

# **You Never Loved Your Boy**

*by*  
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**Cast of Characters (2W)**

Annie – early 50's, doing time for a sexual offense.

Janet – early 50's, ex-con, did time for a sexual offense.

**Scene**

The living room of Janet's house.

**Time**

Present. Late on a rainy Friday evening.

**Production Note**

The characters in this play truly love their victims. As paradoxical and as unbelievable as that may sound, they do – a love mixed with abuse, of course, but it's still love. These characters must be played as loving their victims more than any other person on earth.

The living room of a small house, furnished modestly. Moderately tidy, but clean. The door to the front porch is left, the door to the kitchen is right; next to the front door is a chair, above the chair is a window; and there is a set of double windows up stage. There is an armchair, a coffee table, and a sofa underneath the double windows. A small bookcase with some books.

Annie is offstage, in the kitchen. She comes in, eating crackers. She flops on the sofa, makes a face, pulls a gun from waistband of her pants. She hears a car outside. Tucks the gun under the cushions, peeks out the window, then goes back to the sofa and sits. We hear keys in the front door, and Janet enters, carrying bags of groceries. She flips the light switch, sees Annie. She drops her groceries in shock. Stares at Annie.

ANNIE

*(Finally.)*

Don't be scared. It's just me.

JANET

Oh my God.

ANNIE

I hope you didn't have anything breakable in there.

JANET

What? What are you doing here?

*(ANNIE stands.)*

ANNIE

I need your help. I know I just barged in, but you're the only friend I've got.

JANET

Oh, my God. You can't be here.

ANNIE

But I need your help.

JANET

You can't be here.

ANNIE

I thought you'd be glad to see me. It's been eight years.

You look good.

JANET

You have to leave.

ANNIE

I need your help. Please.

*(JANET exits to the porch. Perhaps we can see her, perhaps not, but we can hear her clearly.)*

JANET

Get out!

ANNIE

God, Janet, that really hurts. I thought we were friends.

JANET

Leave or I'm calling the cops.

ANNIE

Don't do that. I just need to talk to you. Come back in here.

Your neighbors will see you.

You're letting the cold air in.

Janey, come back inside.

JANET

Don't call me that.

ANNIE

Okay. Of course.

JANET

I'm calling the cops.

ANNIE

You don't like to be called that. I forgot.

JANET

I'm calling the cops.

ANNIE

I'm so stupid. I know you don't like that. Come back inside.

JANET

Annie, you have to leave.

*(ANNIE is pacing, wanting to see JANET but wanting not to be seen.)*

ANNIE

I can't believe this. I just can't believe it. You wouldn't be here if it wasn't for me. Come back inside.

JANET

I can't.

ANNIE

Think about your electric bill.

JANET

It's gas.

ANNIE

Okay. Okay, think about your gas bill.  
You're the only one who can help me.

JANET

I can't help you.

ANNIE

You're the only one who understands.

JANET

Don't co-opt me.

ANNIE

It was you and me against everyone else. You understood.

JANET

I was justifying myself. Just like you are.

ANNIE

No. No. I don't justify myself anymore. I've gone – I am so far past that.  
You'd be proud of me. You'd be proud of how much I've changed.

JANET

Yeah, right.

ANNIE

You would be. I've been working with Hodgkinson. She's still there. She's great. You were right about how great she was. Man, she doesn't let you get away with shit, does she? She sees through everything. I hated her at first. She's gotten me to see how I was blaming him for everything, like it was all his choice. I didn't realize how I wasn't seeing that I was doing things. It's weird, you know? It's like my own actions were invisible to me. Just like you kept trying to tell me! It's been painful, but it's been really really good.

I'm freezing in here. Can't you come back inside and shut the door?

JANET

I can't.

ANNIE

You've been an inspiration to me. Didn't you know that? I thought you'd drunk the Kool-Aid, but you were right.

*(Speaking of her son.)*

It's so different now. There's compassion for him now. And a feeling of sadness. For what he had to go through. If only it hadn't happened, I wouldn't be where I am now.

