

HAWTHORNE VALLEY HARVEST

A Collection of Plays for the Elementary Grades

Compiled

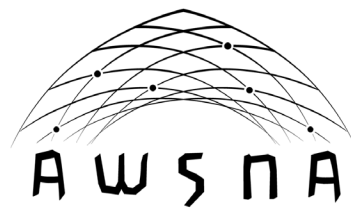
by

William Ward

HAWTHORNE VALLEY HARVEST

COMPILED BY

WILLIAM WARD



DEDICATION

Hawthorne Valley Harvest is dedicated to the children and faculty of Hawthorne Valley School and to the creative spirit that inspires Waldorf education.

Printed with support from the Waldorf Curriculum Fund

Published by:

AWSNA Publications
The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
65-2 Fern Hill Road
Ghent, NY 12075

© 2009 by AWSNA Publications

Title: *Hawthorne Valley Harvest*

Compiled by: William Ward

Editor: David Mitchell

Cover: David Mitchell

Cover Art: Stella Elliston

Photograph Back Cover: Sedat Pakay

Proofreader: Ann Erwin

Contributing Authors: Beatrice Cohen, Ariana Hays, Jolene Jackson, Gloria Kemp, Kevin Kilb,

Claire McConnell, Patrice Maynard, Laura Summer, Andree Ward, and William Ward

ISBN: 978-1-888365-78-8

CONTENTS

PREFACE by David Mitchell.....	7
--------------------------------	---

INTRODUCTION: IN PRAISE OF PLAYS by William Ward.....	9
---	---

FIRST GRADE

“The Light Child” by Andree Ward.....	13
“The White Snake” by Ariana Hays.....	17
“The Devil with Three Golden Hairs” by William Ward.....	22
“The Six Servants” by Jolene Jackson.....	35
“Snow White” by William Ward.....	45

SECOND GRADE

“The Voyage of Saint Brendan” by Kevin Kilb.....	56
“Saint Jerome and the Lion” by William Ward.....	61
“Odelia and Aldaric” by Laura Summer.....	67
“Saint George and the Dragon” by Claire McConnell.....	78
Saint Martin Legend by William Ward.....	81
“Saint Martin’s Pageant” by William Ward.....	83
“Jumping Mouse” by Patrice Maynard.....	87

THIRD GRADE

“Passover Celebration” by William Ward	92
“The Maccabees” by Patrice Maynard	98
“Joseph and His Brothers” by William Ward	103
“Moses” by William Ward	115

FOURTH GRADE

“The Forging of the Sampo” by Kevin Kilb	131
“The Death of Baldur” by William Ward	144

FIFTH GRADE

“The Epic of Gilgamesh” by Gloria Kemp	157
“Zarathustra: The Golden Star” by Jolene Jackson	176

SIXTH GRADE

“The Peacemaker” by Beatrice Cohen	185
“The Sacred Flame” by William Ward	201

FIFTH - EIGHTH GRADES

Michaelmas Pageant Introduction by William Ward	228
“Michaelmas Pageant” by William Ward	230

AFTERWORD: PRACTICAL GUIDANCE by William Ward	240
---	-----

PREFACE

by
David Mitchell

William Ward was a gentle man with a sharp wit, a broad smile, and a friendly demeanor who made everyone he came into contact with feel that they were extraordinarily important to him. His greeting was sincere, outreaching, and committed.

While many miles separated our sister Waldorf schools (Pine Hill and Hawthorne Valley), he and I met regularly at conferences and AWSNA meetings. In over thirty years of friendship I never heard William issue an unkind word about anyone. Think about how rare this is!

William possessed many talents, and one of the areas of William's genius was an ability to tell a wonderfully rich story and then apply it dramatically. His writing was direct and simple. His choice of words, his arrangement of phrases, and his ability to sprinkle good humor in the midst of profound wisdom were inspiring.

Over the years I participated in, and was witness to, many skits William crafted for adults in conferences. He was astute in addressing the most profound flaws within a person's characterological disposition. His barbed wit illuminated the individuality while at the same time was void of pain. The truth of what he said illuminated the audience with humor so light it was irresistible. He helped us to accept our own flaws.

For many years William wrote plays for his classes, directed community celebrations at Harlemlville, and assisted colleagues in writing their own plays and verses. William understood how important it was for Waldorf teachers to write their own plays – writing into them the insights gained by reading the personalities in one's class. In honor of William's passing earlier this year, AWSNA Publications wishes to make some of his work available to a wider audience through this collection of plays. May this *Harvest* inspire teachers along this creative and profoundly spiritual pathway.

INTRODUCTION: IN PRAISE OF PLAYS

by
William Ward

Hawthorne Valley Harvest is a collection of plays and pageants created by teachers for performance by elementary school students from kindergarten through grade six. It also includes a model for an adaptable multi-cultural Michaelmas pageant in which the whole school community can participate. Selected from dramatic productions staged at Hawthorne Valley School in upstate New York, this harvest of plays is intended to encourage and stimulate class teachers in the Waldorf schools and elementary school teachers generally to tackle the rewarding creative task of writing their own plays tailored for the diverse individuals (characters!) in their classes. Experienced teachers know that class plays offer exceptional opportunities for growth for particular students, unite the class at new levels of social and artistic cooperation, and generally quicken a love for literature. The transformative effect of plays is a recurring miracle, an enchantment, and a revelation. Written words leap off the page to become living, breathing, resolute heroines and heroes whose earthly and spiritual trials resonate with our deepest longings to know our true selves.

As a practical matter, it is understood that a teacher may be daunted by the task of creating a play for his or her class. Don't be. Just do it! After all, the story you select is "given" in the fairy tales, legends, myths, and histories that form the backbone of the language arts curriculum for each grade in the Waldorf school. Among all the stories you share with your class in the course of a year, one will light up that speaks most deeply to the particular constellation and challenges of the students in your care. The matrix of archetypal wisdom that originally inspired the bards and ensures the enduring relevance of time-honored stories is a reservoir of inspiration to awaken the sleeping poet-playwright in you.

Be certain, from humble beginnings, your creative effort will prove to be a powerful current in the stream flowing between teacher and child that engenders reverence for the living word as bearer of beauty, light of thinking, warmth of idealism, and clarion call to action. Through the

artistic exercise of writing a play, your imagination will become more mobile and lively and your command of language more resourceful and pictorial. Your practice of creative writing will subtly radiate further, teaching you how to teach writing, deepening your understanding for the students in your class, stimulating your ability both to study and to present all subjects vividly, and even improve your ability to communicate with parents and colleagues in the drama of daily life. Most importantly, your work in this direction will culminate in a festive offering that joyfully unites the extended class community. The successful staging of a class play, analogous to building a Waldorf school, demonstrates what great things can be achieved when people contribute their creative activity toward a worthy collective goal.

While the potential rewards are great, a teacher, newly finding her or his way among the challenges of class teaching, may not be able to take on the writing of an original class play right away. But one soon discovers it is often easier to write one than to search in vain for material of real substance written for children connected with the themes arising in the curriculum that live so powerfully in the children's imagination. May the enclosed plays serve both as proven models for what can be done and templates for adaptations for your own class. Feel free to revise, edit, amend, or rewrite any of these plays with the original author's blessing. If you find a play in *Hawthorne Valley Harvest* to use as springboard for your class' creative endeavors, please feel free to consult with the original author for helpful (and hard-won) pointers. A few key suggestions for successfully staging a play are included in the appendix under the heading: *Practical Guidance*.

Why are class plays such powerful learning experiences? A clue lies in the word itself – "Play!" The word rings with the most joyful associations, encompassing the spectrum from the free improvisation of children to the artistic heights of Shakespeare's genius. Play is the essential "work" of childhood – mirroring, practicing, and assimilating through imitation and imagination the activities and roles of life. The magic of play transforms blocks to ships, pebbles to bread, tables to caves, and chairs to locomotives. Mothers, bakers, bears, carpenters, kings, princesses, captains, doctors, teachers, angels, gnomes, engineers, and ponies simultaneously inhabit and interact in the spontaneous play of kindergarten children who make free and inventive use of colorful capes, crowns and hats, wands, baskets, and wagons. The playful intuitive power of imitation, empathy, and imagination to enter whole-heartedly and willingly into the life and being of others is the fertile ground from which education for life springs.

In Waldorf education the playful nature of the child continues to flow as creative imagination through all the arts as the lifeblood of

intellectual development grounded in active perception, a heightened feeling for beauty, and intuitive social sensitivity. All artistic disciplines, drama prominently and explicitly, exercise and differentiate the feeling-cognition of the heart to waken to new ideals and worlds of experience. Simultaneously, the heart's warm enthusiasm fires the will to learn and to create.

Plays fulfill a profound longing in the soul of the child to revere a heroine or hero, to look up to what is noble and good. There are repercussions throughout later life for those who either do or do not find individuals worthy to admire and emulate. In a cultural milieu that exploits the aspirations of childhood for genuine heroines and heroes with counterfeit images in comics, cartoons, movies, and trivial games, Waldorf education rediscovers in the art of drama a most powerful educational tool and healing medicine.

