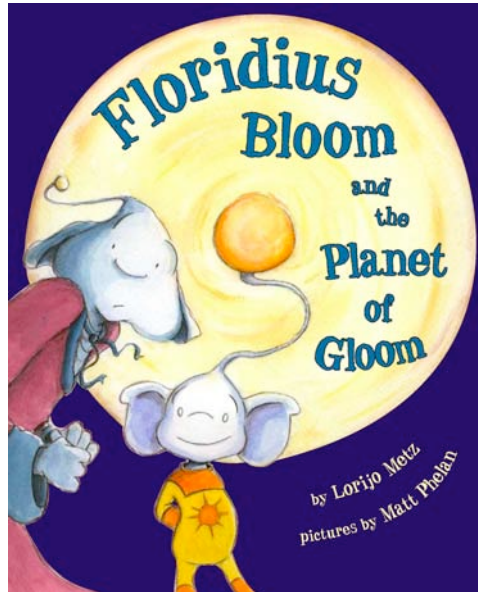


FLORIDIUS BLOOM AND THE PLANET OF GLOOM - The Play

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FLORIDIUS BLOOM AND THE PLANET OF GLOOM - The Play
By Larijo Metz

CHARACTERS:

NARRATOR (Teacher)
FLORIDIUS BLOOM
ZRILL
MONSTERS OF GLOOM (Several)
ZRILL'S MOTHER
ZRILL'S FRIENDS (2)

(Setting: Stage is dark. As the narrator reads the following poem, a tiny star drifts across the stage as if falling. It lands where it will remain on the stage until the end of the play. Throughout the play, CHARACTERS should perform actions indicated by the NARRATOR or the script. Only minimal stage directions will be given.)

NARRATOR: A tiny star fell
 to the planet of Gloom,
 into the yard
 of Floridius Bloom.

 Shining so brightly
 it pierced Gloom's gray night,
 and Floridius thought,
 I must have this Light!

 So a wall he began
 and he built it so tall,
 that it captured the Light—
 encircled it all.

(FLORIDIUS BLOOM [F.B.] sits up in bed.)

NARRATOR: Floridius shook his head and wriggled his toes. As
 always, the wigglyfluffs and Monsters of Gloom had
 invaded his dreams.

FLORIDIUS: *(Stretching and yawning.)* Another day, another
 brick.

(Sound effect [loud]: tap, tap, THUNK!)

FLORIDIUS: Yipes! Those bothersome wigglyfluffs are nibbling on my prize cherriflox!

(Sound effect [louder]: tap, tap, PLUNK!)

NARRATOR: Floridius jumped out of bed and rushed to his garden... but he saw no wigglyfluffs.

(Sound effect [loudest]: tap, tap, CLUNK!)

NARRATOR: He turned. Someone had knocked some bricks out of his wall.

FLORIDIUS: Just as I've feared. The Monsters of Gloom have come to steal my Light!

(F.B. goes to the wall, picks up a brick, and is about to shove it back into place when a tap, tap, sends another brick through the wall and onto his toe.)

FLORIDIUS: YE-OUCH!

(Zrill's head peeks through the hole.)

ZRILL: Sorry.

FLORIDIUS: Sorry? Sorry?!

(F.B. hobbles dramatically—or perhaps hops on one foot—to his bench. More bricks topple out of the wall and Zrill pushes himself halfway through.)

ZRILL: Wanted a peek.

FLORIDIUS: OUT! You've had your peek. Now OUT!

ZRILL: *(Blinking and rubbing his eyes.)* Can't see. Too bright! Scary, scary.

FLORIDIUS: Scary? It's not scary at all. WHO are you?

FLORIDIUS: Monster?!

ZRILL: Mother! *(Grabbing F.B.'s hand and leading him into the house.)*

(ZRILL'S MOTHER may slip onto stage at this point, or she may have already been on stage resting, maybe even rocking in a chair off to the side. She stands as Zrill enters, perhaps turning on a light.)

MOTHER: You're late. *(Noticing F.B.)* Oh my!

ZRILL: *(Pointing to F.B.'s toe)* Fix Mother?

(ZRILL and his MOTHER wander off to the side as if in private conversation through this next bit of narration. Floridius wanders over to the wall of pictures.)

NARRATOR: Floridius remembered his toe and felt silly because it didn't hurt as much anymore. He looked around the room. It was gray like the rest of Gloom, but also filled with pictures of smiling, Zrill-like faces.

Then, for some reason, Floridius felt lonely.

FLORIDIUS: My home... Another day, another brick?
(Turns to leave.)

MOTHER: Come Mr....?

FLORIDIUS: Bloom. *(Turning back.)*

MOTHER: Bloom! *(Speaking to Zrill)* By the wall again?

