

PENI: A Post-Feminist Morality Play

— a one-act play

[This play was staged by G. Valli at the New School for Drama, Spring, 2010, NYC.]

CHARACTERS: (2)

CASEY, played by a woman, any age

JACKIE, played by a woman, any age

(All that is needed are two three-foot-long “penises,” preferably made of Styrofoam or some such, that can be strapped on. If they can be rigged to be manipulated, all the better.)

CASEY: (to audience) I don't usually perform before men. I do not support the patriarchy and all that that means. But I'm making an exception today, but only because Robin, who was supposed to play this part here at Theater for the New Woman, is ill and they asked me to go on for her. Now I don't have the lines down yet, so I'm sorry! (She's not sorry.) As soon as the other actor is ready, I guess we'll begin. (Calling offstage) Are you ready back there?

JACKIE: Not quite.

CASEY: What do you want me to do?

JACKIE: Stall.

CASEY: This is so annoying. Not only do I have to have men in the audience, I have to placate them. Believe me, if this were my theater company, things would be quite, quite different.

JACKIE: (offstage) Tell them about the play.

CASEY: I haven't read it all the way through. I'm not too sure what it's about. (irritated) What have gotten myself into?! What in the world are you doing back there?

JACKIE: Never mind. Just tell 'em something!

CASEY: All right, I will. (to audience) As I understand it, it's a morality play about how females are oppressed in this society and who the guilty oppressors are! Perhaps you can guess? No, it's not preachy. It's hard-hitting and extremely important. I'm happy to say that it's a mere five hours long — all monologues — and —
(to JACKIE) Are you ready yet?

JACKIE: Guess what? . . . I'm ready!

(JACKIE appears from backstage.)

CASEY: It's about time.

JACKIE: Shall we begin?

CASEY: Yes indeed!

(They strike theatrical poses as if about to start.)

CASEY: (groans suddenly) I don't feel right.

JACKIE: Oh, no. What is it?

CASEY: I don't know. I'm queasy.

JACKIE: Can you go on?

CASEY: I don't think so. Excuse me. (Runs offstage sick)

JACKIE: (to audience) I'm sorry about this. There must be something going around. I hope you don't catch it. I think there may be some of those towelettes — you know, the wet, antiseptic kind — around here somewhere. Maybe you should wash your hands before you go. (to CASEY) Have you seen those towelettes anywhere?

(CASEY enters wearing a huge erect penis, at least a yard long.)

JACKIE: My god, what happened to you?

CASEY: I don't know. What kind of horrible place is this?

JACKIE: Is that a penis?

CASEY: No, it's a bread stick. What does it look like!

JACKIE: Sorry. Don't be grouchy. I'm sure it can be removed.

CASEY: It just grew and grew. I couldn't stop it.

JACKIE: Stand still. We'll deal with it.

CASEY: Get it off me. Get it off!

JACKIE: I can't do anything if you don't cooperate.

CASEY: Okay, okay. I'll cooperate. Just get it off me!

JACKIE: (checking) It seems to be attached pretty firmly.

CASEY: It's disgusting. Do something. Do something!

JACKIE: Calm down! I will get something. I saw something
backstage that will do the job. Stay here. . . . And relax.

(JACKIE goes backstage.)

CASEY: Hurry!

JACKIE: I saw it just a minute ago. (Sounds of searching, going
through boxes, etc.)

CASEY: I think it's getting bigger!

JACKIE: It's right here somewhere. (More sounds) Hold on!

CASEY: How could this have happened? Why me? (Touches the penis) Oo!

JACKIE: What?

CASEY: Nothing. (Touches the penis again. It feels good.) (in a lower voice) *Oooo!*

JACKIE: Are you all right?

CASEY: (stroking the penis) Not too bad. Oh *my!*

(JACKIE returns with garden shears.)

JACKIE: Found it!

CASEY: What is that?

JACKIE: A prop from a play that we did. Come here and I'll get that off you. (Beckons)

CASEY: (doubtful now) Get rid of it *how?*

JACKIE: How do you suppose? Like this. (Snaps the garden shears several times)

CASEY: You must be kidding.

JACKIE: It won't hurt. That's just a prop. Or a costume. Isn't it?

CASEY: I think perhaps it may be more than that now.

JACKIE: Come on. I'll just cut it off. It won't take a minute.

CASEY: Nope! Nope!

JACKIE: Don't worry. It'll fall right off. See. (Demonstrates.)

CASEY: (loudly) Wait!

JACKIE: Come on. Remember that morality play we're supposed to do?

CASEY: I said wait!

JACKIE: I haven't got all day. Do you want that thing off or not?

CASEY: (deciding) Hmm.

JACKIE: Well?

CASEY: You know, it's really not that bad. I look sort of good with it, don't you think? (Parades up and down.)

JACKIE: I've seen better.

