

The Penis Play

by

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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT Toby Scales is an award-winning screenwriter, playwright and comedian. His work has been produced across the United States and at various theatres around New York. His screenplay *Joe* was a United Film Festival Finalist and his full-length play *fugue* was selected as part of Sanguine Theatre Company's inaugural Project Playwright. He was a contributing writer for *Talk Hard Chicago*, and he currently hosts a weekly variety show in Manhattan that regularly features performers from SNL, The Pete Holmes Show and SpikeTV. He studied Playwriting with David Wagoner at the University of Washington.

ABOUT THE PLAY "The Penis Play" was originally produced by Altruistic Theatre in June 2011, under direction from Daniel Huntley Solon. The play has been edited since then to reduce running time. It was also recently produced in Racine, Wisconsin where it received second-place in the ten minute play festival "Snowdance 2014."

Cast of Characters

(2M, 2W)

CHARLES:	30s, well-intentioned. Fidgety.
EX:	Charles's ex-girlfriend. Constantly disappointed.
BECCA:	30s, succinct, successful. Very attractive.
PENIS:	Charles's penis. Alternately seductive or frenetic.

Scene

A single TABLE in a nice restaurant.

Synopsis

A charmingly nervous man named Charles shows up to a blind date with his ex-girlfriend in tow. Things go from bad to worse when his penis starts to sing.

The Penis Play

CHARLES sits at a table, looking around nervously. His EX sits beside him, fussing over his hair.

Presently BECCA enters. She looks around nervously. Spies CHARLES. An awkward wave.

Awkward wave, returned.

She lurches toward him, offering a hand.

BECCA

Hi. Are you Charles?

CHARLES

Yep, I'm Charles! And you must be Becca?

BECCA

Yes.

An awkward handshake.

CHARLES

Shall we sit? Let's sit.

Becca sits. Charles sits. An awkward silence.

Smiles are exchanged, water is drunk. Finally:

CHARLES

Well, you didn't recoil in horror!

BECCA

Oh, yes. What?

CHARLES

When you saw me. That's a good sign.

BECCA

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

CHARLES

And neither did I, so.

BECCA

So-

CHARLES

So that's a good sign, too.

EX

Off to a great start, Chuck. Really turning on the charm.

CHARLES

You look like yourself. I mean, like your picture. You look like your picture. Which is good. It's a great-looking picture. And therefore- by the transitive property- you- look great- as well.

BECCA

Thank you. That's very sweet. You look nice, too.

CHARLES & EX

Nice?

BECCA

Yes. Is that a bad thing?

CHARLES

No. Not at all.

EX

I hate the word "nice."

CHARLES

I think "nice" is a nice word.

EX

Oh come on. You hate it too and you know it.

CHARLES

(to Ex)

No, I don't! That was always *your* thing. You were the one who said it should be thrown away, not me.

EX

I said it's a throwaway *word*. It doesn't have any specific *meaning*. I never trust people who use throwaway words because it indicates an inability to *commit* to a thought or idea. Which, by the way-

CHARLES

So! *Becca*. Is that short for something?

BECCA

Yes.

CHARLES

What's it short for?

BECCA

Rebecca.

CHARLES

Oh. Right.

BECCA

And Charles... Do people ever call you Chuck?

CHARLES

No. Well-

EX

I did.

CHARLES

My ex-girlfriend did. So.

BECCA

I see. Were you together long?

CHARLES

(together)

Three years.

EX

(together)

Two and a half years.

BECCA

I see.

CHARLES

Yeah it was- a complex situation. But I'm over it.

EX

He's not over it.

CHARLES

I'm mostly over it. I mean, predominantly. I'm predominantly over it.

EX

Oh Jesus, Chuck! That's not how you use that word. *Predominantly* means-

CHARLES

Anyway we'll just put that aside for now. We'll call it x. The letter x. Like a variable. We'll call it variable x, and we won't worry about it- we'll just solve the rest of the equation first. Okay?