ZRILL: Wanted a peek! *(He shrugs, smiles and hops out of the room. [exit stage])*

MOTHER: *(Pointing to F.B.'s toe.)* May I look?

(MOTHER helps F.B. over to the chair and fusses over his toe. She pulls out a pillow to prop his foot on and a blanket to cover him.)

NARRATOR: Floridius thought about his garden. His cherriflox were in bloom. What if the wigglyfluffs returned?

MOTHER: Needs rest, Mr. Bloom... someone to look after you?

FLORIDIUS: No one.

MOTHER: Ahhh... AHHHHH!

(As MOTHER does a bit more fussing, ZRILL returns, hopping into the room followed by two friends. They crowd around the couch.)

ZRILL: Mother fixed?

FRIEND 1: Star Light—hurt?

FRIEND 2: Awful?

FLORIDIUS: What silly notions. The Light fills my home with cheezblooms and cherriflox, brickelseeds and starshines!

FRIEND 1 & 2: Brickelseeds?

FLORIDIUS: *(Bragging.)* And I have a bench outside for sitting and gazing upon my star whenever I please.

MOTHER: And friends? Any friends, Mr. Bloom?

ZRILL: Me!

NARRATOR: Floridius Bloom opened his mouth, but for once, he had nothing to say.

(As MOTHER tucks F.B. in, ZRILL and FRIENDS exit the stage; waving goodnight.)

NARRATOR: Mother tucked Floridius in and trilled...

MOTHER: Sweet Dreams, Bloom. *(She exits.)*

NARRATOR: And, for the first time...

(The MONSTERS OF GLOOM rise and begin creeping towards F.B.)

NARRATOR: ... Floridius DID NOT dream of Monsters.

(The MONSTERS OF GLOOM turn, disappointed, and return to their hiding places.)

NARRATOR: Floridius awoke rested, but with a slight throb in his toe.

(F. B. Stretches, yawns and wiggles his toe as if testing to see how it feels.)

FLORIDIUS: Perhaps I should stay a bit longer.

NARRATOR: But as he closed his eyes, an image appeared: not one wigglyfluff, but hundreds of them—munching on his garden!

(Reacting to this, F.B. rushes out of Zrill's house, back out into Gloom. To make it appear as if his home is farther away than it will appear on stage, F.B. should weave in and out among the rocks and hiding places of the MONSTERS OF GLOOM. As before, the audience should see the MONSTERS OF GLOOM spying on him.)

NARRATOR: Dashing madly across Gloom, back to his wall, Floridius popped his head through the opening, and stopped. His Light, it seemed almost—too bright?

(F.B. squeezes through the hole and makes his way blindly to his garden where he gropes about, picks a blossom and holds it to his nose.)

FLORIDIUS: Ahhh, cheezbloom, ahhhhh!

NARRATOR: Then Floridius closed his eyes and heard—

FLORIDIUS: Silence. *(Dropping the cheezbloom.)*

NARRATOR: No wigglyfluffs. No Monsters. Nothing at all. Floridius was completely alone.

(F.B. walks slowly back to the wall. He stares at the hole.)

FLORIDIUS: I suppose I should close it up.

ZRILL: *(Popping his head through the hole)* Another peek?

NARRATOR: Floridius smiled... Floridius beamed!

FLORIDIUS: Just a peek?

NARRATOR: Zrill climbed through the hole, blinking and rubbing his eyes. Finally, he walked over to Floridius. Together, they turned and peered at the top of the wall.

FLORIDIUS: You know, Zrill. I believe my wall is complete. Now what am I to do?

ZRILL: Down, down, DOWN!

(ZRILL grabs a brick and tosses it in the air.)

FLORIDIUS: *(Hopping aside.)* Yipes! *(Smiling.)* Why yes! Take it ALL down, of course! Another day, another brick!

ZRILL: 'Nother day!

(ZRILL runs to the wall and begins to climb. See SET & STAGING NOTES #3.)

FLORIDUS BLOOM: Wait, Zrill! Where are you going?!

NARRATOR: But Zrill did not answer. Higher and higher he rose. Floridius looked at his toe, then back at the wall, when suddenly he heard—

(Bricks begin to fall. F.B. looks up and we see Zrill waving from the top of the wall.)

ZRILL: 'NOTHER BRICK! *(He drops two more bricks)*

FLORIDIUS: *(Laughing and dodging the bricks.)* Ahhh...

EVERYONE: *(Walking over by FLORIDIUS)* AHHHHH!

STAGING

(These are only suggestions. Feel free to use your imagination and come up with your own, unique way of staging FLORIDIUS BLOOM AND THE PLANET OF GLOOM!)

