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Spike Heels

by Theresa Rebeck
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"This play was given a staged reading in New Voices '90 at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, New York City."

[The above credit must be provided until January 30, 1995.]

"Produced in workshop by New York Stage and Film Company in association with the Powerhouse Theatre at Vassar, July, 1990."

The following credit must also be provided until July 4, 1997 on the credit page of all programs and in all advertising of similar billings of 1/4 page or larger in which full credits appear. The size of the billing is to be no smaller than the smallest creative element:

"Original New York Production by The Second Stage Theatre, Robyn Goodman and Carole Rothman, Artistic Directors, on June 4, 1992."
Spike Heels was produced in workshop by New York Stage and Film Company in association with the Powerhouse Theatre at Vassar, July, 1990.

Spike Heels was originally produced in New York by the Second Stage Theatre on June 4, 1992. It was directed by Michael Greif and had the following cast (in order of appearance):

ANDREW ......................... Tony Goldwyn
GEORGIE .......................... Saundra Santiago
EDWARD ............................ Kevin Bacon
LYDIA ............................... Julie White

Set Design: James Youmans
Lighting Design: Kenneth Posner
Costume Design: Candice Donnelly
Sound Design: Mark Bennett
Hair Design: Antonio Soddu
Production Manager: Carol Fishman
Production Stage Manager: Jess Lynn
Stage Manager: Allison Sommers
CHARACTERS

ANDREW
GEORGIE
EDWARD
LYDIA

TIME: The present

PLACE: Boston
ACT I

Scene 1

Loud classical MUSIC, Vivaldi or Mozart, on the radio. There is a long moment of POUNDING at the door. LIGHTS come up on the main room of Andrew's apartment, the orderly environment of a scholar.

GEORGIE. (Offstage.) Andrew! Are you in there? Dammit, goddammit, are you home, goddam you—Andrew!

ANDREW. (Overlapping offstage.) Wait a minute—I'm coming—

GEORGIE. (Overlapping, offstage.) Open up the goddam door—are you home or WHAT—Jesus CHRIST I am going to KILL myself I swear to God I will DAMMIT, ANDREW!

(ANDREW crosses the stage quickly, wiping his hands on a towel, snaps off the radio and opens the door.)

ANDREW. What, what, what—

(HE opens the door. GEORGIE barges in.)

GEORGIE. I have been on the stupid goddamn T for an hour and a half, squished between four of the smelliest fat
men on earth, all of them with their armpits in my face, in high heels—Am I interrupting?

ANDREW. No, I was just making dinner. Lydia’s coming over—

GEORGIE. Oh. I won’t interrupt.—

ANDREW. You’re not interrupting—

GEORGIE. (Charging ahead.) Goddammit, I hate heels. I have ruined my arches for the rest of my life just so a bunch of stupid men can have a good time looking at my fucking legs. (SHE sits and takes off her heels.)

ANDREW. Nice mouth. Very nice mouth.

GEORGIE. Oh, don’t start. Don’t even fucking start, okay? If I had a fucking car I wouldn’t have to take the fucking T. Do you know how long I have been in transit? An hour and a half.

ANDREW. Edward let you off at 4:30? What, did he have a nervous breakdown or something?

GEORGIE. I hope so. I hope he totally loses his mind. I hope he has a vision of how useless his whole stupid life has been, and I hope he jumps out his spectacular little office window and into the fucking Charles River, that is what I hope.

ANDREW. Come on, he’s not that bad.

GEORGIE. I wish I still smoked. Why the hell did I have to quit smoking? Do you have any cigarettes? How the hell are we supposed to survive in this stupid country without cigarettes? I mean, they invent this terrific little antidote to everything, cigarettes, and then after they get you hooked on it they tell you that it’s going to kill you. And you know, the thing is, I think I’d rather be killed by cancer than by life in general. I really think that. (SHE
circles the room gingerly, trying to get some feeling back in her feet.)

ANDREW. Are you going to tell me what happened?

GEORGIE. I threw a pencil at Edward, okay? He was getting on my nerves, so I said, fuck you, Edward, and I threw a pencil at him. (SHE starts to laugh.)

