

**PERUSAL SCRIPT**

# **The Funny Little Woman and Her Dumpling**

**A Japanese Folktale**

Adapted by  
George and Gayanne Ramsden King



Newport, Maine

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**The Funny Little Woman and Her Dumpling**

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**CAST OF CHARACTERS 3m 1f****STORYTELLER 1 & ONI 1 (M)****STORYTELLER 2 & ONI 3 (M)****JIZO-SAN & ONI 2 (M)****LITTLE WOMAN (F)**

*There can be 9 players if you separate out the ONIS and add 2 Players who manipulate the scenery and effects in Japanese Kabuki Fashion*

**THE FUNNY LITTLE WOMAN AND HER DUMPLING** by George and Gayanne Ramsden King. Up to 9 players can double to as few as 3m 1f. Simple Costumes or traditional Japanese and Fantasy dress. Props and setting. When this Japanese fable begins there is a famine in the land. An old woman is making one last dumpling to eat when it suddenly rolls away from her. As she runs after it, she is captured by a terrible Oni monster. He takes her to his home to make dumplings for him and his friends and gives her a magic paddle that makes rice. One day the old woman finds her lost dumpling and decides to use the magic paddle to return back to her home. Although Onis are usually portrayed as villains, in this tale the Funny Little Woman ties them up and squirts them with a water gun ending the story with a happy twist on the old pie throwing gag. Rather than throw the pie, the Storyteller eats it. The Funny Little Woman escapes from the Onis and saves her friends while she makes dumplings with the magic rice paddle. Children will love the slapstick routines and seeing how cleverly the Funny Little Woman can outwit the Oni monsters. **ORDER #3297**

**Dr. Gayanne Ramsden King** has produced and directed a variety of plays for adults, teens, and children. She has also published an award-winning Story Theatre adaption of the classic *Beowulf*, and a musical version of *Heidi*, in collaboration with C. Michael Perry. In addition, Dr. King has published a book of poems and several other poems in various collections. She has a Doctorate degree in Children's Theatre from Brigham Young University and has worked as a pre-school teacher, an elementary school librarian and a professor of Public Speaking.

**George G. King** loves music and drama, writing, producing plays and musicals, and working with children of all ages. He published and produced *Coming Home -- A Christmas Musical* which he wrote in conjunction with C. Michael Perry. He has taught in several schools throughout Utah County and in Texas and worked for US Steel, WordPerfect Corp. and Zions Bank as a publication's editor and writer. He has earned degrees from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and Rice University in Houston, Texas.

## **THE FUNNY LITTLE WOMAN AND HER DUMPLING**

**STORYTELLER 1:** Konichiwa! I have a story to tell.

(*He bows.*)

**STORYTELLER 2:** Welcome honorable audience. I will also tell the story.

(*He bows.*)

**STORYTELLER 1:** Why two storytellers, you ask?

**STORYTELLER 2:** Because I see things that he sometimes misses.

**STORYTELLER 1:** Just like him, I notice things that only I can see.

**JIZO-SAN:** I am the Jizo-san. I protect people.

(*He bows.*)

**LITTLE WOMAN:** I am the Funny Little Woman and this is my story.

(*She bows. She bows. She is wearing a black leotard and black tights. She holds up a bag and pulls a kimono from it. She puts it on backwards, gets on her knees, flaps her hands and makes the sound of a seal.*)

**STORYTELLER 2:** What are you doing?

**LITTLE WOMAN:** I'm pretending to be a seal. I'm being very funny. I'll make the audience laugh.

**STORYTELLER 1:** There are no seals in Japan.

**LITTLE WOMAN:** (*Still flapping and barking like a seal*) Of course there are! They live in the warm seas around Japan's southernmost islands.

(*She barks some more.*)

So ha! Ha! Ha! On you!

(*She barks some more.*)

**STORYTELLER 1:** But you're not supposed to be ha ha funny. You are supposed to be "odd".

**LITTLE WOMAN:** I'm not going to be odd. The children in the audience won't like it. They all want me to be funny. Don't you children?

*(She gets on her knees again and barks like a seal.)*

**STORYTELLER 2:** Stop it! Now be serious.

**LITTLE WOMAN:** I'll be serious.

*(Then in a stage whisper.)*

But sometimes children, I'll be funny and you can laugh at me as much as you want to.

*(She barks and claps again.)*

Ha! Ha! Ha!

**STORYTELLER 2:** *(To the Little Woman)* Put on your kimono the right way.

*(She does, and bows once again to the audience.)*

Let us begin.

**STORYTELLERS & JIZO-SAN:** And watch carefully, because sometimes we turn into the terrible Onis.

*(They make scary faces)*

**ALL:** Now, honorable audience, please hear famous Japanese fable, *The Funny Little Woman and Her Dumpling*.

**STORYTELLER 1:** A long time ago in Japan, in a time when the rice crops had failed so that there was very little rice to eat, there lived a Funny Little Old Woman who had just enough rice to make herself one last dumpling. At the very moment when she was about to finish forming the dumpling it suddenly jumped out of her hands and fell on the floor.

**ALL:** Kerplop!

**STORYTELLER 2:** When she got on her knees to look for the dumpling, she realized that it had vanished down a large round hole in the floor!

*(LITTLE WOMAN gets on knees and looks for dumpling. Then stands.)*

She said:

**LITTLE WOMAN:** Oh you crazy bad dumpling where can you be! Oh you naughty, naughty dumpling, you come back to me!

**STORYTELLER 1:** So the little old woman peered down the hole to see where the naughty dumpling had gone.

*(As LITTLE WOMAN peers down the hole, the STORYTELLERS 1 & 2 form a seat with their hands and she sits on it.)*

**STORYTELLER 2:** But the floor gave way and the Funny Little Woman fell in the hole!

*(STORYTELLERS 1 & 2 let her down. LITTLE WOMAN begins running in place.)*

**LITTLE WOMAN:** Help! Help! Hold on to me! Where am I going? Where can I be? I don't belong in such a long dark hole!

**STORYTELLER 1 :** As she fell down down and down she turned round, round, round and round until she eventually found herself in a strange new land where she had never, ever been before.

**STORYTELLER 2 ;** Suddenly she saw her little round dumpling rolling rapidly down the road far ahead of her.

*(STORYTELLERS 1 & 2 let her down. LITTLE WOMAN runs in place and says.)*

**LITTLE WOMAN:** My dumpling, my dumpling where can you be? My dumpling, my dumpling, come back to me!

**STORYTELLER 1:** Finally she came to a Jizo-san.

**STORYTELLER 2:** Now my good children please understand that Jizo-sans are the wonderful and kindly little Japanese gods who protect all new little babies before they are born. Jizo-sans also watch over any unfortunate babies who die even before being born. That's why we all love kindly Jizo-sans!

**LITTLE WOMAN:** *(She bows.)* Oh Lord Jizo- san, have you seen my dumpling?

**JIZO-SAN:** Yes! I saw it roll down the road. It rolled into the house of the wicked Onis. But don't go there! The Onis are terrible monsters! They eat people!

**STORYTELLER 2:** But the old woman only laughed and said:

**LITTLE WOMAN:** My dumpling, my dumpling where can you be?  
My dumpling, my dumpling come back to me!

**three more pages to the end of the script**