

Akane and the Tiger

Characters:

Caroline Joy Wood as	STORYTELLER/Onee-Chan the Fox
Rebecca Obst	AKANE
Katie Harp	HONORABLE MOTHER, KAME and NINJA
Kristy Wallach as	KUMO and TORA
Andrea Riley	PANDA

Featuring Rainbow Ducky as -- HONORABLE GRANDMOTHER

Production Notes:

To Keep Characters separate, we will be using half-masks designed in the characters. The Storyteller has a fox mask, AKANE's mask is red, Honorable Mother has a blue mask. KAME has a turtle mask, KUMO has a butterfly mask, TORA has a tiger mask and PANDA has a panda mask. The Masks should only cover the upper half of the face so we still get expressions.

Props:

1 Rainbow Umbrella,
Assorted Masks, 2 tails for Tora n Storyteller.
2 Fans for KUMO

Japanese used for flavor:

Konichiwa= Good day (pronounced: Ko-Knee-Chee-Wa)
Minna-san= Everyone (pronounced: Mina-san)
Ah, So Desu Ka= Yes, that's right or yes, okay. (rough translation.. (Ah! So Des ka?)”
Onigiri= Rice balls (Pronounced: O-Nee-Ge-REE)
Hai= Yes (pronounced: Hi)
Iie= No (pronounced: Eea)
Kawaii= Cute (pronounced: Ka- why)
Sakura= Cherry Blossoms.
Names: Chosen as follows:
Storyteller- Obvious.
AKANE- Red flower, or Madder
TORA- Tiger
KUMO- Cloud (Butterfly ☺)
KAME- turtle

Time: Present

Setting: Japan

*(STORYTELLER enters, sets up laptop and begins playing **Introduction Music**. PANDA enters next, Introduces the play and self, followed by others one at a time until the storyteller's left. Storyteller introduces self, turns off music... Start Play.)*

STORYTELLER: *(bow deeply to the audience, carrying a rainbow umbrella.)*
Konichiwa Minna-san! ..Welcome to Nihon, or Japan! You are American's yes? English Correct? I am Onee-san, the storyteller. I go from street to street in villages all over Nihon telling stories from both my homeland, as well as stories that travel to me. I tell old stories, and new stories. I tell sad stories, happy stories, and sometimes, even borrowed stories. Today I have an old story tell you all. I have borrowed it.*(bowing again)* from you. I hope you do not mind, Minna-san. You see Americans boys and girls borrowed it from the English who borrowed it from the Germans, who got it from Jacob Grimm who borrowed it from someone else. A wise old clownfish once told me you simply can not keep a good story captured at home in a closet. Now with the help of my friend PANDA, *(Motion to PANDA)* we will tell you the story of when Little Red Riding Hood came to Japan.

STORYTELLER: When Little Red Riding Hood came to Japan, she became Akane, or red flower. It was many, many Suns ago in Nihon, on the island of Shikoku. There was a mountain capped with snow. Below the mountain lies a green valley and in that valley there is a meadow of tall grass which held a small cottage. In the Cottage lived Honorable Mother...

(HONORABLE MOTHER holds up face mask and bows to audience formally.)

STORYTELLER: *(hands the rainbow umbrella to HONORABLE MOTHER)* With the honorable Mother lived a small daughter.

(STORYTELLER steps back, bowing to PANDA)

(AKANE Holds up mask and bows to the audience formally, then to her mother.)

PANDA: This is Akane. She is forgetful and.

(AKANE giggles behind her hand and looks down-cast and shy)

PANDA: She has a way for being curious about things around her...

(AKANE looks around the room obviously distracted by various things..)

PANDA: Listen to your Mother, AKANE-chan, or bad things will happen!

HONORABLE MOTHER: *(With finger pointed to AKANE)* Listen to me, AKANE-chan, my Child. It is time you visited my mother, your Honorable Grandmother for advice on the world.

AKANE: Hai! So Desu ka.... Yes Mama-san.

