

Auto Erotik

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Cast of Characters

- SPEED: Owner of a parking lot, a car, and a gun. Late thirties with perfect blonde hair; a little too perfect. Big, masculine, tattooed. Italian mother, Polish father. From Hell's Kitchen.
- VIOLET: His girlfriend. Early thirties. Short, stringy hair, bleached green in places. Tall, a former 'red freak,' she speaks in a slow, elongated Brooklyn accent. African-American mother, American-Italian father.
- BENNY: A drifter. Mid twenties. Skinny, gentle, but not effeminate. Does a lot of amphetamines; edgy, hyperactive. Mexican grandmother, Norwegian-American grandfather. From California.
- OMAR: A retired, 71-year-old man who builds model planes and stares out his window.

Scene

A parking lot on the lower eastside of Manhattan. Ideally, the audience is seated in risers on either

Time

The Reagan Years.

ACT I

Scene 1

(SPEED's legs are poking out from under the front of the car. It is a very hot day. He is wearing mechanic's overalls with no shirt. VIOLET is inside the car, but she is not visible at first. In an odd way, it should seem as though SPEED and the car are talking. SPEED's relationship with the car is like that of a man and his lover – throughout the play he is constantly caressing and touching and fussing over the car.)

VIOLET

So, monkeytits, what're we gonna do for our anniversary?

SPEED

Mmmmph.

VIOLET

Oh, that sounds like lots of fun. Speed, Mmmmph ain't in my dictionary. What does it mean? I mean, it could mean a cruise to Paris, or a shopping spree at Woolworth's or, I know, It means--

SPEED

Shut up.

VIOLET

It means shut up.

(Pause)

So, honey bunny, sweetiepoo, liverlips, what we gonna do for our anniversary?

SPEED

What anniversary?

VIOLET

Of when we first met. It's the day after tomorrow. And I wanna know what we're gonna do!

SPEED

Nothin'.

VIOLET

Nah – we did that last year. Why don't we do something different?

SPEED

How about a movie?

VIOLET

I do not want to go see exploding cars and cardboard characters on our anniversary, thank you so very much. No, I wanna do something special. Like dinner out. And I don't mean out of a can. Maybe.... someplace real fancy. Yeah, that's it! We could go to Windows on the World!

SPEED

What's that?

VIOLET

But you don't have a tie. Or a dress shirt. Shit, the only jacket you have says FRED'S FLYING A on it....

SPEED

What the fuck you talking about?

VIOLET

Windows on the World. It's this fancy restaurant downtown on the very tip top of the World Trade Center and they serve things like Poison – that's a kinda fish in french – and Crudities – those are french appetizers – they sound like you'd like them, and, oh, what else, and...

SPEED

Indigestion?

VIOLET

I'm sure they have a beautiful french name for that, too. You can see Queens and Long Island, and Jersey, even. Everything is beautiful at Windows on the World. And fancy. Oh, it'd be such a hoot, Speed! Me all pumped up and smelling like – I could go to Saks and have one of them skinny model types spray me with fancy perfume just before we go – and you could...use a bar of soap...and...and – oh, they have these rare famous wines like Effete Rothschild eighteen-so-and-so and all the waiters are dressed in white like the tablecloths. It is tray ele-gant.

SPEED

Piss elegant.

VIOLET

Yeah – actually it is Speed. They got attendants in the bathrooms. They hand you your paper towel after you wash your hands! That's how fancy this place is! I read all about it in Vogue. It's perfect for our anniversary. Maybe you could rent a suit or buy one over at St. Joseph's. It would be so perfect – to have dinner there. Of course, there is that one problem. That one horrible, terrible, unmovable problem. That big, awful, undeniable problem.

(Pause)

You know what the problem is?

SPEED

Mmmmmph.

(Pause)

Well, what the fuck is it?

VIOLET

Oh, you do want to hear it? I thought mmmmmph meant shut-up. Oh! — you musta said mmmph, not mmmmmph. I'm sorry, my mistake. No, the problem is Windows on the World costs money. You remember money? It's green and has pictures of dead people on it. We used to have some. Before you went crazy with that stupid bookie. You know, Speed, you're supposed to pick the winners, not the losers.

