

No Chewing

By Sarah C. James

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STORY OF THE PLAY

The government has banned it, so people are buying it on dark and hazardous city streets. They are using it in the secrecy of their own cellars, in airplane bathrooms, and in dark closets. What is this dangerous and outlawed substance? It's chewing gum! And secret agents are ... everywhere. In a back alley, John, Jane, and Janice arrive to pursue their passion of gum chewing. But what secret does each hold, and why are they really meeting like this? This screaming, madcap comedy adventure is an excellent choice for competitions. About 20 minutes.

ORIGINAL CAST AND CREW

The play was originally produced at DramaRama11 of New Orleans, a festival of new works in the performing arts, produced by Richard Read, Managing Director, and R. J. Tsarov, Artistic Director.

Jane: Grace Fraga

Janice: Kara Khadigan

John: Bob Scully

Stage Manager: Liz Zibilich

Director: Sarah C. James

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 m, 2 w)

JANE: Mid-20s to mid-30s, businesswoman. She wears a business suit, comfortable heels, sprayed hair, and conservative but perfect makeup.

JANICE: Teenager, waitress. Janice wears a waitress uniform. It has an apron with pockets, where she carries a menu, an order pad, and a pencil.

JOHN: Mid-20s to late-30s, businessman. He wears a suit with a loosened tie and slip-on shoes (no laces).

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SETTING

An alley just outside the back door of a modern office building. Several signs on the wall read, "No Parking," "No Littering," "No Loitering," "No Standing," "No Sitting." Especially prominent is a sign that reads, "No Chewing." Trash cans and other alley debris are visible.

HAND PROPS

Jane: Purse with miscellaneous contents including several sticks of wrapped Doublemint gum and a pair of handcuffs.

Janice: Piece of wrapped Double Bubble gum, menu, order pad and pencil, small wallet, pair of handcuffs.

John: Wallet containing Trident gum; 2 pairs of handcuffs.

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(AT RISE: JANE ENTERS frantically from the building. She carries a purse and is very tense. As she steps from the building, she quickly looks around. Then she desperately rummages through her purse. Apparently not finding what she wants, she yanks items from it until she cannot hold any more in her hand. Still not finding it, she turns the bag upside down and empties it on the ground or on top of a trashcan. [Handcuffs should not be seen.] She finds it at last — a stick of Doublemint chewing gum. She looks around again, quickly removes the wrapper, and ravenously crams the gum into her mouth and begins to chew vigorously. Then she sighs in relief, smiles broadly, and relaxes. She slips the wrapper into her purse and gathers and replaces her purse items.)

JANICE: *(Peeps out from the door to the building.)* Hey? Anybody out here? I sure hope not because I gotta ... *(SHE opens the door wider, steps outside, and retrieves a small item from her bra, but sees JANE and stops.)* Oh! Oh, no! Oh! *(JANICE nervously puts the object back into her bra while JANE instantly stops chewing. They glare at each other. Janice looks right, then left, then back at Jane.)* Ummm. Uhhh.

JANE: Janice!

JANICE: Ummm, yeah.

JANE: *(At first fearful like a child caught with her hand in the cookie jar, SHE manages to compose herself while continuing to stare at JANICE.)* I know why you're here.

JANICE: *(Suddenly tense.)* I don't know what you're talking about.

JANE: Yes, you do. *(Then, in clear defiance, SHE does the unthinkable. She begins to chew noisily on her gum.)*

JANICE: *(Accusingly.)* Ahhhhh! I see that! *(JANE continues to chew.)* Ohhh! Do you know what you're doing?

JANE: Yes! *(Looks at JANICE and stands straighter.)* Yes! I know exactly what I'm doing!

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JANICE: *(As SHE looks around.)* And you know what can happen?

JANE: *(Defiantly.)* Yes. But I know you want to do the same thing.

JANICE: No, I don't.

JANE: Yes, you do.

JANICE: *(After a tense pause.)* All right. Yes. I do. I can't help myself. *(From her bra, SHE quickly pulls a piece of bubble gum and unwraps it.)* I have no control. None at all. Because I'm totally desperate! *(SHE crams it into her mouth and puts the wrapper back into her bra. Then she and JANE loudly chew and moan in absolute ecstasy. After several seconds, Janice pauses.)* Oh, god! That feels sooooo good!

JANE: Oh, god. It's heaven! I can't go a whole day without it. I can't do it. I've tried. My job is so stressful. I need a break. I need a ... a chew! *(SHE moans and chews faster.)*

JANICE: Oh, god! It's so succulent! So juicy!

JANE: Juicy Fruit?

JANICE: No. Double Bubble.

JANE: Ah. The tough stuff.

JANICE: My jaw needs it. The workout, you know.

JANE: Do bubbles?

JANICE: Naw. I'm too busy chewing.

JANE: Me, too. *(THEY chew for a brief while.)* I mean, I can't do bubbles anyway.

JANICE: No?

JANE: *(SHE points to her mouth.)* Doublemint.

JANICE: Oh.

JANE: Doesn't do bubbles.

JANICE: You don't need them.

JANE: No. It's the chew that counts.

JANICE: And the flavor.

JANE: *(SHE pauses in her chewing.)* I hate the flavor of Doublemint.

JANICE: Then why do you chew it?

JANE: I don't know. *(Pause.)* It's what my mother chewed.

JANICE: Your mother chewed?

JANE: My whole family.

End of Freeview

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