ANDREW. Oh, Jesus. Here. Give me your foot.

GEORGIE. Excuse me? I say I threw a pencil at Edward, and you say give me your foot? What is that supposed to mean? Are we having a conversation here, or is this like some sort of art film or what?

ANDREW. (Crosses to the couch, throws her shoes aside and begins to massage her foot.) No wonder you’re in a bad mood. These shoes look like some sort of medieval torture device.

GEORGIE. Don’t just throw those around, those cost a fortune. What are you—Andrew, excuse me, but what are you doing?

ANDREW. I’m massaging your foot. It’s supposed to be soothing. Isn’t it soothing?

GEORGIE. Yes, it’s very—I don’t know if soothing is what I would call this.

ANDREW. Supposedly the muscles in the foot are connected to almost every other part of your body. So it’s important that your feet are always relaxed. That’s why you’re in a bad mood; you’ve been abusing your feet.

GEORGIE. That’s not why I’m in a bad mood.

ANDREW. (Pause.) How’s that?

GEORGIE. It’s nice. It’s very nice.

ANDREW. (Pause. ANDREW looks up at her for a moment, and becomes suddenly awkward. HE quickly sets
her foot down and moves to the kitchen.) I better get to work on dinner.

GEORGIE. (Watches him exit, then sits in silence for a moment.) So how’s Lydia?

ANDREW. (Off.) She’s fine. Fine. She’s good.

GEORGIE. Good. How’s the wedding?

ANDREW. (Off. Pause.) Fine. It’s still a ways off, so nobody’s too hysterical yet.

GEORGIE. That’s good.

ANDREW. (Off.) She wants to meet you.

GEORGIE. She does?

ANDREW. (Off.) Yeah. She’s coming over for dinner later on. You should stick around. It really is ridiculous that you two haven’t met.

GEORGIE. Yeah, that’s ridiculous, all right.

ANDREW. (Reenters, carrying a cutting board and vegetables.) So can you stay?

GEORGIE. Right. She’s gonna come over for some romantic little vegetable thing and find me. I’m sure. (SHE starts to leave.)

ANDREW. She said we should all go out sometime—

GEORGIE. Fine, we’ll do that sometime.

ANDREW. Georgie—

GEORGIE. What? I’m all sweaty and gross. My shirt is sticking to everything and I stink. I can’t meet Lydia smelling like a sewer. She’ll faint or gag or something.

ANDREW. Don’t start.

GEORGIE. I’m sorry. I’m just not up to it, okay?

ANDREW. So don’t stay for dinner. She won’t be here for another hour. Just stick around for a while.

GEORGIE. Look—these clothes are killing me. I need to go upstairs. I can come back tomorrow.
ANDREW. Go put on one of my t-shirts, they’re in the top drawer of the dresser. Come on. You still haven’t told me the details of your assault on Edward.

GEORGIE. Andrew—

ANDREW. There’s some shorts in there, too.

GEORGIE. Oh, fuck.

(SHE heads off, peeling her jacket as she goes. ANDREW cleans, puts away his books, etc.)

ANDREW. (Calling.) You’ll be fine. It’s just going to take a little while to get used to it all. You know, actually, you’re doing great. I talked to Edward last week, and he said you’re the best secretary he’s ever had. So you should just chill out and be nice to him. He’s not that bad, and he likes you a lot. As a matter of fact, I think he has a crush on you. (HE sees something on the coffee table, picks up a book and slams it down. HE takes the book to a small garbage can by his desk and knocks the dead bug off.) These goddam bugs are invading my living room now. Did you ever get a hold of Renzella? I thought he was sending somebody over. (Pause.) Georgie?

GEORGIE. (Off.) You got a regular boudoir in here. Lydia’s been lending you some of her clothes, huh?

ANDREW. Hey, leave that stuff alone. (Pause.) Georgie?

GEORGIE. (Off.) I don’t want to wear one of your t-shirts. I want to wear this. (SHE appears in the doorway, wearing an elegant patterned silk dress. SHE slinks into the room.)

