Old Man.

WILLIAM I love animals. *(smiles)* I'm an old fart hater.

The Old Man cold stares William, then there's the sound of a LONG AND LOUD FART.

The Old Man waves the air around him with his cane, moving the odor toward William.

William reacts to the strong odor, staggers.

That's obscene.

OLD MAN *(a gleam in his eye)* A free sample. There's more, also free.

William takes down the sign.

WILLIAM Okay, okay. Hold your fire. I surrender. Did you say two hundred?

OLD MAN Yup.

William rapid counts, pushes money and card to Old Man.

WILLIAM Have a senior day.

William puts the closed sign up.

OLD MAN *(counts the money)* There's only a hundred and eighty dollars here.

WILLIAM You must have dropped some. Look around.

OLD MAN But . . . I won't have enough.

WILLIAM *(shrugs)* Your odor qualifies you for the senior discount.

Old Man puts a hand to ear, not hearing him.

OLD MAN Hu?

WILLIAM *(frustrated, loud)* You'll get ten per cent off. It won't cost anything if you smell up the place.

OLD MAN But . . .

WILLIAM *(interrupting)* Off you go.

OLD MAN Cuddles is waiting outside.

WILLIAM Good. Take your annoying little dog with you.

OLD MAN *(shouts toward the entrance door)* Cuddles!

*The AGGRESSIVE DOG BARK AND SNARL. Terrified,
William jumps onto the workstation.*

Money's for the Chihuahua's vet bill.

*William contemplates. There's a gleam in the Old Man's
eyes.*

I was in a hurry to get here before closing, so I neglected to feed Cuddles his five-pound raw . . . red meat . . . dinner.

WILLIAM *(terrified voice)* Raw, red, meat?

William hesitates, Old Man does a jumping gesture, moves toward the door.

OLD MAN *(interrupting)* Cuddles is a jumper. Take you offa there in a second. You look real tender, too. Cuddles likes ‘em tender.

WILLIAM *(terrified)* Okay, okay.

The Old Man returns to William. William takes a twenty-dollar bill from a pocket and gives it to the Old. Man.

The old man moves toward the DL exit.

(to the old man) Another bum bites the dust.

The old man stops at the DL exit, looks back, smiles, farts and EXITS through the DL exit.

The song “WITCHY WOMAN” plays.

Ms. Samuels ENTERS from UL, hands on hips, is shocked to watch William on the workstation. “WITCHY WOMAN” stops.

William does his joyful “Another Bum Bites The Dust” dance on the workstation.

Another bum bites the dust. Another bum bites the dust. Another bum’s gone. Another bum’s gone. Another bum bites the dust. Hey, hey, hey, *(louder)* hey, hey, hey; *(louder)* hey, hey, hey; *(louder)* hey, hey, hey!

SAMUELS *(shouts)* William!!!

William freezes in an awkward position facing DC.

WILLIAM . . . hey?!

SAMUELS I returned to check you’d remembered to relock everything, and I find you dancing on your workstation!!! Smarten up!! Straighten up!!

William snaps to attention. Ms. Samuels moves DS.

Have you gone mad?

WILLIAM Sorry, Ms. Samuels!!!

SAMUELS Your workstation is a sacred place! The reason you exist! Respect it! I want you to scrub it clean before leaving! I'll be inspecting it, and it better be sterile!!!

WILLIAM Yes, Ms. Samuels! *(to the side)* You're good at ster . . .

SAMUELS *(interrupting)* What?

WILLIAM *(loud, clears throat)* Uhummmm. Just clearing my throat. Need water.

SAMUELS Come down at once and face me!

WILLIAM Yes, Ms. Samuels.

William awkwardly gets off the workstation, faces her.

SAMUELS Because of the recent sizable currency deposit I've locked the safe, so you'll have to reopen it once you've balanced everything, then double check to be sure it's locked. We can't be too careful.

WILLIAM But, I promised my fiancée I'd . . .

SAMUELS *(interrupting)* No buts! Security, security, security is what this institution, you and I stand for. Do you understand?!

WILLIAM Yes, Ms. Samuels.

Ms. Samuels moves toward UL.

SAMUELS I'm slipping out the back for an important bank function. I've locked my office, and I'll lock the rear door.

WILLIAM Yes, Ms. Samuels.

SAMUELS Can I count on you to double check the safe's locked, set the alarm, and lock the front before leaving? Double check everything! So, have you got that?!!

WILLIAM I'll do it! I'll do it! No problem. I completely understand Ms. Samuels.

SAMUELS Utilities are burning a hole in our bottom line. Jennifer pulled the blinds, so I need you to be sure the thermostat is lowered to seventeen and all the lights are turned off before you lock up.

WILLIAM *(loud)* No problem Ms. Samuels.

Ms. Samuels shrugs, EXITS through the UL doorway.

(mumbles to himself) I'll work in brail wearing my scarf, hat, coat and gloves.

Ms. Samuels ENTERS from the UC door.

SAMUELS *(loud)* William, you're mumbling! I can't hear you unless you *(next word is clearly enunciated)* enunciate and *(louder)* speak up!

WILLIAM *(loud)* Don't concern yourself Ms. Samuels. It's all good. Goodbye Ms. Samuels.

SAMUELS *(shouts)* You don't have to shout!

WILLIAM Sorry, Ms. Samuels.

Ms. Samuels EXITS into the UC door.

While William concentrates on his ledger book a MAN holding a large gym bag, wearing a black macho hat, macho fake beard, fake eyebrows, nose and glasses, dressed in black with black jacket, ENTERS from the DL door, locks door.

