**Pig in a Blanket**

(a 10 minute black comedy by Claire Booker)

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 **Characters**

 Rat: Animal rights activist

 Ellie: Her sister.

 *Lights rise on Rat and Ellie sitting on chairs which represent a car. Rat is in the driving seat. They are stuck in traffic.*

Ellie What are we going to do now?

Rat Relax.

Ellie (*leans out*) It goes on for miles.

Rat Stay cool.

Ellie What if he . . .

Rat He’ll be fine.

Ellie What if he’s not? It’s scorching out there, Rat. He’s really, really overweight. We could barely hoist him in.

Rat Tough.

Ellie (*distant sound of police siren*) Oh God, the police.

Rat Act normal.

Ellie Normal? We’re criminals.

Rat No we’re not. We’re fighting injustice.

Ellie That’s what this is – a road block, a police swoop. They’re swooping, Rat. Someone’s rumbled us. We should never have done it.

Rat Put some lipstick on. In the mirror. Go on!

Ellie Why?

Rat (*siren gets louder and blue lights flash*) Just do it.

Ellie (*she obeys*) I don’t want to go to prison. I’m claustrophobic.

Rat We won’t go to prison.

Ellie We will if he dies.

Rat Look, worst case scenario, I’ll take the rap for both of us.

Ellie Would you? Would you really do that, Rat?

Rat Yes. I’ll say you’re a mental retard who can’t think for herself.

Ellie That’s a bit harsh.

Rat My kid sister with no brains.

Ellie I’ve got brains.

Rat (*with disdain*) A mindless follower.

Ellie I’m not! It was my idea in the first place. To confront farmers face to face. To have it out with them – as people.

Rat (*the sirens have stopped*) See. It must be some accident or something. (*pause*) Fancy a Mojo Bar?

Ellie I feel sick.

Rat You always feel sick. Have a peppermint.

Ellie (*takes one*) I wonder if he had any idea this morning when he woke up, that he’d be trussed and gagged by 14 hundred hours, Greenwich Meantime.

Rat Probably not. Or he’d have stayed in bed.

Ellie Hindsight is an amazing thing.

Rat That’s the whole point of terror, Ellie. You have to strike when people least expect it.

Ellie (*pause*) The piglets were amazing, weren’t they? The minute we hacked down the doors and wrenched open the pens . . . their little tails, all coiled up . . . and then . . . zzzip, alive!

Rat Their first taste of freedom.

Ellie Oink, oink, oink, oink, oink. Real soil under their feet. Trees, fresh air. I know I nearly shit myself, but oh my god, it’s so much more exciting than writing a blog.

Rat And now he’s getting a flavour of how it actually feels.

Ellie (*hesitant*) Yes but . . . Rat. He might die.

Rat Nothing beats direct experience, Ellie. That’s how people change. That’s how you changed. Remember? You used to love your Sunday roasts before I dragged you along to your first abatoir. My God, I’ve never seen so much vomit come out of one stomach.

Ellie Yes, but at least I was only twelve. He’s ancient. He could have a heart attack.

Rat You signed up to it.

Ellie Honestly Rat, I thought he’d let them out once I’d reasoned with him.

Rat (*with derision*) Ah, the power of the Word.

Ellie Don’t knock it. People can be persuaded. (*Rat snorts*) You look them in the eye and you make them understand what it’s like to be a pig trapped in a 3 by 4 pen, unable to move for piglets and shit and antibiotics, then crammed into a lorry, swung down the motorway, hung up by the hind leg, half the time only partially gassed before your throat’s slit.

Rat And at the end of your little lecture, what did he say? (*pause*) Sorry, I didn’t quite catch that, Ellie.

Ellie (*pause*) You know what he said.

Rat Still feel sorry for him?

Ellie Yes. And no.

Rat Stick with no.

Ellie We should be at the lock-up by now, hosing him down, giving him something to drink, making the anonymous phonecall.

Rat Well we’re not. And there’s nothing we can do about it.

Ellie I could loosen his gag a bit.

Rat And have him scream blue murder?

Ellie What if he starts producing catarrh?

Rat He’s hardly going down with a cold in the next hour.

Ellie We taped his mouth on the understanding that his nasal passages were completely clear.

Rat Oh, sorry I didn’t have time to give him a full BUPA health check.

Ellie He might have an allergy, or asthma. I don’t know. I’m getting bad vibes, Rat. One of us should go and check.

Rat Yes. Let’s open the boot and have a party.

Ellie He’s roasting back there.

Rat May I remind you that the maximum temperature for life-stock transportation is 30 degrees Centigrade. No-one checks if they’re fit to travel.

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