ANDREW. I asked you not to start.
GEORGIE. Thank you. I picked it up at Saks. Usually I don’t appreciate his line, but when I found this I was just devastated—

ANDREW. Take off the dress. Take it off now.
GEORGIE. I particularly like the bow.
ANDREW. I don’t find this funny.
GEORGIE. I just thought I could pick up some fashion tips. So I look presentable when we all go out to dinner.

ANDREW. This is not funny.

(Pause.)

GEORGIE. Okay. It’s not funny. Fine. (Pause.) I didn’t mean anything. I just meant—this is a nice dress. Silk, huh? Lydia’s kind of loaded, huh? (Pause.) You think this looks good on me? I mean, I got some money coming in now, maybe I should try to dress better.

ANDREW. I think you should take it off.
GEORGIE. Yeah, I guess I look pretty stupid. (SHE crosses back to the bedroom.)

ANDREW. I’m sorry. That’s her favorite dress. I just—you don’t even know her. She’s nothing like that.

(GEORGIE exits.)

ANDREW. (Calling.) We’ll set up a date this week and actually do it: we’ll go out to dinner. The three of us. You two can spend the evening trashing Edward. It’ll be fun. You’ll be thick as thieves by dawn.

GEORGIE. (Off.) She doesn’t like him either, huh?

ANDREW. Both of you, you’re both heartbreakers.
(GEORGIE reenters and stands in the doorway, without her shirt on, wearing a slip and a bra. SHE carries the t-shirt in her hands.)

GEORGIE. What is that supposed to mean?
ANDREW. Nothing. I told you, I think he has a crush on you. I talked to him last week, and—
GEORGIE. You talked to him? You talked to him. What did he say?
ANDREW. Georgie.
GEORGIE. What?
ANDREW. Put your shirt on.
GEORGIE. (Puts the t-shirt on. It is long and loose, with sleeves and neck cut out. When she pulls it over her shoulders, her breasts are still largely exposed. ANDREW points it out to her.) You talked to him?
ANDREW. I talk to him all the time. You know that.
GEORGIE. So what did he say?
ANDREW. He said he liked you.
GEORGIE. Great. That’s just—and what did you say?
ANDREW. I said I liked you, too.
GEORGIE. That’s what you said? You said, “I like her, too.” That’s all you said?
ANDREW. (Perplexed.) Yes. That’s all I said.

(Pause.)

GEORGIE. Great. Well, you know, as far as I’m concerned, Edward can just go fuck himself. I mean, your little friend is just a prince, isn’t he? He’s just a delight. (SHE goes back into the bedroom.)
ANDREW. (Calling.) Look—he hired you. You didn’t have any references, you didn’t have any legal experience, you didn’t have a college degree. And he didn’t ask any questions. You might think about that.

GEORGIE. (Reenters, carrying a pair of gym shorts. While she speaks, SHE takes off her slip and pantyhose.) Oh, I might, might I? All right. I’m thinking about that. Nothing is coming to me, Andrew. What is your point here?

ANDREW. My point is, he gave you a job. I’m not saying the man is a saint. But he gave you a job.

GEORGIE. Yeah, right, he “gave” me the damn job. I fucking work my ass off for that jerk; he doesn’t give me shit. I earn it, you know? He “gave” me the job. I just love that. What does that mean, that I should be working at McDonald’s or something, that’s what I really deserve or something?

ANDREW. You wouldn’t last two hours at McDonald’s. Some customer would complain about their French fries and you’d tell him to fuck off and die, and that would be the end of that.

GEORGIE. Bullshit. Fuck you, that is such fucking bullshit. You think I don’t know how to behave in public or something?

ANDREW. (Overlap.) Georgie—could you put your clothes on—Georgie—

GEORGIE. (Ignoring him, overlapping.) Jesus, I was a goddam waitress for seven years, the customers fucking loved me. You think I talk like this in front of strangers; you think I don’t have a brain in my head or something? That is so fucking condescending. Anytime I lose my temper, I’m crazy, is that it? You don’t know why I threw
that pencil, you just assume. You just make these assumptions. Well, fuck you, Andrew. I mean it. Fuck you. (SHE takes her clothes in her hands and heads for the door.)