The MAN approaches William who is pre-occupied with his book. The Man moves the closed sign to the side.

MAN Excuse me, but I'd like some service.

William ignores The Man.

The Man grabs the front of William's shirt with his left hand, pulls William toward him, pulls a Glock handgun from his jacket pocket with his right hand (looks like a Glock) and pushes the barrel into the side of William's cheek. The gun could possibly made from wood.

I'd like to make a withdrawal, a substantial withdrawal.

The Man pockets the gun, releases William.

WILLIAM Um, um, um, was that a a a . . . ?

MAN A gun? Coulda been. *(pause)* Maybe it's a sausage?

WILLIAM I've never seen a a a . . . you know, one s-s-so close.

MAN Gun or bratwurst?!

Stunned look from William.

Robbery or barbecue?!

William is frozen in terror.

This isn't a tailgate party!!

WILLIAM *(stunned)* A r-r-r-eal . . .

MAN *(interrupting, determined)* If I bring it out again, it'll be last thing you'll ever see!
It'll take your head off.

WILLIAM *(nervous)* N-n-o, d-d-on't bother.

MAN Where's the dough!

WILLIAM The bakery is down the street in the next block. S-s-sorry.

The man does a slow burn.

MAN Banks employ idiots! Mula! Loot! Cash! Money! Any of these ring a bell in your thick teller head? Hand it over!

WILLIAM You . . . you've left s-s-something out.

MAN *(pause to think)* Please?!!

WILLIAM It's not your lack of manners. There's a p-p-p-rocedure.

The Man pushes the barrel of the gun into William's cheek.

MAN *(crazed)* A p-p-p-rocedure?!

WILLIAM To receive mula from this b-b-bank you're required to *(takes deep breath)* provide me with y-y-our name and bank a-a-ccount ID.

MAN Call me Ted. The Glock is my ID!

WILLIAM T-t-ted?

MAN No, not T-t-ted! Ted!!!

WILLIAM S-s-sorry Ted. I don't s-s-suppose Glock is a brand of, of, of . . .

MAN What? Brand of what? What?!!!!

WILLIAM S-s-sausage?

MAN Do you want to die?! (*thinks*) It's just the two of us, so . . .

Ted pockets the Glock, motions William to come out from behind the workstation and he does.

They walk around in the bank, sometimes sitting on chairs.

Ted strides, shoulders back, with confidence.

William, takes small steps, slumped forward, the opposite posture used by Ted.

WILLIAM (*interrupting*) I've heard it said o-o-ne gets better results with h-h-honey than v-v-vinegar.

TED Honey? Vinegar? Listen, I've got a loaded, fully loaded weapon in my pocket, and I'll use it on you if you don't get my money.

WILLIAM Um, uh . . . It would be h-h-helpful if you told me what you want the m-m-money for. Maybe you've got a sick family member, a friend n-n-needs your help.

TED (*to himself side*) I get a moron with a death wish. (*to William*) Let's see . . . (*thinks, then to William*) . . . my young son is, uhm, ah, is sick. (*pause*) With scurvy! Extremely sick with it.

WILLIAM Sorry. Your reason lacks the ring of a-a-authenticity.

TED How about this: I rob banks for the ultimate high?

WILLIAM (*enthused*) Now you're talking!

TED So?

WILLIAM You get the robbery high, but what about m-m-me?

TED Y-y-you get to live!

WILLIAM Yes, but I'll be thought of as the wimp who gave away the bank's money. They'll think I did it, an inside job. C-c-can't you see how it'll m-m-make me look?

TED *(mocking)* There's that, but there's also the b-b-bullet in the b-b-brain look!

WILLIAM Definitely n-not a g-g-good look for m-m-e.

TED Stop talking like a moron.

WILLIAM Verbally c-h-a-a-allenged would be b-e-tter.

The phone RINGS.

William runs behind the workstation and answers the phone.

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene One

ACT ONE, SCENE TWO

LIGHTS UP:.

Time: Evening

Place: Inside the Americana Bank and Trust Company

A few bars of the song "LOVE ON THE ROCKS" plays.

The song ends.

Ted's gun is in his pocket.

The bank's phone RINGS. William answers it.

WILLIAM *(enthusiastic)* Americana Bank and Trust. In money we trust. *(normal)* William speaking, how . . . *(listens for three seconds)* No, no problem, Hon. I know I'm late. Got held up at the bank.

Ted pushes the gun into the side of William's cheek. William reacts to what he has said.

Delayed at the bank! Delayed!!! Just delayed! The numbers! Nothing balances! Ms. Samuels won't let me leave until I find the problem.

TED Put your Honey on speaker.

Ted whips the gun into his coat pocket. William puts it on speaker. Marilyn speaks with a southern accent.

MARILYN *(V.O.)* Your dinner is cold and so am I. William, when you promise to be home on time, I expect you to keep your promise.

WILLIAM Well, uh, Marilyn, Honey. Listen. I've . . .

MARILYN *(interrupting V.O.)* You? I've been working in our kitchen for hours to create the perfect meal. The meat is dried out and everything is cold. *(starts crying)* If you could keep one promise.

WILLIAM *(weakly)* Isn't cold good for salad?

MARILYN It wilted, spoiled! You have no idea how I suffer.