Through the suspense, conflict, catharsis, and resolution of drama, youthful thought and feeling expand to share the joys and sorrows of characters finding their way through the trials of existence. Drama is the gateway for soul experience to grow beyond the narrow confines of self. Through this portal, powerful culture-shaping forces of world religions, the path of initiation, the gods and goddesses, heroines and heroes of mythology and history live anew for each generation with archetypal power. In plays the whole being of the child participates to bring to life universally meaningful stories of our evolving humanity – the story of Everyman, individualized in a particular time, place, and culture.

The teacher's thoughtful selection of play material and sensitive casting are pedagogical therapy that can resolve a social impasse, instill confidence, help a child through crisis or great loss, encourage a hidden talent, help overcome weakness and gain skill, even exorcise and transform a stubborn habit of character.

To bring off a play, the comfort of a predictable, daily routine must be set aside. It's Showtime! In dress, glance, stance, tone, gesture, feeling, word, and thought the individual becomes a persona fated for joy or sorrow in dramatic interaction with classmates also no longer themselves. This is not like creating a page in a main lesson book or displaying a painting. You are it! With the wave of the casting wand (and a lot of work), a thoroughly modern teenager can be transformed into the King of France ("At last, the recognition I deserve!") or the courageous, revolutionary Saint Joan! All participants step out of daily habit and static personalities into the exhilarating fresh air of drama in the making. Together, teachers and students win through, despite and because of the many obstacles to be overcome, to a deeper recognition of one another.

All the arts are mobilized to bring the play to life: speech, poetry and drama, gesture and movement, painting, and music with the supporting magic of set design, lighting, and costuming. Ah, the joy of costuming: a regal gown, a beggar's rags, tights and doublet, beard, jewels, togas and tunics, swords and spears, pelts and ears, helmets and crowns! O, the passionate thrills of crafty conniving, disconsolate weeping, imperious commanding, fearful trembling, foolish bumbling, fierce fighting, wise counseling, compassionate consoling, courageous confronting, bold discovering, fearless foiling and freeing!

Hawthorne Valley Harvest demonstrates the breadth and depth of plays witnessed and performed during the elementary years in a Waldorf school. These dramatic experiences that throng the stage of the imagination resound with a host of personalities – tragic and comic, noble and base, faithful and cruel, forgiving and vengeful, foolish and wise – throughout the galaxy of human emotions and deeds. We are transfixed and transformed by the enchantment of drama. Trials, confrontations, deaths, and rebirths become our own story as food for contemplation that is empathically assimilated as content of character and substance of conscience in the great drama of life.

THE LIGHT CHILD

by Andree Ward

For many years our kindergartens each performed a little Christmas Pageant for their families in the classroom on the last day before the vacation. This play was inspired by that experience: the joy of the children in playing the well-loved characters, the joy of the parents in seeing their children sing and process about with such natural reverence and dignity. It was also inspired by a beautiful book about Solstice celebrations. The play was written with younger children in mind, retaining from the older children's pageant the general pageant form, the universal themes represented by the Angel, the family, the birth, and the gift-giving, but leaving out the specific Christian carols and images.

The melody for most of the play is from a beautiful Advent carol by Veronika Roemer. Songs 2, 4, and 5 are adapted from several songs in the Wynstones books. Song 3 is the "Christ Child's Lullaby"; we sing "Allelujah" throughout. We all sing and speak everything, building the play up slowly as a circle over 3 or 4 weeks. We then open up the circle and invite the parents in. With such young children, of course, the play is carried primarily by the teacher. Through the play, each child remembers how the Heavens shine down upon every birth and how the earth and its elements surround and support the family. The children sing and speak as they can, but they always know the path for their journey and seek and give the gifts with great conviction.

The children sit in a circle around the empty cradle. As the first 3 characters are introduced, they take their places by the cradle. All sing the following verses, melody 1, or speak together.

ANGEL: *carrying a star*

Comes an angel, from the highest.
Down to earth s/he makes her/his way.
Light the path, a babe is coming
To our home this Winter's day.

MOTHER: *carrying the baby hidden under her blue veil, her "secret"*

Gentle Mother, softly walking,
Through the stars she makes her way.
Wondrous stars so brightly shining,
Bless my child this winter's day.

FATHER: Now the father follows closely,
 Walks the earth with steady tread.
 Here's the cradle. Is all ready
 For our babe to lay his head?

ALL: Mother, Father, Angel bright,
 All await, the time is near.
 But who will bring earth's gifts and blessings,
 Stone and water, fire and air?

CHILDREN *speak*: We will help, the children call.
 We'll journey forth and fetch them all,
 Wondrous gifts from far and near,
 For the baby coming here.

Earth Element

The children walk to the earth kingdom, indicated with a purple cloth.

 The Light Child is coming;
 What shall we bring?
 A gift from steadfast earth
 Will be just the thing!

CHILDREN *sing*: *One child unwraps the gift, revealing a sparkly amethyst.*
 Beneath our feet the loyal stones,
 Soft earth where deep roots grow.
 The crystal cave is dark this night.

Spoken: How did this glittering crystal catch
 A flash of bright starlight?

Water Element

The children walk to the water kingdom, indicated with a blue cloth.

CHILDREN *speak*: The light child is coming,
 What shall we bring?
 A gift from flowing water
 Will be just the thing!

CHILDREN *sing*: *One child unwraps the gift, revealing a little cup.*
 Flowing, trickling, drip, drip, dripping,
 Lovely water finds its way.
 Refreshing us, we drink it deep.

Spoken: Let's give the babe this cup to keep.

Air Element

The children walk to the air kingdom, indicated with a yellow cloth.

CHILDREN *speak* The light child is coming,
 What shall we bring?
 A gift from singing wind
 Will be just the thing!

CHILDREN *sing: One child unwraps the gift, revealing a wooden flute.*
 The wind pipes its songs and tosses the trees,
 And up with the birds go the flying leaves.
 The wind makes music for all to hear,
 Humming, whistling, whispering near.

Spoken: A pipe for the babe, the little one dear.

Fire Element

The children walk to the fire kingdom, indicated with a red cloth.

CHILDREN *speak:* The light child is coming,
 What shall we bring?
 A gift of golden flame,
 Will be just the thing!

CHILDREN *sing: One child unwraps the gift, revealing an apple with a candle in it. The teacher may light the candle, or not.*

 Stars and moon shine out tonight.
 Closer now, they watch and wait,
 For our journey's almost done.

Spoken: We light this candle with star for flame,
 It's for the babe, the little one.

All sing Song 2 as the children approach the family and sit around the empty cradle.

 Children, children softly walking,
 Through the night their gifts they bring,
 While above the watch they're keeping,
 Angels' song doth gladly ring.

All sing the Alleluia Song 3 – The baby is born. Mother places the doll carefully in the cradle while the Angel lowers the star over it. The children place their gifts near the cradle.

Lullaby, Song 4, all gently rock the cradle.

All stand. Mother carries the baby. Angel and star lead the procession round in a big circle while singing Song 5, rather boisterously!

We are children and we sing of lots of jolly things.
We can dance and we can shout
We can wave our caps about. (*wave caps!*)
The stars shine above us, the snow shines below,
And we are so happy in this wondrous glow.

THE WHITE SNAKE

A Grimms' fairy tale adapted for first grade

by Ariana Hays

CHORUS: There once was a king most wise and rare,
The secrets he knew were born through the air.
Each day after dinner when the hall was clear
One more dish was brought by his servant dear.
No one knew what this dish contained,
From all eyes hidden, as the king had ordained.

One day the servant, with curiosity overcome,
Carried that dish back into his room.
Lifting the cover, he found the white snake
And one small bite he did carefully take.

Then little voices he heard by his window.
Looking out he saw sparrows flitting to and fro.
Chattering merrily they told of their day,
All they'd seen in the woods and meadows of hay.
The language of animals was now clear to the servant
From eating one morsel of the king's white serpent.

But the Queen had lost, that very day,
A ring most beautiful, so people did say:

PEOPLE: It must be the servant who stole the ring.
For he is allowed everywhere and sees everything.

KING: You must find the Queen's ring and point out the thief
Or on the morrow you shall lose your life.

SERVANT: I promise you I am innocent of this crime.

CHORUS: But the King would not listen to him this time.
To the courtyard he went and watched the ducks,
Overhearing their chattering quacks and clucks.

DUCK: This morning as I ate below the Queen's window,
Her ring in my haste I did mistakenly swallow,
And now in my stomach so heavy it lies.

CHORUS: That servant quickly seized that duck by her neck.
To the kitchen he took her and said to the cook:

SERVANT: Here's a fine duck, pray roast her for the King.

COOK: Yes, by her size I see she can feed the Queen too.
She's fattened herself well and won't be tough,
She's waited for roasting long enough.

