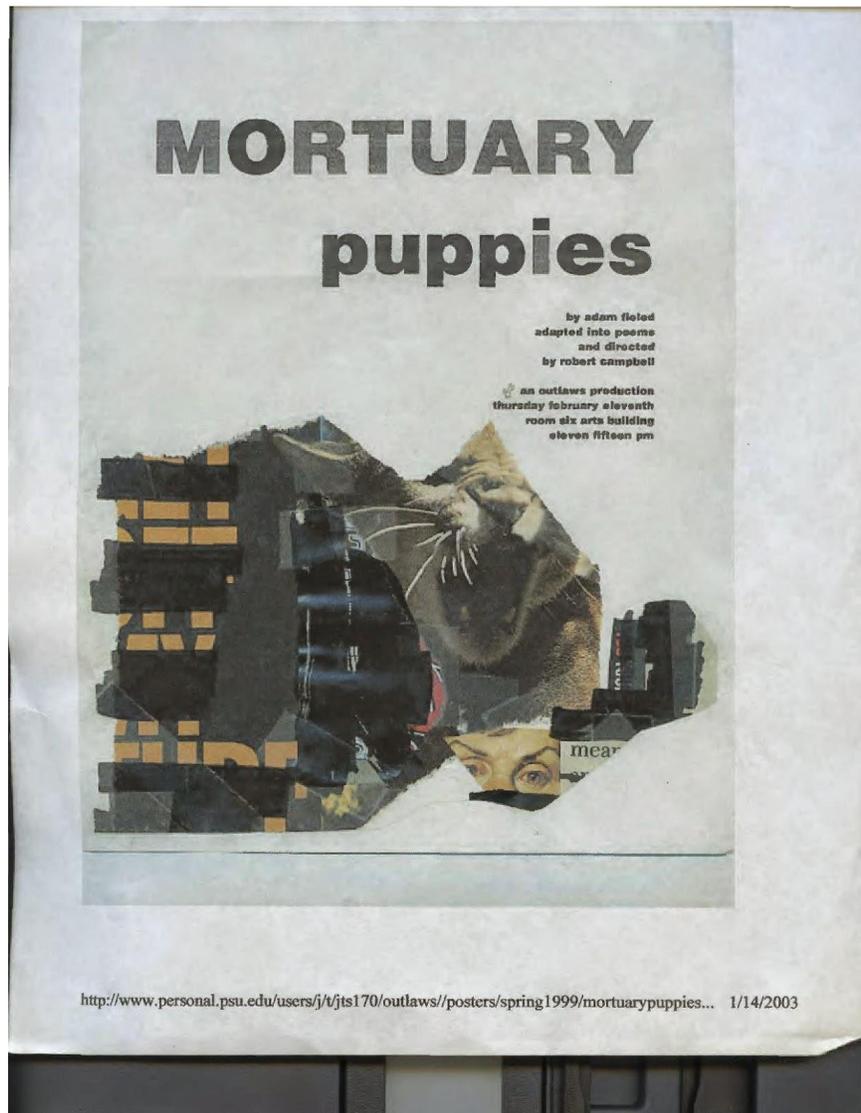


# Mortuary Puppies

## Adam Fieled



**Mortuary Puppies, a one-act play by American poet Adam Fieled, was produced by the Outlaw Playwrights of State College, Pa in February 1999, in the main theater building of the University Park campus of Penn State University.**

(Three men and three women in black robes sit in a semi-circle; a candle sits before them, and a box of bibles. Inverted pentagrams are drawn on their foreheads, and their faces are powdered stark white, black lips. Call them A, B, C, D, E, F)

A: (tearing off his robe to reveal black jeans and tee-shirt) I have no supernatural insight! I can't cast a spell!

B: (pinching his stomach) I'm fat! I eat too much!

C: (rising, miming an Indian rain-dance) You guys take yourselves too seriously. I can't blame you. We're desperate for a leader. (pulling his hood over his head) We're living slumberously. We'd rather surf the Net than the ocean. We'd rather rent movies than make them. Lust is the only thing you can rely on. (crumbling into a heap on the floor, writhing)

D: (approaching C, comforting him with an embrace) Sex dominates our lives, but we don't want to admit it. (she peels hood off C's head and kisses him passionately)

E: (picking up a copy of Playboy from beneath the candle, lighting a page on fire) Look at this shit. Exploitation is rampant.

