

The Kimono Project

by

Patricia Jang

(an excerpt)

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CHARACTERS

DENNIS TEAGUE 30's. CEO of Infrastructure, MAS. A tense, driven super nerd given to grandiosity.

SHANTI TEAGUE 30's. Dennis's wife. A trophy wife turned seeker looking for eternal truths. Currently investigating Wicca.

BILL JOHNSON 40's. CEO of South Energy. A coal man, born and bred.

POOKIE JOHNSON 20's. Bill's newlywed wife. An industrial spy, of dubious capability, pretending to be ditzy.

JADE 20's. Asian. The Teague's maid and undercover guerrilla filmmaker.

VICTORIA The "Hal" computer of the Teague home. Victoria's voice should be recorded and played over speakers. Double-cast with JADE.

SETTING

The Teague home on a Southeast Asian volcanic island. The home is decorated in the British Colonial style. There is an absolutely lovely view of the volcano, Mt. Pawa, from the grand picture windows.

TIME

Present. The play unfolds over the course of one evening.

The TEAGUE home, decorated in the British Colonial style. The room is dominated by massive picture windows and a large dining room table. The remote-controlled shades are drawn, obscuring the view. A repetitive dull thwacking sound is heard in the background.

JADE, wearing headphones, taps a boom mike to test it out.

JADE

(quietly)

Testing, testing.

JADE makes sure she's alone, then starts to beatbox while showing off some serious b-girl pop and lock moves.

SHANTI TEAGUE enters, intent on untangling a ball of yarn. Trailing behind her is an unfortunate piece of knitting.

SHANTI

Jade, darling, are you here?

JADE rips off the headphones and throws them behind the bar. She shoves a fur windsock on the mike and begins to dust the furniture with the boom mike.

SHANTI (cont'd)

I simply can't get this thing untangled.

JADE takes the ball of yarn and begins to untangle it.

SHANTI (cont'd)

I've been trying my hand at the textile arts in an effort to balance my spiritual work with the tactile. But I feel that the universe is telling me that my talents lay elsewhere.

JADE

(in a ridiculous Asian accent)

May I ask what you are knitting?

SHANTI holds up her knitting. It looks atrocious.

SHANTI

It's a deer cozy!

JADE

A deer cozy?

SHANTI

A little blankie for our first baby deer. I named her Artemis. She get so cold, she trembles! It's precious.

JADE hands SHANTI the unknotted ball of yarn.

SHANTI (cont'd)

Thank you! You know, Jade, I should bring you to my deer habitat. I love it there - it's such a healing place, a place kept pure from the desecrating evils of humankind, a place where Mother Goddess could call home.

SHANTI floats over to a large tropical bouquet and pulls out a flower.

SHANTI (cont'd)

Are these the flowers you ordered for tonight?

JADE

Yes, Mrs. Teague.

SHANTI

They're lovely!

SHANTI pulls out a flower from the bouquet.

SHANTI (cont'd)

What's the name of this flower?

JADE

(making it up)

Sampufata tata ta.

SHANTI

(repeats carefully)

Sampufata tata ta.

SHANTI buries her nose in the "sampufata tata ta" and deeply inhales.

SHANTI (cont'd)

Mmmm... I smell... lazy afternoons in St. Barts... my mother's favorite perfume... and whispered secrets.

SHANTI hands a flower to JADE.

SHANTI (cont'd)

You try.

JADE eyes the flower suspiciously.

SHANTI (cont'd)

Just close your eyes and tell me the first thing that comes to mind.

JADE takes the flower, closes her eyes, and inhales.

SHANTI plucks another flower and tenderly tucks it behind JADE's ear. JADE backs away, surprised.

SHANTI (cont'd)

Don't you just look like a delicious treat.

JADE

Mrs. Teague! Not here.

DENNIS TEAGUE enters in high-tech gym clothes, carrying his squash gear. He drops his racquet bag onto the floor.

DENNIS

(disdainfully)

Nine zero, nine zero, nine zero.