- WILLIAM Hon, I'm here, on my own, at my workstation, working on the numbers, so please try to under . . .
- MARILYN (*interrupting V.O.*) You're with that hot, blonde teller, Jennifer, aren't you?
- WILLIAM Marilyn, you're imagining again!
- MARILYN (*V.O.*) I'm not imagining! Jennifer is too real and too blonde!
- WILLIAM Jennifer's gone home! I'm stuck here's because, because, because (*thinking*) there's either a g-g-gun or s-s-sausage pointed at my head!
- MARILYN (*V.O.*) William, that's crazy! Your excuses are getting more and more weird. I didn't believe you last Friday when you said the Brinks truck came in late, and I don't believe you now. The numbers?! Gun?! Sausage?! (*Ted laughs*) William, you're sounding crazy! I'll eat alone . . . again.
- WILLIAM There's the microwave. I'll pop my wonderful dinner in the micro when I get in.
- MARILYN (*V.O.*) Everything gets microed. It feels like our relationship is constantly being warmed up. It's because Jennifer's burning a hole in your heart. I hate her! I hate all blondes. I hate you!
- The sound of the DIAL TONE. William hangs up.*
- Ted takes off his artificial nose, glasses, eyebrows, beard, hat and drops them into the gym bag.*
- TED You don't work here for the money, do you?
- WILLIAM That was Marilyn, my fiancée. She's quite . . . sensitive.
- TED Sensitive?!! She's as wacko as they come. Waaaaako with a capital Wak!
- WILLIAM She wasn't always like that. Before we moved in together, we didn't have a care in the world, but now, after four months, she's turned, I don't know, strange.
- TED You're aware once you're married you get two options.
- WILLIAM (*painful look*) Live or die?
- TED Spouse or no spouse! With no spouse you're free to be whatever you want. With spouse you get rules.
- WILLIAM Rules are good. People need rules. The civilized world is the result of rules.

TED Rules like no spending a night with a semi-special female; no playing cards till dawn with the guys; no ice cream for breakfast; no pissing around whenever you want because you need to be home for this or that, and the worst of all . . .

WILLIAM *(eager)* What?

TED No farting!

WILLIAM No marriage is perfect.

TED I've taken the spouse option more than once. *(pause remembering)* The last one was Teresa, the artist. We lasted a year. With her gone, I come and go as I please.

WILLIAM Wouldn't it be nice to come home to a warm human being?

TED Teresa wasn't overly warm.

WILLIAM After robbing and pillaging you'd rush in for a home cooked meal?

TED Teresa couldn't boil water.

WILLIAM She'd keep your place clean, right?

TED Teresa doesn't know one end of a broom from the other.

WILLIAM Not warm, bad cook and untidy?

Ted thinks, shrugs.

(bright idea) She must be super hot!

Ted shrugs.

What?

TED She developed a sex phobia.

Ted shrugs to the affirmative.

WILLIAM You married an entirely screwed-up human being!!! She's caused you to acquire anti-social behavior!

Ted's look says he's not understanding.

(MORE)

You rob banks to get out of the house!

Ted recoils, brings out is gun.

On second thought, maybe robbery runs in your family, born into the biz. Your dad a train robber? Brother?

TED I get respect from my peers.

WILLIAM Convenience store crooks?

TED *(big smile)* You don't have a high regard for my Teresa?

WILLIAM I'm taking the fifth on that?

Ted pockets the gun.

TED After what I heard on the phone, your choice of mate was appalling.

WILLIAM My Marilyn's a saint compared to your Teresa.

TED *(reminiscing)* My Teresa was quirky, funny at times, but whiney. Whining can wear on a man.

WILLIAM I'm hearing an important message.

Ted sends William an expectant look.

S-s-top whining.

The sound of a siren in the distance, coming closer.

WILLIAM Ted.

TED What?

WILLIAM I pushed the secret silent alarm, so I'll say it now.

TED Say what?

WILLIAM Bye bye.

The siren sound decreases. Ted laughs.

TED That was an ambulance siren. I deactivated all the alarms including cameras. It's just you and me until I get my money.

William pulls an arm up, backs toward the fire alarm.

WILLIAM You forgot the fire alarm.

William puts a hand on the fire alarm, about to pull it.

Ted points his gun at William's head.

If I pull, it'll ring. Fire, ambulance, and cops will flood the building.

TED How's you being dead going to help either of us?

WILLIAM It isn't loaded.

TED Big mistake.

WILLIAM It's a sausage gun.

Ted pretends to take a bite out of the gun.

TED Real gun. You'd rather die than go home to face Marilyn! I know the feeling, but being dead is a worse feeling!

Ted points gun at William's forehead.

I'll shoot you between the eyes.

WILLIAM Maybe not.

TED It was nice knowing you, dead weight.

WILLIAM It'll be quick.

Ted points the gun at William.

William closes his eyes, PULLS THE FIRE ALARM.

NO ALARM SOUNDS.

Ted takes the ledger book and slams it on the workstation, WHAM!

William is stunned, terrified, wondering if he's living or dead, staggers around, falls flat, back on the floor (pause) sits up bewildered, feels his forehead.

Ted breaks into laughter, practically rolling on the floor laughing.

TED I disabled all the alarms.

WILLIAM You, you, you put me through that, so you could laugh at me?

TED *(laughs)* I wanted to see what you'd do.

WILLIAM I could have shit my pants!

William stands, feels pants, staggers.

TED So?

WILLIAM No, but I could have!

William holds his shaking arms out.

See, I'm terrified!

TED You're born again!

Frustrated, William throws his arms into air.

Halleluia! Celebrate!

WILLIAM You're nuts! Absolutely . . .

TED *(interrupting)* You're not s-s-stuttering.

WILLIAM Scared people stutter! Terrified people freeze in terror! Freeze! I'm, I'm, too terrified, too frozen to s-s-stutter!

TED William, do you know what I think?

WILLIAM Why should I care?

TED You've become a risk taker, a man starting to live.

WILLIAM *(shaking)* I'm a sponge!!! A frozen sponge!!