CHORUS: The cook killed the duck and for the spit dressed her
And found the Queen's ring lodged down inside her.

KING: I see you are innocent and have been wronged.
I'll grant you any favor. For what have you longed?

SERVANT: I've a mind to see the world, to learn more than I know.
May I have a horse and money and your leave to go?

CHORUS: The request was granted; he set forth on a horse
And after some time by a pond led his course.
Three fish by the edge he saw caught in the reeds.
They were gasping for water and air could not breathe.

FISH: Oh, why such a miserable death must we die?
Gasping for water so helpless we lie.

CHORUS: The servant freed the fish from their prison of reeds.
They leapt with delight and thanked him for the deed.

FISH: We will remember you for your service most kind.
We will repay you well when trouble you find.

CHORUS: Through forest and field the servant rode onward
Until at his feet a small voice he heard.

ANT KING: Why cannot folks and their clumsy beasts
Keep from trampling us with their big, fat feet?

CHORUS: So the servant to another path turned aside,
And the ant king in appreciation loudly cried:

ANT KING: We will remember you as a brother.
One good turn deserves another!

CHORUS: The servant rode on and came to a wood
Where two old ravens lived with their brood.

RAVENS: Out with you, you idle, good-for nothing creatures,
Long enough have we fed you and been your teachers.
No more burden shall you be upon ourselves.
You are now big enough to fend for yourselves.

RAVEN CHICKS: Oh, what helpless little chicks are we,
How shall we find food or perch in a tree?
We must care for ourselves, yet we cannot fly.
Now we must starve, now we will die.

CHORUS: The servant heard the young ravens' lament,
And from his horse he did quickly alight.
With silvery sword he killed his good steed
And gave it to the fledglings that they could feed.
They hopped to their meal, for they were eager
To fill their bellies that rumbled with hunger.

RAVEN CHICKS: Kind sir, we'll remember you and your good deed.
We will come to your aid when you are in need.

CHORUS: The youth on his own two legs now walked
Till he came to a city whose streets were blocked
With a great, noisy crowd, 'round a herald they gathered.

HERALD: The king's lovely daughter wishes for a husband,
A man who completes a hard task to win her hand.
But, if with this task he does not succeed,
His life will be forfeit, no mercy may he plead.

CHORUS: Many young men had already failed,
And many the mothers who for their sons wailed.
But when the youth saw the king's pretty daughter,
Overcome by her beauty, he determined to win her.
He went before the king and declared himself a suitor.

Before the servant's eyes the king
Threw into the sea a golden ring.

KING: Fetch that ring up from the depths of the sea,
But come up without it and thrown in you'll be,
Over and over until the waves drown thee.

CHORUS: The crowd left him alone, their hearts were sore.
But for the king's mercy they dared not implore.

On the shore the youth stood. What should he do?
Then three fish he saw darting through the ocean blue.
These were the fish whose life he had saved.
Now they swam to him and at his feet laid
A mussel whose shell held the golden ring.
With joy the youth took it to show the king.

But the princess was proud and she could see
That the servant, by birth, her equal could not be.
She scorned him now and required another task;
He readily agreed to whatsoever she asked.

To the blossoming garden he followed her down
Where ten sacks of millet she strewed on the lawn.

PRINCESS: Each seed must be picked from this lawn
And all be in sacks before the dawn.

CHORUS: The youth sat down and carefully considered
How to pick from the grass the seeds there littered.
Sorrowfully he sat, awaiting sunrise,
Sure that on the morrow he would die.

In the dark of night came the good ant king
With thousands of ants who were all hard-working.
All the millet seeds across the grass scattered
By their quick industry they gratefully gathered.

When on the garden shone the first sunlight,
The youth saw the sacks had been filled in the night.
The king's lovely daughter came down presently,
And the task all done she was amazed to see.
But her heart was still too full of pride.

PRINCESS: A fruit most rare this man must provide.
If he would wish to take me to wife,
He shall bring me an apple from the Tree of Life.

CHORUS: Now the youth knew not where the Tree of Life stood;
Yet, till he found it, wander he would.
Through three broad kingdoms he wandered afoot,
Until one evening he stopped in a wood.
Under a tree he lay down to sleep,
Trusting that God his life would keep.

Then with a rustling of branches came down
An apple as gold as the king's royal crown.
Three ravens flew down and perched on his knee.

RAVENS: The ravens you saved from starvation are we.
We had grown big when we did hear
That the golden apple you sought without fear.
So we took to wing and flew over the sea
To the end of the world where stands the great tree,
The Tree of Life bearing apples of gold,
And brought one back over the ocean so cold.

CHORUS: The youth journeyed home full of joy and laughter,
Bringing the apple to the King's beautiful daughter.
No more excuses could she now make,
So each from the apple a bite did take.
Her heart for the youth was now filled with love,
And their marriage was blessed by the heavens above.
They lived in happiness as King and Queen,
And a kingdom so rich has not since been seen.

Now the story has come to its end.
We trust our play did none offend.

THE DEVIL WITH THREE GOLDEN HAIRS

*A play for first graders
adapted from Grimms' fairy tales*

by William Ward

ALL: Once upon a time
A poor woman bore a son.
*(Angels bring the child with veil over his head to mother,
who removes the veil.)*

This is the Child of Good Fortune,
What he does shall be well done!

KING: Who is this happy child
That causes Fate to smile?

ALL: It was foretold for him
A full and fruitful life,
And by his fourteenth year
The King's daughter for his wife.

KING: This will never be
As long as I do rule,
To have my daughter wed
This poor and ragged fool.

(to parents)
I will give you silver,
I will give you gold,
Just give to me your only son
To help me when I'm old.

PARENTS: Our child cannot be bought or sold,
Neither for silver nor for gold.

KING: Gold coins glitter like the sun
They are yours; give me your son,
Buy a good life for yourself,
Give up your child, keep this wealth.

FATHER: Let us sell Fortune's Child,
 All things will turn round right.
 Gold for us, a son for him,
 The child's future will be bright!
(They give the King the child.)

KING: This shall be your palace,
(veiling child in black) A casket black as night,
 You will never marry my daughter,
 As sure as the deep river flows with water!
(sets child adrift on river of waving blue cloth)

RIVER: *Carry the trusting child along.*
(song) *Rolling river be your song,*
Drifting with the swirling deep,
Child of Fortune sound asleep.

MILLER'S BOY: Look, a casket on the stream,
 Filled with some great prize.
 Sure it's more than just a dream,
 I see it with my eyes.
(unveils child)

A pretty boy, upon my life,
 O great joy, for the miller's wife!

ALL: A son, a son! Thanks be to God!
 May he grow up true and good.

STORM: Lightning streak! Thunder crash!
 Wild wind wail and lash.
 Rivers of rain rush from the sky,
 Heaven is weeping from every eye.

KING: I seek safe shelter from the storm.
 This old mill is snug and warm.
 Open, good folk, in the King's name.
 Not even I this storm can tame.
(Youth brings the King wine.)

Who is this lad? Is he your son?

MILLER AND WIFE: Our son, yes, yet not our own.
 On the river he was found,
 Drifting on the water's flow
 Fourteen fleeting years ago.

KING (*aside*):
I threw him in the water
To keep him from my daughter.
The river sang his lullaby
While I supposed the child would die.
This letter, however, will seal his doom,
And lay him in a darkened tomb.
(*He writes*)
"Dear Queen,
Kill the bearer of this letter.
The sooner he's dead,
For us, the better!
By order of the King."

Lad, take a message for me
To our beloved Queen.
Go as quickly as you're told,
Your reward, these coins of gold.

(*Youth sets off.*)

FOREST:
(*Youth weaves in and out of "tree" children.*)
oo....., oo....., oo....., oo.....,
The woods are deep.
Day wanes dim.
oo....., oo....., oo....., oo.....,
Trees twist and creak,
shadows follow him.
oo....., oo....., oo....., oo.....,

CHILD:
FOREST:
CHILD:
FOREST:
CHILD:
FOREST:
CHILD:

I am lost far from home.
oo....., oo....., oo....., oo.....,
I am lost and all alone.
oo....., oo....., oo....., oo.....,
The sun has fled from the night ...
oo....., oo....., oo....., oo.....,
Look a light!

(*In a cottage an old woman sits by the fire.*)

OLD WOMAN:
Whence do you come, and wither do you go?

CHILD:
I come from the mill
With a letter for the Queen.
But I lost my way,
As twilight turned to even'.

OLD WOMAN: Poor boy, poor boy,
You've come to the robber's den,
Hard-hearted, hairy, wild, mean and ruthless men.
When they come home and find you here,
They will kill you – dead ... I fear.

CHILD: Let them come,
I am not afraid.
I can go no further for today.

(He lies down.)

ROBBERS: We are robbers bold and burly,
Big and lean and straight and curly,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.
Fights for us are furious fun,
Lions cannot make us run,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

Oh, ho! Look a boy!
A spy, a rat,
Tie him up,
Do him in.

