

# Metaphorical Shoes

Judith Pratt





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**ArtAge Publications**

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## METAPHORICAL SHOES

### SYNOPSIS

After spending most of her life raising children and wearing sensible shoes, Doris finds her inner goddess in pair of stylish, trendy shoes. Husband Don, whose shoes date from 1958, worries about broken hips and new-fangled notions. (Note: the actress gets to choose shoes that will not break her hip!)

### CHARACTERS

DORIS, 70 to 90. She lusts after shoes.

DON, her husband, about the same age. Patient.

CLERK, female, younger than Don and Doris. Loves old-time words like "copacetic."

### SETTING

A shoe store. A bench, a chair, some shoeboxes.

### TIME

A weekday afternoon.

### NOTES

This play has an alternate ending for those who find the original ending too risqué.

#### About the Shoes!

The actress playing DORIS needs to feel safe. But the audience needs believe something on her trendy shoe is badly broken.

Suggestion: Go to your local thrift store (Goodwill, Salvation Army). Find a pair of shoes, or kinky boots, that fit, with the highest heels that you can manage. (For me, that's about 2 inches!) Decide what will "break:" the heel, a strap, a zipper. Then paint the shoes bright red (or pink, purple, or chartreuse.) It would be nice if you can find a similar shoe to use as a stand-in for the broken one. That one doesn't have to fit you.

*DORIS is sitting on the bench, trying on a pair of extremely fashionable shoes. DON comes in from somewhere else in the store.*

DON: Nothing in my size. Never anything I like in my size. Makes no sense. It's not like I wear such an oddball size. My feet are normal. I have perfectly normal—

*DORIS stops him by holding out a foot that is wearing an insanely trendy shoe or boot.*

DON: What the Sam Hill is that?

DORIS: Aren't they gorgeous?

DON; As long as you don't stand up.

DORIS; I feel like a new woman in these

DON; You're gonna fall on your womanly keister.

*DORIS shows DON an open shoebox.*

DORIS; Do you like these better?

DON; They'll break your hip.

DORIS: *(Waving her foot)* I've never owned anything as sexy as these, never in my whole life.

DON; Except me. *(He enjoys this joke. DORIS ignores it)*

DORIS; Even when I was young and foolish.

DON: I'm staying out of this.

DORIS: It's time.

DON: You ready to go? Good.

DORIS: Time to follow my bliss.

DON: Bliss? What is that, "bliss"?

DORIS: Wear the shoes my inner goddess was meant to wear.

DON: What about your outer arthritis?

*DORIS totters to her feet, grabbing at DON for support.*

DORIS: How do I look?

DON: Leggo! Doris! We'll both break our hips!

DORIS: (*ecstatic*) These are the ones. These are my shoes!

DON: You are not buying those dang things.

DORIS: I beg your pardon?

DON: I only said--

DORIS: You're always ordering me around

DON: (*avoiding a public fight*) I'm just worried, Doris, honey. You'll hurt yourself if you wear those shoes.

DORIS: I did not burn my bra so you can tell me what to wear.

DON: When did you burn your bra?

DORIS: All those earth shoes.

DON: You never told me you burned your bra.

DORIS: All those Birkenstocks.

DON: You were too old when they burned bras!

DORIS: Years of sensible shoes.

DON: We already had the twins when women burned bras!

DORIS: I was wearing old lady shoes before I was ever an old lady.

DON: You didn't have time to burn your bra!

DORIS: It's a metaphor, Don. I meant it metaphorically.

DON: Then buy some metaphorical shoes.

DORIS: You're just being negative.

DON: Don't give me that malarkey.

DORIS: I am following my bliss.

DON: You are going to follow your bliss straight to an orthopedic surgeon.

DORIS: Maybe you are too old for bliss, but I am no such thing.

DON: What's that supposed to mean?

DORIS: This is my money from my annuity and I am going to buy these shoes.

DON: Don't ask me to drive you to the hospital when your knees give out.

DORIS: Just because you've been wearing the same styles since 1958 doesn't mean I can't keep up with the times.

DON: You gonna get one of those painted-on tee shirts that show off your belly button?

DORIS: That is disgusting. Insulting. I'm not talking to you.

*DORIS starts to exit past Don. She is still wearing The Shoes.*

DON: Doris –

DORIS: I'm going to find that nice clerk, and I'm going to--

*DORIS wobbles and grabs DON.*

*They both wobble and struggle, waving their arms, grabbing or leaning on a chair or bench on the way. DORIS shrieks.*

DON: *(as they struggle, yelling.)* Dammit, Doris, now look what you've done! You never listen to me! Just rush into things—

DORIS: *(Plonking down on the chair or bench)* Oh my god.

DON: *(continuing)* Taking chances, never thinking . . . What? Are you okay? Doris?

DORIS: *(in tears)* I broke —

*DON panics, yells.*

DON: Hey! Call 911!

DORIS: I broke the —

DON: Hey! Emergency! Call 911!

*DORIS holds up a broken shoe. (Put a broken shoe under the bench she's sitting on, so she can substitute it for the real shoe. Or just pretend that it's broken!)*

DON: Christ, doesn't anybody work here! It's okay, sweetheart, don't worry, it'll be all right.

*DON looks at DORIS and realizes what has happened.*

DON: You broke the danged shoe!

DORIS: They were my bliss!

DON: Jiminy H. Christmas on a bicycle.

DORIS: *(tears)* I hate it when you curse!



DON: Honey, I told you those were dangerous. We're lucky nothing worse happened.

DORIS: (*Smacks DON with the shoe.*) I hate you! You are so . . . sanctimonious! You smug, self-righteous -- I've never had any decent shoes for my whole life--

DON: You've had great shoes!

DORIS: You've always wanted me to be an old frump and made sure that I never got anything nice!

DON: I don't want a frump!

DORIS: Just once I want some sexy shoes and see what happens--

DON: You fall down!

DORIS: They're broken and I can't afford two pairs and I hate you.

*DORIS collapses on the chair, sobbing. DON looks at her helplessly. The CLERK enters.*

DON: Doris. Sweetie.

CLERK: Is everything okay here?

**End of FreeRead**

**You can tell that the show is quite wonderful! Order your copy to read the complete script.**