

JACANDY

By Forrest Musselman

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ISBN: 1-60003-378-4

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CHARACTERS

CON	HE is the emperor of JaCandy and his sweet tooth has turned him rotten.
JADE	SHE is Con's wife and has a secret to tell.
BON BON	HE / SHE is the court jester and a rabbit!?
KENJI	HE is the rebel, the hero and a mama's boy.
NARRATOR	HE / SHE tells the tale like all narrators do.
PRIESTESS	SHE is wise beyond her years and a pretty fair judge too.

***Note:** NARRATOR and PRIESTESS can be played by the same person if needed.

PLACE

In the sweet land of JaCandy.

TIME

Any time.

The world premier of this play occurred on May 6th, 2005, at an arts festival in Byron, Minnesota, and was performed by high school students from Studio Academy Charter Arts High School in Rochester, Minnesota.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

The students who brought their ideas and energy to this show: Corey Andrews, Erikka Kono, Meaghan Bradley, Mikey Witts and Colin Foster.

My former colleagues at Studio Academy who allowed me the freedom to do this class and write whatever came to mind.

And always Melisa, Jackson and Sophia.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The set only consisted of a few cubes or stools to serve as levels and screens to serve as offstage hiding spots.

The props are as follows: A plastic carrot, 2 very large plastic candy canes, a bag of candy, 4 juggling balls, a game board and a deck of cards.

Costumes were a mixture of traditional Japanese clothing and anime comic books. All actors wore masks that covered only part of their face. The bunny also wore the Japanese-type clothing, but wore rabbit make-up and ears. CON and KENJI have the large candy canes as swords, and keep them in their sashes.

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SETTING: The stage is bare except for two cubes that sit directly center stage. A screen with oriental designs is set on either side of the stage to provide exits and entrances of the actors.

AT RISE: *Traditional Japanese music is playing. A NARRATOR enters and walks to center stage.*

NARRATOR: Once upon a time in a far away land, there was a country called JaCandy. JaCandy was a wonderous land where most everything was made of candy. The clothes were spun sugar, the furniture made of the finest chocolate and there was always dessert for supper. I guess you could say it was a sweet place to live. Unfortunately, during the Age of Corn Fructose, a young ruler by the name of Con became the Emperor of JaCandy. Having been spoiled by his parents, Con had eaten so much candy it rotted his brain. Blinded by this ailment, he perceived a rottenness around him as well and demanded that everyone wear masks to cover themselves. When someone removed their mask, he would send them to prison for the rest of their lives. Yes, it was not a happy time in JaCandy. Despite the hardships, life went on and Con continued to rule the land with some help from his wife, Jade, and the court jester, Bon Bon the Bunny.

(CON and JADE enter and sit regally on the cubes. BON BON enters and bows before them. NARRATOR exits.)

CON: It is yet another boring day in JaCandy. Wouldn't you agree, my sweet?

JADE: More worse than the day before.

CON: Let us be entertained, Bon Bon.

BON BON: Of course, your eminence.

CON: I only hope you are more amusing than yesterday.

BON BON: And funnier tomorrow, my lord.

CON: Then proceed.

BON BON: *(Pulls three juggling balls from a pouch)* Sire, I give you the juggling trick of death.

JADE: The juggling trick of death?

BON BON: That is correct, your highness. In my hands, I hold extremely sensitive juggling balls. If I drop just one, they shall explode and my life shall be no more.

CON: This is very amusing. I should like to see that.

JADE: But if you drop them, you would not exist.

BON BON: That's the plan.

JADE: I think I would not like to see this trick. There is too much at risk.

Who would entertain us if you left?

BON BON: Wouldn't be my problem, now would it . . . your majesty.

CON: I love it. You may proceed.

BON BON: As you wish. The Juggling Trick of DEATH!

(BON BON begins to juggle and immediately drops a ball. EVERYONE flinches, but nothing happens.)

JADE: Why, nothing happened.

CON: What sort of trick is this?

BON BON: A glitch in the program, sir. I shall try again. Ahem, The Juggling Trick of DEATH! *(Begins to juggle, drops all the balls, and covers head. Nothing happens.)*

CON: Why aren't you exploding?

BON BON: I shall try again, oh great one. Ahem, The Juggling Trick of DEATH! *(Juggles, drops the balls, jumps for cover and nothing happens.)*

JADE: Really, this is quite amusing.

CON: You must be joking, Bon Bon. You are still alive.

BON BON: Precisely, sir. Yet another joke to make you laugh. *(Begins to laugh, but dies off when the others do not follow.)*

CON: I would have rather seen you explode.

JADE: Really, Con. It was a bit funny. I enjoyed it.

CON: As you wish. What else do you have for us, Bon Bon?