ANDREW. You can’t go out in the hall like that—

GEORGIE. I mean, I just love that. You don’t even know. You’ve never seen me in that office. You think I’m like, incapable of acting like somebody I’m not? For four months I’ve been scared to death but I do it, you know, I take messages, I call the court, I write his damn letters. I watch my mouth, I dress like this—whatever this is; these are the ugliest clothes I have ever seen—I am gracious, I am bright, I am promising. I am being this other person for them because I do want this job but there is a point beyond which I will not be fucked with! So you finally push me beyond that point, and I throw the pencil and now you’re going to tell me that that is my problem? What, do you guys think you hold all the cards or something? You think you have the last word on reality? You do, you think that anything you do to me is okay, and anything I do is fucked because I’m not using the right words. I’m, like, throwing pencils and saying fuck you, I’m speaking another language, that’s my problem. And the thing is—I am America. You know? You guys are not America. You think you are; Jesus Christ, you guys think you own the world. I mean, who made up these rules, Andrew? And do you actually think we’re buying it?

(Pause.)

ANDREW. Maybe you should sit down and tell me what’s going on.
GEORGIE. Yeah, and maybe you should go fuck yourself. (Pause.) I'm sorry, okay?
ANDREW. Are you okay?
GEORGIE. Yes! No. Christ. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

(Pause. THEY stand for a moment in silence. ANDREW crosses and puts his arm around her. SHE leans against him.)

ANDREW. What happened at the office?
GEORGIE. I don't know. You got anything to drink around here? I mean, could I have a drink?
ANDREW. Do you want some tea?
GEORGIE. Tea? Are you kidding? I mean, is that supposed to soothe me or something? I hate to break the news to you, but I really think that that is like, just a myth, Andrew. I think that in reality vodka is far more soothing than tea.
ANDREW. I don't have any vodka.
GEORGIE. Bourbon works too.
ANDREW. I have half a bottle of white zinfandel.
GEORGIE. Oh, Jesus. Make me tea.

(HE exits to the kitchen. GEORGIE crosses, picks up the gym shorts and puts them on. ANDREW reenters.)

ANDREW. All right. Now tell me what happened.
GEORGIE. Nothing happened. I mean, it's stupid.
ANDREW. (Pause.) That's it? It's stupid? You can talk for hours about absolutely nothing, and now all you have to say about something that is clearly upsetting you is, it's stupid?
GEORGIE. I feel stupid.
ANDREW. What are you talking about, you feel stupid? You just walked in here and insulted me for ten minutes.
GEORGIE. That was different. I was mad.
ANDREW. You have to be mad to talk?
GEORGIE. No, come on—I don’t know—
ANDREW. I could make you mad.
GEORGIE. No, you couldn’t. You’re too nice.
ANDREW. Fuck you.
GEORGIE. —Andrew—
ANDREW. Fuck you. Come on. Fuck you.
GEORGIE. (Calm.) Yeah, fuck you too.
ANDREW. Fuck you.
GEORGIE. Fuck you.
ANDREW. Fuck you.
GEORGIE. You look really stupid saying fuck you—
ANDREW. Fuck you. Fuck you! Fuck you.
GEORGIE. (Laughing. Overlap.) Andrew, stop it. Cut it out. It sounds weird when you say it. You shouldn’t talk like that.
ANDREW. You talk like that all the time!
GEORGIE. I’m different. I mean, I know how to swear. You don’t. It’s like, fuck you. Fuck you. Or, you know, fuck you. It’s just—you know. You got to know how to say it.
ANDREW. Fuck you.
GEORGIE. Forget it. You look really stupid. You look the way I look when I try to talk like you.
ANDREW. You’ve tried it? Really? I must have missed that day.
GEORGIE. Oh, fuck you. You know I can do it; I can be as snotty and polite as anybody and it just makes me look stupid.