B: (pointing accusingly at E) You're desperate! You're an accident waiting to happen! (he shrinks away from E, pointing a cross at him)

E: (chasing B around in a circle) Hatred is the spice of life! Your subtle sensibilities are corrupt with bullshit!

F: (coming downstage left, lying flat on ground) Every man harbors a secret desire to be Superman.

D: (rising, tearing off robe to reveal glamorous dress, breaking into a supermodel strut) I am revolver! I am bomb! I am grenade! I can hurt!

E: (walking aimless circles) Like idlers at the funeral of a psychiatrist. (collapsing onto his knees in prayer) Like a pitchfork stuck into eternity's stomach.

F: (frantically doing sit-ups) This was the determinist exercise, intellectualized, spectacle-juiced.

C: (catching D in a full-nelson) This was detrimental planets of chanting, word-place unstymied, climaxed with whoredom!

D: (breaking away from C, spitting on him) This was the court of maybe adjourned, wrestled with casual moaning blizzards!

A: (doing Michael Jackson "moon-walk" downstage) God cooperates with Truth and Justice. God is millions of uptight people fucking themselves!

B: (taking off his shoes, beating himself in the head with them) God is implements of destruction stewing in vats!

C: (finding a razor, preparing to slit his wrists) God is a spider piercing heaven with venom and menace!

A: (knocking razor out of C's hand) Fuck death! Death is the refuse of flies! (the rest of the group forms a semi-circle around him, begins falling at his feet and feeling him up sensually, lust in their eyes) Death is the pulse of underwater nowhere! (the group begins to sex-pant) Death is the thin arm of ridiculous waving! (the group begins to climax violently) You're all a bunch of babbling crabs! (he breaks from them and they whimper) Let us ride. Let us worship a lesbian gopher. Let us spit our vehemence. (he takes out a copy of the Bible from under the candle; in it are five copies of the poem "bible"; he distributes them; the rest of the group forms a line at the front of the stage and recites this poem)

B, C, D, E, F: bible is stilts for mind-midgets,  
brassy as a Barnum poster, three-ringed  
bible is black and white silent film  
with Valentino Christ presiding  
bible holds governments in thrall, muzzles  
president's mouth, defecates on judges heads  
bible is Godfather ordering a kill,  
hovering outside abortion clinic w/ gun  
bible is Pat Buchanan riding GOP elephant  
towards Bethlehem, stampeding over gays  
bible is 700 Club demanding money, bogus  
tears in their eyes, TV Jehovahs  
bible is King Silence faced w modern ambiguity,  
cancerous sewing rage in frail hearts  
bible's enemy is artistry,  
prophets of longing howling w compassion  
bible is fire blowing anger  
bible is exclusivity spilling its heinous seed  
bible is shelled turtle  
bible is vomit of fear  
bible is a lie, an ivory toilet;  
to shit in it you have to flush yourself

(During the poem, A has been tearing pages from his bible, chewing them and spitting them out. When the poem ends, he tosses the bible into the audience)

A: (approaching the other five, he tips the first in line and they fall, domino style)  
Somehow I found myself spending time with teenagers in coffee joints. I happened to lose my bearings and had no better place to go.

B, C, D, E, F: (from the floor, doing the wave, in unison) God is a cornball with a draggy scheme!

A: I fucked one of them but I...(weeping) couldn't come!

B, C, D, E, F: (unison, pointing at him accusingly) Sometimes impotence knows best!

A: (regaining his composure, lighting a cigarette suavely) Terrible, how our needy flesh imagines satisfaction in external monuments.

B: (rising, kneeling before A) Shut your eyes and listen— the thread of children's voices will hold our hearts in place, cozy as a hammer's nail or tire tracks on blacktop roads.

C: (rising, kneeling before B) I haven't seen my father in seven years! He jerked off in front of me and brought home porn!

D: (rising, kneeling before C) Precious bulbs bloom from horde together beg!

E: (rising, stripping off his robe in disgust) You guys are fucking ridiculous. Why do you have to make a production out of everything?

F: (rising, facing audience) Emancipate my claustrophobia! Respect my wedding dress! Ponder my teabags! Sleep! (she spits into the audience)

A: (taking F by the neck in a vice-grip) Do you belong to a food group?

