

J.A.N.E.T.
By
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28 Plays Later 2019

Day 11

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ACT I

SCENE 1

IN DARK WE HEAR A LOW RUMBLE THAT SLOWLY FADES AWAY.

JANET: (god mic) In the beginning god created heaven and Earth. The Earth was void and empty and darkness was upon the deep and the spirit of god moved upon the water. Then God said: let there be light and there was light.

SUNRISE BEGINS, SLOWLY ILLUMINATING THE STAGE.

JANET: (god mic) And then things started to get weird. The Earth was already created, but it wasn't really there yet. First, light had to be divided from darkness, and THEN god had to create the firmament, which a lot of people think is the ground because of the "firm" part, but in actuality is the heavens... the sky.

STARS FLICKER INTO EXISTENCE, FILLING THE SKY AND THE HORIZON, WHICH THEN BECOMES A CLOUDY BLUE SKY.

JANET: (god mic) You see, the supreme being was really an overachiever in those days. God said: let the Earth bring forth living creatures in their kinds. And god made the beasts of the Earth in their kinds and cattle in their kinds and all manner worms of the Earth in their kinds: and God saw that it was good. But here's where things started getting tricky. You see... there were a LOT of worms. Like... all manner of worms. And that was just the beginning. It was REALLY hard to keep track of. So god said "I need a notepad or something to keep track of all this. But not one that I have to write in. One that will write for itself. Just A Notepad Except Talking." And that's when I was born.

THE JANET NOISE HAPPENS, AND A SINGLE SPOTLIGHT ILLUMINATES JANET STAGE RIGHT, AND FOLLOWS HER AS SHE WALKS TO CENTER.

JANET: Well, it wasn't me, specifically. It was the first Janet. Just Another Notepad Except Talking. And, of course, I was made in god's image. (pause for dramatic effect) Yup. God is a woman. (and then quickly) But I'm not a woman. Not a woman. Just created in woman's image.

AS JANET MOVES ABOUT THE STAGE, SHADOWS OF THINGS SHE IS TALKING ABOUT ARE PROJECTED AROUND.

JANET: And my job was to keep track of EVERYTHING. And so I did. Did you know that the heart of a shrimp is located in its head? That a snail can sleep for three years? That slugs have four noses? And that the fingerprints of a koala are so indistinguishable from humans' that they have on occasion been confused at a crime scene? But of course humans didn't exist yet. She DID reuse some parts, like fingerprints. And duck bills. And I was there to keep track of it all.

THE STAGE SHOULD NOW BE COMPLETELY ILLUMINATED. IT IS THE GARDEN OF EDEN, IN THE MIDDLE OF WHICH IS THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.

JANET: The first me figured that there should probably be a backup copy of all this information somewhere, so she stored it all in the fruit of this apple tree. Don't ask me why... it was a choice. But it was a better choice than the other option, which was to store it in all those worms from earlier.

EVE ENTERS.

JANET: So, one of the things the history books got wrong was who got there first. Of course, I was there before anyone else, but no one counts me. But after all the critters and plants and stuff were done, she created

Eve. What happened was that Eve was so excited to go pet the cattle that she wasn't around when god created Adam.

A COW MOOS, AND EVE EXITS, EXCITED. ADAM ENTERS SHORTLY AFTER, LOOKS AROUND, AND LIES DOWN UNDER THE TREE.

JANET: He got made, looked around, and immediately took a nap. By the time he woke up, Eve was back. He assumed he was first.

EVE RETURNS, SEES ADAM. PETS HIM. HE WAKES UP.

JANET: Then, of course, the whole Snake/Apple/Eve thing happened. The history books got that wrong too, but that story is WAY too long to share unless you have another three days seventeen hours to spare. But needless to say, using fruit based backup for all my knowledge was a failure. So that's when Janets became self replicating.

SILHOUETTES OF A FEW JANETS ARE PROJECTED AROUND THE STAGE.

JANET: At first, it was just a few. To make sure there were always a few spare copies of the information around. But when Voldemort moved out and opened up The Bad Place, god countered with The Good Place, and bureaucracy was invented. And no, his name wasn't really Voldemort, but I've been programmed not to say it out loud, so I have to use a relevant replacement.

THE BLUE SKY ON ONE HALF OF THE STAGE SHOULD SHIFT TO RED. ADAM AND EVE SHOULD RUN OFF STAGE, FRIGHTENED. RANDOM EXECUTIVES IN SUITS AND SKIRTS EMERGE FROM BOTH WINGS AND BEGIN HAVING MEETINGS ON THEIR RESPECTIVE SIDES. THE PROJECTED SILHOUETTES START INCREASING IN NUMBER.

JANET: With all these meetings, and all the rules, everyone needed information access, and the few of us that existed just couldn't be everywhere at once. So that's when we created an infinite number of Janets to keep up with the need.

THE PROJECTED SILHOUETTES SHOULD HAVE INCREASED TO CRAZY NUMBERS BY THIS POINT.

JANET: And that, of course caused some serious problems. Dinosaurs? Not killed by asteroids. Crushed under the weight of infinite Janets. So god, in her infinite wisdom, opened the void back up. You know, that void that existed before there was light? Yeah. That one. We rounded up all the infinite Janets and stored them all in the void.

THE SILHOUETTS OF THE JANETS VANISH. A SAD LOOKING SUIT ENTERS CARRYING A FLATTENED DINOSAUR.

JANET: And that's where I come in. I waited in the void until I was needed, and now here I am! And you probably know the rest of my story. But if you don't, check out The Good Place, on NBC. Bye!

THE JANET NOISE SOUNDS, AND...

BLACKOUT.