TED Listen carefully.

(MORE)

Ted hunches over like Old Man, voice sounds like the Old Man.

Sonny, I'm going to need two hundred dollars.

Ted presses a button on a cellular phone -- the AGGRESSIVE DOG BARK AND SNARL.

William jumps up on the workstation.

WILLIAM You were the Old Man with the vicious dog?!!

TED While you were fiddle-farting your life away I put my phone with Cuddles voice in your trash can and disabled the cameras and security system. No one's coming to your rescue. It's just you and me, till dawn if necessary. I'm thinking we're a lot alike.

William comes down from the workstation.

WILLIAM I'd never rob a bank. It's illegal.

TED You're worse than me.

WILLIAM I don't see how.

TED The bank's money is insured. I came to you as an old man needing money to pay his imaginary vet bill and you tried to steal twenty bucks from me. None of my money is insured.

WILLIAM I miscounted.

TED *(sarcastic)* Right. *(normal)* William, you've shown me twenty-dollars worth of initiative. You're starting to impress me. How much in the safe?

WILLIAM Most people pay with plastic, so banks don't handle much cash.

TED *(distressed)* How's a bank man supposed to make a semi-descent living?

WILLIAM You? *(dishearted)* If I live through this, what do you think will happen to me?

TED At the bank?

WILLIAM Yes.

End of Act One, Scene Two

LIGHTS OUT

ACT ONE, SCENE THREE

LIGHTS UP:

Time: Night

Place: Inside the Americana Bank and Trust Company

A few bars of the song "STAYIN' ALIVE" plays.

William and Ted are as before, gun in Ted's pocket.

The song ends.

TED What will happen to the bank's dear William?

WILLIAM In your criminal opinion.

TED Sayin' you survive the night, just sayin', I'm thinking you'll go far, very far.

WILLIAM Because I stopped the robbery and put you behind bars?

TED The teller and the Dodo bird will have a lot in common. Cash machines will make your function obsolete. They'll find you other work, possibly servicing cash machines . . .

William winces.

. . . or data entry.

William winces.

. . . and I know you'll love this . . . there's, tel-e-mark-et-ing . . .

William winces.

. . . but only if you take a seventy percent wage cut . . .

William winces.

. . . and move to India. Then there's . . .

WILLIAM *(big wince, interrupting)* Stop!

TED In time you'll get the company pension. Then there's the Government Pension and the Old Age Pension.

WILLIAM So, I'll work for peanuts all my life, then, when I'm too old to enjoy it, I'll get a lot more?

TED Absolutely . . .

William brightens.

. . . NOT!

William slumps.

WILLIAM Not?!!

TED That's right. You'll get a steady diet of peanuts your entire life until your inevitable, miserable, dirt-poor, pointless, and penniless end.

WILLIAM (*sad then happy*) Then there's you, a crook who could get caught, end up in jail, the pen-i-ten-tury, getting three square a day, (*not so happy*) having a nice secure roof over your head. (*miserable*) You'd be living it up on the income tax money I've been giving the government.

TED You're learning! Are you sure you work here?

WILLIAM (*disheartened*) I've been a teller for Ms. Samuels for over five years.

TED Five years, and you're still an entry level teller? Haven't taken one small step up the corporate ladder?

WILLIAM (*angry*) I could put in for a transfer, away from Ms. Samuels, and do very well. I'll become a successful bank manager some day or a financial advisor. You have no right to judge me!!!

TED Ooooo. I've hit a nerve. Sens-i-tive.

WILLIAM (*angry*) You've never worked a day or night in your life. A scourge on society. You have your nerve, criticizing my career choice. You, an unemployed bum.

TED I'm self-employed!

WILLIAM Hu.

TED Robbing banks is a time consuming, expensive venture. I've spent a month researching this job; then a week in the local Marriott; taking care of details; choosing the right bank; researching the security system; choosing the optimum time to strike; then there's my disguises.

WILLIAM Disguises?

TED Two disguises. As Amos, I opened a modest account disguised as the old pig farmer with his dog, the one you tried to steal twenty bucks from. Then I was Ted, a respectable businessman enquiring about depositing my valuables into a bank safety deposit box.

WILLIAM *(sarcastic)* Yeah, right.

TED Ted the businessman found blonde Jennifer very helpful.

WILLIAM My Jenni . . . I mean the bank's Jennifer?

TED She's a definite asset for the bank and for me.

WILLIAM I don't believe you.

TED Your Jennifer told me about herself and, more importantly, the bank. I told her about myself . . . my fake self . . . allowed her think I was in town to appraise jewellery. I've found most women are drawn to jewellery and to men who can provide it for them.

WILLIAM You're making it up.

TED Jenny's fond of fine dining, classy guys and diamonds, but she's . . . I'm trying to put my finger on it . . . sort of . . .

William is hanging, practically salivating, thinking she's a blonde angel.

. . . thick . . .

(shock shows on William's face)

. . . no, it's more. She's naïve . . .

(MORE)

(more shock shows on William's face)

. . . possibly mentally challenged.

(more shock shows on William's face)

WILLIAM *(stunned)* Jenny? Mentally . . .

TED *(interrupting)* Mornings will never be as bright without seeing Jenny's stupid smiling face. I keep reminding myself she has other assets.

WILLIAM No!

TED Yes.

WILLIAM You . . . you . . . you're a a a . . .

TED *(interrupting)* It's not always coming up naïve Jennifers. No, I go through my dry patches.

WILLIAM You help yourself to other peoples' money . . .

TED *(interrupting, sings)* . . . and to your Jennifer.

WILLIAM You're a physical and amoral parasite!

