



A woman with dark hair is sitting in a large, vibrant red armchair. She is wearing a white, ruffled, sleeveless top and shimmering, textured pants. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows a modern interior with a white sofa and a patterned rug.

ROSELYN'S

It doesn't take much detective work to discover Puerto Rican bombshell and *Without a Trace* star Roselyn Sanchez's secret to success—simply wrap brains and beauty into one incredible package.

WORLD

Story by Jim Colucci · Photography by Cliff Lipson · Styling by Angelique O'Neil

Previous Page: White silk ruffle halter top (\$780) by TEREXOV, available at Edit NYC, 1368 Lexington Ave., New York (212-876-1368). Sequin flare pants (\$1,750) by Tuleh, available at Stanley Korshak, Dallas, (214-871-3600). Clelia ear clips set in white gold and diamonds (\$117,000), five-row ribbon bracelet in platinum set with diamonds (price upon request), Clelia ring in white gold set with diamonds (\$64,000), all by Van Cleef & Arpels, VCA Palm Beach (store manager Yvonne Lynam, 561-655-6767, or vancleef-arpels.com). Metallic silver and rose gold sandals (\$595) by Giuseppe Zanotti Design, Giuseppe Zanotti Design Boutiques (www.giuseppe-zanotti-design.com).

This Page: Jade print stamped viscose jersey gown (price on request) by Roberto Cavalli, (www.robertocavalli.com). Emerald cabochon splash ring (\$350,000) and 18k yellow gold and diamond feuilles chandelier earrings (\$50,000) by Kaufmann de Suisse (kaufmandesuisse.com).



In the opulent Presidential Suite of The Ritz-Carlton hotel, overlooking the Atlantic in Palm Beach, Fla., raven-haired Roselyn Sanchez is loving a beautiful, borrowed sea-foam green gown. This glammed-out look, she notes, is not something she gets to sport on the hit CBS series *Without a Trace*. “For the most part, even though [co-star Poppy Montgomery and I] are dressed incredibly, we’re playing detectives,” the 35-year-old Puerto Rico native explains. “So [this Palm Beach shoot] gives me the opportunity to really dress up, like I’m going to an awards show, and look incredible with the hair and the makeup.”

Yet on *Trace*, Sanchez is hardly hiding her sensuality. Just a few minutes watching her character, Agent Elena Delgado, at work, and you’ll want to be interrogated. But come on—do fabulous Feds like Delgado really exist? “Maybe a few years ago, I would have thought, ‘This is just ridiculous that they have Poppy and me [on a procedural show] with Pantene-beautiful hair,’” Sanchez explains, laughing. “I don’t think that’s the way an investigator would really look. But I do think that the audience is really accepting that this is the world of TV. It’s fantasy. So, we try to play it down a little bit so it’s not over the top and laughable—but at the same time, I don’t want to do so completely, so that I’m taking away from what God gave me.”

Growing up in San Juan, the youngest child and only daughter of an accountant father and school-teacher mother, Sanchez began discovering her talents at an early age. At 4, she studied ballet. At 6, she was playing piano. By 11, the dark-eyed beauty was already modeling and landing commercial work, roles in music videos and, later, swimsuit shoots. At only 5 feet 5, Sanchez admits modestly, her future on the fashion runways was limited. But she still managed to parlay two pageant wins—as Miss Puerto Rico Petite and then as Miss America Petite—into both a bit part as an

island girl in the locally produced 1992 Martin Short and Kurt Russell comedy film *Captain Ron*, and more notably, a role on the island’s top sketch comedy show, *Que Vacilon!*

But wait—is the woman behind Agent Delgado secretly silly, too? “I was talking to Anthony [LaPaglia, her *Trace* co-star] last week, and he said, ‘Ros, you should do a romantic comedy, because you’re really funny,’” Sanchez says in her famously lush Latin accent. “I don’t think I’m funny, but I think because of all my mannerisms and the way I speak, people think I am.”

Even so, she adds, “it’s really interesting that the only roles I ever book are playing the cop, the lawyers, the detectives. People always see me as really serious.” That must be because Sanchez’s innate drive and down-to-earth nature ultimately shine through. Her acting ambitions started when her artistically inclined mother pushed her to explore her talents. “It’s almost as if she lived her life through me,” the actress remembers. Today her mother is retired from teaching, and “she is so proud of what I do.”

With a dream of someday appearing in a Broadway musical, Sanchez moved at age 21 to New York, after three years at the University of Puerto Rico, and began studying acting in earnest. But at first, even though she had studied English in private school back home, she was limited by her lack of confidence in speaking the language. Finally, in true take-charge style, “it took me three years, but I said to myself, ‘If you really want to get your act together, you need to start taking English lessons, and be friends with people who speak only English.’” Then, quickly afterward in 1996, she landed her first big American role, as Pilar Domingo, the first Latina character in the history of *As the World Turns*.

