

# Spike

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SPIKE: Stuff like *Down by Law* and *Stranger Than Paradise*.

YELL: Oh yeah! I noticed that in *She's Gotta Have It*, you used the term "down by law". Was this like an homage to the movie?

SPIKE: (laughs) No, no, "down by law" is just a typical expression, just New York slang.

YELL: Well, we aren't hip to that stuff out here, being across the planet from New York and all.

SPIKE: Is this the University of Nevada...

YELL: ...at Las Vegas, yeah. The one with the

really-good-but-not-great basketball team.

SPIKE: Uh-huh.

YELL: Okay, now that I've arranged to be lynched, I'll ask my next question: What kind of audience are you aiming for with your films?

SPIKE: Black audiences, mostly. Younger people, too. Almost anybody, really.

YELL: I watched *She's Gotta Have It* last night in preparation for this interview, and I was with about six other people, all of them white, and when the

movie was over, for almost 45 minutes afterward, they

all tried to act like Mars Blackmon. I found this to be really annoying. How do you feel about it?

SPIKE: You think it bothers YOU! I get it all the time in the street. It's gotten even worse since that Air Jordan ad.

YELL: That's right. What was the deal with that again?

SPIKE: I was hangin' on the rim, and I blocked him [Michael Jordan] on the first take. So we did 9 takes and my chest was stinging hard.

YELL: So Mike was being kind of a jerk about it...

SPIKE: No, he wasn't

bein' a jerk, he was just doin' what he had to, y'know?

YELL: Yeah. Okay, I'm gonna digress a little bit now and ask you about some other stuff, Jesse Jackson for starters. Do you think he has a chance?

SPIKE: I think he has a real good chance. He'll be able to write his own ticket, I think.

YELL: Do you think he stands a chance against Bush?

SPIKE: I think it's worth a try.

YELL: That's true. Having Bush in there would be

like four more years of Reagan.

SPIKE: Yeah, eight years is enough!

YELL: Okay, I'll ask you one last question and then I'll let you go. Are you really Pantyman?

SPIKE: (laughs) No, that was the only time in my life I've ever put [women's underwear] on my head.

YELL: Well, I'm glad to hear it, because, you know, I was worrying about you. Before you go let me just wish you luck in all your future endeavors and thank you for your time.

SPIKE: No problem, man.

It's been fun.

As I hung up the phone, I realized I had indeed pulled it off, without blundering and a minimum of stuttering. I hadn't accidentally made a racist remark that would bring the Angry Young Filmmaker down to Vegas with vicious thugs to pulverize my kidneys with pool cues. Spike's not uptight enough to have that happen anyway. He was soft spoken and good natured and didn't mind my habitual familiarity. He's more than cool, he's DEF.

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