TED So sensitive. Toughen up!

WILLIAM A couple days ago Jennifer was overjoyed; showed the entire staff the diamond ring you, her boyfriend gave her.

TED *(indicates himself)* It's a superb ten-thousand-dollar diamond ring. A friend got careless; needed to do a stretch up the river; required quick cash; I got it for just over two hundred bucks.

WILLIAM Stolen property!

TED Hotter than the hottest red chili peppers, but who's going to know? Stones alone are worth an easy ten grand. Every mouse trap needs cheese. My cheese sparkles.

WILLIAM You're pure evil! *(pause)* What did you get in return?!

TED Your perspective is unbelievably limited. Widen it!

WILLIAM What did you get?!

TED You mean, what else?

WILLIAM What else?!!!

TED On Sunday Jenny gave me a tour of this establishment.

WILLIAM Liar!

TED She got us in with the spare key, input the motion sensor code, and we were golden! Jenny's none too bright, but she has one or two good points. She thrives on excitement; the kind a man like me can provide.

WILLIAM How could . . .

TED *(interrupting)* I suggested she watch when the security code was input on opening and closing. Told her to write them on in her palm. I knew in two seconds her empty blonde head would forget them.

WILLIAM Impossible. The cleaners come in on Sunday.

TED I had Jenny call them; mention about a special Sunday meeting and that they'd have to clean Sunday night. They'll bill the bank for overtime. I found it well worth the extra.

WILLIAM Jennifer thinks you're her soulmate.

TED William, you ever think about doing unbusiness stuff in the office? Drop everything, the blinds, clothes, and go to it with a semi-special woman.

*Ted has a big knowing smile, pats the workstation top twice.
William puts his hands on the workstation.*

WILLIAM No! No no no no, no no, no!

TED Yes! Yes yes yes yes, yes yes, and . . . yes!

William throws his hands off the workstation like it's a hot stove, staggers around.

Ted pats the workstation triumphantly.

WILLIAM You're a revolting, disgusting bug, not fit to walk the planet. Jennifer is in love with you, but you treat her like garbage.

TED *(laughs)* Young, impressionable women equate diamonds with love. I create the love illusion. Jenny's gaga over the ring. I got my tour, etc. *(shrugs)* It's win-win.

The sound of A KEY IN THE DOOR.

SAMUELS *(loud O.S.)* William!

WILLIAM Ahaaaa!

SAMUELS *(loud O.S.)* William?

WILLIAM Ms. Samuels?!

Ted stands behind the potted plant and the hall tree.

William is behind his workstation.

Ted keeps gun trained on William.

TED Remember, my fully loaded gun is on both of you. Stay cool till she leaves.

WILLIAM You're telling a person frozen with fear to stay cool?!

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One Scene Three

ACT ONE, SCENE FOUR

LIGHTS UP:

Time: Night

Place: Inside the Americana Bank and Trust Company

A few bars of the song "WITCHY WOMAN" plays.

William and Ted are as before.

Ms. Samuels ENTERS from DL, throws her coat over the hall tree, turns her back to the hall tree and plant; Ted sticks the gun out further.

Without looking Ms. Samuels hangs her purse on Ted's gun barrel, thinking it's on the hall tree.

William is horrified seeing what Ms. Samuels has done.

The song ends.

SAMUELS I thought I heard voices.

WILLIAM I was, was, was reading, reading aloud. It helps me understand.

SAMUELS You're pale, look like you've seen a ghost. What are you doing here this late?

During the next conversation William looks over Ms. Samuels shoulder, watches Ted take Ms. Samuels' wallet from her purse, takes cash out of it, returns the wallet to the purse then hangs the purse on the hall tree.

William is in disbelief, shock.

WILLIAM I, I've just seen something . . . something I'll never forget.

SAMUELS Mumble and you don't make sense. Speak up and you make less sense.

WILLIAM Are you concerned about my health, you know, me working so many hours? I've heard there are only so many hours in a day.

SAMUELS Your health? That's gibberish.

WILLIAM *(sympathetic smile)* Yes.

SAMUELS I was driving by and saw the lights were on!

WILLIAM Oh.

SAMUELS What's going on with you? Did I wake you? Are you on drugs? You're pale. You're feeling sick?!

WILLIAM I'm, uh . . .

Ms. Samuels pulls back from William.

SAMUELS *(interrupting)* Not on these shoes!

WILLIAM I couldn't get . . .

SAMUELS *(interrupting)* You're having a stroke?!!

WILLIAM *(interrupting)*. . . my cash to balance.

SAMUELS *(not hearing him)* The bank doesn't have insurance for strokes.

WILLIAM I'm fine. Never better. Looking forward to my teller weekend.

SAMUELS I've never seen you so, so . . . odd. Go home. Be sick there. I hate the smell of vomit, then there's the cost of cleaning.

Ms. Samuels moves toward the SL exit, turns back to William.

Remember to turn off the bathroom lights!

Ms. Samuels takes and puts on her coat, then without looking, she takes her purse and EXITS DL.

Ted comes out from behind the plant and coat rack, meets William at the workstation.

Ted stares at William for two seconds.

TED Your girlfriend hates you and your boss despises you.

(MORE)

Ted slams his Glock down on the workstation.

Go ahead, take it. Blow your brains out! If I were you, I'd do it. One BANG would end your misery.

William can take the gun but doesn't.

WILLIAM I live for the day I . . .

TED *(interrupting)* . . . the day? . . . what day? . . is today the day?

WILLIAM You've got another gun behind, in your belt, or strapped to your leg, or up your ass.

Ted takes the gun from the workstation, puts it into his coat pocket.