In 2001, Sanchez moved west, where her role—as, surprise!, a sexy Secret Service gal—opposite Chris Tucker and Jackie Chan in *Rush Hour 2* put her on everyone’s radar, and continually onto the pages of “laddie” magazines like *Maxim*, *FHM* and AskMen.com. She became “the Latin spitfire” or “Latin vixen.” And though those labels smack of some creaky old stereotypes, Sanchez says she doesn’t mind. “I’m really proud of where I come from, and the way I speak,” she says. “I love the fact that we love salsa and merengue, and that we eat what we eat, and that we’re bigger than life and dramatic. I don’t have a problem with people thinking that we are that—because that doesn’t mean we’re not also educated and intelligent.”

But even with her now-acclaimed Hotness, Hollywood didn’t always know what to do with a proud Latina. “I think America is embracing more and more the Latin community, and the flavor we bring to the table,” the actress theorizes. “But the roles were always more limited. And when I opened my mouth, I have a thick accent. The way I see it is, [being Latina] opens three doors and closes two. Some producers love the fact that I bring authenticity, and for others, the way I speak bothers them as noise that gets in the way.”

Jonathan Littman, an executive producer of *Without a Trace*, is obviously in the former category. *Trace* had already been on the air for four seasons when, Littman says, “we wanted to shake it up a little bit.” Sanchez’s audition tape certainly did just that. During a break on the Puerto Rico set of the 2006 film *Yellow*, the actress did a quick take on FBI Agent Delgado—all the while dressed for her movie role as an exotic dancer. “She was in a very risqué outfit, with a lot of makeup on, doing our lines,” Littman remembers. “It was hysterical, but it was also really telling that we still believed her anyway. She’s got that much talent.”

Sanchez “brings a really grounded nature and empathy to the role that is really stunning,” Littman marvels. “Usually when you have someone that gorgeous, you fear that there might be some distance to her with the audience. But Roselyn has so much humanity in her and so much heart that it comes through on screen.” And yet, he adds, she’s intriguingly tough, too. “When you’re casting someone, and they have to hold a gun for the first time, as a producer you also are thinking, ‘Please, just make it look credible!’ With Roselyn, you believe that she’s an FBI agent. She’s got all the things you’d ever want in a well-rounded actress.”





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There are an awful lot of what I call Anonymous Blondes and Anonymous Brunettes, who don't stand out. But you never say that about Roselyn Sanchez," agrees TV Squad blogger Allison Waldman. "And it's not because she's Hispanic, and it's not just because she's pretty. It's because there's something else going on there. She's a real firecracker, and I think that comes across, even in a procedural, where an actor doesn't always get a lot of chances (for) character development. There's a certain energy, a charismatic quality that she has imbued in the character. And when she has been given the chance to show her stuff"—like, Waldman illustrates, in a Season 5 storyline in which Elena stands down her ex-husband, Carlos, after he kidnapped their daughter—"she has been really great."

Sanchez, too, appreciates those episodes when she can show the softer side of Agent Delgado. "I came in very excited about doing a Jerry Bruckheimer [-produced] show, and working with Anthony and Poppy and Marianne [Jean-Baptiste]," she admits. "But I wasn't really aware of how difficult it could be as an actress to do a procedural, because you don't get to do as much as you want to, while you're busy delivering information to the audience." But, as with a Season 7 follow-up to the Carlos story arc that Sanchez herself suggested to producers, "little by little they're giving me a personal storyline, and opportunities to shine."

In those moments, we can see what Sanchez sees in her TV alter ego: "She's independent, strong, extremely intelligent and loyal. What's not that great is that she closes down very easily—she has to. She doesn't have a lot of patience, so when she gets into a bad situation, she will just turn around and walk away."

Still, the actress admires the single mother of young Sofie. "She is an outstanding mom. And I think a good way to judge a woman is by how good a mother she is." But she'd like someday to see the burdens become a little less heavy for Elena and her co-worker/boyfriend Danny, played by Enrique Murciano. "I told them please, let's not make it so dramatic and so negative," says Sanchez. "Even though we work together and are FBI agents, we're still human beings. I want to be able to have a laugh with my partner."

Silk gazar cocktail dress (\$3,795) by Angel Sanchez (angelsanchezusa.com). Charleston pendant in white gold set with diamonds (\$144,000) and Charleston ear clips from the Couture Collection in white gold set with diamonds (\$165,000) by Van Cleef & Arpels, VCA Palm Beach (store manager Yvonne Lynam, 561-655-6767, or vancleef-arpels.com).