JADE rushes over and hands Dennis a towel. She picks up his bag puts it in the closet.

SHANTI

Laphroaig or jungle juice?

DENNIS

Give me the jay-jay. Make it flaming.

SHANTI pulls out a gaudy scorpion bowl from the bar and starts mixing the jungle juice.

SHANTI

You won, of course?

SHANTI lights the juice on fire. She hands the drink to Dennis.

DENNIS

The fuckin' bastard couldn't get the ball past me. Too bad the British didn't set up shop here and teach these people a proper sport.

DENNIS wipes his forehead with the towel and then throws it on the ground in disgust.

JADE discreetly picks up the towel and exits.

DENNIS (cont'd)

Didn't even break a sweat. Victoria, what was my max heart rate?

VICTORIA, the "Hal" computer of the TEAGUE home, answers in a pleasant, airline stewardess voice.

VICTORIA

156.

DENNIS

I would've gotten a better rush screwing a corpse.

SHANTI

Well maybe Mr. Johnson will be a decent squash player. Or screw.

DENNIS looks at SHANTI's hippie floral dress.

DENNIS

Is that what you're wearing?

SHANTI

It makes me happy.

DENNIS

Change into the black Chanel sheath.

SHANTI

Why Dennis! It's been so long since my physical appearance has had any effect on you.

DENNIS

Pair the Chanel with the double strand of pearls I bought you in London and the matching set of earrings. And the Louboutins with the three inch heels.

SHANTI

Anything else, sweetie?

DENNIS looks contemplatively at the windows.

DENNIS

Oh, and skip that new perfume of yours, it makes me hallucinate.

SHANTI

Any thoughts on the kind of panties I should wear?

SHANTI pours herself a stiff drink.

SHANTI (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Perhaps I shall go panty-less.

(to JADE)

What do you think, Jade honey?

JADE

Whatever makes Mrs. Teague happy.

SHANTI

Thank you, that's an absolutely wonderful answer. Doesn't Jade have a remarkable aura about her, Dennis? Jade honey, come here.

SHANTI takes JADE's hands in hers.

SHANTI (cont'd)

I'm sensing... blue about you. Definitely blue. Oceans. Sky. Cornflowers.

JADE

Is that good?

SHANTI

Oh yes, you have a inner peacefulness, a natural sensitivity about you--

DENNIS snorts derisively.

SHANTI (cont'd)

(to JADE)

Ignore him, he's got a very angry red aura.

DENNIS

With a very green aura around the wallet.

SHANTI

I'm also sensing a very nasty sulfuric undertone.

DENNIS

Would it kill you to pick up something more befitting your station, like pottery or sailing yachts or jazzercise.

SHANTI

At least I spend my energy working on myself instead of fiddling with a computerized girlfriend.

DENNIS

One needs a relaxing hobby while dealing with the stresses of reinventing the world.

SHANTI

Oh, is that what you've been up to?

DENNIS

Nothing can stop the onward progression of science. Along this luminous path there have been game-changers: the discovery of evolution, the invention of the alternating current, the building of the atomic bomb.... And now, I have the chance to add my name to the roll call of illustrious inventors like Darwin, Tesla, and Oppenheimer!

SHANTI

That's quite a list.

DENNIS

One cannot but heed the call of destiny. Tonight will go down in the annals of time!

SHANTI

Maybe you should shower first.

DENNIS

Is everything ready?

SHANTI

Of course. Jade has been absolutely indispensable. I was thinking about using the coconuts instead of the Waterford for the drinks, you know, for sort of a local flair. What do you think?

DENNIS

Whatever.

SHANTI

Jade, will you do your machete thingy for the guests? I don't want to put you on the spot or anything, it's just that it gives me a little thrill every time.

JADE

No problem, Mrs. Teague.

SHANTI

And you have those little umbrellas--

JADE
 --Yes, Mrs. Teague.

SHANTI
 Wonderful!

DENNIS
 The both of you must leave me now. I must prepare.

JADE bows and exits.