SPEED

If I'da did that, I'da never picked you.

VIOLET

Hardy-har-har. That's so funny -- better check my pulse to see if I died from my laughter. Oh! I'm O.K.; cancel the ambulance.

(Pause)

So, shall I make a reservation...

SPEED

Just how much would this joint set me back?

VIOLET

Oh, I don't know. It's not that bad. They got cloth napkins and real silver. Just think...we could eat lemon sherbet and drink champagne. It'll be so romantic, Speed.

SPEED

How much, Vi?

VIOLET

Oh...it's very reasonable...the service is wonderful. They massage your feet while you eat...and...and...

SPEED

How much?

VIOLET

Well...I suppose it wouldn't be any more than seventy or eighty bucks.

SPEED

Eighty bucks!?

VIOLET

For the both of us! Including tip?

SPEED

Eighty bucks for dinner just because everything's got faggy French names? Forget it!

VIOLET

I think there's a bar there. Maybe we could just go up and have some faggy French appetizers and a coupla queer drinks.

SPEED

Great. That'd be only seventy-five bucks. Forget it, baby.
(Pause)

VIOLET

Oh, I was just dreaming. Don't mind me. Dreams die easy.
(Pause)

You know, I was talking to Clint this morning. He had some very illuminatin' things to say about you and me.

SPEED

Clint?

VIOLET

Yeah, you know Clint. That young guy down at the corner store. With the dark hair.

SPEED

Stocky looking guy?

VIOLET

Yeah, him. I kinda figured you wouldn't forget him. Built like a god.

SPEED

What were you doing talking to him?

VIOLET

It's an old custom when you go to the store that you've probably never heard of - it's called "being friendly."

SPEED

What do you mean? I'm plenty friendly. I'm out going.

VIOLET

Yeah, right. You're about as friendly as a pit bull. Oh, Speed, what we gonna do for our anniversary?! I wanna do something different.

SPEED

I sure wasn't unfriendly that day you and I met at Dunkin's.

VIOLET

No, that's true. After we spent a week eyeing each other from separate counters, you got friendly. Sitting one chair

(MORE)

VIOLET (cont'd)

closer every day. I couldn't tell if you was interested in me or if you was just superstitious about sittin' on the same stool two days in a row. I can't believe you was so shy! Ha! You!

SPEED

When was I ever shy?

VIOLET

Whenever you don't have an audience of other guys to play to. Like that first day we talked. You were like a little kid asking some strange old lady for an ice cream.

SPEED

I'm not shy.

VIOLET

Shyness ain't punishable by death no more, Speed. We are a civilized society, in case you haven't heard.

SPEED

I wasn't never shy. You're exaggeratin'. Like usual.

VIOLET

I am not. I remember it most distinctly. You finally sat next to me one day and mumbled something at me. I had to ask you to repeat yourself.

SPEED

That ain't true.

VIOLET

The truth weren't never truer. You offered to buy me a doughnut and some coffee, but you mumbled and had to offer again.

SPEED

That's a lie.

VIOLET

I would not lie about the only two times that you was ever polite to me, Speed.

SPEED

I talked to you the first day I saw you in . .

VIOLET

Ha!

SPEED

O.K., maybe it was the second day . .

VIOLET

The second day of the second week.

SPEED

No. No way. You're wrong.

VIOLET

Of course. Always am, ain't I?

(Pause)

What does it matter when it happened? It happened. You bought me an ee-clair, remember?

SPEED

(Laughing)

I didn't even know what the fuck one was.

VIOLET

How noble of you to admit you didn't know something.

SPEED

Hey, give me a break, will ya?

(Pause)

VIOLET

You remember what kind of doughnut you had?

SPEED

Sure. 'Course I do.

VIOLET

Uh-huh. Well?

SPEED

Well, what?

VIOLET

What kind was it?

SPEED

It was...it had...Jesus! What the fuck does it matter what kind of doughnut it was! It had a hole in the middle.

