

TAKING SECRETS TO THE GRAVE
(full-length drama)

SYNOPSIS

When Angela Romano was a child she was the victim of a series of incestuous rapes.

She is in her early twenties as the play opens, and she finds herself a victim again, this time of a kidnapping by two mysterious men. As the scenes in the first act progress, we realize that they are alternating between her dreams and reality as she lies near death in a hospital bed after being struck by a truck as she crossed the street in a suicide attempt. The kidnapping is actually her dream and reveals that she is haunted by the vicious attacks that she had endured at the hands of "Oscar."

At the same time in the reality scenes, doctors are assuring her family that she is brain dead and that they should consider taking her off life support.

The scenes continue to alternate between the reality of deciding whether to pull the plug and Angela's dream as she relives the rape and is given an opportunity to exact justice, an opportunity ultimately denied when her father allows the life support to end, despite the fact that he has discovered that she is not brain dead. And as the first act ends, Angela dies.

The second act opens shortly after her death, with Angela's father missing. He is so distraught about his role in allowing Angela to die - as well as his role in the rapes - that he too attempts suicide, shooting himself in the head. And so we find him comatose just as Angela had been. Now however the scenes alternate between reality and his dreams, as another point of view of the story unfolds.

Ultimately the entire family is destroyed by the aftereffects of the rapes, and yet none of the reasoning behind the destruction of the family is ever known to those in the real world. It is incomprehensible to those left behind because the secrets are taken to the grave.

CAST

1 Female early 20's
3 Males 40s-50s
1 Female 40s
1 Female 30s
2 Males 20s
Doubling for voiceovers

SETS

A Hospital Room
An Office
A Bare Stage

**TAKING SECRETS TO THE GRAVE
DIALOGUE SAMPLE**

PRIEST (V.O.)

In the name of The Father and The Son and The Holy Spirit...

(Two quick gunshots are followed by screams from the PARISHIONERS. A single gunshot follows. Pause for effect. An ambulance siren wails and then fades)

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

And in local news, sixty-eight year old Roman Catholic Priest, Father Michael O'Malley was shot and killed during afternoon mass at St. Mary's Church right before the eyes of more than a dozen horrified parishioners. Father Mike had been a beloved spiritual leader at the church for more than thirty-five years, and was only months away from his scheduled retirement. In a shocking follow-up, the killer then calmly turned the thirty-eight caliber revolver around and committed suicide on the spot. For a moment police thought that they might find a clue to the killer's motive when they discovered a voice activated tape recorder in the killer's pocket, but the instrument did not contain a tape. A police spokesman then suggested that with the suicide, the killer may well have taken the secret behind this incomprehensible act to the grave. Local news will continue in a moment. (Lights up)

SETTING: A jury room in a courthouse with a long table and four swivel chairs with wheels and arms. There is a door facing the audience. The door opens into the room. There are no windows. There is an electrical outlet visible on a wall, five feet above the floor.

ANGELA (O.S.)

(Screaming) LET GO OF ME YOU ASSHOLES!

(The door bursts open. MR. FOSTER and MR. PEABODY are wearing black suits. THEY drag ANGELA into the room and close the door. SHE is kicking and fighting. THEY force her into a chair and bind her wrists to the arms of the chair with tape while SHE continues to rage. ANGELA is dressed in jeans)

ANGELA (Continued)

(Screaming) YOU FUCKS, LET ME GO! You can't keep me here. Do you know who I am? You kidnapped me! Let me go I said!

(THEY finish binding her wrists and calmly take seats as SHE continues to spew venom, and struggles to get loose)

ANGELA (Continued)

You ugly fucks. My family will kill you. You can't kidnap me you scumbags. Untie me now and let me go!

(THEY ignore her and SHE spits at them. THEY calmly let their chairs roll a little further from her, and swivel away slightly. SHE pushes with her feet and chases them with her chair, but it is too difficult and SHE stops..Pause)

ANGELA (Continued)

Say something you dumb bastards. Don't just sit there like you're fucking statues. Say something!

MR. PEABODY

(With a simpleton's smile) My name is Pibbidy. It's spelled P-E-A-B-O-D-Y but it's pronounced Pibbidy.

ANGELA

(Pause, Incredulous) You're telling me your name?

MR. FOSTER

(HE smiles and nods) And I'm Mr. Foster. It's spelled just the way it sounds.

ANGELA

Mr. Foster and Pibbidy. You sound like cartoon characters. Well guess what..when my family catches up with you, you'll wish you were cartoon characters.

MR. PEABODY

Uh.. actually it's Mister Pibbidy. I'd prefer you call me mister also.

ANGELA

Shut the fuck up Pibbidy - or maybe I should call you Pee-body.

MR. PEABODY

(Very upset) No, no. It's not Pee-body. I won't answer if you call me Pee-body.

ANGELA

You don't answer now dickface.

MR. FOSTER

Must you curse?

ANGELA

Oh I'm sorry Mr. Fuckie. Have I offended you?

MR. FOSTER

It's just that the English language contains so many beautifully descriptive words. There's no need to descend to the gutter.

ANGELA

You faggot prick. You brought me here from the gutter. I was crossing the fucking street. I was in the fucking gutter. You descended into the gutter to kidnap me. You came to me - so you speak my language.

MR. PEABODY

You're so very angry.

