

JT AND THE PIRATES

by Wade Bradford

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STORY OF THE PLAY

This rousing pirate's tale is set not on the high seas, but in one of the strangest and most mysterious of places: junior high!

When a JennyTaylor – JT – stumbles upon a magical book in the school library, she is transported into the past, and finds herself on the tropical island of Lunamoon, surrounded by pirates! She manages to travel back to her own time, but the meddling and hilarious swashbucklers have come along, followed by native warriors from the island who are out for blood. Now, on top of homework and bullies, JT has a bunch of buccaneers and vengeful warriors to take care of!

This fun-filled adventure/comedy is easy to stage and exciting to watch. It's filled with hysterical characters, witty dialogue, and even a few heart-touching moments. At least by pirate standards. Arg!

Running Time:

1 hour, 50 minutes

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 m, 8 w, extras)

JENNY TAYLOR(JT): A spunky junior high student.

MISS POLLY: A pretty, young history teacher, new to the school.

MRS. GRIMM: The school's always-frowning, never-minding-her-own-business librarian.

SUZY SPINKETT: The mean-hearted, awkward-looking, school bully.

SCUMBELLY: A short, tough and messy pirate; the crew's strongest member. Comes off aggressive at first, but inside he's a big old softy.

SAPPHIRE: A slender and tall pirate; always has a mischievous look on her face. When she walks she exudes both grace and cunning. The crew's professional thief.

CHEFFY: The pirate crew's cook, she always has a sunny disposition – unless someone dares to criticize her cooking. Her pirate clothes, complete with apron, are always covered with blotches of food.

PINKEYE JOE: The first mate and the only pirate with an eye patch. Rather portly, he could use a good shave. Despite the scar on his cheek, his face still looks rather boyish. The most timid of the crew, he talks a bit like Elmer Fudd.

NARRATOR/ISHMAEL: That's right, the narrator is one of the pirate crew! He's the oldest of the bunch and, strangely enough, the most quiet when with the rest of the group.

CAPTAIN DEVLIN THORNHILL: Very suave and cocky, so much so that his confidence can sometimes get him into trouble. His costume isn't terribly fancy, but his style is a notch above the rest of the crew. He behaves like a cross between Erroll Flynn and Cary Grant.

LEADER OF THE NATIVES: He obeys every whim of the island goddess, Lunamoona.

LUNAMOONA: The ruler of the treasure island. A strong, beautiful yet very intimidating young woman.

HOLLY: Hall monitor; also quite intimidating.

MR. GREEN: The principal of the school.

STUDENTS, NATIVE WARRIORS: Can double.

TIME: The present and the 17th century.

SETTINGS: Numerous areas at Oceanview School on Pumbleton, an island off the Florida sea coast; a pirate ship; and the enchanted island of Lunamoona.

Due to the large number of different settings, a simple unit set with furniture pieces suggesting location works best. Castered tables and wagons with scenery can be wheeled on and off quickly from SR and SL. For example, a book case on wheels and a table can create the library; barrels and steering wheel on wagons can suggest the pirate ship; bushes and a bench on wheels will suffice for Jenny and Devlin's scene outside the school.

Whenever possible, have the actors move the scenery either during the blackout or in full view of the audience. For the lunchroom scene, the students can wheel tables and chairs into place while Jenny and the pirates discuss lunch. For Miss Polly's classroom, a chalkboard on wheels will do the trick, and the students can bring their own chairs with them onstage. For Lunamoona's island, a nice touch is to have the native warriors behind each bush or tree (on wheels) before the curtain opens to surprise the pirates.

Additional Production Notes are at the end of the play.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: A dim LIGHT unveils a small dusty library room SL. Large books line the shelves. There is also a table with a lamp, a large book open to map illustrations, a few nautical antiques – such as a ship's bell, a model ship in a bottle – and a skull. The skull, a puppet operated from behind the table, slowly begins to turn until it faces the audience. Then, in a very creepy fashion, it begins to speak.)

SKULL: Avast, ye landlubbers! Cursed be all who cast their eyes upon this stage! Cursed, says I! Ha! Hahahahaha!

(Suddenly, a wrinkly old PIRATE pops out from behind the table. The skull puppet is in one hand, his other hand is a hook! He's the show's opening narrator, but you can call him Ishmael.)

ISHMAEL: Arg! Fooled you didn't I?! Don't worry; you're not cursed! That skull puppet gag was just to scare off the faint of heart. Now that we've thinned their ranks out, let's get down to business. Let me guess ... you've come lookin' for a story. But not just any yarn. You want a tale of high adventure. *(HE sits down on the edge of the stage.)* Methinks it be a pirate story that you're itchin' for. Well, it just so happens that I know the most exciting tale of swashbucklers and scallywags ever to linger on the tip of a storyteller's tongue. Now, most pirate stories start out on the high seas ... but this one begins in one of the most fearful and perplexin' places in the world ... junior high!

(CS LIGHTS up to reveal the hallway in a large, quaint school building. From SR, several short and timid STUDENTS slump slowly across the stage in pairs. Enter JENNY TAYLOR, alone, sorting through a small stack of birthday invitations.)

ISHMAEL: These are the students of Oceanview school, grades 7-12. Aye, these are the youthful inhabitants of Pumbleton, a small island off the coast of Florida.

(ISHMAEL steps aside to let the action unfold. JENNY walks up to several STUDENTS. She offers them invitations.)

JENNY: Hey ... does anybody want to go to a birthday party?

(The STUDENTS shake their heads and go back to talking to one another. JENNY approaches two other GIRLS.)

GIRL#1: Hi, Ginger. Are you going to be in the talent show this week?

GIRL#2: I don't know. They're so boring.

GIRL#1: Just like everything else around here.

GIRL#2: I guess we could twirl batons or something.

JENNY: Hi, you two ...

GIRL #1: *(Not very interested.)* Oh ... hi, Jenny ...

JENNY: I was wondering ... I'm having a birthday party in a few days ... do you think ...

GIRL#2: Thanks, but we're kind of busy ...

JENNY: But I didn't say which day it was.

GIRL#1: Which day is it?

JENNY: Friday.

GIRL#1: Yeah ... we're busy then.

GIRL#2: But you have a fun party, okay, Jen?

JENNY: *(Trying to save face.)* You bet. It's going to be the best party ever. So many people are coming. In fact, I doubt there would be any room for you, but I thought I'd ask ...

GIRL#2: I know someone you can ask to your party ...

(SUZY SPINKETT struts onto the stage. She holds a smaller "nerdy" KID in a head lock and pushes him to the floor. When she starts to count the lunch money she's stolen from him, the nerdy kid runs offstage.)

End of Freeview

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