HONORABLE MOTHER: Bring her this basket filled with pickled octopus and rice balls in thanks for her wisdom.

AKANE: Oh! How Yummy! I love Onigiri and pickled octopus! Maybe Honorable Grandmother will share with me!

HONORABLE MOTHER: Pay Attention, AKANE. Do NOT Go through the bamboo forest. There is Darkness there. There is danger There. There are Tigers There.

AKANE: *(Smiling and Nodding)* Hai, Mama-San, I won't go into the dark, dangerous tiger-filled bamboo forest.

HONORABLE MOTHER: Go Now, before the Sun gets high in the sky. Do not linger and pick flowers. Do Not chase butterflies or pick up stones up from the pathway. And above all, carry your rainbow umbrella with you everywhere you go. It may be quite warm, and then again- it may rain.

AKANE: Hai, Mama-san. I will. *(Pick up basket, and take Umbrella from Honorable Mother- walks length of classroom.)*

(HONORABLE MOTHER watches her walk away, bows to the storyteller, then turns away from the audience and removes HONORABLE MOTHER MASK and puts on KAME mask)

STORYTELLER: *(Returns honorable mother's bow and resumes facing the audience, outstretched hands.)* And so, AKANE set off to her journey... But Alas... AKANE was a very scatterbrained girl and as soon as she saw the bamboo forest with its cool pooling shadows she immediately left the meadow's warm grass to seek shelter in the forest. She forgot All about her Honorable Mother's warnings and went straight into the woods!

(KUMO steps forward, using her fans as "wings" and fanning as she hovers near AKANE)

PANDA: *(pad around AKANE)* No! No! No! Do not take this path, AKANE-chan! Turn back and remember your Honorable Mother's words! *(step to one side after your done speaking)*

(AKANE stop walking around the class room.)

AKANE: How Kawaii! It is a cute flower. A lovely waving flower. I will pick the flower for Honorable Grandmother. (*put down umbrella and try to hug KUMO*)

KUMO : (angry) Stop! Do Not touch me!

*I am no earthly bud
No Blossom of the mud,
I am here, I am there
I am the Empress of the air
Foolish child use your eyes
I am KUMO the butterfly*

AKANE: (*Bows deeply to KUMO*) I beg your pardon, Empress Butterfly. I am confused, the shadows of the bamboo teased my eyes. Please excuse this unworthy AKANE! Your beauty simply dazzles the senses.

KUMO (*Looking flattered*) Very Well.. But never confuse me or mine for a flower again! I am late for an appointment with the Sakura blossoms! Let me pass child,. (*KUMO “flutters” off while..*)

PANDA:

*Butterfly Fluttering By
Flashing and fluttering
Skipping and skittering
Seek to hide and hide to seek
Goodbye Butterfly!*

(*KUMO turn back to “Stage” remove mask, put on mask for TORA*)

(*KAME turn to stage and enter slowly- stop at center and “hide” in your shell from AKANE*)

STORYTELLER: An Encounter with a butterfly princess, do you think that stopped our AKANE? Not even for a moment! She walked further into the forest... (*Stay to Right, look for a boy in the audience*)

PANDA:

*One Foot, Two Foot
Three Foot, Four.
Now a little,
Than a little,
Again a little more*

AKANE: But what is this?! (*Drop the umbrella and reach out to Touch the turtle’s back*) I do not need my eyes to tell me. My fingers know what this is. A Great, lucky stone to give my honorable Grandmother. I will pick it up from the ground and take it to her for

her garden. *(tug on the shell)*

KAME: Whoa! What is this!? What is Tugging on my Shell? *(pop head out from behind hands, making a show to stretch and look like coming out of the shell)*

AKANE: Oh! I thought you were a stone!

KAME: A stone? Humph. I am KAME, the turtle. Your senses fail you child. *(Start to walk away from AKANE, slowly while speaking:)*

*Leave me Alone
I am not a stone
A stone is a no one
I am KAME the slow one*

AKANE: Oh! I beg your pardon oh noblest of turtles. *(She picks umbrella and starts “walking” again.)* What an odd forest this is...