*(Dead silence.)*

JANET

I'm calling the cops.

ANNIE

Don't do that.

I'll tell them about your gun.

JANET

I don't have a gun.

ANNIE

Really? You used to.

*(ANNIE pulls the gun out from under the cushion, looks at it.)*

JANET

Really. I don't have a gun anymore.

ANNIE

That's funny.

Cause I found it.

I found your gun.

JANET

Oh Christ. Where is. Where is the gun. Get it now. Bring it out here.

ANNIE

I can't touch it. You know that.

JANET

Don't do this, Annie. Bring the gun outside.

ANNIE

You expect me to be that gullible.

JANET

Gullible. Haven't we learned some big words. Get your God-damned gun, and get out.

*(ANNIE sits on the sofa.)*

ANNIE

No. That isn't the right thing to do here.

JANET

Passive voice.

ANNIE

Shut up.

*(ANNIE gets up again, paces.)*

JANET

Express your actions in the first person.

ANNIE

Shut up! We're not in Group.

JANET

That's for damn sure. You wouldn't last five minutes.

ANNIE

That's enough.

JANET

*(Not stopping.)*

She'd see right through your "I don't justify myself" crap. She'd hear your "if only it hadn't happened, I wouldn't be where I am now."

ANNIE

You know what I'll do if you don't shut up.

JANET

Yes, I do.

ANNIE

So shut up.

JANET

No. No. I don't care if you do have a gun. I am not coming inside.

*(Silence.)*

ANNIE

Okay. I shouldn't threaten you, I know. God, I feel so stupid! I feel like such a loser. That was the wrong thing to do. I know that.

*(ANNIE sits in the chair by the door. Long pause.)*

ANNIE

It's his birthday.

He's going to be 18. He's going to be a man. I have to see him. I'll keep my distance. I'll just look. Then I'll go back. I can stand it if I can just see him. Just make one good memory. Then I'll serve out my time. I'll be a model prisoner. I'll stick to the rules. Even that asshole Farrell, remember? Officer "Tuck Your Shirt In" Farrell. Tuck your shirt in. God.

No one realizes how much we love our sons. Everyone thinks we couldn't possibly love them. What do they know? We love them more than we love our own lives.

How long has it been since you've seen your boy?

How old is he now?

*(Silence. Defeated, ANNIE goes and sits on the sofa. Finally, JANET enters from the porch. She shuts the door.)*

ANNIE

That's better. It's cold in here, you must have been freezing out there.



JANET

Oh, Annie. Why'd you have to come here?

ANNIE

You're the only friend I've got. Who's outside.

JANET

Why didn't you go to Paul?

ANNIE

Oh, God, he won't even talk to me.

JANET

Ruby?

ANNIE

He's dead.

JANET

What?

ANNIE

Little over a month ago. Heart attack. Went just like that.

JANET

Jesus.

*(ANNIE stands and walks towards JANET.)*

ANNIE

You look good, by the way.

JANET

Thanks.

ANNIE

Seriously.

JANET

You do, too.

ANNIE

*(Tries to touch Janet on the cheek.)*

You look like a real working lady.

JANET

I am.

*(Avoids ANNIE'S touch; picks up her groceries and takes them into the kitchen.)*

You know what'll happen if they find you here.

ANNIE

They won't. They think I'm miles away.

JANET

They'll come, though.

ANNIE

I've thought it out. I just need a place to stay. Get warm, get some decent food, get some new clothes. Two nights is all. I'll stay out of sight while I'm here.

JANET

I can't let you stay here.

ANNIE

I would do the same for you. You know that.

JANET

Yes. But I can't let you / stay here.

ANNIE

Well, what am I supposed to do, then? Tell me that.

JANET

Surrender. / It'll go easier with you if you do.

ANNIE

And how will I see him like that? I'll surrender once I see him.

JANET

Have you thought about how much they'll / add on your sentence?