CASEY: Oh, yeah, sure.

JACKIE: I have.

CASEY: Better than this? (Parades even more.)

JACKIE: Yeah.

CASEY: (smugly) Where? When? Who?

JACKIE: I saw a picture of one once. Incredible.

CASEY: I'll bet.

JACKIE: I'll show you. It's in my wallet somewhere, I think.

(JACKIE goes backstage.)

CASEY: You keep porn in your wallet? And leave those shears
back there!

JACKIE: (calling) You sure?

CASEY: Positive!

JACKIE: Well, you wanted them.

CASEY: Let's just say I've changed my mind. (CASEY struts
around now, showing off the penis.) (to audience) I
suppose you can get used to this, right? Sort of like when
you have a growth, a mole or something. Right? You just
accept it.

JACKIE: (calling) I can't seem to find that picture.

CASEY: It's all right! (heavily ironic) I believe you!

JACKIE: I hear that tone. I tell you there was a picture.

CASEY: (mockingly) Right. You had a picture of a better penis than mine. You just can't find it!

(JACKIE now appears from backstage, equipped with an equally exaggerated penis attached to her body.)

JACKIE: I guess I can't.

CASEY: (pointing) Jesus, what's that?

JACKIE: (noticing the penis on herself) Holy crap! It's an epidemic.

CASEY: Did you just do this because I did?

JACKIE: I beg your pardon?

CASEY: You heard me.

JACKIE: *I* didn't do it. It happened.

CASEY: I bet. You're so competitive.

JACKIE: I'm competitive? That's a laugh.

CASEY: Here I am, having a nice little getting-acquainted party — with the audience, I mean — and you have to come out like that.

JACKIE: Like what? (Parades, showing off the penis) Like this?

CASEY: Precisely.

JACKIE: Why do you care?

CASEY: I don't care.

JACKIE: Oh, but I think you do care. (Parades more) Something tells me you feel inferior.

CASEY: You are unbelievable.

JACKIE: Am I? (nodding at audience) I don't imagine they think so. (to audience) Well? (Parades her penis)

CASEY: Stop that! You're obscene.

JACKIE: No, you're just envious.

CASEY: Envious?

JACKIE: Big time. (Parades more)

CASEY: Why would I be that? After all . . . (Parades competitively) I have nothing to fear but fear itself.

JACKIE: Actually I think I've got you beat by . . . a head.

CASEY: Bullshit! Actually, if the truth were known, I've been holding back.

JACKIE: Oh, please. You look like you've been poppin' the Viagra.

CASEY: Like hell I have.

JACKIE: Better watch yourself before you overdose. You'll wind up in your grave — with that thing poking through the dirt. Not pretty. Not pretty at all. Unless of course somebody comes along and puts a little flag on it.

CASEY: I don't need a flag on mine. It's quite festive enough as it is. (Parades the penis)

JACKIE: Length isn't everything of course. There's also girth. (Parades) And if I must say so, I've got girth.

CASEY: (incensed) I've got girth! (Shows her girth) See.

JACKIE: And there is something to be said for aesthetics — as in shapeliness, contour, presentation.

CASEY: You call that presentation? This is presentation. (Parades) Plus shapeliness and contour, to say nothing of angle, coloring, and sheer, unadulterated artistry. (Parades.)

JACKIE: (pretending to hold up a judge's card) Two-point-two. Sorry.

CASEY: Two-point-two! You don't know a ten when you see it. (Parades)

JACKIE: Yes, I do. Right here. Mine. (Parades)

CASEY: If that's a ten, then this is an eleven. A fifteen!

JACKIE: Grade inflation is everywhere these days.

CASEY: I've taken all I'm going to take from you.

JACKIE: Really?

CASEY: I thought we were friends, but there's only so much a person can put up with.

JACKIE: I was thinking the same thing myself.

CASEY: Okay, put up or shut up.

JACKIE: I call your bluff.

CASEY: You think it's a bluff? I'll show you a bluff.

JACKIE: Show me. I'm waiting.

CASEY: You want me to show you?

JACKIE: Yeah, come on.

CASEY: Okay, pal, I'll show you.

JACKIE: I'm waiting.

CASEY: Well, wait no more!

(CASEY and JACKIE start to advance on each other.)

JACKIE: Wait, wait, wait.

CASEY: Had enough, huh?

JACKIE: Not by a long shot. I wasn't ready. I just want this to be by the rules.

CASEY: What rules?

JACKIE: You stand over there. And I stand over here.

CASEY: And then what?

JACKIE: We count to three.

CASEY: Yes?

JACKIE: Like this. Don't you know *anything*?

(JACKIE arranges himself and CASEY back to back, for a duel.)

CASEY: What now?

JACKIE: Now we walk ten paces, slowly, turn, and begin.

CASEY: When do we count to three?

JACKIE: (irritated) I don't know! Let's do it now.

