

Stop Laughing at Me

Mickey Bloom

Stop laughing at me, Joan. It's not funny, so stop laughing. I see you over there, across the playground, standing with your friends and pointing at me like you've never seen a squirrel before. I have feelings too, Joan. I have a heart, which is slowly breaking every time you make fun of me and make me feel unwanted. I just want to be who I am, Joan. I said that to you once and you responded with "then take off that costume you made". No, Joan, I won't. Did Abraham Lincoln shave his beard when he was freeing the slaves? Did Beethoven get a hearing aid before writing the ninth symphony? Did Mr. T get rid of his mohawk before starring in "*The A-Team*"? No, Joan, is the answer to all of these questions. All of these noble and revolutionary men let themselves be who they were and didn't try to be anything else. And besides, my fur is a costume as much as your skin is, and if your skin is a costume, then where did

you get, because that looks very realistic. And another thing, stop saying you know how I stitched all of those squirrel hides together because that's not what it is so stop asking! I don't care if you know my dad is a taxidermist! He tells everybody! Just why can't you accept me, Joan? Don't I deserve to have friends? And no, Joan, Wally the Bear doesn't count because he is obviously Mr. Johansson and he's just wearing that burlap sack because he thinks I need friends that share a common interest. Oh yeah, I'm very interested in burlap sacks, almost as much as I am interested in bears. Right. So I'm telling you, Joan, for the last time, please stop laughing at me. Am I really bothering you that much? Well, anyway, that's all I wanted to say. If you want your sister back, then leave a hundred acorns by the tree I usually sit under and give me written promise swearing that you will stop laughing at me. I am sorry it had to come this, Joan, but I think it's the only way. You can call me crazy, but I bet Einstein was thought to be pretty crazy and that guy who invented silly putty. And actually, I'd rather if you didn't call me crazy, because that is unfair and just wrong. Call me nuts. That way it seems clever and more apt.