

My Ex Started a Podcast
By Gina Femia

THE PLAYWRIGHT

My ex started a podcast.
I found out the other day, by accident.
Kinda.
I mean, I kinda accidentally googled him.
Okay, I mean, that part wasn't the accident,
I did, I googled him,
I google him from time to time to just kinda
check up,
make sure he's staying over there,
in the past,
he likes to google me from time to time,
just to check up,
and send me these e-mails that are just

well, maybe I shouldn't say,
in case he sees this.
That's what I always think when I write one of these,
maybe I shouldn't say,
I probably shouldn't say,
let these stories die on my tongue,
they're like licking a stamp,
these stories,
all bitter with a lingering taste I can never quite
wash away.

But anyway,
he started a podcast,
he's a white man in his 40s so, you know,
I'm sure it's great.

I'm sorry, I shouldn't be mean about it,
I'm sure it is GREAT,
I'm glad he started a podcast,
it's just what the world needs,
a white guy talking about how wokeness has killed comedy,
biting stuff, I'm sure.

And

I'm sorry, I ran outta steam.
This was supposed to be a monologue about like,
toxic masculinity and
men who cause trauma
because they're traumatized by the patriarchy to which they subscribe,
all told through this very specific lens about my ex and his podcast, but I just.

I feel like.

Look, you probably don't know who I am,
and that's fine,
I'm not famous
and there's no way to know every artist in the world
(which is actually a beautiful thing if you think about it –
Maybe a monologue for another day?)

But hi, I'm a Playwright,
I write a lotta different kinds of plays
But I love writing these deeply personal plays that explore all of the above,
usually though the lens of the abusive relationship I was forced to endure,

I've written like 20 of those kinds of plays,
And I love them all, truly,
But I am
So tired
Of writing
The same
Things
Over and over and over –

'Well why don't you write something different'

I wanted to!
I was googling headlines
(it's so bleak out there!)
And I had found one,
Or a couple,
That were
Not this!

And I sat down at my computer to write it but then

****** BREAKING NEWS ******

**A VERDICT HAS BEEN REACHED
IN THE E. JEAN CAROLL RAPE TRIAL**

**Liabe for sexual abuse and defamation,
Not liabe for rape.**

And I just.

I started with a new primary physician the other day,
I wanted somebody Not Horrible
and she is Not Horrible!
Which is
GREAT.

We were going over my history,
Starting at the top of my head
And moving down,
past my ears, past my mouth to my thyroid (it's small), shoulders, spine (it's crooked),
Breasts (I had a lump – don't worry, it was benign, but that's a monologue for another time),
Stomach, Intestines,
Kidneys, liver,

Vagina –

We had to take a pause because my vagina
is a little stressed out,
it's a Vagina that needs special attention
because I have vaginismus and I've had it for years,
because it's a Vagina that carries the stress of trauma inside of it, still,
even though a decade's passed,
my Vagina doesn't know that.

I tell the doctor why I have the vaginismus,
In that clinical way I've learned how to talk about these things,
How I talk about my work, too,
Clinical,
Distant enough to let you know No, I will not be answering specifics at this time,
But yes, I am writing from lived experience,
smart enough to let you know I'm not stupid
to combat those evil thoughts that the patriarchy trickles into our minds to try to justify the
abuse that We endure,

And I was talking to my Doctor about it,
and she is this wide open, caring soul,
nodding, taking notes,
and she asked me why I didn't press charges.

There's like a cycle of ten questions everyone asks that range from well-meaning to annoying and that's number 6 or 7 on the list.

And I simply
did not answer
because the answer
has nothing to
do with my
vagina,

but maybe I should've said

Because even if you were raped,
you can have a jury tell you that you weren't.

By all accounts, it seems E. Jean Carroll is very satisfied with her outcome.
He didn't get away with it,
there is something there.

But I saw the verdict and said
Even though I was raped,
I could have a jury tell me that I wasn't.

I'm still writing the same thing,
over and over again
because it's my only form of justice,
to tell my story,
over and over again,
to hold it in my own hands
and mouth,
run my tongue over the words
before they come out.