

Vagina Monologues – 2360

(a Basil and Zoe story, with respect to Eve Ensler)

A blank stage. The back wall is a screen. Images of Zoe (humanoid, 19) and Basil (synthetic being, silver skin, sapphire eyes) are projected on the wall upstage. A photo-collage of their first year together: a birthday party, dancing, the two of them playing music, etc.

Zoe enters from behind the screen, and walks downstage. She is dressed simply, in a purple, grey, and black color-blocked swing dress hemmed just above her knees. On her feet are purple combat boots, well-worn.

She stands still in the spotlight for several seconds, then looks up at the audience.

ZOE: My lover is synthetic. Of course any woman who isn't in a relationship but uses a vibrator could legitimately make that statement as well. But in this case, my lover is both synthetic and sentient. And I don't care how much you enjoy your time with your battery-operated-boyfriend – and you should! You *should* enjoy that time – it's not the same.

She pauses, then continues.

ZOE: The thing about having a synthetic life form as a partner is that you live with the knowledge that for them, their presented gender is a choice. Basil – he doesn't mind me naming him; I asked – Basil has always identified as male, has always been attracted to people who present as female, when he has dated humanoids, anyway, but he's told me that others of his kind experiment.

Am I dishonoring him, if I'm curious about that experimentation? He's told me he can manifest male or female genitals but doesn't...switch. Am I being merely insecure if I wonder what being with Basil in another form might be like? Or is it just the way we humans are wired: to wonder, to ask... to gawk?

She takes a beat.

ZOE: My lover is a sentient synthetic being and therefore has unending stamina when it comes to sex, as well as endless fascination with the process, and with me. He cannot self-pleasure; his programming isn't written to accommodate that act, but he loves to see me plunging my fingers deep inside myself, and using my thumb to stimulate my clit until I'm slick with sweat and satisfaction.

He says I taste like salt and honey.

He asked me once to taste myself.

It wasn't gross, but I didn't get anything from the experience.

Basil once wrote an entire collection of poems celebrating my vagina, comparing it to down and peaches and other soft, sweet things. It sold better than I expected but since he didn't specify my name, I didn't mind.

I love that he writes about me.

She pauses again, changes her stance.

ZOE: My lover is a sentient synthetic being with unending sexual stamina, and he worships me, worships my vagina, but sometimes I feel like the gift of my heart and body are not enough. That I should be downloading information on Cool Vagina Tricks for better sessions.

Sometimes his stamina is blessing, but there are times when it's like a curse, because he will happily continue when I want to rest, to recover, but he's also respectful because his enjoyment is a *want* not a *need*, while for me it's the other way around.

But through all the questioning and wondering and learning to communicate on every level...

My vagina has never been happier.

And neither has the rest of me.

She smiles.

The spotlight winks out.

The photo-collage fades to nothing.

Blackout.