

**An Italian aristocrat on her own in Texas?
They just thought she was young and vulnerable...**

In Italy, Joanna Scarpatti was used to her every desire being granted as soon as possible.

At any time of the day, any day of the week.

So this Tuesday morning, when the knock came at her bedroom door and a male voice called out in Spanish that he had a delivery for her, the princess forgot where she was and opened the door without hesitation or trepidation.

Two dark Latin-looking young men forced their way into her bedroom.

One went immediately for the phone and placed it out of her reach.

The other grabbed her arms, pinned them behind her back with one hand and put his other across her mouth.

He dragged her to the outside corner of the room.

"Quick! Get the shot! Hurry up!" the man holding Joanna said, low and urgent.

"Just a minute," said the other and he was fiddling with something in his hands.

"Don't let go of her mouth."

Taken off guard, Joanna had offered no resistance until now.

She deftly pulled her right leg forward, her knee up and then plunged her entire body backwards, aiming her shoe heel at the vulnerable parts of her captor.

She hit the mark.

He yelled, then let go of her.

She fell face forward to the floor but swiftly turned on her back and slipped out of his reach to the opposite corner of the room so fast the second man did not have time to react.

The kicked man rolled forward on the bed, still yelling.

Joanna climbed the furniture nearest the corner window, grabbed a lamp, turned it upside down and started smashing the windowpanes, yelling and screaming in Italian.

The man writhing on the bed looked up at the commotion and started to protest.

"Hey, we just wanted-"

"Let's go!" The first man grabbed his companion and shoved him towards the windows.

"Don't come near me!" The princess held the lamp over their heads and screamed in Italian.

The phone began to ring loudly.

"Let's go!" repeated the first man. "It's a bust."

"What about the shot!" the other cried. "We didn't get the shot!"

"It's a bust. We've got to get out. Go go go!"

Vaguely understanding that she had the better of them somehow, the princess relaxed her guard and lowered the heavy lamp slightly.

Instead of turning to the exit, the first man shoved his partner in the direction of the princess.

"STOP!" she screamed as they came in her direction.

She threw the lamp at the man who had manhandled her.

But he ducked.

The lamp crashed to the ground.

Sparks flew.