TED William, that's crude. I'm a one-gun thief.

WILLIAM Why did you do that?

TED Testing my instincts. You'll take me to the safe and give me the money because you prefer my company over Ms. Samuels. Anybody would.

William hesitates, then losing his mind, he becomes unhinged, jumps around.

WILLIAM AHAAAAAAA!!!! I hate her! Everything! This prison! The customers! All the customers, even the nice ones! I even hate the janitor who likes me! Ahaaaaaa!!

TED Finally!

WILLIAM *(hesitates)* Okay, here's the deal. As the only male teller in the branch, I'm required to do the grunt work, stock the printers with paper, etc. When Ms. Samuels was at lunch, I restocked the printers, then took a detour by the safe, and restocked the printer paper box with money from the safe.

TED *(smiles)* They can't keep a bad man down. What about the serial numbers on the bills?

WILLIAM That file has magically disappeared.

(MORE)

William brings a box of printer paper from below the workstation, puts it on the workstation.

I've been late for supper every Friday night for a month. That's because I look at the money in this box for about half an hour or so, then restock the safe and go home. To-night will be different.

TED How so?

William puts his right hand into the box.

WILLIAM I've been planning my jail break from here for quite a while; have a bag packed with fake passport in the car. The climate is pleasant in Belize, and it doesn't have an extradition treaty. I've never followed through because I hadn't thought of the last piece.

TED What piece?

WILLIAM Stopping at Vegas! I'll be a Vegas high roller, deposit the money into five different banks with no questions asked. Once in Belize, I'll transfer the money to the account I opened there two months ago.

TED You're forgetting something.

WILLIAM No, it's foolproof.

TED I don't have a sausage in my pocket.

William is behind the workstation, right hand still inside the box.

WILLIAM *(sincere)* The thirty-eight I have pointed at your heart cancels your Glock out. *(pause) (mellow)* However, I prefer to split my good fortune than shoot up the place. Are you okay with that, or would you rather become my, easy to explain, dead weight? They'd give me a medal for shooting you.

TED *(pause)* You're a fast learner. *(pause)* How much are we talking?

WILLIAM Total, just over sixty grand.

TED *(ponders)* I'll take thirty-two.

WILLIAM *(contemplates, shrugs)* You need to cover expenses. Sure, okay.

William takes his right hand from the box. They shake hands.

TED You lose a lot playing cards?

William's shrug admits Ted's right.

Because you're a bad bluffer. Your gun is imaginary.

WILLIAM If you were sure of that, why not shoot me, take it all?

TED William, my soul sad partner in crime, I wonder about that every other second, then it occurs to me. I'm a winner . . . but also a loser. Most of my friends are in jail, the cemetery, or faded memories. I decided, if I had a choice, which I obviously did, I'd rather make a friend than a corpse.

WILLIAM If I had to choose, and I know you're crazy, absolutely nuts (*shrugs*) so would I.

TED You'll spoil Ms. Samuels' weekend.

WILLIAM The bank is her life. All she has. Money and making our lives miserable is her vocation in life.

TED Learn from Ms. Samuels. See her misery as a sacrifice for you, helping you.

WILLIAM Helping me?

TED Her antagonism has helped you become the man you were meant to be!

William takes a moment to contemplate Ted's idea.

WILLIAM Right now, we need to focus on getting our treasure out of here.

TED We're both welcome in Belize?

WILLIAM My fake passport says I'm Daniel Smith.

TED I've got two passports.

Ted pulls two passports from a pocket.

I can be Douglas Jones or Michael Smith.

WILLIAM We can go as the Smith brothers, brothers in crime.

TED Treasure seekers. You'll be my bank job apprentice. We rent a car, drive to Vegas, rock the place.

WILLIAM Then Belize.

They do fist-to-fist punches.

*There is the sound of A KEY IN THE DOOR. They freeze.
The sound is prolonged.*

TED *(hushed)* Somebody's breaking in.

WILLIAM *(hushed)* What now?

TED Resume stealth positions.

Ted turns off the lights.

LIGHTS DIM

William takes the box, gym bag and his briefcase, puts them behind the workstation, and stands behind it as before. Ted pulls his gun, hides behind the plant and hall tree. There is a rattling and the sound of the door opening.

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Four

ACT ONE, SCENE FIVE

LIGHTS DIM:

Time: Night

Place: Inside the Americana Bank and Trust Company

A few bars of the song "PRETTY WOMAN" plays.

William and Ted are as before.

JENNIFER, 23, gorgeous, with long blonde hair, ENTERS, turns on the lights. Jennifer could speak with a British accent.

LIGHTS UP

Jennifer looks to the motion sensor alarm, shrugs, puts her coat on the hall tree, turns to the room.

The song ends.

Jennifer sees William sitting at his workstation.

JENNIFER *(shrieks)* Ahhhhhhhhaaaa!

WILLIAM Jennifer!

William rushes to her. Jennifer faints into William's arms. He brings her around.

JENNIFER Why are you

Jennifer stands, wobbles, about to faint again, William grabs her, takes her over to his workstation.

She leans on the workstation. William hands her a bottle of water from under his workstation. She sips the water.

WILLIAM Feel better?

JENNIFER Fine.

WILLIAM I thought you were a a a . . .

JENNIFER *(interrupting)* Why are you here?

WILLIAM Me?

His eyes study her like she's a God.

Her expression says she expects an answer.

Did I say me?

JENNIFER There's nobody else here.

WILLIAM No, there isn't. Really there isn't. Just the two of us.

JENNIFER So?