(TORA turns and enters the scene, hiding behind a “tree”)

PANDA: Listen! Listen! What is that?! A child alone in the forest? What’s that? A tiger in the bushes? Oh Akane-chan!

(TORA Rushes out at AKANE.)

(AKANE: cowers behind her umbrella)

AKANE*(Peering over the edge of the umbrella)* Oh! Oh! You look like---! OH! Umm.. OH!

TORA: What do I look like, my little darling?

AKANE: *(straightening up)* Well, you look like a tiger, sound like a tiger.. Move like a tiger.. But you aren’t a tiger.

TORA: *(Confused, scratches head)* What?! You confusing girl... why can’t I be a tiger? I have stripes...

AKANE: Because.

TORA: Because Why?

AKANE: Because I ‘think’ you are a tiger. So it can not possibly true that you are in fact a tiger. Today I met a flower who was really a butterfly, and a stone that was really a turtle. Now, listen carefully, if I think you are a tiger, then surely you are something else entirely. Perhaps a fish, or some sort of tree?

TORA: ...I'm confused... *(Shaking head)* What am I then?

AKANE: Hmmmm... you have orange fur and black stripes.. You must be.. AH! I know! You must be a ClownFish! Nice to meet you Clownfish! I shall tell my Grandmother about you.

TORA: *(To Audience)* Ah.... A Grandmother... Two nice morsels for TORA! *(Lick lips.. To AKANE)* Of Course! I am a clownfish! Your such a... clever .. Child... Your not allergic.. To fish are you?

AKANE: Lie, No, I am not allergic to fish.

TORA: Then take me home to your grandmother and I will become her pet and keep her company when you are not there.

AKANE: Hai! How sweet for you to come to my grandmothers house to become a pet!

(TORA and AKANE walk side by side for a bit around the room traveling to grandma's house)

PANDA: *(While they walk to audience)* Oh! Oh! Foolish Child! EVIL Tiger! What will happen?! What will become of AKANE-Chan??

(STORYTELLER place "grandmother" on the table. AKANE Freeze walking.. TORA Stop, turn to look at the audience.)

TORA: Ah, I can tell you what will happen. I will get a very nice dinner out of a very silly girl who believes a cat is really a fish and a dessert with her grandmother! I just need to get her into the cottage... Ah! Perfect! An Idea!

(AKANE: Unfreeze!)

TORA: *(To AKANE)* Look! Over there! A boy! *(Point to boy in audience.)*

AKANE: Where?! Where?! *(leave the path again to look for a boy in the audience..)*

(TORA Smirk and move to the table and pick up the grandmother. "Throw" it at the STORYTELLER, who's crossing the area. Mock Slam an invisible Closet.)

TORA: Into the closet with you! I will fetch you when it's time for dessert.. Now .. Let's see.. Oh the cleverness of me... *(Pick up the shawl and put it on over mask)* There I am! Do I not look like the grandmother? Ah, now to bait my trap... *(lean on the table and Mock-Cough 3 times)* *(High pitched, creaky old woman voice)* AKANE-chan! AKANE-chan! Where is my granddaughter?

AKANE: *(stops what she's doing and rushes back to the grandmother.)* Here Grandmother! I am here! ..Oh.. My.. What's a matter Grandmother? Did you.. Swallow a hairball?

TORA: *(Cough)* No, no, I think I ate a butterfly... Come.. Closer to me..

AKANE: OH Grandmother, I will run to the Ninja's next door and fetch help for you!

TORA: *(Quickly)* No! No! *(More slowly)* I'll be fine if you stay near me.. Come.. Stand by my chair...

AKANE:Umm Alright.. *(To the Audience)* I don't want to offend Honorable Grandmother, but she's looking a bit.. Mm.. different today... I think perhaps she needs to get out more. *(To TORA Granny)* Honorable Grandmother, what .. Fuzzy ears you have...