OLD WOMAN: (Scat!) Ah, it is an innocent child
Who has lost his way.
Out of pity, I let him stay.
He has a letter for the Queen.....
Take it while he dreams.

CAPTAIN: A letter for the Queen you say,
This could be our lucky day!
(Opens letter and reads)
"Dear Queen,
Kill the bearer of this letter.
The sooner he's dead,
For us, the better!
By order of the King."

ROBBERS: Pitiless, merciless, black-hearted king!
Let's take this boy under our wing.

CAPTAIN: Feather and ink.

ROBBER: I'll tear up this letter.

CAPTAIN: I'll write him one
Much the better.
(He writes)
"Dear Queen,
When this handsome youth arrives,
Give our daughter for his bride.
The wedding feast is by my order,
This youth will marry our dear daughter."

ROBBERS: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
(Exit robbers.)
We are robbers bold and burly,
Big and lean and straight and curly,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

OLD WOMAN: Wake up, wake up, it's a new day.
The sun is risen, be on your way!

(Youth journeys on to Queen.)

CHILD: Good news to you I bring.
I have a letter from the King.

QUEEN *(reads)*: "Dear Queen,
When this handsome youth arrives,
Give our daughter for his bride.
The wedding feast is by my order,
This youth will marry our dear daughter."

Bless me, heavens! What does he say?
Our only daughter give away?
Mercy, goodness! I just read,
Our only daughter to you ... WED!

(Wedding music. Queen summons daughter, joins their hands.)

PEOPLE:
(sing and dance in ring)
*All joy to you on your wedding day,
Blessed Child of Good Fortune.
The sun shines gold upon your way,
Blessed Child of Good Fortune.*

KING *(furious)*: How has this come to pass?
I ordered this child dead.
Now that I come home again,
I find him wed instead!
To **my** daughter!

QUEEN: **Our** daughter
 By **your** order.
 (Shows letter)

KING: Where is the letter
 I sent to you?
 Why have you brought this instead?

YOUTH: If that is not it,
 I tell you true,
 It changed while I slept in my bed.

KING: You shall not have everything
 So much your own way.
 Whosoever marries my daughter
 Will have the Devil to pay!
 You must bring three golden hairs
 Plucked from the Devil's head.
 If you succeed, my daughter's yours.
 If you fail, you are dead!

ALL:
(whisper) Three golden hairs, three golden hairs
 Plucked from the Devil's head.
 Down the darkened gates of Hell,
 If you fail, you're dead.

YOUTH: I will fetch three golden hairs,
 I do not fear the Devil.
 I will descend the darkened stairs.
 I will fear no evil.

ALL:
(song) *Child of Fortune on your way,
 Walking till the end of day.
 Though the way be long and hard,
 Courage fills your noble heart.*

WATCHMAN I: What's your trade? What do you know?
 What do you seek? Whither do you go?

YOUTH: I know everything.
 I am the Child of Good Fortune.

WATCHMAN I: O, surely you must know
Why our fountain will not flow.
Once it overflowed with wine.
Now it's dry all the time.

YOUTH: That you will learn.
Only wait till I return.

(repeat song)

WATCHMAN II: What's your trade? What do you know?
What do you seek? Whither do you go?

YOUTH: I know everything.
I am the Child of Good Fortune.

WATCHMAN II: O surely you must know
Why our apple tree won't grow.
Once it bore apples of gold.
Now it's withered, bent, and old.

YOUTH: That you will learn.
Only wait till I return.

FERRYMAN:
(song) *The river is wide, the river is cold,
I row to and fro. I grow tired, I grow old.
The river is wide, the river is deep.
I row to and fro. I want to be free.*

YOUTH: Ferryman, ferryman, ferry me over.

FERRYMAN : What's your trade? What do you know?
What do you seek? Whither do you go?

YOUTH: I know everything.
I am the Child of Good Fortune.

FERRYMAN: Oh surely you must know: Why must I row
Forward and backward, to and fro?
What will become of me?
Will I ever be set free?

YOUTH: That you will learn.
Only wait till I return.

FERRYMAN: *The river is wide, the river is deep.
I row to and fro. I want to be free.*

ALL:
(song) *Child of Fortune on your way,
Walking till the end of day.
Hell's huge gate is sooty black.
Go within. Will you come back?*

DEVIL'S
GRANDMOTHER: Who are you?
What do you need?

YOUTH: I am the Child of Good Fortune.
I need three golden hairs plucked from the Devil's head.

DEVIL'S
GRANDMOTHER: Ha! You'll lose your life instead.

YOUTH: To keep my wife I must bring
Three golden hairs back to the King.

DEVIL'S
GRANDMOTHER: This is a great deal to ask,
This is not an easy task,
But as I pity you,
I know just what to do.
Your wish I will grant
By changing you ... into an ant!
In my dress' folds hide well ...
Or be doomed to die in Hell.

YOUTH: For your help I thank you so.
But three secrets I must know:
Why the fountain will not flow,
Why the withered tree won't grow,
Why the Ferryman must row
Forward and backward, to and fro.

(Devil's stamps are heard.)

DEVIL'S
GRANDMOTHER: Shhh! Be silent, use your ears
When I pluck the Devil's hairs.

DEVIL (*searching*): Tremble, lash, rumble, crash,
I smell man's flesh here.
Grumble, gnash, strangle, slash,
I smell man's flesh here.
Bramble, bash, dangle, dash,
The air is not so clear.
Rangle, rash, mangle, mash,
All is not right here!

GRANDMOTHER: I just swept and cleaned this house,
And you go stomping and messing about.
You are always sniffing sinners.
Just sit down and eat your dinner.

DEVIL (*eating*): Good food, good cheese,
Good wine and bread –
Now I'm so full and tired
I feel about half dead.
A little nap would be nice.
While I snooze,
You pick my lice.

GRANDMOTHER:
(*Lullaby*) *Go to sleep, calm and nice.
I'll soothe your brow and pick your lice.*

*(He falls asleep, snoring, with head in Grandmother's lap.
She plucks hair.)*

DEVIL: Ouch!

GRANDMOTHER: Do not take it ill.
It was against my will,
No need to shout and scream.
I had an evil dream.

DEVIL: What did you dream then?

GRANDMOTHER: I dreamt that a fountain
Once with wine did flow.
Now it is dry,
Dry as dust and bone.
What think you is the reason?

DEVIL: Oh ho! Oh ho!
How could they know?
A toad, a toad, chokes it so.
Kill the toad and wine will flow.

GRANDMOTHER:
(*Lullaby*) *Go to sleep, calm and nice.
I'll soothe your brow and pick your lice.*

(Devil falls asleep. Grandmother pulls second hair.)

DEVIL: Ouch!

GRANDMOTHER: Do not take it ill.
It was against my will.
No need to shout and scream.
I had an evil dream.

DEVIL: What did you dream then?

GRANDMOTHER: I dreamt I saw an apple tree
With apples all of gold.
It faded and it withered then
and grew so bent and old.
What think you was the reason?

DEVIL: Oh ho! Oh ho!
How could they know?
A gnawing mouse won't let it grow.
Sharp teeth chew at the roots inside.
Kill the mouse or the tree will die!

But I have had enough of dreams.
Disturb me in my sleep, my dear,
And you will get a box on the ear!

GRANDMOTHER: *Go to sleep, Calm and nice.*
(Lullaby) *I'll soothe your brow and pick your lice.*

(Devil snores. She picks third golden hair.)

DEVIL: **Yeeouch!!!**

GRANDMOTHER: Do not take it ill.
It was against my will.
No need to shout and scream.
I had an evil dream.

DEVIL: What did you dream then?

GRANDMOTHER: I dreamt a ferryman asked me,
"Why must I row
Forward and backward, to and fro?
What will become of me?
Will I ever be set free?"

DEVIL: Ferryman fool,
How could he know?
No need to always row and row.
Once the oar falls in your hands,
You become the ferryman.
Give another the sticky oar,
And you are free forevermore!

Now it's time to catch some sinners,
I'll invite them home for dinner!

(Exit Devil.)

GRANDMOTHER: The Devil has gone from his den.
Change from ant to youth again.
Three golden hairs from the Devil's head ...
Did you hear well all he said?

YOUTH: You have helped me in my need
And revealed these mysteries.
I return to light and air
With knowledge true
And three golden hairs.

ALL: *Child of Fortune on your way*
(*song*) *Up into the light of day.*
Three mysteries you understand,
Three golden hairs hold in your hand.

FERRYMAN: *The river is wide, the river is cold.*
(*song*) *I row to and fro. I grow tired I grow old...*

YOUTH: Ferryman, Ferryman, ferry me over.

FERRYMAN: First tell to me
What will set me free?

YOUTH: Cross me first to the other shore.
Then your ferrying day are o'er.