SHANTI starts to leave.

DENNIS (cont'd)
 And Shanti - try to do something with your hair.

SHANTI exits, slamming the door shut behind her.

DENNIS (cont'd)
 Victoria, the podium, please!

A podium emerges from the floor.

DENNIS (cont'd)
 Lights!

A spotlight shines down on him. DENNIS raises his head and basks in the light

DENNIS (cont'd)
 It's master of the universe time!

Mozart's Requiem, Dies Irae, blasts from the Bang and Olufsen sound system. The music fills DENNIS - he is a man possessed.

JADE enters, and watches DENNIS for a moment.

JADE
 (hesitantly)
 Mr. Teague?

DENNIS, too caught up in the music, doesn't hear her.

JADE (cont'd)
 (louder)
 Mr. Teague!

DENNIS finally notices JADE.

DENNIS

Stop the music, Victoria.

VICTORIA turns off the music.

JADE

Uh, Mr. Teague?

DENNIS

Speak, or leave me be, woman!

JADE

The driver call. They be here very soon.

DENNIS

Victoria, what's the ETA of the Johnsons?

VICTORIA

The Johnsons will arrive in approximately 5 minutes and 48 seconds.

DENNIS

Hallelujah! The time has finally come.

DENNIS bounds out of the room.

JADE picks up a bronze statue of Buddha
hides a small camera in the base.

SHANTI enters, wearing the Chanel,
pearls, and Louboutins. Her hair is
swept up in a sophisticated bun.

SHANTI

Jade, honey, do me a favor?

JADE replaces the statue quickly turns
around.

JADE

Yes, Mrs...

JADE stares at SHANTI's stunning
transformation.

JADE (cont'd)

You look like movie star!

SHANTI

Why thank you very much. Now if you wouldn't mind giving me a
little zip....

JADE

Of course, Mrs. Teague.

SHANTI

You know I love it when you call me Shanti.

JADE

Yes... Shanti.

SHANTI

That's better.

JADE zips up SHANTI's dress. JADE starts to look a bit dizzy.

JADE

(dazed)

What is that smell?

SHANTI

My perfume. It's a special concoction I created. Do you like it?

JADE

It is... nice.

JADE wobbles over to a chair and sits down.

SHANTI

You know, I've been curious - do your peoples have a history of pagan worship?

JADE

(faint)

Pagan worship?

SHANTI

Worshiping the Goddess in all of her wondrous mysteries, celebrating rituals of the Moon, the casting of spells, that sort of thing?

JADE

Oh yes. My mother chant funny things when she boil rat tail, bat wings and horse whiskers together in big iron pot.

SHANTI

Did strange events occur afterwards?

JADE

My pet lizard Bibi would dance to Dolly Parton, especially to "Islands in the Stream".

SHANTI goes to JADE and takes her hands. JADE's dizziness returns.

SHANTI

Are you a believer?

JADE

(woozy)

Sure.

SHANTI

Praise be the powers that have brought us together!

A not so far off explosion. The house shakes. SHANTI and JADE pay no mind.

SHANTI (cont'd)

We will have to swap some incantations! I've been working on one to dispel evil from my space--

DENNIS enters in a sharp suit.

SHANTI gestures toward DENNIS.

SHANTI (cont'd)

Clearly I haven't much success.

DENNIS

According to Victoria, the Johnsons' ETA will be at eighteen-o-five,

(glances at his watch)

or in exactly two minutes and forty-five seconds. Jade, door and jackets if on their person. And do the ever-present but invisible house-help thing.

JADE curtseys.

DENNIS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Shanti, a handshake for Bill, not too firm, we don't want him thinking you're too liberated.

SHANTI

I'll try to keep the castration jokes to myself.

DENNIS

And no eye-rolling if he kisses your hand. As for his wife, Pookie, I haven't met her but I know she's spent time in Paris and Amsterdam, so play it safe with an outstretched hand and go with it if she pulls you in for a kiss on the cheek.

SHANTI

Your faith in me warms my heart.