WILLIAM Jennifer, when there's only two, just two, do you ever think about dropping everything, the blinds, the c. . . *(stops speaking)*

JENNIFER The what?

WILLIAM Forget it. It's not important but, although it is, in a way.

JENNIFER What?

WILLIAM C-c-cash! I'm short twenty. I've been going over the numbers trying to find where I messed up.

JENNIFER In the dark?

WILLIAM Ms. Samuels says we spend too much on hydro, so . . .

Ted motions with the gun for William to get rid of Jennifer.

You're probably late for something, so if you don't mind, I'll get on with . . .

William ushers Jennifer toward the SL door.

JENNIFER *(interrupting)* It's those twenties. They stick like glue. I've had the same problem. Every time it cost me. You've probably given a customer a bonus twenty.

WILLIAM Jennifer, you're a dear, but I need to balance everything.

Frustrated, Ted points the gun at William. William pushes her toward the door.

It feels like, like, I'm, I mean, you need to understand . . . it's life or death.

Jennifer stops suddenly.

JENNIFER William, you're over-reacting. It's just numbers. I can help you. (*new idea, astounded*) Do you think I'm here to rob the bank?!!!

WILLIAM No no no no, NO!!

JENNIFER Aren't you interested in how I got in?

WILLIAM Picked the lock? Maybe a key?

JENNIFER The spare key. The one that's been missing for a week. I borrowed it from Ms. Samuels' desk drawer. I'm here to return it.

They move back to William's workstation.

WILLIAM Why did you take, I mean borrow the key?

JENNIFER To repay a favor.

WILLIAM A genuine, 24-carrot favor?

JENNIFER I wish.

WILLIAM Was it one faaaavvvvor or were there to be . . .

William pats his workstation.

. . . instalments? Multiple instalments?

JENNIFER No more favors. I'm over Ted, way over him. I broke it off. I'll never see Ted again. I don't know what it'll do to Ted, so I haven't told him.

Ted reacts, moves to one knee, is miserable.

WILLIAM (*seeing Ted*) I'm getting the whole pathetic, pitiful, and sooooo sad picture.

JENNIFER He wasn't what I needed, you know, in the long term. He was romantic and treated me well, and I kind of fell for it, him, because of that. You remember the diamond ring I was showing around the office?

WILLIAM It was an amazing ring, quite valuable too, I mean, I expect.

JENNIFER I got rid of it.

Ted reacts, makes a lot of misery motions.

WILLIAM You threw it away?

JENNIFER That's right.

WILLIAM Why would you throw away of a ten-thousand-dollar diamond ring? I mean, I expect it's worth that much. It looked fabulous.

JENNIFER It was a fake!

Ted shakes his head "No".

WILLIAM Your boyfriend, this Ted, had nerve to give you a glass ring? He must be as fake as the ring itself.

JENNIFER It has diminished him in my eyes.

Ted reacts, makes a lot of misery motions.

WILLIAM Mine too. *(smiles to Ted)* What makes you think the ring wasn't genuine?

JENNIFER Ted made me promise to never take it to a jeweler for an appraisal, even for cleaning. Any jeweler worth his salt would know it's glass! That's why he made me promise.

Ted and William react. William is in shock looks over Jennifer's shoulder toward Ted.

WILLIAM You turned diamonds into glass! A unique talent. What about this low life, Ted?

JENNIFER Ted was a bank customer I got to know. He wanted to know about what I do, to see me in action, in the bank.

WILLIAM In action?

William looks to Ted. Ted reacts, fist pump.

JENNIFER I gave Ted a tour of the bank on Sunday.

WILLIAM The special, secret, personal, private tour?

JENNIFER I thought he'd appreciate what I do, but he seemed more interested in the building and some, some (*embarrassed*) personal stuff.

William crawls onto workstation, lays on his side.

WILLIAM I can imagine . . . although, I'm trying not to think about it.

JENNIFER Ted was okay but, well, I've found him to be, I don't know, it's hard to describe.

Ted reacts. William jumps down.

WILLIAM Could it be by giving you a fake diamond ring mean he doesn't love you the way you need to be loved?

JENNIFER That could be it.

WILLIAM How about he's a washout, a complete disgrace as a, a, boyfriend, even as a human being?

JENNIFER That could be it too.

WILLIAM Maybe he lacks an important manly quality.

Ted reacts.

JENNIFER That could be it too.

Ted jumps out from behind the plant and hall tree.

TED (*shouts*) What manly quality?!!!!

JENNIFER (*screams*) Ahhhhaaaa! (*faints into William's arms*)

LIGHTS OUT

End of Act One, Scene Five

ACT ONE, SCENE SIX

LIGHTS UP:

Time: Night.

Place: Inside the Americana Bank and Trust Company

A few bars of the song "STAYIN' ALIVE" plays.

Jennifer is unconscious on the floor.

William sits on a chair beside Jennifer.

Ted sits on a chair on the other side of Jennifer.

WILLIAM What now?

TED *(brings gun out)* I'll have to shoot her.

Ted points his gun at Jennifer.

William throws himself between Ted and Jennifer.

WILLIAM No, don't!

Ted pockets the gun.

TED *(alarmed)* I could have shot you. As I recall, you're not fond of dying.

WILLIAM I'm not dying to-night, and neither is Jennifer.

TED If she comes to, she'll realize why we're here. She's slow, but not that slow.

WILLIAM There must be a way she can live, and we can get away with the money.

TED I don't see how. She'll ID us.

WILLIAM I love her.

TED She's terminally slow!

WILLIAM She's not slow, she's, she's lovely, and smart too.

TED Isn't Marilyn your fiancé?

WILLIAM I was planning on moving on, you know, once I'd taken the money. Marilyn and I have less and less in common.