FERRYMAN: *The river is wide, the river is deep,*
(*song*) *I row to and fro. I want to be free.*

YOUTH: The next one you ferry
 To the farther shore,
 Hand to him the sticky oar!

ALL: *Child of Fortune on you go
 To the tree that's withered so.*

WATCHMAN II: You've come back! Now we must know
 Why our withered tree won't grow?

YOUTH: Kill the mouse that gnaws the root.
 The tree again will bear gold fruit!

(Watchmen "kill" mouse.)

WATCHMAN II: Thank you for your kindness.
 How our tree does grow!
 Take with you this donkey,
 Laden down with gold.

ALL: *Child of Fortune on you go
(song) To the fountain dry as bone.*

WATCHMAN I: You've come back! Now we must know
 Why our fountain will not flow?

YOUTH: A toad, a toad chokes it so.
 Kill the toad and wine will flow!

(Watchmen "kill toad. Fountain flows.)

WATCHMAN I: Thank you for your kindness.
 See the fountain flow!
 Take with you this donkey,
 Laden down with gold.

ALL: *The princess waits at home for you,
(song) Blessed Child of Good Fortune.
 Now you return brave and true,
 Blessed Child of Good Fortune.*

ALL: Three golden hairs, three golden hairs,
 Plucked from the Devil's head himself,
 Two donkeys laden down with gold,
 Great honor, fame, and wealth.

KING: Now all conditions are fulfilled.
My daughter you may have and hold.
But tell me, dear son-in-law,
How came you by this gold?

YOUTH: I was rowed across a river
To another land.
There it lies upon the shore,
A bank of golden sand.

KING: I must see this far off land
I must possess this golden sand!

YOUTH: The ferryman will row you o'er
Gold lies on the farther shore.

FERRYMAN: *The river is wide, the river is cold,*
(*song*) *I row to and fro, I grow tired, I grow old...*

KING: Ferryman, Ferryman, ferry me over.

FERRYMAN: The river is wide, the river is deep,
I row to and fro... (*He hands the oar to the King.*)
At last I am free!

KING: Come back, come back! (*trying to free himself*)

The river is wide, the river is deep,
I row to and fro. Will I ever be free?

ALL: *All joy to you your crowning day,*
(*crowning and procession*) *Blessed Child of Good Fortune.*
The sun shines gold upon your way,
Blessed Child of Good Fortune.

THE SIX SERVANTS

Adapted from Grimms' fairy tales for first graders

by Jolene Jackson

Cast of Characters:

Chorus I, Chorus II, Prince, King, Stout, Listener, Tall One, Sharp Eyes, Frosty, Long, Queen, Princess, Flames

ALL:
Introduction

We welcome you today
To our first grade play.
Our efforts are quite small,
So we ask you, one and all,
To listen with your hearts.
Do not dwell upon the parts,
For the tale we tell is true.
To enter in is up to you.

CHORUS I:

In olden times there lived a Queen,
A sovereign was she.
Her spells she cast, down to the last,
No good man would be free.

CHORUS II:

Her daughter was most beautiful,
Of all under the sun.
To win her love
So many heroes did come,
But none escaped with his life.

CHORUS I:
(Enter Prince.)

Now in a kingdom far away,
A handsome Prince did hear
Of the maiden fair,
And her beauty rare.
He was bold and had no fear.

PRINCE: It is she I shall marry,
To her I belong.
Where she lives I must seek
All my life long.

(Enter King.)

KING: Never shall you go.
She cannot be your wife.

(Prince slumps in disappointment.)

To win her in marriage,
You would lose your own life.

CHORUS II: The Prince fell ill for seven years.

(King worriedly turns away.)

He lay upon his bed,
For him there was no cure.
Till at last his father said:

KING: Oh, my son, I warned you,
But now your fate is sealed.
You must find your true bride,
And all shall be revealed.

On your way I bless you. *(gesture of blessing)*
My prayers shall follow you. *(embrace)*
May God protect you also,
In all that you will do.

(Prince sets out. The six servants are found, one by one, on his journey.)

CHORUS I: The Prince set out and on his merry way,
When he saw something lying,
Like a big heap of hay.
But as he came closer,
It was clear to see
The stomach of a man,
As big as could be.

STOUT: This small mountain is nothing,
When I'm really puffed up.
I'm three thousand times fatter,
Yet still not filled up.
Oh please take me with you.
I'm useful, you will see.
Come, brother, you'll find you never had
Such good company.

CHORUS II: A little while later
They soon came around
To a man who was lying
With his ear to the ground.

PRINCE: Hello there, pray tell me
Why bend you so low?

LISTENER: I listen so keenly,
I can hear the green grass grow.
The flowers they whisper secretly,
And there's stirring life below.

PRINCE: Tell me, what do you hear
At the Court of the Queen,
The old one who is wicked,
Heartless, and mean?

LISTENER: The whizzing of swords
Is what I do hear,
That strike off the heads
Of young men gripped with fear.

PRINCE: Do come along with us,
So that we may see
What good there might come
From the deeds of we three!

CHORUS I: Next the Prince saw the tallest
Of men on earth to be found,
With his head in the clouds,
Yet his feet on the ground.
The Prince spoke of his journey,
And where he was bound.

TALL ONE: Let me be at your service.
Do take me along.
I can stretch to all heights —
You can never go wrong.
With me by your side
The road will be clear.
So let us be friends —
Kind, hearty, and dear.

CHORUS II: So onward they went,
the Prince with the three,
And found a man sitting,
who it seemed could not see.
His eyes were all bandaged
and closed to the light.
Although it was day,
to him it was night.

PRINCE: Are your eyes so weak,
that you sit there as blinded?

SHARP EYES: No, not at all,
and you shouldn't mind it.
My powers of vision
are so strong and rare.
Things shatter to pieces
whenever I stare.

PRINCE: So come with me,
and make servants four.
Lend your talents to us,
we ask nothing more.

CHORUS I: The five journeyed onwards,
and found a man who,
was trembling in hot sun
and shivering ice blue.

PRINCE: How is it you shiver
when the sun is so hot?

FROSTY: Alas, I am quite different,
and my nature you know not.
The hotter it is,
the colder will I be.
While amidst the coldest ice,
a fire starts in me.

PRINCE: Then join us in our travels –
 It is certain you must come.
 Though fire and ice would stop us,
 with you we shall overcome.

CHORUS II: A little bit further they met on their way
 a neck so long.....
 it vanished away.

PRINCE: Hello up there.
 Can you hear what I say?
 With your neck so long,
 your ears are far away.

LONG: My eyes are so keen,
 the whole world I can see.
 Every forest and field,
 every hill and valley,
 every creature God made,
 be it giant or small,
 with my eyes I can see
 the wonder of all.

PRINCE: Then come with us,
 for we want such a one.
 Many trials stand before us,
 and good deeds to be done.

CHORUS I: They came to the town
 where the wicked Queen dwelt,
 but kept his name secret,
 lest she cast a spell.

PRINCE: Set me a task;
 it will be done.
 For your daughter's hand
 all this way I have come.

QUEEN: Instead of one,
 the tasks shall be three!
 First, fetch me my ring
 from the bottom of the sea.

PRINCE: It will not be so easy,
 to succeed at this task.
 We must all work together,
 and for help we must ask.

LONG: *(peering into depths)*
I can see where it lies there
upon that big stone.
But to reach so far down,
I can't do it alone.

TALL ONE: I could reach down quite easily,
if only I could see.

STOUT: Oh, I knew that I could be of help
and you'd have need of me.
I will drink up all this water
like a small cup of tea.

CHORUS II: With a few long sips,
he had drunk up the sea
Till the bottom was dry
as a desert can be.
Then Tall One stooped down
and brought up the ring.
And the Listener he heard,
the Prince's heart sing.

CHORUS I: So they ran to the Queen
without delay.
Their hearts filled with sunshine,
each one a warm ray.
As they showed her the ring,
she could hardly believe —
The lost ring the young prince
had somehow retrieved.

QUEEN: You have performed well
the first of my tasks.
But now we shall see how you will fare.
Do you see the meadow
in front of my palace?
Three hundred fat oxen feed there.
Now these you must eat,
from their horns to their feet.
And that's not all to this savory treat.
In my cellar
lie three hundred casks of wine.
You must drink the last drop,
or your head will be mine!

PRINCE: Please, may I invite
a guest to this feast?
No dinner is good
without one friend at least.

QUEEN: One you may have,
but not any more.
You'll need at least one,
the red wine to pour.

PRINCE: Now come with me.
(turns to Stout) My guest at a meal
this day you shall be.

CHORUS I: He ate and he ate
all of the hoard,
then said:

STOUT: Thanks for the breakfast,
but is there nothing more?

CHORUS II: When the Prince showed the Queen,
that the task was completed,
She wondered at this —
Could he have cheated?

QUEEN: You will not escape me
nor keep your dear head.
A third task awaits you,
and I'll soon see you dead.