TORA: All the better to hear you with my dear.

PANDA *(turns around and looks down at arm at invisible watch.)* Where is that Ninja?

(TORA and AKANE look to Panda, then at each other, shrug ..)

AKANE: Ah.. Umm what.. Sharp, green eyes you have...

TORA: All the better to see you with my dear...

PANDA *(Irritated)* I know I told the Ninja the correct time... Timing is everything in these sorts of productions... *(weary glance toward Storyteller who, even as a closet, is glaring at Panda suspiciously!)*

(TORA and AKANE look to Panda.. AKANE, when returning to looking to Tora, points at the invisible(?) tail.)

AKANE: *(look at the chair and point at invisible tail)* Why.. Grandmother.. What a .. tail you have? Wait! Grandmothers don't have long tails! You're TORA the Clownfish! What have you done with my Grandmother?!? Help! Someone help!

TORA: Two bites you'll make!

(NINJA shows up to the scene, looking out of breath...)

PANDA: Hurrah! Hurrah! The NINJA comes! She will help AKANE-chan! *(An aside to the audience)* Better late than never, ne?

NINJA: *(walks over toward the table)* Get back Tiger! Or I will chop off your tail and turn you into a fur coat!

TORA: Chop off my tail?? Tiger? Surely your mistaken. Tell her, AKANE, I am a clownfish! Not a tiger!

NINJA: You are TORA, scourge of the forest! You can not fool me even under that shawl! (*Take shawl for the “great reveal“*)

TORA(*step back a pace from NINJA/AKANE and “beg” with hands staying standing.*) Please! Please! I did nothing! The Grandmother is in the closet. Mercy!

(*AKANE get Grandmother from STORYTELLER and carry her on scene.*)

NINJA: what’s this? Begging for mercy you proud cat? Very well, if you promise never to leave the bamboo forest and do harm to a human, you may live. Now Scat Cat!

(*TORA Scampers*)

STORYTELLER: (*Looking highly irritated but crafty*) The Ninja, watching Tora scamper off into the shadows of the bamboo forest, suddenly realized that’d make an awesome technique for her fighting style and left without telling Akane, or her grandmother goodbye.

(*NINJA exits jogging Storyteller turns her attention from Ninja to Akane*)

STORYTELLER: As for AKANE, she was less gift-giving after that...

PANDA: Greedy really..

STORYTELLER: Never again did she go deep into the forest

PANDA; (*nodding wisely*) Never again

STORYTELLER: Never again did she chase butterflies

PANDA: (*nodding wisely*) Never again

STORYTELLER: Nor did she ever pick up cool stones for her grandmothers garden, lucky or not,

PANDA: (*nodding wisely- than confused*) Never More.. Er.. Oh no!

STORYTELLER: (*Eyeball PANDA before turning back to the audience sounding depressed because her plans been thwarted*) And I assure you, now she knows the difference between a Tiger, and a Clownfish.

PANDA: (*gleeful*) She knows!

STORYTELLER: AKANE-chan and her Rainbow Umbrella went home to her mother and there she lives to this very day.

PANDA: In the cottage on the meadow in the valley below the mountain capped with snow, on the island of Shikoku in Nihon...

STORYTELLER: Many suns ago..

PANDA: many, many suns ago...

(Wait a heartbeat, both start to bow, stop mid-motion to talk to each other.)

STORYTELLER: You ruined it..

PANDA: Ruined what?

STORYTELLER: Really.. A ninja?

PANDA: Really... a Clownfish? How much did she bribe you?

STORYTELLER: Oh, a few Clams.

PANDA: *(Groans)*

STORYTELLER: *(To Audience, winking)* Arigato!

(NINJA, TORA, AKANE, turn and bow with STORYTELLER and PANDA to audience)

*Taken From "Crimson Parasol" and adjusted

Work Sited and Referenced:

Boiko, Claire "Crimson Parasol" Children's plays for Creative Actors, Plays, INC, Boston 1967 pg 1 - 11