ANDREW. Georgie, it doesn’t. You just—look. The English language is one of the most elegant and sophisticated languages on earth, and it will let you be whatever you want. If you use it carefully, and with respect, it can teach you things, it will allow you to uncover thoughts and ideas you never knew you were capable of; it will give you access to wisdom. Sophistication. Knowledge. Language is a gift that humanity has given itself to describe the world within, and without, with grace and wonder, and you can do that. Or you can use it badly and just be what you say you are. You can just be a, a fucking—cunt, if that’s all you ever—

GEORGIE. UGGH. I can’t believe you used that word. Oh, my God. You should see these words coming out of your mouth. It’s so fucking weird. I’m not kidding, Andrew. I wouldn’t swear if I was you.

ANDREW. Forget it. (The tea kettle WHISTLES.) You want that fucking tea?

GEORGIE. No. I don’t want the fucking tea.

ANDREW. (Exits to the kitchen and turns off the kettle. HE re-enters.) You want to tell me what happened?

GEORGIE. Oh, God. It really is stupid. I mean, what do you think happened? He wants to screw me is what happened.

(Pause.)

ANDREW. Could you elaborate on that?

GEORGIE. What, you don’t know what that means?
ANDREW. He propositioned you or he tried to rape you or what? You have to be more specific; “screw” covers a lot of ground.

GEORGIE. Well, in his own weird little way he tried both, okay?

ANDREW. (Pause.) Georgie, don’t kid around with me now—

GEORGIE. Just sit down, Andrew. He didn’t lay a hand on me, he just—Look. Last week he tells me we have to talk about my future with the firm so we go out to dinner and he tells me how amazing I am and I could be a paralegal if I keep this up. I spilled my soup, I got so excited. So then he took me home and asked if he could come up, and I said sorry, but I would like to keep our relationship professional. See, I do know how to talk like you assholes when I want to, so you can just stop acting like I’m a fucking idiot with words.

ANDREW. So he propositioned you.

GEORGIE. Last week, that was last week. Yesterday, he has me stay late, right? He says, “Georgie, could you stay late and type up some interrogatories.” And I say, “sure.” Then after everybody’s gone he invites me into his office and asks me if I knew his couch folds out into a bed. So I say, “I have to get to work, Edward.” But he wants to have a debate about the pros and cons of whether or not I should screw him. It was amazing, it went on for twenty minutes, I am not kidding. So I finally said, “Edward, I don’t have to debate this with you. I don’t have to be polite, you know? I’m not going to fuck you.” So he says, he doesn’t have to be polite either and he could just rape me if he wanted because everybody else is gone and the security guard isn’t due until ten. And I stared at him—and,
you know, I could see it in his little lawyer’s face; he
could’ve done it. (Pause.) I mean, on the one hand, it was
no big deal; I just walked out of the office and took the
stairs, ’cause I wasn’t going to wait for any elevator. I
mean, I was scared, but I didn’t think he was going to do
anything because it was pretty clear that in his own sick
little mind, just saying it was as good as doing it.

ANDREW. You went to work today? You went to
work after that?

GEORGIE. That job means a lot to me! (Pause.) What
was I supposed to do, just quit and go back to—fuck, I
don’t know—I mean—I don’t want to go back and be a
waitress! What was I supposed to do? Quit because Edward
is an asshole? I didn’t care, I didn’t think he’d try it again! I
didn’t; I thought that was it!

ANDREW. Wasn’t it?

GEORGIE. Today, he comes out of his office at about
4:30 and asks me to stay late to type a pleading. And he
kind of looks at me, you know? So I said, fuck you,
Edward, and threw my pencil at him.

ANDREW. (Pause.) Why didn’t you tell me? Dammit.
Why didn’t you tell me last night?

GEORGIE. He said something, it was something he
said.

ANDREW. He said something worse?

GEORGIE. No. No. It was just talk. You know? It was
just talk. I just—I didn’t want to make a big deal about it.

ANDREW. It is a big deal. It’s indecent. It’s a big deal.
(HE paces angrily.)

GEORGIE. Andrew. You’re mad. I’ve never seen you
mad.
Hungry for More?

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