Here's the fair princess,
she is yours for this night.
Now go to your chamber,
'Til the clock strikes midnight.
Keep your arms locked around her,
but beware do not sleep.
When the clock strikes twelve,
she must be in your keep.

CHORUS I: The Prince held the Princess close in this night.
The Tall One encircled the two rather tight.
And Stout stood watch by the chamber door.
His presence no living creature could ever ignore.

(The Queen enters and casts her spell.)

CHORUS II: But alas, the Queen cast
a spell on them all.
And, one by one,
while they drifted in dream,
the Princess...is gone!

(Exit Princess.)

O Woe! All their hopes
will vanish by dawn.
But shortly before the appointed hour
the magic wore off
and lost all its power.
To find the Princess
they had less than one hour.

PRINCE: The Princess is gone!
The enchantment was strong.
Do you know where she is?
We haven't got long.
O Listener, O Tall One, O Frosty, O Stout.
We must work together
to turn this about.

LISTENER: Be quiet! Be still!
I want to hear.
She's bound in a rock
Three hundred leagues from here.

TALL ONE: As quick as a flash
I can be there.
To rescue the maiden,
I'll do it. I dare.
Come with me, Sharp Eyes,
to shatter the rock.
We'll rescue the Princess
and beat out the clock.

(They rescue the Princess and bring her back to the Prince.)

CHORUS I: At midnight the sovereign entered the room,
filled with her hunger for death and gloom.
Then she raged at the beings
whose courage held fast.
And she knew in her heart,
she had lost all at last.

QUEEN: So take her, she's yours. You have won free and clear.
But to her a commoner will never be dear.

CHORUS II: The maiden she vowed that revenge she would take.
And challenged the Prince to stand at the stake.
She ordered big bundles of wood for a fire.
To be rid of him was her secret desire.
Surely no servant would give up his life,
just so the Prince could have her for his dear wife.

CHORUS I: But Frosty came forward
and with bold voice he said:

FROSTY: All the others have helped.
Let me burn instead.

(Flames enter.)

CHORUS I: The fire burned fiercely
without pause for three days,
until all the wood into ashes decayed.
When the flames had burnt out,
there the servant stood,
shivering like a leaf,
freezing cold on charred wood!

CHORUS II: The maiden now took the man as her husband.
Not knowing that he was a king's son.

PRINCE: Do you know who I am?
I'm a herder of swine.
And together we must work
'Til the end of our time.

CHORUS I: As she worked hard each day,
Her icy heart warmed.
She grew grateful for little,
and to no one caused harm.

PRINCESS: Spoiled and lazy by pleasure and wealth,
I used to think only of pleasing myself.
To other's needs I lived in blindness.
Now I see the joy of kindness.
I once was proud, but now I'm free
to work, learn, and love in simplicity.

CHORUS II: As the Prince heard the maiden confess all of this,
 He told her the truth and gave her a kiss.

The Princess was radiant,
And he so gallant, so strong,
That they joined hands forever.
May their life be long!

ALL: Now the six servants took their leave.
 Through the wide world they still roam.
 And in every man's heart
 they will find a good home.

We thank you for coming to hear of this tale,
And the truth of it all will never fail.

SNOW WHITE

Adapted from Grimms' fairy tales for first graders

by William Ward

Cast of Characters:

*Chorus, Queen, Wicked Queen, Snow White, Mirror,
Huntsman, Seven Dwarfs, Prince*

- CHORUS: Once upon a time
When snowflakes fell like feathers,
The Queen pricked her finger,
And three drops of blood
Fell upon the white snow.
- QUEEN: If only I had a child as white as snow,
As red as blood, as black as ebony.
- CHORUS: Soon the Queen gave birth to a beautiful daughter
As white as snow, as red as blood,
With hair as black as ebony.
- QUEEN: Snow White shall be your name.
- CHORUS: The good Queen died.
- (A veil is placed over her head and she exits.
The new Queen enters.)*
- The king married another –
Beautiful, proud, and haughty –
Who could tolerate no rival to her beauty.
- QUEEN: Mirror, Mirror, on the wall,
Who in this realm is fairest of all?
- MIRROR: You, my Queen, are fairest of all.

CHORUS: Snow White grew up and became more fair,
As beautiful as the day is clear,
More beautiful than the Queen herself.

QUEEN: Mirror, Mirror, on the wall,
Who in this realm is fairest of all?

MIRROR: You, my Queen, have a beauty so rare,
But Snow White is a thousand times more fair.

CHORUS: The Queen shuddered with jealousy,
Turning shades of yellow and of green.
Each time she saw Snow White
Her heart throbbed with hate,
Thick with thorns of envy
So rank she has no peace.

QUEEN: Huntsman!
(Enter Huntsman.)
Take the child to the forest.
I wish never to see her again.
Kill her. Bring me as proof
Her liver and her lungs.

CHORUS: The huntsman led Snow White to the forest
With heavy heart and heavy tread,
Then he raised his hunting knife...
To strike poor Snow White dead.

SNOW WHITE: Oh, dear huntsman, spare my life.
As you are an honest man,
I'll run into the forest wild
And never come home again.

HUNTSMAN: This is a burden off my heart.
You're free to go, poor child,
Into the forest deep and dark,
Into the forest wild.
(Exit Snow White.)

CHORUS: The huntsman killed a passing boar,
Liver and lungs removed,
And gave them to the wicked Queen,
Snow White's death to prove.
(Exit Huntsman. Chorus with raised arms forms "forest.")

Snow White was left all alone
In the forest dark and huge,
Without a friend, without a home,
Not knowing what to do.
She ran through the forest wild,
O'er sharp stones, through clutching thorns.
Fierce beasts darted at the child,
Till she was tired and worn.
In the fading light
She came upon a cabin.

SNOW WHITE: Here I may spend the night
If they will take me in.
(Knock, knock, knock, Snow White enters.)
Everything is so tiny, so dainty, and so neat,
The table is so nicely set with fork, knife, spoon, and plate.
Would anybody mind, if I took just a bit
Of bread from every plate, of wine a little sip?

Now I am too tired to take another step.
How smooth and white these sheets.
Would anybody mind if I curled up to sleep?
(Snow White tries various beds.)
Too long, too short, too wide, too thin,
Too hard, too soft, just right, climb in!

CHORUS: Four corners to my bed,
Four angels round me spread,
One to watch and one to pray,
And two to bear my soul away.

(Enter Dwarfs, singing.)

DWARFS: *Little dwarfs so short and strong
Heavy-footed march along.
Every head is straight and proud,
Every step is firm and loud.*

*Pick and hammer each must hold,
Deep in earth to mine the gold,
Ready over each one's back
Hangs a little empty sack.*

*When their hard day's work is done,
Home again they march as one.*

*Full sacks make a heavy load,
As they tramp along the road.*

Hey! Something's amiss!

DWARF 1: Who's been sitting in my chair?
DWARF 2: Who's been eating off my plate?
DWARF 3: Who's been eating my bread?
DWARF 4: Who's been eating my carrots?
DWARF 5: Who's been using my fork?
DWARF 6: Who's been cutting with my knife?
DWARF 7: Who's been drinking from my cup?
DWARFS 1-6: Wrinkles! Who's been sleeping in my bed?
DWARF 7: Look!

ALL (*hushed*): Oh, my Lord! Oh, my Lord!
Here sleeps a beautiful child.

SNOW WHITE: Oh!

DWARFS: What's your name?

SNOW WHITE: Snow White.

DWARFS: Snow White, what brought you to our house?

SNOW WHITE: The Queen wants me dead. Her huntsman spared my life.
To the forest I have fled. Here I slept the night.

DWARFS: If you'll keep house for us . . .

DWARFS 1-7 (*consecutively*):
Make the beds, cook, wash, iron, sew, knit, sweep . . .

DWARFS: Happily you can stay with us.
We'll give you all you need.

SNOW WHITE: Yes, with all my heart, I agree.

DWARFS: Beware of your stepmother, the Queen,
She'll soon know you're here.
Don't let anyone in
And you'll have nothing to fear.

(Dwarfs exit singing as Queen and Mirror enter, palace side.)

*Little dwarfs so short,
Heavy-footed march along.
Every head is straight and proud,
Every step is firm and loud.*

QUEEN: Mirror, Mirror,, on the wall,
Who in this realm is fairest of all?

MIRROR: You, my Queen, have beauty so rare,
But beyond seven mountains is one more fair.
With seven dwarfs lives this beauty bright:
Her name you know, it is Snow White.

QUEEN: I know no peace while Snow White lives.
To her this silken lace I'll give,
And bind her up so very tight
To choke the breath of fair Snow White.

*(The Queen disguises herself as a peddler woman
and journeys to Snow White.)*

Pretty wares for sale! Pretty wares for sale!
Buttons and bows, trinkets and treasures,
Rings and things for your pleasure.

SNOW WHITE: Good day, dear woman. What do you have for sale?

