

EGG

a short play

by

Mark Steven Jensen

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CAST:

BERTHA – A woman who wants an egg.

LOUISE – A woman who wants an egg.

FIRST PRODUCTION:

EGG was first performed as part of a showcase for the Advanced Directing class at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in December 1992.

Contact Author:

Phone: 763-545-2145

requests@markjensenwriter.com

[An egg sits upright in the middle of a bare stage.]

[Enter BERTHA. She walk part way past the egg, stops and looks at it.]

BERTHA

Oh. An egg.

[Enter LOUISE. She walks part way past the egg, stops and looks at it.]

LOUISE

Oh. An egg.

BERTHA

Figure that, egg sitting out here.

LOUISE

Yeah. Lone egg, lone egg just there. Right there.

BERTHA

A big egg.

LOUISE

Not that big.

BERTHA

It's kinda big. I like big eggs. Big eggs make big omelets. That's what I always think. Big eggs make big omelets.

LOUISE

What makes that egg so damn big?

BERTHA

I don't know, it's just big to me. That's all that matters. I'm gonna make an omelet of that egg.

LOUISE

Oh, no, I'm claiming it.

BERTHA

You are not claiming nothing. Saw it first I did, it's going right to my fridge!

LOUISE

Sure you want it? It's been out probably all day, sitting out here. All in the open. Fifty flies probably been landing on it. Dirty flies, defecating. Yup, look real hard. I can see from here even, fly spots all over the shell—

BERTHA

I'm making an omelet!

LOUISE

Hey, sister, ease the blood pressure. This ain't earth shattering or anything stupendous. It's just an egg. A free egg.

BERTHA

Exactly. Free.

LOUISE

What?

BERTHA

You said free. Free eggs are hard to come by. And it's my free egg. I saw it. Saw it right there, and I said, "oh, an egg." I know I saw it first.

LOUISE

NO, I saw it before you--

BERTHA

No I--

LOUISE

That's why I walked over here! That's why. Otherwise I woulda kept on walking. But I spotted the egg, walked over, and then you came and--

BERTHA

You couldn't have, couldn't have, you weren't even here yet. You came after me. That much I'm sure about.

LOUISE

Nope. I saw it from back there, so, sorry, guess I get the sucker!

BERTHA

I was here first, I... I... IT'S MINE!

[BERTHA and LOUISE race over to the egg. BERTHA drops down to scoop up the egg, but LOUISE raises her foot above it, ready to smash it.]

LOUISE

Even touch it and it's yolk city.

BERTHA

You'd break it?

LOUISE

I'd make it ooze everywhere.

BERTHA

But no one would have it.

If I don't get it, neither do you. LOUISE

I need it! BERTHA

Why? 'Cause you like big eggs? LOUISE

BERTHA
It's big and nice and, and I make omelet's with green peppers and ham and onions and mushrooms and-- Well. I make a great Denver!

That's so trite! LOUISE

But I do! BERTHA

Back off the egg. C'mon, back off. Back off! LOUISE

[BERTHA retreats. LOUISE faces directly at her.]

LOUISE(CONT.)
So you think you know eggs. Ha! This egg has a tie, a tie to the soul. The Egyptians saw all its mystical properties, and I, I read about them. I did. The soul is encased in its oval white world all... encased. All pure, all perfect.

You showing it in a museum? BERTHA

No! I'm painting it for Easter! LOUISE

It'd be better in an omelet. BERTHA

Bad for you, all that fried cholesterol. LOUISE

It's going in a omelet! BERTHA

It's getting gussied up for Easter! LOUISE

Omelet! BERTHA

Easter! LOUISE

Omelet! BERTHA

Easter! LOUISE

Omelet! BERTHA

Easter! LOUISE

BERTHA
OMELET! OMELET! OMELET!
OMELET! OMELET! OMELET!
OMELET! OMELET! OMELET!

LOUISE
EASTER! EASTER! EASTER! EASTER!
EASTER! EASTER!
EASTER! EASTER! EASTER!

[They continue shouting and circling until
BERTHA dives once again for the egg. And
once again, LOUISE holds her foot over it.]

It's mine or no one's. LOUISE

This is terrible, you, you can't. You're simply awful! BERTHA

Tough! LOUISE

I saw it first! I did! I saw it, I saw it, I saw it! BERTHA

Don't be such a little child. LOUISE

You...you're. Am I acting like a child to you? BERTHA

Kind've. LOUISE

[BERTHA backs off. LOUISE relaxes.]

I don't mean to be. BERTHA

LOUISE

It's okay. Being a little childlike. It's energetic. It just gets a little tiresome.

BERTHA

I certainly don't mean to be tiresome.

LOUISE

Everybody's tiresome.

BERTHA

But I sure don't mean to be. I'm just really hungry. Hunger can make you get real nasty. So as you see, I must be really, really hungry.

LOUISE

And I must be really, really serious.

BERTHA

You think that way? Do you? About eggs and souls?

LOUISE

Sure.

BERTHA

That is quite wonderful. Beautiful even. I would say elegantly beautiful.

LOUISE

You still ain't getting the egg.

[LOUISE picks up the egg. BERTHA tries to get the egg from LOUISE.]

BERTHA

Hey! Put that back! Put it! Set it down. No one said you could touch it. When we agree with what we're gonna do, then we can. But no one's touching anything until we agree on some set of particulars.

LOUISE

Blow off!

[BERTHA grabs LOUISE's neck.]

BERTHA

You egg hog! I'll shove you and that egg into next week! C'mon drop it! Drop it! No wait, don't drop it. Just... set it down very carefully. That's it.

[LOUISE sets down the egg.]

BERTHA(CONT.)

You gotta explain just how you intend painting that egg. Let's get that clear first. Once I know then maybe, maybe it'll be okay. But only if you explain!