SET LIST

1. F.B.'s wall
2. A bench
3. F.B.'s bed (a cot or small bench he can lie on)
4. A roped off area for the star
5. F.B.'s garden: (this can be accomplished in a variety of ways: cardboard figures, fake flowers, paintings...)
6. Gray foliage and rocks for the Monsters to hide behind. Once the tiny star is back in the sky, these set pieces might be turned around to reveal colorful foliage.
7. Wall of family pictures in Zrill's house (An excellent way to accomplish this is to have extra actors or the actors playing the monsters, stand in a row with frames in front of their faces – Smiling!)
8. A couch or chair with footstool for Floridius to prop his feet on.
9. House light (for Zrill's house: optional)

PROPS

1. Extra bricks for Zrill to knock out of the wall and toss as if tearing down the wall. Bricks should be made out of light material, as they will be tossed.
2. A tiny star that lights up.
3. A pillow and blanket stored under the couch in Zrill's house.
4. A Narrator's book. (This is an easy way to have someone on lines, should the young actors/actresses forget theirs.)

COSTUMES

1. Create the Monsters of Gloom using your imagination.
2. Zrill, his mother and Floridius may be fashioned after the characters in the picture book, but they need not be. Their ears can be fashioned out of foam art or cardboard.
3. Zrill's friends may look like him, or simply two of the younger looking Monsters of Gloom.

The only costume that is absolutely necessary is some sort of working light (or at least a shiny ball or pompom that looks like a light) for each character to wear on the top of his/her head – or as part of their costume. Floridius's, of course, need only to be there, but not work.

LIGHTING

The play opens with the stage as dark as possible. As the Narrator recites the opening poem, a tiny star makes its way down from somewhere in the house landing/stopping in the area where F.B.'s wall will be. If possible, this light should remain on keeping F.B.'s home bright, while the rest of the stage remains dim.

The characters themselves should creatively light the rest of the stage, including Zrill's house. (Though a light may be added in Zrill's house if needed.) Lightening can be accomplished by having lights built into their costumes. (Flashlights, headbands that light up, glow sticks on some....)

As the wall is taken down at the end of the play, the light from F.B.'s home should seem to spread over the rest of Gloom, becoming brightest when the star is once again placed in the sky. Colored lights may be used to make the rest of Gloom seem more colorful once the star is in place and/or the trees and other stage props turned around to reveal colorful foliage.

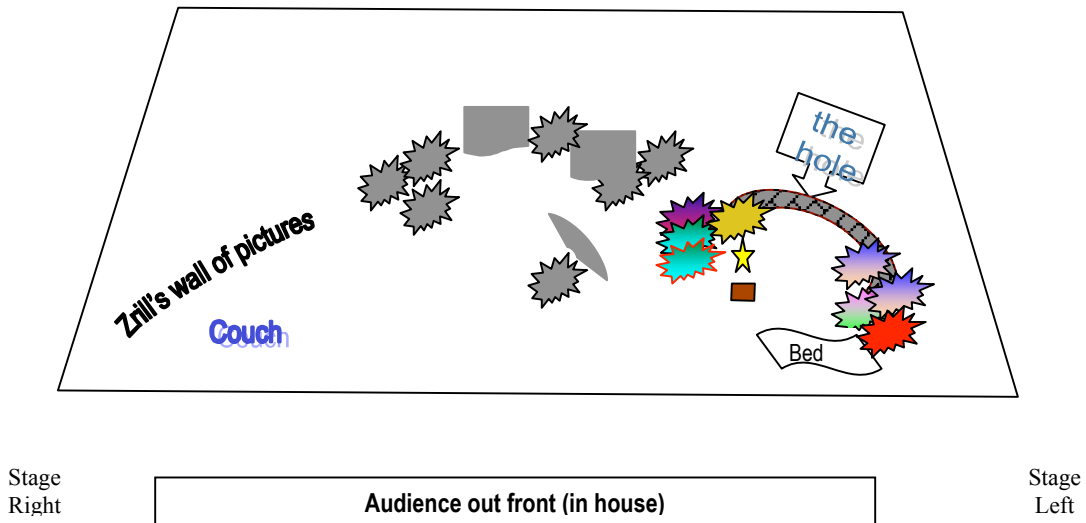
SET & STAGING NOTES

See below (A. & B.) for a suggested stage layouts below. Feel free to create a better one!

Zrill need not climb the wall at the end, but simply suggest the action by running around, or climbing out the hole, to the other side (out of the audience's view) and while Floridius Bloom looks up, either climb up a preset ladder or simply toss bricks over the wall.

Floridius Bloom's wall need only be a half wall and can be made in a variety of ways, but there must be a place for Zrill to enter and it must be able to be torn down (or taken away) at the end of the play. If the wall is solid (except for Zrill's hole) extra bricks can be used to drop over the wall—suggesting that it is being disassembled. (Let the kids use their imagination on creation of this wall. Painted boxes are nice, but easily knocked over.)

A.



B.