(SHE suddenly pushes with her feet again and comes close to MR. PEABODY, as HE and MR. FOSTER quickly jump up and push their chairs around to the other side of the table. THEY calmly sit again)

ANGELA

(Resigned) Where the fuck are we?

MR. FOSTER

You have said that word seventy-two times since we.. since we encountered each other. There will be no further discussion until you stop using such vile language.

ANGELA

Fine fuckface.

(SHE shuts her eyes and clenches her mouth tightly. MR. FOSTER rises followed by MR. PEABODY. Hearing them, ANGELA opens her eyes)

ANGELA (Continued)

What are you doing?

MR. FOSTER

We're leaving.

ANGELA

What do you mean you're leaving asshole? What about me?

(MR. FOSTER and MR. PEABODY begin to cross towards the door)

ANGELA (Continued)

Wait a second. Wait a second... (THEY continue) I'll stop cursing. (THEY stop) Don't leave me alone in here.

MR. FOSTER

Why not? You're a tough girl aren't you?

(ANGELA is about to snap back, but catches herself)

ANGELA

I don't want to sit here alone.

(MR. FOSTER and MR. PEABODY return to their seats
as ANGELA studies them)

ANGELA (Continued)

This wasn't your idea was it? You're just a couple of flunkies aren't you? (Off MR. FOSTER's negative reaction to the word "flunkies") Hey, flunky's a real word. It's not a curse.

MR. PEABODY

Flunky is a demeaning characterization.

ANGELA

Webster defines flunky as one who does menial or trivial work. Doing menial work doesn't necessarily demean a person.

MR. FOSTER

Webster? We see another side of you.

(ANGELA doesn't respond)

MR. PEABODY

You may be - dictionary smart but your interpersonal skills are woefully lacking. You have insulted us by declaring our work to be menial or trivial when it is not.

ANGELA

You look like servants - Well I can't help it, you do. You aren't dressed like kidnappers, you handled me with kid gloves.. you don't even have a fucking phone in here to make a ransom call. (MR. FOSTER and MR. PEABODY rise quickly, stiffly and in unison) Sorry just habit. (THEY sit quickly, stiffly and in unison. ANGELA realizes that THEY resembled jack-in-the-boxes. SHE sings to the tune of the jack-in-the-box) Dum de dum de diddly dum, de dum de dum de de de, dum de dum de diddly dum - fuck (THEY rise quickly, stiffly and in unison again) goes the weasels.

MR. PEABODY

You are a hopeless case. Goodbye Miss Romano.

(THEY start to cross towards the door)

ANGELA

Romano? Who the fuck is Romano? (SHE struggles again) You got the wrong bitch. I'm not Romano you scumbags! You fucked up!

(MR. PEABODY and MR. FOSTER exit, closing the door behind them)

ANGELA (Continued)

Well that didn't work. (SHE looks around the room) This is the craziest fucking kidnapping I ever took part in. (Yelling) Hello. Is anyone out there? (Pause) (Yelling) Hello. Can anyone hear me? I'm hungry. And I have to go to the bathroom. The Geneva Convention says prisoners are allowed unlimited bathroom visits. (Pause) (Yelling) You guys are in major trouble. First my family's going to kill you, then you're going to be charged with kidnapping, and now you've just added war crimes. (Pause) (Yelling) Fuck (Pause, Fast) fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck. (Defeated) shit - Can't anybody hear me?

OSCAR (O.S.)

(Soothing) I hear you.

ANGELA

Hey. Who are you?

OSCAR (O.S.)

I'm Oscar. Who are you?

ANGELA

Can you come in here?

OSCAR (O.S.)

I'm tied up too. I heard them bring you in.

ANGELA

Were you kidnapped by two men in black suits?

OSCAR (O.S.)

Mr. Macwhirter and Mr. Bramwell.

ANGELA

You mean there's more of these dickheads running around?

OSCAR (O.S.)

Where'd they grab you?

ANGELA

Right off the street.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Why?

ANGELA

Who the fuck knows. (Pause) What kind of room are you in?

OSCAR (O.S.)

It looks like a jury room in court with chairs and a table and a television.

ANGELA

A television? (Yelling) I want a television.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Hey get a grip on yourself.

ANGELA

(SHE struggles to get loose) A grip? I can't get a grip you stupid turd. My freakin' wrists are tied. (One wrist comes loose) Whoa.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Whoa what?

ANGELA

(Standing and freeing her other wrist) Whoa, a beautiful butterfly just passed the window.

OSCAR (O.S.)

You have a window? (Yelling) I want a window.

ANGELA

Hey be quiet.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Okay. (Silence)

ANGELA

(Sotto as SHE moves cautiously towards the door) No, no I mean don't yell. Just keep talking so I can find you.

OSCAR (O.S.)

I thought you were tied up.

ANGELA

Keep talking. I'll find you.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Okay. What should I say?

ANGELA

Say anything you dope.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Okay. How about this? (ANGELA is at the door as HE starts to hum the jack-in-the-box song) Dum de dum de diddly dum, de dum de dum de de de.

ANGELA

Very funny.

OSCAR (O.S.)

Dum de dum de diddly dum.

(ANGELA pulls open the door. OSCAR is standing at the door and punches her, knocking her out)

OSCAR (Continued)

(Singing) Pop goes the weasel.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE 1