

JOCELYN'S WORLD

by Rand Higbee

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Jocelyn is not your average high school girl. She has just applied to become Earth's first interplanetary foreign exchange student on the planet of Castino. Before she can actually start classes at the school for extraterrestrials, however, she must convince a panel of aliens that she is worthy of the honor. Even more of a challenge might be to convince these aliens that humans are a race they want to allow into their social circle. Jocelyn realizes right away that she might be in trouble when the aliens appear to have trouble grasping the meaning of the human word "war."

Jocelyn's World is a comedy that examines the human condition while posing the question: If sometime in the future the human race really does meet an alien species, how will we ever explain ourselves?

Running Time:

30 minutes

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 4 either)

JOCELYN: 17-year-old human.

UHLAENDER: A student from the planet Quilici.

ZAHN: A teacher from the planet Castino.

WILFONG: A teacher from the planet Castino.

PAZIK: A teacher from the planet Castino.

TOVAR: A teacher from the planet Castino.

Note: While Jocelyn and Wilfong are written as female roles, all of the other roles could be played by either gender. In fact, by changing a few words, the role of Wilfong could be played by either gender as well.

TIME AND LOCALE

The play takes place on the planet Castino in the not too distant future.

The set itself can be very simple or very complex depending on what is desired. All that is absolutely required are three sittables – in a pinch, chairs or cubes will do – set together downstage where the panel will sit and a couple more sittables upstage where Jocelyn and Uhlaender will sit.

Both Jocelyn and Uhlaender carry backpacks.

All characters aside from Jocelyn are extraterrestrials. What precisely they look like is not specified. The cast and crew may indulge themselves.

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(AT RISE: JOCELYN and UHLAENDER are sitting on stage. They are each reading a book, but every once in a while they steal a curious glance at the other. After a few moments, ZAHN enters. Jocelyn and Uhlaender quickly get to their feet. Zahn and Uhlaender say their first few lines not as clear words, but almost as a hiss.)

ZAHN: Gizz rizz e e tizz i nizz gizz sizz!

(ZAHN first crosses to UHLAENDER and begins to slap him on the back.)

UHLAENDER: Hizz e lizz lizz o.

ZAHN: Nizz i cizz e tizz rizz i pizz?

UHLAENDER: Yizz e sizz. Yizz e sizz.

(ZAHN turns to JOCELYN.)

ZAHN: A nizz dizz yizz o u?

(JOCELYN stares at ZAHN a moment, and Zahn and UHLAENDER stare back at her.)

JOCELYN: I'm sorry. I ... I don't –

ZAHN: A hizz hizz hizz hizz!

(ZAHN takes out a small object which looks something like a hearing aid and gives it to JOCELYN. With Zahn's prompting, Jocelyn sticks it in her ear.)

ZAHN: Better now?

JOCELYN: Oh. Yes. I can understand you.

ZAHN: I forgot! Your first trip to Castino! Of course you would not have one of our translators! I trust you had a nice trip?

JOCELYN: It was remarkable!

ZAHN: I am Zahn. I teach Castino Literature.

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JOCELYN: I am Jocelyn, and I ... am trying to learn everything.

ZAHN: Wonderful. (*Indicating UHLAENDER.*) You have met Uhlaender?

JOCELYN: Not formally.

ZAHN: In that case: Jocelyn the Human, meet Uhlaender the Quilician.

(UHLAENDER crosses to JOCELYN and slaps her on the back. After a slight hesitation, Jocelyn slaps Uhlaender on his back.)

JOCELYN: A pleasure to meet you.

UHLAENDER: An honor. I am from the planet Quilici.

JOCELYN: I am from Earth.

UHLAENDER: Earth? Really? I have been there! Well ... I've been to Mars. Does that count?

(JOCELYN doesn't seem to know if this is a joke or not.)

JOCELYN: Well ... I ...

UHLAENDER: Have you visited my fair planet? Quilici?

JOCELYN: I haven't. No.

UHLAENDER: Easy to get there from Earth. Just turn left at Luebber-Arrigo.

JOCELYN: Oh. Oh, yes. (*A beat.*) I'm sorry. We humans are very new to space travel.

ZAHN: Not to worry. Not to worry at all. We Castinoids are newcomers to space travel as well. We've only been at it for 150 million years. Give or take. Mere babes in the galaxy. Now. Before the others arrive, I should quickly fill you in as to what exactly will occur today, hm?

JOCELYN: Sounds good.

ZAHN: In a few moments, I will be joined by three of my fellow teachers from the school. They will sit there. (*Indicates three sittings.*) I will introduce the two of you. One by one, of course. Then you will say a little about yourself, and then our panel will vote you in. Simple, hm?

UHLAENDER: Quite.

JOCELYN: Wait a minute. Vote us in?

ZAHN: Yes.

JOCELYN: They have to vote on us?

ZAHN: That is correct.

JOCELYN: I was under the impression I was –

ZAHN: Oh, no worries my dear. You are in. You are an official exchange student to the planet Castino. The voting is a mere formality. Gives the panel a sense of power, hm?

(ZAHN and UHLAENDER laugh.)

JOCELYN: I understand.

ZAHN: Yes, I do not believe we have actually ever voted against a student. *(Considers.)* Oh, there were the Wynegars, but you know how the Wynegars are!

(ZAHN and UHLAENDER laugh.)

JOCELYN: So when I am asked, what sort of things do you want me to say about Earth?

ZAHN: Talk about what it is that makes your planet special. I did read the book, Jocelyn, that your committee sent. "The History of Earth."

JOCELYN: Good.

ZAHN: Actually, "read" might be too strong of a term. I was running a bit short of time, so I rather "skimmed" it. But I did get the highlights. I think. So if you get stuck, I can help you out, hm?

JOCELYN: That would be appreciated.

ZAHN: There is one word in the book I didn't quite understand, however. Even the translator did not seem to know.

JOCELYN: What word was that?

ZAHN: I believe the term was "war." What is meant by that?

(ZAHN and UHLAENDER stare intently at JOCELYN.)

JOCELYN: Well. Well ... um ...

End of Freeview

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