



Sweet Daruma: a Japan satire

Janice Young

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Magda is thrilled to leave her globalization-protesting boyfriend in Toronto and head to Tokyo to teach English conversation...or so she thinks. Upon her arrival she is whisked off to save the life of a suicidal salaryman with the help of a strategic idiom. Magda has unwittingly joined the Anne of Grey Tokyo Emergency English Response Team, and she better brush up her vocabulary in a hurry, because the English emergencies keep coming. Suddenly caught up in the politics of English and pop culture in Japan, Magda soon realizes to expect the unexpected. She's now the student--and Japan definitely has a lot to teach.

"From Orgasm Kabuki to troll girls in the pee trade, stackable Daruma apartments to a mute monkey named Kagemusha, Janice Valerie Young has written an irreverent send-up of the warped world of English conversation schools (and the zany international staff that fuel them) that is as imaginative and over-the-top as Tokyo itself. Strike up the chindonya, this girl can write!"

--Leza Lowitz, author of *Green Tea to Go*

"Janice Valerie Young's absurdist satire of the turn-of-the-millennium Japanese pop culture and post-bubble society trots out an outrageous cast of characters, from Yakuza wannabes to Yamamba urine sellers and a particularly disgusting pet monkey...a mélange not seen since Thomas Pynchon's 'whole sick crew'."

--Hillel Wright, author of *Rotary Sushi*

Review of *Bankrupt*, from *Faces in the Crowds: a Tokyo International Anthology*: "*Bankrupt*, a short story by Janice Valerie Young that contains no references to Japan or "Japan" is a screamed, jazzy, nerve-jangling two-page riff on a broken marriage triggered when the husband complains that a hair of his wife, who feels herself to be the wronged party, has fallen into his spaghetti."

--Mark Austin, *The Daily Yomiuri*

Cover illustration by Wayne Wilson

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George Green:

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Diana Slama:

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