CASEY: Count, then go ten paces?

JACKIE: Sounds good to me. Slowly.

(They stand back to back.)

JACKIE: One!

CASEY: Two.

BOTH: And three!

JACKIE: I'm pacing now.

CASEY: So am I.

JACKIE: How far are you?

CASEY: Maybe we should count the paces too.

JACKIE: Good idea.

CASEY: I'm up to four.

JACKIE: Okay. Now it's *five*.

BOTH: (counting fast) Six, seven, eight, nine —

BOTH: Ten!

(They turn and face each other, penises in hand.)

CASEY: Do we shoot from here?

JACKIE: (embarrassed — it's too "gay") I don't *think* so. *En garde!*

(They run at each other and begin dueling, using their penises like swords. It should be a regular choreographed duel as in a Robin Hood movie, for a minute or so.)

CASEY: Take that!

JACKIE: No, you take this!

CASEY: Let's see how you feel when I run you through with my trusty blade!

JACKIE: Perhaps I'll run *you* through first with mine.

BOTH: (embarrassed, to audience) We don't mean *that!*

JACKIE: We mean this! (Lunges.)

CASEY: And this! (Lunges)

JACKIE: I thrust!

CASEY: I parry!

CASEY: I thrust!

JACKIE: I parry!

CASEY: If only we had a staircase to duel on.

JACKIE: I think I saw a crate backstage.

CASEY: Get it. I'll wait, like the gentleman I am.

(JACKIE runs backstage for the crate.)

CASEY: And when you return, prepare to be penetrated!

BOTH: (in much denial) We don't mean *that!* (meaning they aren't gay!!!!)

JACKIE: (about the audience) Why do they *keep* bringing it up?!
(They react whether or not the audience is actually snickering at them being GAY!!!!)

(JACKIE now returns with the crate, sets it down; they begin dueling, with one standing on it, one on the floor.)

CASEY: May I commend you on your skill.

JACKIE: And you too wield a formidable weapon.

CASEY: I thank you, sir. And now I must kill you. I have dallied with you for too long.

JACKIE: You overestimate your prowess, sir. What a pity it is I who must teach you the lesson of your own severe

limitations.

CASEY: Teach me if you dare, you scoundrel!

JACKIE: Unspeakable cur! Prepare to meet your maker!

(They duel some more.)

CASEY: Do you yield, sir?

JACKIE: Never!

CASEY: Then I am afraid this must result in but one thing?

JACKIE: A truce?

CASEY: Exactly!

(They stop dueling and rest.)

JACKIE: Well fought, sir!

CASEY: And you as well, my friend.

JACKIE: I am so glad that I did not have to kill you.

CASEY: You kill me?

JACKIE: Yes, I'd hate to kill anyone so out of shape.

CASEY: I seemed to notice you panting like a lapdog on a treadmill.

JACKIE: It was merely a trick to make you think I couldn't win. In another two seconds I would have had you —

CASEY: Right where you wanted me? You are amusing, sir. In the way a crawling child or a stumbling buffalo is amusing.

JACKIE: What you lack in physical skills you more than make up for in charming imbecility.

(They hold up their “swords” to their foreheads.)

BOTH: Your servant, sir!

(They bow to each other.) (Pause)

CASEY: Whew, I'm tired.

JACKIE: You want to sit down and rest?

CASEY: Let's.

(They sit.)

JACKIE: God, I'm horny.

CASEY: Don't look at me.

JACKIE: Don't flatter yourself.

CASEY: Did you ever do it with a guy?

JACKIE: (deliberate non-answer)

CASEY: Did you?

JACKIE: . . . Yeah, but it didn't count.

CASEY: Boys' school?

JACKIE: Prison.

CASEY: (agreeing) Yeah, that doesn't count. You were in prison?

JACKIE: I was innocent.

CASEY: What did you do in prison? You know . . .

JACKIE: You know the old saying: any port in a storm. At least
I didn't have to say "I love you."

(They laugh together.)

CASEY: Ever married?

JACKIE: Yep. Twice.

CASEY: Me too.

JACKIE: Twice?

CASEY: Three times.

JACKIE: No!

CASEY: Yeah.

JACKIE: What happened?

CASEY: Life.

JACKIE: Yeah, I know what you mean.

CASEY: You don't think we're getting too womanly, do you?

JACKIE: What do you mean?

CASEY: Sitting around talking like this.

JACKIE: Men talk!

CASEY: We talk, but not really the way women want.

JACKIE: Trust me, they say they want us to "talk," but when we do, they don't like it. They think we're weak.

CASEY: I think you're right.

JACKIE: I know I'm right.

CASEY: Hey, I'm saying you're right. Give me a break. . . .
Asshole.

JACKIE: Holeass.

CASEY: What's that?

JACKIE: You figure it out.