VIOLET

Such a dedicated romantic. Our first meal together and he don't even remember what he had. Ya big idiot, it didn't have no hole; it was a Boston Creme. It had a soft spot in the middle just like you.

SPEED

Yeah, right. Boston Creme.

(Pause, VIOLET watches SPEED; laughs.)

What's so funny?

Nuthin'. I love you. VIOLET

Me, too. SPEED

Your hair was different then. Not so blonde, I don't think. VIOLET

What you driving at? SPEED

He pats his hair nervously, looking at himself in the car's reflection.

Nothing. I don't got no license, remember? VIOLET

(Pause)

Hey, killer, why don't we just go to Dunkin's for our anniversary? That'd be fun, hey?

Sure. SPEED

And cheap. Only this time, Speed, bring some cash? I don't want to have to pay for both of us like the first time. I really shoulda known, when on our first date... VIOLET

Don't worry about it. SPEED
(Pause)
So, what'd Clint say?

What'd Clint say about what? VIOLET

About me and you. SPEED

Why should he say something about you and me? VIOLET

Don't play dumb. You ain't dumb. You said he said something. Well? What'd he say? SPEED
(Pause)

Nothun. VIOLET

SPEED

That sounds like something.

VIOLET

Nope.

SPEED

You sure?

VIOLET

Certain. You know, I think we should fix this place up a bit. Buy some curtains.

SPEED

Don't start, Vi.

VIOLET

Yeah, curtains. That's what this place needs. And maybe we could put a sauna bath in the back seat. That'd make it a real home. A home just like we used to have over on Avenue C.

SPEED

Cut it out.

VIOLET

Get me the scissors, I'll be glad to.

SPEED

Ha-ha!

VIOLET

Sorry! I'm sorry, Speed! I know how offensive you find humor. Well, and it's no wonder – it's so dangerous! – if you were to smile, your face might crack and fall off. You listening to me, Speed? Speedy? Earth to Speed, come in Speed. Oh, we're playing that game, are we? Violet's not here. Such a wonderful game. My brother and sis used to play it. You big idiot. You're funny looking, you know that? I think I've got rabies. Better check your hair.

(Long pause)

He said I was too good for you.

SPEED

Who did?

VIOLET

I knew that would work.

SPEED

What you talking about?

Clint. VIOLET

SPEED
What does that jerk know? Someone told him to put sugar in his gas tank to make his engine stop knocking.

So? VIOLET

The idiot did it. SPEED

So? VIOLET

SPEED
So?! You know what sugar does to gas?

Makes it sweeter? VIOLET

Turns it to syrup. Ruins the engine. SPEED

Oh. VIOLET

(Pause)
What about Sweet and Low? SPEED

What do you mean? VIOLET

Does Sweet and Low do the same thing? SPEED

Who knows? VIOLET

I'll have to try it sometime. SPEED

You just try. Go ahead. I'll stuff you in right after you try.... VIOLET

Joke! Joke! I was joking! Jeez. No need to get violent.
(Pause. SPEED is back under the car working.)

SPEED

Fucking A. Shit! Goddammit!

VIOLET

Ya don't say?

SPEED

Dammit.

VIOLET

It may just be my faulty intuition, but is something wrong, honeybunny?

SPEED

This fucking...shit...it's...it's leaking all over the . .

VIOLET

Well, can't ya fix it?

SPEED

Of course I can fix it, stupid!

VIOLET

That's MISS Stupid to you, fuckface. God! What's eating you today? Is a rat chewing at your asshole!?

SPEED

Get me the wrench.

VIOLET

What wrench?

SPEED

The little monkey wrench. Near the tool kit.

VIOLET

I don't see it.

SPEED

Get off the fucking car – how many times have I told you – get off the car and look for it, stupid.

VIOLET

No.

SPEED

What the fuck do you mean – "No?" Get off of the fucking car and bring me the fucking wrench before I break your fucking neck.

VIOLET

How can a neck fuck? For that matter, how can a car fuck? When cars fuck, do they give birth to motorcycles?