QUEEN: Silk stay laces rainbow bright
To cinch your waist trim and tight.

SNOW WHITE: The good woman has an honest face,
How pretty is her silken lace.

(Snow White opens the door and lets her in.)

CHORUS: The lace was made with evil art,
Binding Snow White round her heart,
So she could scarcely catch her breath.
She fell to earth as cold as death.

QUEEN: Snow White dies by my hand.
Now I'm the fairest in the land.

(Exit Queen. Dwarfs return, singing.)

DWARFS: *When their hard day's work is done,
Home they march again as one.
Full sacks make a heavy load,
As they march along the road.*

Oh, no! Dear me!
Snow White dead?
This cannot be!

DWARF 1: Look! She's bound with laces tight.

DWARFS 2-7: Quickly set her free!

DWARFS: Oh, dear Snow White...
Joy! She lives and breathes!

DWARF 2: Who gave you this silken lace?

SNOW WHITE: A peddler woman with an honest face.

DWARFS: Snow White, beware the Wicked Queen,
She was the peddler you have seen,
Enticing you with trinkets fair,
Bar the door, Snow White, beware.

(Dwarfs sit, Snow White serves them.)

QUEEN: Mirror, Mirror,, on the wall,
Who in this realm is fairest of all?

MIRROR: You, my Queen, have beauty so rare,
But beyond seven mountains is one more fair.
With seven dwarfs lives this beauty bright:
Her name you know, it is Snow White.

QUEEN: With the witchery at my command
I'll destroy the fairest in the land.
A poison comb to comb her hair
Will rid me of this maiden fair.
An old woman is my disguise,
With a pretty comb to blind her eyes.

(Dwarfs leave, singing.)

DWARFS: *Little dwarfs so short and strong,
Heavy-footed march along.
Every head is straight and proud,
Every step is firm and load.*

(Queen enters.)

QUEEN: Pretty wares for sale! Pretty wares for sale!
Buttons and bows, trinkets and treasures,
Rings and things, for your pleasure.

SNOW WHITE: Go away! I'm not allowed to let anyone in.

QUEEN: But surely you're allowed to look...
(holding up comb)

SNOW WHITE: What a pretty comb---

QUEEN: For your hair as black as ebony.

(Snow White opens the door.)

Now I'll give you a proper combing for once.

(Snow White slowly falls as the Queen combs her hair.)

CHORUS: The comb was made with evil skill
For as she combed, Snow White was chilled.
Icy cold numbs her head,
She fell to earth, as if dead.

QUEEN: Snow White dies by my hand.
Now I'm the fairest in the land!

(Queen exits. Dwarfs enter, singing.)

DWARFS: *When our hard day's work is done,
Home again we march as one.
Full sacks make a heavy load,
As we march along the road.*

Oh, no! Dear me!
Snow White dead?
This cannot be.
Who would kill this maiden fair?

DWARF 3: Look, a comb stuck in her hair.

DWARFS: Take away the poison comb.

(They help her stand.)

Dear Snow White rises from the tomb!

DWARF 3: Who gave you this pretty, poison comb?

SNOW WHITE: An old woman selling trinkets passed by our home.

DWARFS: Snow White, beware the Wicked Queen,
She was the peddler you have seen,
Enticing you with trinkets fair.
Bar the door, Snow White, beware.

(They sit. Snow White serves them.)

QUEEN: Mirror, Mirror, on the wall,
Who in this realm is fairest of all?

MIRROR: You, my Queen, have beauty so rare,
But beyond seven mountains is one more fair.
With seven dwarfs lives this beauty bright:
Her name you know, it is Snow White.

QUEEN: This evil apple, so red and white
Is death to her who takes one bite.
Half is poison, half all right,
So will die the fair Snow White,
Even though it costs my life!
A peasant woman with a painted face
Will give the child a deadly taste.

(Exit Dwarfs, singing.)

DWARFS: *Little dwarfs so short and strong,
Heavy footed march along.
Every head is straight and proud,
Every step is firm and loud.*

(Enter Queen, knock, knock, knock.)

Apples sweet, red and white,
Apples filled with life and light!

SNOW WHITE: I'm not allowed to let you in.
The Dwarfs have forbidden me.

QUEEN: Wise child, but see how sweet—
An apple is a healthy treat.
This red one will be my gift.
Sure it will thy spirit lift.
Look, I'll cut it right in two—
The white for me, *(bites)*
The red for you. *(offers)*

CHORUS: The apple looked so sweet and red,
She took one bite...
And fell down dead.
(Snow White falls.)

QUEEN: Ha, ha! White as snow, red as blood,
Hair like ebony black,
Nothing seven dwarfs can do
Will ever bring you back.

(returns to mirror)
Mirror, Mirror, on the wall,
Who in this realm is fairest of all?

MIRROR: You, my Queen, are fairest of all.

(Enter Dwarfs, singing.)

DWARFS: *When their hard day's work is done,
Home they march again as one.
Full sacks make a heavy load,
As they march along the road.*

Oh, no! Dear me!
Snow White dead?
This cannot be...
Gone our love, dark our light,
Who can wake our dear Snow White?
Comb her hair, so black so fine.
Bathe her with water and with wine,
Even though our Snow White's dead,
The ground's too dark to be her bed.
We'll bear her to the mountain's height
In a glass coffin filled with light.
(They carry her to a raised platform.)

CHORUS: They wept and mourned three days and night,
Though tears could not revive Snow White.
An owl, a raven, and a dove
Circled round her with their love.
White as snow, red as blood, black as ebony —
Must Snow White sleep in death for all eternity?

One day a prince rode through the woods
Upon his charger white.
He came upon the seven dwarfs,
With them he spent the night.
At sunrise he climbed the mountain top,
And there he found Snow White.

PRINCE: I cannot go on living
Without her beauty for my light.
Let me buy this priceless treasure
With silver and with gold.
Snow White is the beloved
Of my heart and soul.

DWARFS: All the gold in the land
Can never buy Snow White's hand.

PRINCE: Then give this coffin freely,
As a gift to me.
To honor and to love her
I vow eternally.

DWARFS: Because your love is pure and true,
We will entrust Snow White to you.
(They lift coffin.)

CHORUS: As they walked a sudden jolt
Freed the apple from her throat,
From sleep of death Snow White awoke,
Reborn to life Snow White spoke...

SNOW WHITE: Oh, Lord! Where am I?

PRINCE: You're with me, I am with you.
Above all the world I love you true.
You are my joy, my light, and life.
Will you consent to be my wife?

SNOW WHITE: I do.

CHORUS: Now the joyous day has come —
Snow White marries the king's true son
And receives the golden ring,
While all the people dance and sing.

(Snow White and Prince come through arched hands of Chorus who then dance. Dance freezes as Queen speaks.)

QUEEN: Mirror, Mirror, on the wall,
Who in this realm is fairest of all?

MIRROR: You, my Queen, have a beauty quite rare,
But Snow White is a thousand times more fair.

CHORUS: The Queen cursed her fate.
She froze with fear and burned with hate,
But could not stay away from
Snow White's wedding day.

Iron slippers fiery hot,
To the wicked Queen were brought.
In iron slippers fiery red,
The Queen danced till she was dead.

THE VOYAGE OF SAINT BRENDAN

Adapted for second grade

by Kevin Kilb

Cast of Characters:

Chorus, Lord, Nursemaid, Saint Brendan, Giantess, Bird, Hermit, Voice of Fire, Crew

CHORUS: When others had fallen far from grace,
 There gathered together in a sacred place
 Men and women of a saintly race
 Who were warm of heart and fair of face.

In northern waters lies an island green
Where the creatures of nature work unseen.
The rolling hills flow down to the sea,
And morning mist covers the trees.
Each stone has been touched by God's own hands
In this holy place called Ireland.

Here came Patrick, God's word made him strong,
And Bridget who taught kings right from wrong.
And Aidan and Bede and Columba too,
Each with their own holy work to do.
Of these there was one whom legends foretold
From the day of his birth would be pure gold.
'Twas Brendan who heard the call of the Lord
And listened closely to every word.

LORD: Of what has passed, you must be free,
 Create anew and follow me.
 You will go on a voyage bold
 And reach the promised land of old.

Health without sickness,
Union without quarrel,
Pleasure without contention,
Dominion without interruption,

Feasting without diminution,
Meadows sweet with fair, blessed flowers,
Attendance of angels at every hour.

CHORUS: Words of wisdom spoke the boy's nursemaid.
As a blessing to Brendan, the old woman bade:

NURSEMAID: Soft skins will wear before too long,
So build your ship of timber strong.
Take forty days to ready the boat.
Smear her with myrrh and then she'll float.
Shape a vessel that will serve you well.
From God to you this task befell.

CHORUS: Then Brendan chose from among the men,
Those with wisdom and strength, and then,
They set to work upon the shore.
"Bring tools to build and supplies to store."

(Sailors build the boat.)

BRENDAN: Now is the time. We have a mission to fulfill.
Let it not be mine, but God's own will."