BON BON: Ummmmm. How about sporadic shaking? *(Begins to shake violently and falls to floor.)*

CON: I've seen that before. What else?

BON BON: I have a joke. What do you call a fish with no eyes?

JADE: How amusing! What would you call a fish with no eyes?

BON BON: A fsh. *(Pause)* A fsh. Fsh.

CON: *(Pause)* I don't get it.

BON BON: I said the word fish without the i. You know, fsh.

CON: Okay, now I'm bored again. What's next?

BON BON: I believe it's time to get on with some court business, your boredom. Another child was found with his mask off this morning in the marketplace.

CON: Another rebellious fool? Bring the child in.

(KENJI enters as if HE has been pushed onstage. HE stands in defiance.)

BON BON: Bow before the court.

KENJI: I refuse to honor those who do not honor their people.

CON: Foolish child. Your defiance means nothing to me. Stand if you wish.

KENJI: Then I shall sit. *(HE does.)*

JADE: This one does possess a fighting spirit. Perhaps he would do well in our army.

KENJI: I will not fight for you either. I would rather rot in your jail.

CON: Than rot you shall. I have heard enough out of you and will hear no more. Bon Bon, you shall escort this foolish youth to the darkest cell we have. There he can think about his own stupidity with the starving rats.

BON BON: As you wish, my ruler. *(To KENJI)* Come on. On your feet.

KENJI: *(HE stands)* We will meet again, Con. You can be sure of that.

CON: *(Laughs)* Now that was funny. Take him away.

(BON BON escorts KENJI offstage. JADE sighs.)

CON: Why do you sigh so dramatically, my dear?

JADE: Despite his anger, he seemed like such a nice boy.

CON: Must you feel sorry for everyone we send to the prison?

JADE: No, just the children.

CON: Don't fret, my dear. You will have a child of your own one day.

JADE: No, those days are gone. Come, let us go to dinner.

(THEY exit. BON BON and KENJI enter.)

BON BON: Into your cell, worthless child.

KENJI: Why do you work for such unfair, crazy rulers?

BON BON: You couldn't possibly think you would go unpunished.

KENJI: Do as you wish! I don't see why we have to wear these ridiculous masks anyway! *(HE removes his mask. There is a distinctive birthmark on his cheek.)*

BON BON: No, no! Put your mask back on right now.

KENJI: And what if I don't? You going to punish me?

BON BON: No, but the emperor will!

KENJI: Oh? And what is he going to do?

BON BON: Imprison you for all of eternity.

KENJI: Like he already did?

BON BON: Yes. Wait . . . No, he'll . . . *(Pause)* Good point.

KENJI: *(Over dramatically to audience, perhaps with music.)* When I was very young, I lost my father and mother. I grew up on the streets, begging for scraps of food. Now I am going to prison. Why be cautious when I have nothing to lose?

BON BON: I must admit, you do have a fighting spirit. There aren't many in this land that have it anymore.

KENJI: Sure there are. But they are just afraid to show it. No one wants to be imprisoned forever. But they are becoming sick of Con as well.

BON BON: *(Looks around to see if anyone is listening. Pulls KENJI close to him.)* If I let you in on a secret, would you keep it to yourself?

KENJI: Of course.

BON BON: I am becoming tired of Con's reign as well. His perception of the world is becoming increasingly more and more hostile. Yet he continues to eat candy like there will not be a tomorrow.

KENJI: Then do something about it.

BON BON: I can't. My strength is in my sense of humor, and not in my body. Perhaps . . . perhaps you could do something.

KENJI: Nothing would give me greater pleasure. Except, I don't know how, just yet.

BON BON: I have an idea.

KENJI: What is it?

BON BON: You must go see the wise Priestess of truth. She will show you the way.

KENJI: Where is she?

BON BON: I can not show you the way. Now leave before you are seen.

(KENJI hurries offstage as does BON BON. A PRIESTESS enters and sits center stage. KENJI enters.)

KENJI: Excuse me, I have . . .

PRIESTESS: I know why you have come.

KENJI: Then you know . . .

PRIESTESS: How to defeat the emperor? Yes. *(Long pause)*

KENJI: Well, what is it?

PRIESTESS: You must first gather an army. Find people who feel the same way you do and band them together.

KENJI: Yes, go on.

PRIESTESS: Then challenge the emperor to a game. He will not be able to resist.

KENJI: What sort of game?

PRIESTESS: That is for you to decide, but remember play to his weakness.

KENJI: And what is that?

PRIESTESS: Look, I can't reveal everything. Figure this stuff out on your own, Mr. Hero.

KENJI: Okay, okay. Thanks for your help.

PRIESTESS: Do you have any other questions?

KENJI: Do you . . .

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