Magenta chiffon strapless gown with pleated organza bodice (\$3,960) by Marchesa, available at Neiman Marcus (neimanmarcus.com). Rainbow moonstone feuilles earrings (\$15,000) by Kaufmann de Suisse (kaufmanndesuisse.com). Decollete necklace set in white gold and round diamonds (price upon request); dentelle bracelet in pink and white gold set with pink and white diamonds (price upon request); Decollete ring from the Couture collection set in white gold and diamonds (\$33,900); Années Folles ring in white gold set with round and baguette diamonds (\$37,100); all by Van Cleef & Arpels, VCA Palm Beach (store manager Yvonne Lynam, 561-655-6767, or vancleef-arpels.com).





As a detective on *Without a Trace*, Sanchez doesn't often find herself slipping into exquisite designer gowns. "[This shoot] gives me the opportunity to really dress up, like I'm going to an awards show," she says.

Such suggestions are taken seriously on a show as collaborative as *Without a Trace*. Says the actress: "We're all really close—that's one of the reasons that I love this job. From day one, everyone has been so supportive."

Especially co-star Montgomery, whom "I adore," Sanchez says, adding, "I think that when this show is over, I'm going to have a friend for life." For LaPaglia, "I have nothing but respect. We give to each other, and I know that he loves me." Jean-Baptiste "is wonderful, and I know that I'm going to do business with Eric Close at some point because we have a very similar work ethic."

And perhaps unfortunately, "Enrique is like my little brother, where we can't stand each other but love each other at the same time." During romantic scenes, that familial feeling can make for discomfort on the set. When the cameras stop rolling, "every time, we laugh and joke around, 'Eww, disgusting!'"

But her relationship with Danny aside, Agent Delgado spends most of her screen time tracking down some big-time baddies. Sanchez's own tough side, she jokes, comes from "growing up in Puerto Rico with three brothers." Now, the actress is prepared to impart some lessons on being badass to her husband and fellow actor Eric Winter (right, with Sanchez), whom she wed last fall. Thirty-three-year-old Winter, who most recently appeared on ABC's *Brothers & Sisters* and in last year's CBS series *Moonlight* and *Viva Laughlin*, is also a star on the rise. "So I think I met him at the right time," Sanchez says. "I've been doing this longer than he has, so I'm a little bit more jaded and knowledgeable when it comes to the bull you have to put up with in the business."

"I had been married before, and after that, it was very difficult for me to find somebody I knew I wanted to spend the rest of my life with," Sanchez says about meeting her husband-to-be more than three years ago. "My instinct was always to be attracted to guys who are handfuls, who are going to bring a lot of drama into my life. But then, for the first time, when I was 32, I had some maturity. I saw this guy who had the most loving and respectful





Red jersey gown (price on request) by Roberto Cavalli (www.robortocavalli.com). Pewter "Specchio Very Prive" pump (\$770) by Christian Louboutin (christianlouboutin.com). Pendant ear clips in white gold set with round diamonds (\$44,100); lavalier necklace set in white gold, baguette and round diamonds (price upon request); dentelle ring in white gold set with diamonds (\$13,300); all by Van Cleef & Arpels, VCA Palm Beach (store manager Yvonne Lynam, 561-655-6767, or vancleef-arpels.com).

relationship with his mom. I want family to be really important to me, and he's such an amazing son that I think he's going to be an amazing father. And when I saw that, I said, "This is the guy."

Having achieved small-screen success, Sanchez says she wants nothing more now than "to be an amazing mom and an amazing wife. I know I'm going to be happy with that." So far, Sanchez, who is raising six dogs, has been working out some of her maternal energies by lobbying to abolish puppy mills. In her native Puerto Rico, she founded Caritas Alegres ("Happy Faces"), a charity to aid disadvantaged kids who have suffered physical or emotional abuse. And she and Winter recently traveled to Nicaragua and Peru as ambassadors of Operation Smile, a worldwide foundation working to repair childhood facial deformities.

And, when in some season soon, the actress approaches the producers of *Without a Trace* to talk about expanding not just Elena's storylines but her waistlines too, she knows they'll work around her pregnancy as beautifully as they did for Montgomery in 2007. TV is a great place to be, Sanchez says, for a new or, like her, an aspiring mom. So when the day comes when *Trace* solves its last case, she'll be open to another show—especially if she can help to develop and shape it. As a producer and writer, she was already the force behind the big-screen *Yellow*, which not so coincidentally told the story of a young singer/dancer/actress who leaves Puerto Rico to hit the big time in New York. And as in the film, Sanchez would still risk it all for the chance to do a Broadway musical like her current "obsession," *In the Heights*. "Then I don't have to work ever again as an actress," she avows. "Because that's what I came to America for." ■

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