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Fetal Pig

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FETAL PIGL

A PLAY BY
DENNIS BUSH

Fetal Pig had its premiere performance in June 2007, as part of a new works festival at Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts' Theatre 4301 in Scottsdale, AZ. The play was directed by the author, Dennis Bush. Sabrina Matlock was stage manager.

The original cast was:

Melissa Teitel as Emma
Benjamin Burt as Mark

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

Set, props and costumes

Fetal Pig may be staged in a variety of performance spaces; the more simply the better. A rolling chair for Mark allows him to be maneuvered more easily when still tied. Tarps or similar large pieces of fabric are essential to keep the chair (and the actor playing Mark) and the fan covered until revealed in the course of the play. No other props or set pieces, other than the chair, fan and coverings are necessary. The actress playing Emma should be dressed simply and tastefully. The actor playing Mark should be costumed as if he was halfway undressed. The degree of undress can be determined by the venue and the actor's comfort level.

At rise: We see a young woman sitting on a chair. Behind her are objects that have been completely covered with large drop clothes, like one would find covering furniture at a vacation home, during the off-season.

EMMA: I felt like a fetal pig. (*Quick pause*) Yes... That's what I said. (*pause*) "Fetal pig." (*quick pause*) I felt like a fetal pig. (*Clarifying*) A fetal pig that was being dissected. (*Quick pause*) That's what fetal pigs are used for. They're "salvaged" from pregnant pigs going to slaughter for pork products. (*Quick pause*) The pigs were going to be killed anyway. Pork chops don't end up on your table without a pig getting chopped up. Sweet and sour pork is more sour than sweet when you get the whole slaughterhouse visual... Anyway... They remove the fetuses from the pregnant pigs before they hack them up and they use them for scientific purposes. For dissections. They're preserved in a non-toxic solution – safe for children of all ages – and their arteries and veins have been injected with pink and blue latex. For about twenty bucks a pop you can have your very own by-product of the meat-packing industry. My feeling like a fetal pig is the by-product of a five-year relationship with my boyfriend, Mark. (*Pause*) loved him... in that way you can love a beautiful pair of shoes, even though it hurts like hell to wear 'em. And he was beautiful. Better looking than any guy I'd ever been with. I never thought he'd be interested in me. I was dating another guy when I met Mark. I guess the fact that I wasn't available made me more appealing. It had to be something. Maybe it was the lighting... Anyway... he made a move. A bold one. We were at a party. My date and I were standing near the bar. Close enough to steal olives when the bartender wasn't looking. And Mark walked over to me – while my boyfriend was right there, with his arm around me. He smiled. I smiled. And he looked my date in the eye and said, "I'm gonna fuck your girlfriend, tonight. I'm gonna take her home and fuck the shit out of her. Just so you know." Oh my fucking God. (*Quick pause*) That's what I was thinking, as he was saying it. "*Oh, my fucking God.*" I was afraid I was going to faint. But I was wearing a short skirt and if I fainted it would have

flown up and I didn't want to be laying on the floor with my skirt up. Preventing that image from becoming a reality is *seriously* the only thing that kept me from fainting, I swear to God. And he did it. Mark took me home that night. We didn't have sex, though. Not right away. Not for at least a week. He tortured me with the *possibility* of sex. Like it was more of a threat than a reward. Not that sex should be a reward but, let's face it, a lot of times, it is. Anyway... It was like he was playing a game, trying to see how desperate for sex I'd get. I *wanted* to have sex with him. I wanted to have sex, *period*, but he was the one I was obsessing about having sex with. And he knew that. He manipulated my desire and used it against me. Guys will tell you that that's what women do, but men do it, too. It was more than teasing. It wasn't just whispering, "Let's make love," into my ear and then not going through with it. It was like, we'd be having dinner at a nice restaurant and he'd lean across the table and say, "I could fuck you, tonight." He said it loud enough so the people around us could hear him... I liked that. (*Quick pause*) I know, I know. I'm a bad girl. I could have said that I was disgusted by it. But this is about honesty. This is about facts not clouded by emotion.... Anyway... When we finally made love... no, that's not what it was. I was getting all soft-music-and-rose-petals on you. (Starts fresh, with candor) When he finally fucked me, I thought it was the most amazing thing I'd ever experienced. (*quick pause*) Painful, but amazing. (*Pause*) The next morning, on my nightstand, I found a handwritten note critiquing my sexual performance. Apparently, I hadn't moaned enough. *Apparently*, men like it when women moan. *APPARENTLY*, it's like some kind of non-verbal "atta boy" that keeps 'em motivated... Anyway... that's when the dissection started. I guess everything leading up to that point was just his way of injecting me with pink and blue latex. (*Pause*) Mark is a communication consultant. He does workshops and individual coaching on how to have more effective written and spoken communication. He's hired by people to improve their communication skills. They pay him a lot of money to do it.