CASEY: (about the penis) Jesus, this feels full. I wish I could come. Then I could go to sleep.

JACKIE: (about her penis) I never realized what a lot of trouble this thing is.

CASEY: And the balls feel so . . .

JACKIE: Mine too. And I feel like I want to . . . how do you put it in words?

CASEY: You want to spew to the moon?

JACKIE: To the sun. To the stars. I want to join the Milky Way!

CASEY: I suppose I could always jerk myself off.

JACKIE: There is that. It's not the same, though. It's better with somebody.

CASEY: Somebody you love.

JACKIE: And breathing.

CASEY: You got that right.

(They share a laugh.)

CASEY: I can sort of see a woman over there. Do you think it's a mirage?

JACKIE: Over there? Oh, yeah. Big boobs?

CASEY: Tight little . . .

JACKIE: Oh, lady. I think I love you!

CASEY: (to the imaginary lady, on knees) No, *me!*

JACKIE: (because CASEY is kneeling, offers a penis) Hey, while you're down there.

CASEY: (getting up fast) Hey, hey, cool it.

JACKIE: I'm just bumping your head, man. Don't get all excited.

CASEY: I'm not excited. I'm just not . . . that way.

JACKIE: Me neither.

CASEY: I'm just so . . .

JACKIE: Me too.

(Pause)

CASEY: I wish I could get it regular.

JACKIE: You can always pay for it.

CASEY: I hate paying for it!

JACKIE: Me too.

CASEY: And my wife stopped wanting it.

JACKIE: Mine wanted it, but I got bored. I like spaghetti, but you don't want spaghetti every day for forty years!

CASEY: I hope you didn't tell her that.

JACKIE: Yeah, I did.

CASEY: (singing) "There goes the bride. There goes the bride . . ."

JACKIE: . . . Women are different, man.

CASEY: That is so true, man.

(Pause)

JACKIE: I hear there's a whorehouse across that river.

CASEY: Really?

JACKIE: It's about five miles to the river. (Points) That way.

CASEY: Five miles? That's not that bad. (Moves penis) I think I can make that.

JACKIE: It could be ten.

CASEY: I can do ten.

JACKIE: And it's a river made of snot.

CASEY: Did you say "snot"?

JACKIE: Yep. I saw it with my own eyes. About a mile and a half wide. (Pause)

CASEY: Well, what's a little snot?

JACKIE: Damn straight.

(They get up and arrange their heavily-laden penises.)

CASEY: Which way did you say it is? In case we get separated.

JACKIE: (almost points in the wrong direction, then points off)
That way.

CASEY: You sure there's an orgasm at the end of the rainbow?

JACKIE: That's the tale they tell.

CASEY: Good enough for me. Let's head out. Let me get ready.

(CASEY ties her penis tight against her chest.)

JACKIE: Whatcha doin'?

CASEY: Always need some support.

JACKIE: Good idea. (Ties her penis up against her chest)

CASEY: Ready, Jackie?

JACKIE: As ready as you are, Casey

CASEY: Now you're talkin'. Orgasm, look out!

JACKIE: Here I come!

(They laugh together.)

CASEY: You know something. Maybe along the way to the
Promised Land we can do a few things.

JACKIE: Like what?

CASEY: Like build every goddamned building in the world!

JACKIE: And map everything that's out there.

CASEY: And invent practically every invention ever invented,
from the wheel to —

JACKIE: — to Viagra!

CASEY: Amen, brother!

JACKIE: Not to brag.

CASEY: Of course not. Just to set the record straight.

JACKIE: We men may be the lowest of the species —

CASEY: But we've got our good days. No, great days!

BOTH: Right on!

(They give each other high fives.)

JACKIE: And now to the river of snot!

CASEY: I'm right behind you, brother!

JACKIE: All set?

CASEY: Yep.

JACKIE: Don't forget your penis.

CASEY: Wouldn't dream of it.

JACKIE: You sure you don't want to leave it behind?

CASEY: You know something?

JACKIE: What?

CASEY: I believe I've learned a valuable lesson from what happened today.

JACKIE: (exaggeratedly) Really? *A lesson? No way!*

CASEY: I think you know what it is. And so does the audience.

JACKIE: "Penis is as (prompting the audience) . . . penis does.

CASEY: That's not it.

JACKIE: "A fool and his penis are soon parted"?

CASEY: No, and it's not "The way to a man's heart is through his penis." Well, not exactly.

JACKIE: Then what is it?

CASEY: Do I have to spell it out?

JACKIE: Probably.

CASEY: Okay, I will. "Don't judge a man until you've walked a mile in his penis."

(Pause)

JACKIE: You know what? I hate morality plays!

CASEY: You know what? Me too.

(They trudge off, whistling and singing like the Seven
Dwarves: “Heigh ho! Heigh ho, it’s off to hoes we go!”)

SLOW FADE