

LIBBY SCHEIER

Penises, 1

Freud never had one.

We're irritated with penises.
The psychiatrists
have shoved them down our throats for too long.
Penis envy and other silliness.
So there's backlash.

Penises are kind of a pain because
they're so vulnerable hanging out there like that
and men are so concerned about the way they hang
out there like that.
Penises are not consistent.
They make foolish demands
or lapse into abject defeatism.
They know no happy medium.
Penises are Jewish:
When they fail they transfer the guilt,
when they succeed they take all the glory.

Penises are funny.
Sylvia said they look like chicken gizzards.
I said sausage and eggs
old monkey skin
and hairs of an elephant's head.
Let's face it.
Penises are not goodlooking.
They can be fun, but they're never pretty.

Penises hang on grown men.
Children do not have penises.
Or so I thought.

But I had a baby boy.
He has a penis.
It's small and pretty like a little finger.
He does not yet have a piece of his brain
in the head of his penis.
Some days he wants to be a girl.
Some days he wants to be a boy.

It's no big deal for him.
He is intensely interested in trucks, trains, airplanes,
boats, crayons, paint, playdough, books, bikes,
wagons, puppets, hats, necklaces, blocks, dolls,
doll carriages, rabbits, and nail polish—
which he insists on wearing ever since he saw it
on the fingernails of a friend of mine.
He doesn't confuse his interest in trucks with his penis.
He doesn't confuse his fondness for nail polish
with his penis.
He pees with his penis.
He plays with it.
He likes playing with it.
He likes aiming his piss
and he likes his little erections.
But he's big on his feet and toes too.
And he greatly admires his belly button.
Let's face it.
He's got his penis in perspective.
It's part of the body.

Penis envy is a theory
that came from Freud's problem
which was a compulsive obsession
with penises
which was not surprising since he never had one.

As part of the male body,
the penis is quite a nice part.
Functional, humorous, unpredictable.
As container for the entire male body
including the brain
the penis in this case is a bore.

*with apologies to bp Nichol and
his wonderful poem, 'The Vagina'*

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