Hector's Warehouse
and
Other Ghost Stories

By Daniel S. Kehde

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STORY OF THE PLAY

The problem with many plays where things have to go bump in the night is that things have to go bump. Not in *Hector's Warehouse and Other Ghost Stories.* Four friends tell five ghostly stories using the most potent special effect of all: the audience's imagination. Using only chairs and candles (plus some well-timed blackouts), the characters re-enact their own eerie experiences and generate plenty of spine-tingling moments for us along the way.

In "Toni's House," Phyllis takes us to a house she lived in with footsteps above and a fear-inducing basement below. "George's Church" is the site where folks hear "the Screamer." Linda tracks down a cougar that shouldn't be living in rural West Virginia in the third story. At the start of Act II, John tells the story of "Hector's Warehouse" and how a ghost reacted when he was being filmed for a national TV special. Finally, "Phyllis' Suitor" turns out to be an evil presence they may have encountered before.

Hector's Warehouse and Other Ghost Stories was first performed on October 30, 1997, at the historic WVSC Capital Plaza Theater in Charleston, West Virginia, by the Contemporary Youth Arts Company.

The Original Cast

Phyllis...Lealah Pollock
John...Travis Stephens
Linda...Chrissy Hyre
George...Michael Gale

CHARACTERS

PHYLLIS
JOHN
LINDA
GEORGE

The actors appear as themselves, but take on a number of different roles as they tell each story.

THE STORIES

Act I

1. Toni's House

2. George's Church

3. Linda's Cougars

Act II

4. Hector's Warehouse

5. Phyllis's Suitor

6. The Girl in the Theatre *(This story is optional.)*

SETTING

The set consists of four straight-backed chairs (strong enough to stand on) on an empty stage. Lighting should be sparse but effective, used to light specific areas of the stage as needed.

ACT I

Story 1: Toni's House

(AT RISE: There are four chairs in a line across the middle of the stage. PHYLLIS crosses from stage left and stands. EACH CHARACTER enters on his line and eventually sits, each in their own fashion on the chairs provided.)

PHYLLIS: This all started when we were in school. Our senior year.
GEORGE: It was after exams and we were all leaving for home the next morning to spend the holidays with our families.
PHYLLIS: John was dating Linda at the time.
LINDA: Actually we were living together.
JOHN: It was the seventies, who cared?
LINDA: And George was president of … what were you president of?
GEORGE: The student body.
LINDA: You're kidding. I thought it was some little club or something.
PHYLLIS: How could you have known? You were never on campus anyway.
GEORGE: And Phyllis kept complaining about the noises upstairs.
PHYLLIS: I lived in this old house on the four-lane, just my landlady and I; and she rented the place herself from some lumber corporation out of state.
JOHN: Union Pacific.
PHYLLIS: Might have been. I don't think I ever really knew. It was a strange house, though. It stood up on the hillside and, if you looked out the front windows over the hedges, you looked right down on the bend in the river as though the four-lane weren't there at all.
GEORGE: We found out later that the river bend used to be called Wynotts Ferry and old man Wynott ran it up until October of 1863.
JOHN: Why was it haunted?

EVERYONE: Wynott?
PHYLLIS: But the noises were what started this whole thing. *(SHE rolls up her sleeve.)* Look. I still get goosebumps just thinking about it.

(The GROUP is getting serious.)

GEORGE: They were strange. Especially those footsteps.
JOHN: Phyllis had invited us all over that night – kind of like an end of the semester thing. Besides, none of us wanted to be alone. Not even Linda and I.
LINDA: It was one of those December nights, you know, when it's cloudy and cold and the wind is just blowing enough to move whatever leaves are left on the ground. It just makes you want to be surrounded by friends. It makes you want to be warm.
PHYLLIS: Antoinette – "Toni" we called her – my landlady – was gone for the holidays. *(ALL stand and look around the stage, entering the scene.)* Would you like some wine? *(SHE pantomimes pouring.)*
LINDA: Yes, thank you. *(Looking around.)* What was this originally?
PHYLLIS: The house? I have no idea. Toni says parts of it go back to before the Civil War.
JOHN: Which parts, I wonder.
PHYLLIS: This room, and the parlor and the front bedrooms upstairs. Everybody have enough?
GEORGE: *(Raising his glass.)* To the end of another and the beginning of the last.

(JOHN looks up at the ceiling suddenly. There is no sound effect.)

JOHN: What was that?
PHYLLIS: What?
JOHN: Shhhhhh. Listen. Did you hear that?
PHYLLIS: He's started again. God, I'm glad you're all here.
GEORGE: Who?
JOHN: Shhhhh.

PHYLLIS: You won't miss anything, John – once he gets started, he goes on for about ten minutes.
LINDA: Why don't you tell him to stop? What's he wearing, combat boots?
PHYLLIS: That's the problem. You can't tell him to stop.
GEORGE: Why not?
PHYLLIS: Because we're the only people in the house.
JOHN: *(Disbelieving.)* Oh, come on.
PHYLLIS: I'm serious. Go on upstairs. Turn on all the lights. You won't find anyone. Not even the room where they're coming from.
JOHN: I don't believe this. Come on, George.
GEORGE: Do you mind, Phyl?
PHYLLIS: Go ahead.

(The two MEN go offstage.)

LINDA: *(After THEY leave.)* It's really kind of funny sounding, isn't it?
PHYLLIS: I suppose. It is hard to sleep sometimes.
LINDA: I guess. Is Toni all right with this?
PHYLLIS: Are you kidding? It fits her personality.

(There is the sound of knocking on wood offstage.)

PHYLLIS: What are they doing?
LINDA: *(Laughing.)* John's probably looking for secret passages. We should hide and jump out at them when they come back down.
JOHN: *(Offstage.)* Hellooooooooooooo!
LINDA: *(Laughing.)* Oh, good grief.
GEORGE: *(Offstage.)* Hellooooooooooooooo!

(PHYLLIS and LINDA laugh again.)

LINDA: *(Looking up.)* You're right; it doesn't have any effect on the noise at all. Could it be the wind?
PHYLLIS: Does it sound like the wind?

End of Freeview

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