ANNIE

Come on. They'll understand. Not all of them are assholes.

JANET

They won't understand.

ANNIE

It'll be fine. Don't worry. You got something to eat? I ate all your crackers.

JANET

You know what will happen to me if they find you here.

ANNIE

Jesus, stop worrying. No one will find me. I won't tell them, and neither will you.

*(JANET thinks for a moment.)*

JANET

Okay. I'll help you.

*(JANET goes to the door.)*

ANNIE

Thank God. I knew it. There's a place for you / in heaven for this.

JANET

Leave. Now.

ANNIE

You just said you'd help me!

JANET

This is how I'm helping you.

ANNIE

That's help? That's no help.

JANET

Yes. It is.

ANNIE

I saved your life. You would have died if I hadn't stepped in.

JANET

I know.

ANNIE

You'd be dead if it wasn't for me. Shived in the yard in the rain.

JANET

I know.

ANNIE

No one will ever find out. I won't tell anyone, you won't / tell anyone, I'll –

JANET

No.

ANNIE

You hypocritical bitch. I saved your life. But you won't even help me out with a place to stay. Just a place to stay. So I can see my son. My son, who I love more than any human being on the face of this good goddamned earth. You won't help me see my son. And you call yourself my friend. What kind of a friend is that? Huh? What kind of a friend is that?

JANET

The best friend you'll ever have. Now leave.

*(ANNIE saunters away from the door.)*

ANNIE

You know what? You never loved your boy. If you really loved him, you'd understand how I love my boy. But you never have, so you'll never understand.

JANET

I do love my boy.

ANNIE

You did all those horrible things to him. You didn't love him, you were only thinking of yourself.

*(JANET goes towards ANNIE. During the following, they will play cat and mouse around the living room. ANNIE is mostly the cat.)*

JANET

You know *you* were only thinking of *yourself*.

ANNIE

Oh, no, I wasn't.

JANET

*(Not stopping.)*

Both of us love our boys, but what we did, we did for our own selfish reasons. It wasn't love.

ANNIE

It wasn't selfishness. He wanted it, too. He enjoyed it. But I'm the one who got sent away. You, you have no excuse for what you did. / You didn't love your boy.

JANET

You made him bathe you. You made him touch you all over. Your buttocks. Your breasts. Your genitals.

ANNIE

He wanted it. / He enjoyed...

JANET

Over and over. Every day for two years.

ANNIE

He loved me. He loved / me. I loved him.

JANET

HE WAS NINE YEARS OLD!

ANNIE

But you understand that. He was the only thing good in my life, he was the only thing in my life, the only person, who loved me. Those were the only happy times in my life. / In my whole miserable, fucking life.

JANET

They weren't happy for him.

ANNIE

Yes, they were. He felt loved.

At least I didn't touch him. I never laid a hand on him.

JANET

Right. You're a saint.

ANNIE

I never touched him at all. That's the difference between you and me.

JANET

*(She's heard this before.)*

Oh, for God's sake.

ANNIE

I never put my hand on his penis.

JANET

Yeah. That makes you a fucking saint.

ANNIE

I never put my mouth on his penis.

JANET

I know what I did.

ANNIE

I never swallowed my own little boy's cum.

JANET

I know what I did.

ANNIE

I. Never. Touched. Him.

JANET

I KNOW WHAT I DID.

ANNIE

And everything you did, you still want to do it. You want to do it all over again. I can tell. If he was here right now, you'd do it all over again.

JANET

No. I wouldn't.

ANNIE

Oh, yes, you would.

JANET

I wouldn't.

ANNIE

You'd want to, though. You know you'd want to.

JANET

Yes, I would want to. Oh, God, I would want to. I'd want all of that again. But I wouldn't do it.

ANNIE

You can't say that for sure. You don't know.

*(JANET stares at ANNIE for a long time.)*

JANET

I'm getting in my car and driving away. I'll be gone an hour. And when I come back, you will be gone. I don't care where you go or what you do, you'll be gone. And if you're not, I'll call the police.