I didn't hire him. I was just dating him. And sleeping with him. But, somehow, he thought that gave him the right to correct the spelling and grammar in my e-mails and videotape our conversations in bed and, then, play it back for me and count the number of "um's." Other guys would be videotaping the sex and posting it on the Internet. Not Mark. "Seventeen goddamn 'um's' in the span of four minutes. That's criminal. You sound like an illiterate bitch." *(Pause)* And that was foreplay. *(Pause)* He threw away outfits that he didn't like. One time, he followed me out to the driveway and made me change my skirt right there. *(quick pause)* In the driveway. *(quick pause)* At 7:15 in the morning. As soon as I got the one off that he didn't like, he grabbed it and set it on fire in the driveway. It was Michael Kors. Michael Kors should not be burned. *No* skirt should be burned – especially not in the driveway. *(Quick pause)* And the whole time he was pouring the lighter fluid on it and setting it on fire, he was yelling about what shitty taste I have in clothes and how I was lucky he let me out of the house at all. *(Pause)* When I got home from work, that day, Trish O'Connor, our next door neighbor, was out in front of her house doing something to her flower beds. As soon as I got out of the car, she said, "I saw you and Mark out in the driveway, this morning. He sure looked good in those shorts and that t-shirt. Has he been working out?" *(Pause)* Nothing about me stripping down to my underwear and no mention of the Michael Kors flambé. No! Just a thinly-veiled "I'd-sure-fuck-your-boyfriend" remark tossed casually my way. *(Pause)* Nothing between Mark and me was casual. He took notes, during our conversations, and e-mailed me comments on my communication skills. He was terse and officious. *(pause)* And harsh. He made fun of me at parties and told his colleagues about our most intimate moments. More than once, he referred to me as "the bitch I'm fucking." He poked and prodded me – manipulated me – into emotional outbursts in public. That way, I looked like the unstable one. And I was. I was unstable. The longer I stayed with him, the more I wondered why I was with him at all. *(Pause; an admission)* He's handsome. Handsome men are the chosen people. If you're with a handsome guy, you're deemed more worthy of admiration by the rest of the

world. People think, “She must be something special if she’s with that guy.” I think it myself. I like myself more when I’m with a guy who other people think is hot. Mark is handsome. He’s hot. And when he looks at me with that “I own you” cocky smirk, I forget my own name.

(Quick pause) You know what I mean. The *women* know what I mean. And the ones who won’t admit it are just too afraid to be honest. And this is about honesty. It’s about facts not clouded by emotion. This is about truth. This experiment is about truth.

(There is a groan from under one of the tarps.) What?!

(EMMA removes one of the tarps to reveal MARK, tied to the chair with a piece of duct-tape over his mouth. She yanks the tape off.)

MARK: FUCK YOU!

EMMA: Promises, promises.

(EMMA wheels MARK downstage, still tied to the chair but his mouth no longer restrained.)

MARK: You crazy fucking bitch.

EMMA: Don’t make me put the tape back on.

MARK: You’re a psycho cunt.

EMMA: *(Starts to put the tape back on)* Oh, that did it. Anyone who uses the “c-word” should have his mouth taped shut. And that includes you.

MARK: I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have said that.

EMMA: No, you shouldn’t have. *(She puts the tape back over his mouth)*

(MARK groans and looks at here, with pleading sincerity.)

EMMA (cont.): Are you going to be good?

(MARK nods "Yes.")

EMMA (cont.): No more using the c-word?

(MARK nods "No.")

EMMA (cont.): OK, then. *(She removes the tape.)*

MARK: *(With a gasp of air)* What the fuck is going on?

EMMA: An experiment.

MARK: You jump me from behind, when I'm getting out of my fucking work clothes, you tie me up, toss me in the back of your fucking SUV and bring me to this fucking shit hole?!
(Quick pause) Get me out of this fucking chair!"

EMMA: *(To audience)* Note: Subject is obsessed with fucking.

(MARK notices the audiences and jerks his head in the direction of the audience.)

EMMA (cont.): Yes, there are people here.

(MARK eyes the audience warily.)

EMMA (cont.): Not so cocky anymore... Not like when we're with your friends... or my friends, for that matter.

MARK: *(Indicating audience)* Who are they?

EMMA: Neutral observers. Unbiased witnesses who care about honesty.

MARK: So, what is this experiment? I sit here tied to a chair while you talk shit and humiliate me? Some sort of classic female revenge fantasy?

EMMA: (*Stating a fact.*) I'm going to set off a firecracker up your ass. We'll see if the shit really does hit the fan. (*She removes the tarp from a tall oscillating fan.*) Here's the fan. Let's get started.

MARK: You can't be serious.

EMMA: About what?

MARK: The firecracker up my ass... the shit hitting the fan

EMMA: Why wouldn't I be serious? It's part of the experiment. (*To audience*) Note: Subject seems unnerved by the prospect of an explosive device being detonated up his ass.

MARK: I had no idea you were this crazy.

EMMA: You had no idea about a lot of things.

MARK: So, you're really going to set off a firecracker up my ass?

EMMA: (*Rejecting his stupidity.*) No. I'd have had to distribute splatter-guard ponchos to the first few rows of people and that would have been pricey. (*Quick pause*) I just brought the fan in case it got a little hot and stuffy in here.

MARK: OK, so joke's over, right? We can go home.

EMMA: The experiment is no joke and it's not over.

MARK: Do you want me to say I'm sorry? Is that what you want?

EMMA: I wouldn't believe you.

MARK: I've never lied to you.