

# EXTERMINATING FEAR

A TEN-MINUTE COMEDY

by

Jonathan Mayer



BROOKLYN PUBLISHERS, LLC

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## Scene 1

*Lights rise on the kitchen in a small apartment. DAVID, a man in his early thirties, is atop a chair, crouching in fear and staring at a spot on the floor. HE maintains a countenance similar to that of a squeamish person doing a dissection. After a moment, the doorbell rings. DAVID has a slight stutter in his speech.*

DAVID: *(yelling)* It's open!

*(MICHELLE, also in her early thirties, enters.)*

DAVID: Michelle!

MICHELLE: David? What are you doing?

DAVID: Nothing.

MICHELLE: You haven't picked up your phone for a couple days.

DAVID: I know. Sorry.

MICHELLE: What are you doing?

DAVID: Nothing.

MICHELLE: David, what are you doing?

DAVID: It's right in the center there . . .

MICHELLE: What is?

DAVID: It's positioned exactly so that I cannot move.

MICHELLE: What are you talking about?

DAVID: *(with difficulty)* Bug.

MICHELLE: There's a bug?

DAVID: Yes.

MICHELLE: Where?

DAVID: *(pointing to the spot on the floor)* There.

*(SHE starts to go over to the bug.)*

DAVID: No!

*(SHE stops)*

DAVID: Don't go near it. It might not be dead!

MICHELLE: David . . .

DAVID: Stop!

MICHELLE: I'm gonna stomp my foot near the bug to see if it's alive.

*(SHE walks over to the bug.)*

DAVID: *(cowering more)* Noaaargh!

*(SHE stomps her foot near the bug. HE shrieks.)*

MICHELLE: It's dead. It's okay.

DAVID: Are you sure?

MICHELLE: Yes.

DAVID: Are you sure?

MICHELLE: Yes, David. Why are you so scared of this bug?

DAVID: I...I...I have a phobia...of bugs.

MICHELLE: Well, no duh. But gosh... Why didn't you pick up your phone?

DAVID: It's over there. I would have had to go near it.

MICHELLE: How long have you been on that chair like that?

DAVID: Since I left work.

MICHELLE: You weren't at work today or yesterday.

DAVID: I know.

MICHELLE: Oh my gosh. You've been on that chair for two days?

*(HE doesn't respond.)*

MICHELLE: Oh my gosh. All because of a bug . . .

DAVID: Not any bug. That bug!

MICHELLE: It's just a cockroach. *(SHE starts to laugh.)*

DAVID: It's not funny.

MICHELLE: You gotta get over this phobia. You can't jump on a chair for 24 hours every time a bug dies in your kitchen.

DAVID: Yes I can. Uh . . . can you get rid of it now, please?

MICHELLE: *(SHE grabs a napkin off a counter, but then hesitates.)* No...no, I think you have to overcome this phobia. And the only way to do that is to confront your fear. Or at least I remember reading something like that. I was a psychology major in college.

DAVID: For a year, and then you changed to business.

MICHELLE: I know, but still, maybe I can help. I remember some stuff.

DAVID: Can't you just get rid of it? Please!

MICHELLE: No, I'm your friend and I feel obligated to help you overcome this.

DAVID: Michelle...it's staring at me. Look at it!

MICHELLE: No it's not.

DAVID: Oh yes it is.

MICHELLE: David, it's dead. It can't stare at you when it's dead.

DAVID: That's what they want you to think. They play dead just so they can surprise you when you least expect it.

MICHELLE: Even if it was alive, you're faster than it. If it came towards you, you could get out of the way.

DAVID: But what if I wasn't fast enough?

MICHELLE: What could the bug do to you?

DAVID: Eat me.

MICHELLE: No it couldn't.

DAVID: It could crawl all over me.

MICHELLE: So?

DAVID: It could crawl inside my nose or my mouth and go inside me. It could eat my internal organs and make me internally combust.

MICHELLE: If it went inside of you, it would be killed by your stomach acids.

DAVID: It would live inside of me and asexually reproduce until there were hundreds of cockroaches living inside of me. They would take over my brain like those aliens in *Men In Black*.

MICHELLE: Cockroaches can't asexually reproduce.

DAVID: Have you ever seen them sexually reproduce?

MICHELLE: No.

DAVID: Aha! So then for all you know they could asexually reproduce.

MICHELLE: Only bacteria do that.

DAVID: Can you just get it out of here?

MICHELLE: David, in order to overcome your fear, you have to realize that there is nothing to fear. Worst case scenario, if the bug crawled on you, you'd brush it off. Would you actually be hurt at all? No. You could just take a shower if you're worried about germs. Then you're good as new, right?

*(HE doesn't answer)*

MICHELLE: Right?

DAVID: I guess . . .

MICHELLE: You'll be fine. You can't let a silly fear run your life.

DAVID: There's nothing to fear but fear itself?

MICHELLE: Well, I don't think I'd go that far, but still. *(coming closer to DAVID)* All you gotta do is embrace the fear.

DAVID: I don't know... Michelle! I can't see it! Be careful!

MICHELLE: *(looking at the spot on the floor)* It's not here anymore. It must have still been alive. It's right there! It's on your leg!

*(DAVID shrieks and violently hits his legs. SHE goes to him and stops his hitting.)*

MICHELLE: David! David! It's okay. It's gone. You got it off.

DAVID: It's off?

MICHELLE: Yes.

DAVID: Are you sure?

MICHELLE: Yes.

DAVID: Are you sure?

MICHELLE: Yes.

DAVID: Oh my gosh...

MICHELLE: It's okay.

DAVID: Oh my gosh...

MICHELLE: Are you all right?

DAVID: Oh my gosh...

MICHELLE: David, listen to me. Are you hurt?

DAVID: I saw my life pass before my eyes, Michelle. I saw a white light . . .

MICHELLE: Are you actually hurt?

*(pause)*

DAVID: No.

MICHELLE: So you're all right?

*(pause)*

DAVID: I guess.

MICHELLE: Was that so bad? Did you get eaten?

DAVID: *(feeling his leg; surprised)* No, my leg's still there.

MICHELLE: Did your internal organs combust?

DAVID: No.

MICHELLE: Did it take control of your brain?

DAVID: No.

MICHELLE: See? There was nothing to be afraid of. You can come down now.

DAVID: Are you sure?

MICHELLE: Yes.

*(pause)*

DAVID: Are you sure?

MICHELLE: Yes.

*(HE slowly comes down off the chair.)*

DAVID: I'm still alive . . .

END OF FREE PREVIEW