

JOY FRICKIN' HATES HER DUMB STUPID ROOM

---

A Trapped Little Play for Trapped Little Times

By Sara Jean Accuardi

**[characters]**

JOY

A 13-year-old girl who is really over this whole thing. Can be played by absolutely anyone who sorta feels like they're 13 and really over this whole thing.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH  
(aka Dorito)

A very small hamster who may or may not be the reincarnation of the 15th-century painter best known for his nightmarish depictions of hell. Can be played by absolutely anyone who sorta feels like they're a very small hamster who may or may not be the reincarnation of the 15th-century painter best known for his nightmarish depictions of hell. Probably speaks with a Dutch accent.

PARENTS

One or more parents. Can be played by absolutely anyone who sorta feels like they're parental. If there are only two of you reading this play, the actor playing Joy should also be the parents.

**[where]**

Joy's dumb stupid room.

**[when]**

Spring 2020.

**[note]**

... a pause or a place where words become thoughts

-- the words are cut off. Sometimes-- often-- a character will interrupt themselves

Joy's bedroom.

Her parents let her pick out the paint color when she was 8-years-old, but now she's 13 and totally hates it.

In fact, she totally hates everything.

JOY lies on the floor looking up at the ceiling.

She is mid-panic attack and trying with all of her might to calm down.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH, a hamster residing in a ridiculously elaborate cage with tubes and running wheels everywhere, drinks from their water dispenser, nonchalantly.

Joy panics.

Hieronymus Bosch drinks.

Joy panics.

Hieronymus Bosch speaks.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

In about 30 seconds the girl will start listing things.

30 seconds pass.

...

Joy takes a deep breath.

She begins to name what she sees.

JOY

Ceiling.

Little bumps on the ceiling.

Quarter inch crack in the upper left corner.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Told you.

JOY

Mark from the blue sticky hand that stayed up there for three weeks.  
Stupid paint on the walls.  
Light fixture.  
Two dead bugs in the light fixture.  
Two bugs who got trapped in the light fixture and died.  
Two bugs who couldn't escape so they flew around and around and around until they  
couldn't fly anymore.  
And they died.  
They were trapped and they died.  
They--  
...

She takes a deep, deep breath.

In.

Out.

Hieronymus Bosch rolls their eyes.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I have no patience for the girl.  
Her complaints of confinement.  
*Try being me*, I want to tell her.  
*Stuck in a cage that you won't clean.*  
*Just try.*

Joy rolls onto her side.

JOY

Carpet.  
Scratchy carpet.  
Stain on the carpet from when Kayla threw up at my slumber party.  
Gross.  
...  
I miss slumber parties.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I miss the smell of pigment and linseed oil. The feel of my brush.

Joy looks around some more.

JOY

KitKat wrapper.  
Desk.  
Chair.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

The weight of a palette in my hand.

JOY

Socks.  
A lot of socks.  
Why are there so many socks?

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

The Netherlandic wind whipping at my doublet.

JOY

I barely even wear them.  
Anymore.  
I barely even go outside.  
I used to go outside.

She starts to panic.

JOY

I used to be a person who lived a life and had friends and went outside.  
...  
Now look at me. I'm nothing.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I used to be Hieronymus Bosch, who lived 500 years ago and painted epically demented  
hellscares.  
...  
Now look at me. I'm a hamster.

They both sigh.

...

Joy turns to Hieronymus Bosch.

For the first time, she smiles.

Dorito. JOY

HIERONYMUS BOSCH  
The girl calls me that. I don't know why.

JOY  
Dorito.  
Hi.  
Hi, Dorito.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH  
It is not my name.

JOY  
This is hell, Dorito.  
It's hell.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH  
The girl knows nothing of hell.

Joy watches Hieronymus Bosch.

Hieronymus Bosch watches Joy.

JOY  
Eleanor Willis is a monster, 'Rito.  
She's a monster.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH  
I used to paint fantastic monsters.

JOY  
Like, we were friends and things were good--  
But then this happened.  
Then this whole thing happened and--

HIERONYMUS BOSCH  
Demonic fish devouring humans whole, squat little feet gremlins, birds of melting flesh...

JOY  
And at first it was fine.  
We'd text and we'd talk and I'd feel less lonely.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH  
Oh, how I miss my monsters.

