

TOUCHY FEELY

by Greg Vovos
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TO PRODUCE THIS PLAY
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TOUCHY FEELY

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a straight comedy that's bent

CHARACTERS

DOUG: A married man working in a corporation. He expects very little out of life and gets it.

TED: A single man working in said corporation. He has more fire in his belly, but it's doing him more harm than good.

SETTING

A seldom-used hallway in a large corporation. A place where people try to get lost from the crowd.

SYNOPSIS

Ted has reached that point: either he touches someone's life soon or he's going to go off half-cocked.

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Lights up on the seldom-used hallway of a corporation. TED stands, reading a file. DOUG enters.

DOUG

Did you see the report?

TED

Checking it out right now.

DOUG

Unbelievable, right?

TED

Par for the course.

DOUG

Well, it'll get better.

TED

Will it?

DOUG

(Shrug)

TED

You're married, aren't you?

DOUG

Yeah.

TED

You like it?

DOUG

It's okay.

TED

Just okay?

DOUG

Yeah, no. It's good. Why?

TED

Will you touch me?

DOUG

Touch you?

TED

Yes. You know, touch me, hold me.

DOUG

What the fuck?

TED

I just...I'd like to be...touched.

DOUG

You better watch what the fuck you're saying to me.

Doug starts to walk away. Ted grabs him.

Hey, get your hands off me.

TED

Sorry. Sorry.

DOUG

Maybe you should get your ass down to HR or something.

TED

Yeah, maybe.

Doug starts to walk away.

Wait!

DOUG

What?

TED

You're not going to tell anyone about this, are you?

DOUG

Hell no.

TED

Thank you. That's very sweet of you.

DOUG
Sweet of me?

TED
Yeah, you know, helping me out like that.

DOUG
I'm not helping you. I'm doing it for myself. I don't want anyone knowing about this.

TED
It wouldn't kill you to touch me, you know.

DOUG
This is a place of employment.

TED
I know that.

DOUG
You can't talk to people like that.

TED
Why not?

DOUG
It's harassment.

TED
Harassment?

DOUG
Yes. Harassment.

TED
I just asked you to touch me.

DOUG
Yeah, well, don't.

TED
Sure. It's cool.

DOUG
Good.

TED

This report's fucked up, huh?

DOUG

Yep.

TED

Same old shit at this place.

DOUG

That's better. See you around.

Doug starts to leave.

TED

Doug?

DOUG

Yeah?

TED

Would you just stroke me?

DOUG

What?

TED

My face. Would you just stroke my face? As if you were my mother and I'm your little boy. Show me that you care, that you feel my pain, that everything will be better.

DOUG

You are seriously messed up, Dude.

TED

I know. That's why I need you to stroke my face.

DOUG

No.

TED

Don't you care about me?

DOUG

Not really.

TED

You don't care about your fellow man?

DOUG

Not like that I don't.

TED

I'm just asking for a little compassion.

DOUG

For what?

TED

For the pain I feel every day. Look, I don't have a wife—or anybody for that matter—who I can just go to and they can make everything better. I'm just asking you to help me feel better.

DOUG

Ask someone else.

TED

Like who?

DOUG

Like a woman.

TED

I can't ask a woman that. She'll think I'm a pervert.

DOUG

I think you're a pervert.

TED

Just give me a hug then. Okay? Just a hug.

DOUG

No.

TED

Please.

DOUG

No, man. Get away from me.

TED

Don't you ever feel pain?

DOUG
Sure, I feel pain.

TED
Then hug me. Studies show that hugging in the workplace can relieve stress and make for a better working environment because it releases the dopamine in the brain.

DOUG
You're the dopamine.

Doug starts to leave.

TED
I brought a gun to work today.

DOUG
What?

Ted pulls out the gun.

Whoa, Partner.

TED
I'm not going to hurt you, Doug.

DOUG
Yeah, no. I know.

Pause.

Are you going to hurt anyone?

TED
I don't know. I just brought it in case I felt like shooting the place up.

DOUG
Oh.

Awkward silence.

You still want me to hug you?

TED
Not now, I don't.

DOUG
Why not?

TED
Because it wouldn't mean anything. You'd just be doing it so I won't kill you, not because you actually care about me.

DOUG
That's not true.

TED
Fuck it isn't. You don't give a shit about me. You said as much a minute ago.

DOUG
Let me hug you, Ted. Please.

TED
No. I shouldn't have to pull a gun on you to get some affection. It feels cheap now.

DOUG
It's not. Come on. Let me hug you.

TED
All right, but no funny business.

They hug. Ted pulls away.

DOUG
What's wrong?

TED
I don't buy that hug.

DOUG
You don't buy it?

TED
That hug did absolutely nothing for me. Brought me no comfort whatsoever. I get more satisfaction hugging my toilet.

DOUG
Well, excuse me. It's not like I practice hugging every day or something.

TED
Do you hug your wife?

DOUG

Yeah, I hug my wife.

TED

When's the last time you did that?

DOUG

I don't know, last...no, um...maybe...no. Look, I don't know.

TED

Do you have sex with her?

DOUG

Sure, I do.

TED

But you don't know the last time you hugged her?

DOUG

No.

TED

That's sad.

DOUG

It is sad.

TED

And she doesn't hug you?

DOUG

I don't know.

TED

Again, sad.

Silence.

DOUG

I feel so alone sometimes, Ted.

TED

I know.

DOUG

I just...I'd like to hug her...but for some reason...I just...I can't anymore.

TED
It's okay.

DOUG
What's wrong with me?

TED
Nothing's wrong with you.

DOUG
No, something's wrong with me. I mean, I'm like seriously fucked up. I don't touch anyone anymore. Not my mother. Not my wife. Not anyone. It's like I'm not human. I touch gas pumps more than I touch people. And gas is expensive.

TED
You're human, Doug.

DOUG
I wish I were.

TED
Would you like a hug, Doug? A real hug?

DOUG
Yes, Ted. I would.

TED
Come to Papa.

Doug does. They hug.

Better?

DOUG
Yes.

Ted holds him by the cheeks.

TED
Now go home and make your wife happy. Take the day off. No! the rest of the week off.

DOUG
But I just can't leave work like that. I can't just—

TED
Can't you?

Pause.

DOUG
Thank you, Ted.

TED
You're welcome, Doug.

Doug references the gun.

DOUG
Will you be okay?

TED
Go home, Doug.

They stare at each other for a moment. Then, without warning, Doug grabs Ted by the cheeks and kisses him on the lips.

TED
What the hell was that for?

DOUG
Sorry. That was crossing the line, wasn't it?

TED
This is a place of employment, Doug.

Awkward pause. Doug references the report Ted holds.

DOUG
Helluva report, huh?

Ted puts the gun away.

TED
Same shit, different day.

The exit in opposite directions. Lights fade.

END OF PLAY