*(JANET goes into the kitchen to get her jacket.)*

ANNIE

Bitch! Stupid, miserable, fucking bitch! I saved you. I saved your miserable mother fucking life.

JANET

*(Crossing to the door.)*

Son-fucking, actually.

ANNIE

Bitch.

*(ANNIE punches JANET. JANET blocks, but not quickly enough. She staggers and falls.)*

ANNIE

You stupid, cold, asshole bitch.

*(ANNIE kicks JANET in the stomach.)*

ANNIE

My son needs me. He needs me. He's miserable without me, you stupid cunt.

*(ANNIE kicks JANET again. JANET has curled into a little ball, on her left side, just trying to protect herself. She is in pain, trying not to cry out.)*

ANNIE

You stupid fucking cunt. You stupid fucking cunt.

*(ANNIE gets a .38 revolver out from where she hid it in the sofa cushions. She jumps on JANET and puts the gun to her head.)*

ANNIE

Give me one good reason! One good reason why I shouldn't just fucking kill you right here and now. One good reason.

One good reason!

JANET

*(Weakly.)*

Because I'm doing the right thing.

ANNIE

What?

JANET

Because I'm doing the right thing.

ANNIE

Because you're doing the right thing? Not helping your friend? Your friend who saved your miserable fucking life? Yes! I saved your miserable fucking life, and I sure as fuck didn't do it so you could do me like this.

What the fuck am I going to do with you? What?

I thought we were friends! What the fuck?

*(ANNIE breaks away from JANET, pacing furiously.)*

JANET

Is this what you saved my life for?

*(ANNIE looks at JANET for a long time.)*

ANNIE

Jesus Christ, what were you thinking? You know what I get like.

JANET

Is it? Listen to yourself.

ANNIE

You know what I'm like!



JANET

Do *you* know what you're like?

ANNIE

Sit up. Come on, sit up.

*(ANNIE tries to pull JANET up to sit. JANET cries out in pain.)*

ANNIE

Sit up.

*(ANNIE stares at JANET. We can see the gears turning in her head and heart. Finally.)*

ANNIE

Oh, Janey, you're hurt.

Oh my God.

*(ANNIE gets up, moves away, anywhere, trying not to accept what she's beginning to understand. She realizes she's still holding the gun. Very carefully, she releases the hammer and sets the gun down.)*

ANNIE

I didn't do it because of that.

I didn't mean to...

Fuck! Fuck you. Fuck you and Hodgkinson and Farrell and everyone. Just fuck you all.

*(ANNIE stands, stock still.)*

JANET

You know this feeling. You're seeing a new truth. And you're angry because it keeps you safe.

ANNIE

Don't be a *therapist*.

*(But she is angry and defensive, not violent.)*

JANET

You know you don't have to accept this right now. You can take your time. But you've seen it, and / when you're ready, you'll –

ANNIE

Don't fucking understand me!

JANET

Why not? You're right, no one else does.

And you will feel like utter shit for all the mistakes you've made. For all of the things you did that hurt people. And you'll feel like that for a long time. But you will feel better.

ANNIE

*(Defensively, mechanically.)*

Go to hell.

JANET

I know this, Annie. You will feel better. I promise.

ANNIE

Fuck you.

I hurt you. I really hurt you.

JANET

Yes. You did.

ANNIE

Oh my God.

*(ANNIE struggles for a long time, trying to speak until finally.)*

ANNIE

Oh my God, Janey.

You shouldn't have...I'm sorry.

Fuck.

*(ANNIE collapses to the floor. She starts to cry, great, harsh, bitter tears. JANET carefully sits up.)*

JANET

It's okay.

ANNIE

Fuck off.

JANET

I forgive you.

*(ANNIE cries.)*

ANNIE

Oh fuck. Oh fuck.

JANET

It's okay. I forgive you.

ANNIE

Fuck you.

Oh fuck.

*(ANNIE cries. Lights fade to black.)*

***The End***