EX

You're an idiot.

CHARLES

So, uh- Becca. What do you do again?

BECCA

I consult with businesses developing international charitable foundations. It's mostly cross-cultural implementation design, but there's a fair amount of research and data analysis as well.

CHARLES

Sure, right. And have you been single for...?

BECCA

Five years.

CHARLES

Oh!

BECCA

But I've had several relationships during that time.

CHARLES

Oh.

BECCA

To me being single means that I'm not committed to any one person, not that I can't see someone exclusively for a period of time. I started dating online because it eliminates the unnecessary element of chance.

EX

She's a power-dater, Chuck. Way outta your league.

CHARLES

Oh, right. Sure. Uh, it's very- yeah. Definitely.

He takes another large gulp of water.

CHARLES

It's like there's no waiters here!

BECCA

So- what do you do?

Ex lets out a loud laugh.

CHARLES

Oh, I- well I, teach, and- present- the subject of math to young people and students in their teenage years.

BECCA

So you're a math teacher?

EX

A *high school* math teacher.

CHARLES

Yes. I teach- Algebra one, Algebra two, and- I coach the math team, and- I'm assistant coach for- girl's softball and I, uh-

BECCA

Do you like it?

EX

He hates it.

CHARLES

It's a job. It's not my dream job, but, uh- I write, too. Sometimes.

BECCA

Are you working on anything now?

EX

Funny you should ask!

CHARLES

Actually I'm working on a piece, about my old relationship.

BECCA

Oh.

CHARLES

Yeah, it's about- sort of, how- people stay in your life. Even after, you know. They're not in it. Anymore.

EX

It's his way of staying close to me.

CHARLES

Really, the thing with me and my ex, it's- well, it's a complex situation.

EX

That's what he calls his emotions.

BECCA

I understand. Breakups are hard.

CHARLES

Sometimes I feel trapped. In her version of me. If that makes sense.

BECCA

I think it does.

CHARLES

And I just wish I could remember how to be alone.

BECCA

Mmmm.

They drink their waters. Charles motions to a waiter, who ignores him.

CHARLES

Sorry. Next time.

BECCA

You know, I loved what you wrote on your profile. It's why I decided to go out with you.

CHARLES

Well. Thanks. Any part, in particular?

BECCA

Umm, I thought the last line was cute. When you wrote about your biggest secret? You said "I'm looking for a relationship, but I'll accept casual sex." It's funny.

Fanfare. Enter Charles's PENIS, with eye-patch.

Charles's Penis is somewhere between a carnival barker and a vaudeville performer -- every line is played to the audience, expecting a rim shot.

PENIS

SEX?? Did somebody say SEX??

EX

Oh, gawd.

PENIS

Guess who's coming to dinner? Get it? COMING to dinner?

Penis drops to one knee, mugging like Al Jolson.

PENIS

(sings, to the tune of Oscar Mayer song)
Whееееееen... yooou.... wake up with a hard-on, you know your life is grand! 'Cause you can stroke it gently or just hold it in your hand, aaaaaaaand...

*If you stroke it quickly,
you'll get a big surprise--
just be careful where you're aiming,
or you'll get it in your eyes, HEY!*

BECCA

Would you say you're a sexual person, Charles?

EX

Oh *gawd*, don't encourage him!

CHARLES

Yeah, I would say that.

BECCA

My last potential life partner was completely asexual. We were seeing each other for- a total of nine months, I think. And non-exclusively-committed-slash-monogamous for- let's say greater than or equal to six months.

CHARLES

Okay.

BECCA

I cared for him deeply, or I thought I did, but for some reason, in the bedroom, things just got- not hard.

CHARLES

Oh, I see.

BECCA

Sex is an important aspect of a relationship for me. Not the only aspect, but it's incredibly important.

The Penis approaches Becca, speaking in a patter.