F: (fighting A off, wailing) Sleep on sea-sunk nail-beds! Sleep in tart plum wine!

B: (saluting) The President's power is measured in inches! Stars and stripes become a big boner! The bald eagle a flying come-shot! When the President comes, the earth quakes! The President is scrotum-potent!

A: (letting go of F, attacking B) Your head is fuzzy with pussy-dreams!

B: (fighting him off) Saddam Hussein our leather dominatrix! Bush has discovered the joys of jello! Our head of state has a seventh-grade heart!

A: (letting go of B, lighting another cigarette) Butt. Universal emblem of frailty.

D: (approaching him sexily) You should put me in your mouth. I come lit. I don't produce noxious fumes. You can put me out, if you want. (caressing his torso) Quit me. Leave me a butt on your ashtray. Keep my ashes in a vase. Cart me out for the relatives on holidays. Sprinkle me on the Easter turkey. I'll make a hero of you; you don't need cigarettes! (she removes the cigarette from A's titillated lips)

A: (falling on his knees before D, who's now smoking his cigarette) You're the strum of Spanish minstrels, smooth thumbled suck & burst!

B: (hugging himself, shivering) Man holds himself stiff, pretending impotence.

A: (rising from his knees) He is not sleeping. He dares not to dream. His breath comes in little filaments. He fears disease.

C: (clutching his stomach, rocking back and forth) His skirmish is entirely interior. He will die clenched down on some teething ring, bent over from exertion, wishing he had a bolder to push up a hill.

D: (chastising them, hands on hips) This is all exercise. A ruse. A pigeon's quip.

F: (sudden wail) Exit signs get in my eyes! Clocks insult me with nakedness and smoke! Tortures of unmovement! I am the lost quim of Venus!

D: (hissing at F, giving him the finger) I can't handle your vibes. Silence is the climate I aspire to.

A: (approaching D, hand on heart) I can't amend myself any further. What is the great truth of your cock-eyed haunches? Bring out my bastard and love him!

D: (pushing A away, filing her nails) I proclaim myself a feminist scholar! I will not hide amidst the masks of action.

F: (approaching D, pushing A out of the way) From across the room I sense your distance! People who cannot feel are always fugitives! You eschew the possibility of female erection!

A: (throwing F to the ground) Conversation crucifies my pure thrust! Love is my dharma-soap and she's the box!

C: (still clutching his stomach, rocking) We are a generation of matches! We cannot differentiate intelligence from confusion! We are nerves without ending! We feel safest alone!

D: (settling herself in C's lap) Bed you down on rocks of scotch and time. My groove will ride your pale manipulations of phallus!

C: (throwing D off) Reflect is the principle of jellyfish!

D: (angrily, to C) Fuck your three-wheeled baby carriage scruples! You're a mortuary puppy!

C: (slowly, deliberately) I've been rigged with chess-piece brains!

D: (approaching him again, tenderly) Share your flesh, share your heart, make me whole I'll give you part.

C: (resignedly) Sobriety obliterates my supple. There are no rosetta stones in your foam.

D: (kicking him) Bolders are blundering your mountain! Shadows are glistening your shit! Crosses are sucking up your vomit! Life cooperates with pride and abundance! Death cooperates with shy and repentance! (she begins crying)

A: (moving to console, hold her) Love cooperates with everything lovely. Don't feel soft among the steely geniuses who know what to do! You inspired my first published poem, in a dream of supernatural poise! (he wraps D in his arms)

F: (sudden frenzy) Nothing to kill or die for! No religion too!

E: (coming out of trance-sleep) Fuck that! Lennon thought peace was worth dying for, didn't he? He made Yoko into a religion, didn't he? We all heard that!

A: Well, that's love for you. Yoko was his family.

E: (to group) Do you guys believe that?

C: Vestial virgins shrimps and pillars...banana bombs...cocktails of TV static...the thin arm of ridiculous waving! Sins! Window seeds tempt me into comfort!

E: This was a tower-clock striking midnight. This was the bumble of racketing rapids. This was the prick of heroic Hercules! (he produces a copy of the bible) This existed! Ha!

C: (rising, eyes closed) Move! Anywhere! Breathe!

E: (at lip of stage, with blazing eye) Shut your eyes and listen— the thread of children's voices will hold our hearts in place, cozy as a hammer's nail, or tire tracks on blacktop roads...

END PLAY