

Jay & Julia

By
Vincent S. Hannam

Contact:

Vincent S. Hannam
823 Sheridan Ave N
Minneapolis, MN 55411

(407) 953-4061
vincenthannam@gmail.com
www.vincenthannam.com

© 2024, Vincent S. Hannam

JAY & JULIA. (*1f, 2m; int.; 10 minute*) Two young blue jays must reconcile their marriage in the wake of a tragic loss.

VINCENT S. HANNAM. A playwright grounding fantastic stories in honest people. BFA Acting, University of Central Florida; MA Teaching, St. Mary's University of Minnesota; Lab Company, Hangar Theatre. He lives in Minneapolis. www.vincenthannam.com.

~

CHARACTERS

JAY:

A male blue jay. Young father. Any gender. Any race/ethnicity.

JULIA:

A female blue jay. Young mother. Any gender. Any race/ethnicity.

CROW MAN:

A crow. Any gender. Any age. Any race/ethnicity.

PLACE & TIME

The living room of a bird's nest

The present

NOTES

A slash (/) in the dialogue indicates overlapping.

The birds are not to be done up in any sort of "costume"
(the suggestion of color goes a long way).

You could double-cast the actor playing JULIA.
That could be interesting.

JAY & JULIA

JAY stands guard over his nest with two eggs inside, atop a telephone pole. He is a blue jay.

JAY

(dramatically)

I stand alone atop the world. In the clouds I perch and protect my eggs. My offspring. My heirs to not just the throne but my legacy. On Mount Olympus we reign!

He is interrupted by his wife, JULIA, who enters talking on her cell phone.

JULIA

(to phone)

Should be any time now, Mom/ yeah, hold on a sec -

JAY

Royal mistress, present yourself!

JULIA

Going to the store. Any last requests?

JAY

The head of my enemy's, on a spike!

JULIA

Oh, dear.

She resumes her phone conversation and exits.

JAY

I will protect you sweet ones. You are safe here. A bird's nest after all is his castle. His fort. Fort Jay! And you will inherit the world... even if this is all we have.

A shadow passes overhead.

CROW MAN (o.s.)

Chest bump, bro!

JAY

No...

CROW MAN enters. He is a crow.

CROW MAN

Chest bump!

JAY
How did you find us?

CROW MAN
Chest bump! Chest bump!

JAY
Please, leave us alone.

CROW MAN has spotted the eggs. Yum.

No! Stay there!

CROW MAN
Chest bump.

JAY
Yo, back the fuck off!

CROW MAN
CHEST BUMP!

CROW MAN is dangerously close to the nest. Yum Yum.

JAY
Okay! Fuckin'... here. Is this what you want?

JAY approaches and attempts to chest bump him.

I don't understand what this ritual is, but if it means/ you're good to go...

CROW MAN
Chest bump!

JAY
I did!

CROW MAN
Chest bump! Chest bump! Chest bump! Chest bump! Chest bump! Chest bump! Chest bump! Chest Bump! Chest bump!

CROW MAN flaps his wings and jumps toward the eggs. JAY fights back but CROW MAN grabs one egg; begins eating it.

JAY
FUCK! NO! Get the fuck out of here! Stop it! No! Shit! Fuck! Please!

CROW MAN

Chest bump! Chest bump! Chest bump!

CROW MAN grabs another egg. They play tug-of-war with CROW MAN repeating "chest bump" and JAY repeating profanities.

CROW MAN lets go; JAY falls back, smashing the egg.

Chest bump!

CROW MAN exits.

JAY

I DID YOU STUPID FUCK!

He collapses into the yolk and bits of shell.

Oh my god... oh my god....

He tries to frantically reassemble the shell and collect the yolk. He gives up and lays down in the mess.

JULIA enters with groceries, again on the phone.

JULIA

(phone)

He's been much better - AAAAAAHHHHH!

JAY

...

JULIA

AAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

JAY

...

JULIA

AAAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

JAY

I heard you!

JULIA

You broke them!

JAY

Crow Man.

JULIA

Crow Man? Crow Man!?

JAY

I tried...

JULIA

This is the third time!

JAY

Believe me, Julia/ I did what I could...

JULIA

You have to fight, Jay!

JAY

I did!

JULIA

Kill if you have to!

JAY

Have you ever actually seen Crow Man?

JULIA

No, no, this is what you brought up last time.

JAY

He's stronger than me. It's nature.

JULIA

It's an excuse.

JAY

I thought we'd be ok up here.

JULIA

Ha! That's another thing.

JAY

Another "thing"?

JULIA

Who said building a nest on top of a telephone pole would be safer?

Nobody had to. I thought it best. JAY

You thought it best. JULIA

Yes, factoring the height of/ the pole - JAY

Did you ask me? JULIA

You were at your mom's, you said you trusted/ me - JAY

You could have called and consulted/ me - JULIA

You said you trusted me so I/ did what thought best - JAY

I trusted you to go with the oak I pointed out last month in the park! JULIA

Ah, fuck me. JAY

Don't roll over and die, please. It's not a good look. JULIA

She exits into the bedroom. JAY takes a step to the groceries but slips and falls. He curls into a fetal position. JULIA enters.

I can't look at this anymore, Jay. JULIA

I think I sprained my ankle. JAY

Please clean it up. JULIA

Julia, I don't think I can walk. JAY

JULIA

I said I can't look at this anymore!

JAY

Help me!

She goes to help him up. She falls next to him.

JULIA

Oh my god...

JAY

This is awful.

JULIA

My mom was asking about you today.

JAY

I thought I felt a disturbance in the force.

JULIA

She... said she's been proud of you lately.

JAY

You sure that's the word she used?

JULIA

Even after losing the others, said you've shown real "growth and maturity."

JAY

Wait until she hears about this one... she won't be surprised.

JULIA

...

JAY

Julia?

JULIA

That hurts.

JAY

... I'm sorry...

JULIA

No, that I'm not surprised either...

JAY

Julia, I...

JULIA

You're sorry, I know. It's nature, I know. It's the fucking circle of life, I know, but somehow I can't help but feel that this time would be different.

JAY

Let's clean up.

They help each other up. JULIA goes to the groceries; pulls out Swiffer mop towelettes and fixes it to the mop in the kitchen. Begins cleaning.

JAY picks up pieces of shell.

I never thought this would happen.

JULIA

Jay, let's get this cleaned up.

JAY cannot move.

JAY

I managed to take one back from Crow Man before he flew off... My own fault, that one.

JULIA

Now you don't even want to talk about it? Great. That's perfect. Hiding your head in the sand and playing ostrich. Hoping it all fixes itself. Awesome. I'm glad it is so easy for you. Don't just stand there watching me.

JAY

It's over! Leave him.

JULIA

... fuck nature!

JAY

I never thought it'd give us half a chance.

JULIA

Always fighting the odds.

JAY

Us too.

JULIA

You never thought we'd have a chance?

JAY

Yeah, sure, but I'm trying to figure out why.

JULIA

I'm sorry.

JAY

It's as much me as you.

JULIA

I think about when we met. Those feelings. They'd be nice to have back.

JAY

We could work on it.

JULIA

How much fight do we have left?

JAY

We'll move.

JULIA

A first step.

JAY agrees. The tension breaks. JULIA notices something in the bedroom. She exits. Off stage:

Is that...? The duvet I asked for!

JAY

Yeah!

JULIA (o.s.)

It's so fluffy!

JAY

Last one they had in stock! *(beat)* Hey!

JULIA enters.

JAY

Are we going to be okay?

JULIA