PENIS

Listen, doll, I like you. And I mean that, I do. So what's say you and me get to know each other? Because from where I stand you look like the type of gal who's my type of gal, you know what I'm saying?

BECCA

I also want to be with someone who's-- adventurous.

CHARLES

Right.

BECCA

Someone who's-- curious about life.

PENIS

Hey, sweetcheeks, I get it. You like to be tied up! That's perfectly natural, hon. Nothing to be ashamed of. But let's get down to brass tacks: how do ya feel about asphyxiation? Anal penetration? Group copulation? What's the dirtiest thing you ever thought of doing with a man? What's the dirtiest thing you ever thought of doing with a woman? What's the dirtiest thing you'd let me do to you right now?

BECCA

Charles? Did you hear me?

CHARLES

Becca, I think... this is going very well.

Penis places Charles's hand on her knee. Charles gazes at her steadily, unnervingly.

PENIS

Ohhh yeah, you feel that heat babe? That's kinetic energy. That's the goddamn universe flowing through us. We are gonna make sweet love tonight!

BECCA

Oh. That's not what I meant.

Becca gently moves his hand away. Penis cowers suddenly, like a dog.

PENIS

I'm sorry boss she smells so good!

CHARLES

Okay. Sorry if I misread that. I find you attractive, I guess, is what I wanted you to know. I'm attracted to you, and I could see, you know. More dates. Between us. And even, I don't know. A future, of some kind. Whether with kids, or not. Do you want kids? It doesn't matter. Kids are like an order-of-operations thing, for me. Solve the equation inside the parentheses first. Right?

EX

Might wanna pump the brakes a bit, Chuck?

CHARLES

One thing I learned, in my last relationship, is that I resist commitment because I'm afraid of settling for something imperfect. You know? I like to say that I was torn between "the narcotic comfort of the familiar and the thrilling potential of the unknown." Which is not to say that I'm a cheater. In fact I'm very loyal. And I could see myself sticking with the right person, you know, say a woman, like you, for instance- forever.

A stunned silence from everyone at the table.

BECCA

I think you're a nice guy, Charles. But it seems like you have a lot going on right now. I wonder if it might be better if you had time to, I don't know, process-
(gesturing to Penis and Ex)
-everything.

EX

You should have worn that shirt *I* gave you, Chuck.

CHARLES

(to Ex)
Please! Let her finish.

BECCA

It's nothing personal. But I'm not so young anymore and I don't have the time to- I don't wanna say waste?

CHARLES

No, I get it. I understand.

BECCA

But I do like you. And- I could see us being friends?

CHARLES

Sure. Okay.

PENIS

You fucking whore! You fucking dirty slutty bitch-

CHARLES

Penis, PLEASE!!

BECCA

So.

CHARLES

So.

An awkward silence.

BECCA

I think I'll go. It was nice to meet you.

CHARLES

You too.

BECCA

There's someone out there for you, Charles, I know it. Good luck in your search.

Becca folds her napkin, gets up and exits. Penis watches her leave, over Charles's shoulder.

PENIS

MEMORIZE THE ASS. MEMORIZE THE ASS. MEMORIZE THE ASS.

All is silence for a brief moment. Penis sits down across from him.

PENIS

Women, huh?

CHARLES

Please don't.

PENIS

Can't live with 'em, can't possibly fuck 'em all!
Amirite?

CHARLES

No.

EX

You okay, hon?

CHARLES

I don't know. I just- don't know.

EX

She would never have loved you like I did, you know.

CHARLES

Please. Leave me alone. Please.

Charles puts his head on the table. Ex gets up to leave.

EX

It'll get better, Chuck. You'll see.

CHARLES

(without looking up)

Don't call me Chuck.

PENIS

(dances and sings, ends on his knees)

Yooour penis is your best friend, the only one that's true! Cause even when you're all alone, he's still attached to you. Hey!

Lights dim slowly, as Penis searches the audience for applause.