JOY

But now her parents have-- I don't know-- relaxed.  
 They let her leave.  
 They let her see friends.  
 And today there's these snaps of Eleanor and Kayla. Of Eleanor and Remmy.  
 Of Eleanor and Evan.  
 Eleanor.  
 And.  
 Evan.  
 So, apparently, hanging out's okay with Evan's parents.  
 And Kayla's parent's.  
 And the frickin' Willises.  
 And, yeah, sure, Remmy's probably just sneaking out. But Remmy doesn't count.  
 That's three.  
 Three sets of parental units who are letting their kids go outside and be normal.  
 Who are letting their kids have lives.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

The girl hasn't seen her friends since March.

JOY

I have no one.  
 No one.  
 And Eleanor Willis knows it.  
 And Eleanor Willis is rubbing it in my face.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I want to tell her I haven't seen my friends in 500 years.

JOY

Because she knows I can't leave.  
 Because she knows I'm trapped in this stupid house and can't leave.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Maybe that would shut her up.

JOY

I asked my parents.  
 I begged them.  
 And they were all--

PARENTS appear in the middle of the room.

PARENTS

Sorry, Butternut. You know the rules.

JOY

I told them how good I have been and how good I would be if I could just go outside and see people and feel normal for a day.

Just one day.

But all they said was,

PARENTS

We hate this as much as you do.

JOY

Yeah, right.

So I screamed. As loud as I could, I screamed:

*You suck! You suck even more than Eleanor's parents!*

And they know how much Eleanor's parents suck.

So they screamed. As loud as they could, they screamed:

PARENTS

To your room! Now!

JOY

And because I had nothing to lose, I yelled back,

*I frickin' hate my dumb stupid room!*

...

PARENTS

...

JOY

...

And they laughed.

Parents start to laugh.

JOY

They tried to hold it in, at first.

But they laughed.

Their laughter gets louder.

JOY

They saw my pain and they laughed.

Laughing even louder, Parents slowly vanish.

JOY

...

I should have cursed.  
I wish I was better at cursing.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I was excellent at cursing.

JOY

Why do we have to be the careful ones, Dorito?

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I want to tell the girl I lived through plague.  
That I've seen how disease can ravage the world leaving only broken pieces in its wake.  
I want to tell her that only fools tempt fate.

JOY

The worst part is they're probably right.  
Only fools tempt fate.

Hieronymus Bosch freezes. Did she really just say that?

...

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I want to tell her I know how it feels when normal falls away.

JOY

It just feels like-- normal fell away.

Hieronymus Bosch gasps. They're getting through!

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

More than anything, I want to tell her that this isn't hell.

JOY

Of course it's hell.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Like hell it's hell.

JOY

Like hell it's not!

...

They look at each other, completely  
dumbfounded.

They stare

And stare.

And stare some more.

...

JOY

Dorito?

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Don't call me Dorito.

JOY

It's your name.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

It is not.

JOY

You can understand me.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

You can understand me.

JOY

Woah.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I will show you hell!

JOY

What?

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I want to paint your wall.

JOY

I--

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

You say the paint is stupid. Let me paint it.

JOY

You're a hamster.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I wasn't always a hamster.  
Please.

JOY

And you want to paint... hell?

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

It is my specialty.

JOY

I don't--

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Please.

JOY

All I have is, like, a Sharpie and some glitter glue.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

I don't know what that is but it sounds magnificent!

With some trepidation, Joy begins to dig through her things and find art supplies.

She shows the supplies to Hieronymus Bosch, who is completely fascinated.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Amazing!  
Now, free me.

Joy opens the cage.

She scoops up Hieronymus Bosch and places them next to the art supplies.

Instantly, Hieronymus Bosch begins to paint the wall. Centuries of starved creativity bursting from their fluffy little body.

Hieronymus Bosch is, like, a really good artist so it's pretty incredible to watch. They're panting something weird. Real weird.

And Joy kind of digs it.

She smiles.

That's messed up.

JOY

So is the world.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Yeah.  
It sure is.

JOY

Yeah.

HIERONYMUS BOSCH

Hieronymus Bosch continues to paint.

Eventually, Joy joins in.

Together they laugh as they paint hell.

END OF PLAY