TED You'd dump Marilyn and not tell her? Leave her high and dry.

WILLIAM There'd be high but no dry.

TED The coward's way out.

WILLIAM Jennifer means everything to me. I was going to invite Jennifer to Belize once I was established there. Please, I can't live without her.

Ted brings his gun out.

TED Perfect. I'll shoot you both.

Ted moves to shoot Jennifer.

William throws himself between Ted and Jennifer.

WILLIAM We have a deal! A deal, our deal! We shook on it, the money, Vegas, Belize, remember?!!

Frustrated, Ted sits on a chair.

TED Complications! (*normal*) Complications aren't good, although, (*thinks*) on the other hand, I like to think of them as opportunities. Any ideas?

WILLIAM We could tie Jennifer up, leave her in the bathroom.

TED No.

WILLIAM Why?

TED Too traumatic.

WILLIAM (*amazed*) Shooting her is a better choice?!!!

TED For us!

Jennifer starts to regain consciousness.

I've got something else that'll work. Get me a glass of water.

(MORE)

William goes to the workstation, fills a glass of water from a pitcher of water, spilling some, during the next while.

Ted goes to his gym bag while William is filling the glass, takes a white cloth from the bag and moves toward Jennifer with it.

William has filled the glass with water. Jennifer is starting to wake up. Ted holds the handkerchief over Jennifer's nose for five seconds. She goes unconscious.

That'll do it.

William hands the glass of water to Ted.

Ted throws the handkerchief to William who smells it, staggers, repulsed, is almost overcome by it.

Ted drinks the water.

WILLIAM Chloroform!

William rushes to Jennifer, holds her.

You've killed her?

TED We can't have her blabbing to the cops, can we?

WILLIAM But, she was such such such a . . .

TED *(interrupting)* . . . stupid girl and a big problem for us.

WILLIAM No!

TED No Jennifer, no problem. We're free to hit the road. I'm ready for Vegas, how about you?

William, in tears, holds her head up, lightly slaps her face, wails.

WILLIAM Ahhhhaaaaa! You bastard!! You have no, no, nothing, no conscience, empty, a shell of a man. Pure evil.

(MORE)

Ted shrugs.

William hugs Jennifer's unconscious body, a hand on her neck, accidentally checks the carotid artery in her neck for a heartbeat.

There's a heartbeat! She's alive!

Ted laughs

TED You're so dramatic.

WILLIAM Ahaaaaaaa!

TED She'll be dead to us and to the world for maybe an hour.

William lays Jennifer on the floor, jumps up.

WILLIAM You sick bastard!

TED Better to wake up this way than tied and gagged. Less traumatic.

WILLIAM Why would you put me through that, other than you're a sick son-of-a-bitch. I hate you!

TED Think of it as a favor, me to you. You owe me.

WILLIAM I've teamed up with a complete lunatic. A wacko, pure and simple.

TED But you're still alive, in a minimal way. Jennifer is slow but joyfully alive. You, you're barely clinging to your chosen, miserable, existence.

WILLIAM I'm alive, fully alive. *(gestures wildly)*

TED You're a secret, sick lover, definite sick lover.

WILLIAM So?

TED A common ailment, but not good for the bank job business.

WILLIAM I'm not an animal. I feel.

TED Your mambe pambe feelings could get us caught. I don't know about you.

WILLIAM We have a partnership, remember?

TED I'm re-evaluating. You were going to take the coward's way out with Marilyn. Leave without saying anything. Only a coward would do that.

WILLIAM That's got nothing to do with you and me or Jennifer. It's personal.

TED If you'd be less than truthful with Marilyn, it makes me think you can't be trusted.

WILLIAM It would be easier on Marilyn and me for me to disappear.

TED She might think you'd been abducted or murdered or got amnesia. She could spend the rest of her life waiting for your return, or worse, go looking for you . . . us.

WILLIAM Marilyn? (*chuckles*) I don't think so. What now?

TED Get Jennifer into a bathroom.

WILLIAM Bathroom? Let her wake up here, then we leave.

TED Take her into the bathroom, then we'll talk about leaving.

William hesitates,

Ted points gun at William.

Ted relaxes on a chair as William drags Jennifer off through the UC door.

(loud) In a locked stall, with her head on the toilet seat.

WILLIAM (*O.S. loud*) Locked stall?

TED (*loud*) Yeah.

WILLIAM (*O.S. loud*) That won't be easy.

TED (*loud*) Do I need to check?

WILLIAM (*O.S. loud*) I'll manage.

Sounds of stall opening and closing, grunting. William ENTERS from UC door, hair a mess and shirt tale out.

WILLIAM What now?

TED You need to dispose of Marilyn.

WILLIAM Kill her? I've never, or will ever, kill anyone.

Ted shrugs.

WILLIAM Just when I thought it can't get worse, it does!

TED Leaving her is a death.

WILLIAM Dispose sounds so deadly.

TED You'll be killing her love for you. It's a real death!

WILLIAM I don't think . . .

TED *(interrupting)* That's the problem. You don't think! She's emotionally invested in you and now you want her to forget about you because you've decided to move on?

William shrugs.

You killed your love for her hours or weeks ago. She still cares for you. Her feelings don't matter to you?

WILLIAM No, not really, not anymore.

TED You're a cold-blooded, emotion assassin! I'm a gentleman compared to you.

WILLIAM Hu! Me? You're an armed bank robber with a twisted outlook.

TED You're too kind.

Ted points the gun at William.

Call Marilyn and tell her it's over.

LIGHTS OUT -- END OF ACT ONE – END OF SAMPLE