Thank you, Mother, for your warm embrace.
Thank you, Father, for your loving guidance.
Farewell to Ireland, my flesh and bone.
I must now leave my boyhood home.

CHORUS: They had scarce been adrift for three hours, no more,
When beheld they a maiden on an island shore.
Her beauty alone was striking to see.
But lo! She towered above the trees!
One hundred feet did she skyward span.
Her smallest finger was as tall as a man.
Then before their eyes with a thunderous sound,
The giant maiden fell straight to the ground.

For lesser beauty, men have cried
Over women whose strength was less magnified.
Their tears of anguish they could not hide.
For on the shore, where she fell, the maiden died,
Pierced through the heart with a pointed spear.
Oh, the sorrow, the coldness, the longing, the fear.
Then Brendan called out to the man at his side:

BRENDAN: Scoop up some water from the high tide.
God, grant me Your almighty power to heal
The damage done by this devilish steel.
Heal this fair giantess, restore to her breath.
Bring her to life from untimely death.

CHORUS: Then before Saint Brendan and all of his men,
The giant maiden awoke and breathed once again.

GIANTESS: Praise God for his mercy unto me.
I must now return to my home in the sea.
In your mission Brendan, you shall surely prevail.
The wind will always fill your sail.
Call out to me whenever you're in distress,
For unto you as God's servant I owe my life's breath.

CHORUS: As soon as the ship cast away from the isle
And the sailors were adrift for but awhile,
A strange change overtook the crew –
A small spell at first, but it grew and it grew.

They became like animals within the boat.
Among them were lions and foxes and goats.
Not one could keep still or stand upright,
But worse, how they'd howl and bark and bite.

Poor Brendan had never felt so alone,
Out on the sea, in his boat, far from home.
Brendan called out to God's merciful love,
Who sent him an angel in the form of a dove.

The bird alighted on top of a tree,
Unlike any that Brendan had seen;
For upon each branch, sat a bird so white,
That Brendan shielded his eyes from their brilliant light.

These birds have lived since the beginning of all,
Before king and flood and man and the Fall.
Then one by one, they took to the sky.
Oh, what a blessing to see them all fly!

They flew to the north, south, west, and east,
Chasing the demons that turn men into beasts.
The birds flew over each sailor's head,
Then the one that served Brendan alighted and said:

BIRD: Seven long years you will sail the sea
Till you come to the shores of the land you seek.
For forty days and nights there remain
Till fair winds bear you home again.

CHORUS: Then the bird landed on the bow of the ship
And promised to protect them for the rest of the trip.
The crew sailed swiftly into the open seas.
With comfort and confidence, protection and peace.

They came to a shore that was rocky and steep.
The land was as ancient as the water was deep.
There huddled a hermit with a long white beard,
Who had lived for one hundred and forty years.

HERMIT: This isle will be yours after many sunsets,
But, in the meantime, it's good that we've met.
I'll show you to the Isle of Saints, your goal,
For, Brendan, you are bound to be one of those souls.

Now of the first place you pass, please beware.
I do not recommend going there.
You shall know the isle by the sinister sounding
Of metals and bellows and yelling and pounding.

With hammers on anvils the men are smiting away,
Making smoke and noise through the night and the day.
The folks on this island are angry and gruff.
They don't know the difference between too much and enough.
Ships that stay long are likely to sink.
It's best to go around to avoid the stink.

But beyond this isle is a good place to rest.
With fine fruits and herbs, the land is well blessed.
An island where only silence is heard.
Yet much is said without speaking a word.
Restore your supplies and take rest for the week,
For three days beyond is the land that you seek.
But of what lies in between, I can not even speak.

CHORUS: The words of the hermit stayed with the men
When from the island of silence they set forth again.
Soon they saw what the hermit could not even say –
An island of fire lay in their way.
Fire in the sky! Fire on the ground!

Fire in the center! Fire all around!
Red fiery flames pressed in from all sides.
The heat from the fire scorched far and wide.
They watched as the flames encircled the boat.
Only their prayers could keep them afloat.

A voice from the fire rang out loud and clear.
It spoke to the crew, to their hearts, to their fears.

VOICE OF FIRE: One of the men has a heart that's not true.
You can't pass to Paradise with him among you!
One among you must go!

CHORUS: So crackled and cried the voice from the flames.
The crew stood shocked as it called him by name.

CREW: That can't be, we've known him so long.
How is it so that he doesn't belong?
We've known him to be kind, a kindred soul.
Without him our crew would never be whole.
We won't give him up. The answer is No!

VOICE OF FIRE: By the power of fire hear what I say,
One of you is unworthy to pass this way.

CHORUS: The sailors stood bowed beneath the light of the day,
As the spirits of fire took one away.
Without their friend, the crew was never the same.
But in the emptiness burned the spirit's bright flame.

With hearts now open and their worries all gone,
They sailed on to Paradise, their goal was won:
The Isle of the Saints where the wounded are whole,
Where songs of praise raise weary souls,
Where the flowers and trees, the birds and the bees,
The ancient rocks and friendly beasts,
All join as one in God's joyful feast
And live with the saints in blessed peace.

As in Eden all dwell in God's holy light,
Sustained in his love, all is made right.

SAINT JEROME AND THE LION

A play for second grade

by William Ward

Cast of Characters:

Brothers, Sisters, Jerome, John, Lion, Merchants, Donkey, Chorus

CHORUS:

A holy man named Saint Jerome
Has made this empty land his home.
Over the desert he scattered seed
Which rose to life with heavenly rain
And ripened into wholesome grain
To feed all souls who are in need.
By the labor of his hands,
He built a haven in this land,
A shelter from driest desolation,
Bestowing water of salvation.
All who look for love inside
Will find these gates are open wide.

(Mime monastery life)

From sunrise to the close of day
The sisters and brothers work and pray,
Praising God and doing what's good,
Living in peaceful brotherhood.
They fetch spring water and chop firewood,
Bake fresh bread and give thanks for their food,
Work in the garden, weeding and hoeing,
Work in the study, reading and knowing.
God's holy word they carefully write,
Till one day...

(Lion enters.)

A lion gives them a fright!

(Panic)

BROTHER 1: Run for your life! A savage beast!
SISTER 1: On one of us he means to feast!
BROTHER 2: Flee from his pitiless claws and teeth!
SISTER 2: The last to escape is the one he'll eat!

JEROME (*at peace*): So when Judgment Day draws near,
Will you run and quake in fear,
Or find peace within unbending faith,
Calm in the storm by God's grace?
From Brother Lion we have nothing to fear.
It is not hunger that draws him here.
This gentle lion is not bent on slaughter.
Look, he thirsts, give him water.

(Trembling monks bring water, Lion drinks.)

LION: Master, can you hear my plea?
If you do, have mercy on me.
I limp and stumble, sore with pain.
Can you make me whole again?

(Jerome removes a thorn from Lion's paw.)

JEROME: A thorn has pierced the lion king,
Mercy removes the thorn's sting.
Fragrant herbs on the desert found
For your wound will be a healing balm.

(He dresses the lion's paw.)

LION: Of some small service let me be
For your kindness unto me.

JEROME: All who live here work, it's true.
What task would be the best for you?
Brother John, in the ways of animals you are wise,
What is good work for one this size?

JOHN: Let this lion our donkey protect,
Guard him and keep him safe from attack.
With such a friend, what harm could befall
When the donkey grazes outside our wall
Beasts and robbers best beware,
Take our donkey if you dare!

CHORUS: Beneath the sun's burning gaze,
The lion took Donkey out to graze.
Overcome by noontime heat,
In the palm's shade he fell asleep.

(caravan bells)

Look! Who comes across the sand?
A band of merchants, a caravan.

MERCHANT 1: There is a donkey gone astray.
MERCHANT 2: My, this is our lucky day!
MERCHANT 3: Let us take him on our way.
MERCHANT 1: If we take him, who will know?
ALL: Catch him quickly, then we'll go.

(Merchants chase, capture, and lead the stubborn donkey away.)

LION *(awaking and calling)*: The sun is setting, we must go home.
Brother Donkey, where did you roam?
My lion's head is filled with dread,
My brother is lost ... or may be dead.
But I will search until I find him
And one day lead him home again.

CHORUS: With heavy tread walks brother lion,
For him the sun no longer shines.

BROTHER 1: Weakened by hunger, I greatly fear,
You have eaten the donkey in your care.

BROTHER 2: Wicked lion we thought so tame,
Hang your head in utter shame.
Our donkey's gone, and you're to blame.

BROTHERS: There's no forgiveness for your sin,
Behind our backs, you've eaten him.

JEROME: It may be, but I think no.
Would he come back if it were so?
We will treat him gently, still with kindness,
And forgive him for his blindness.

JOHN: With you, Father, I agree,
But now we have no donkey,
Who every day hauled our wood.
Can this lion turn bad to good
By taking now the donkey's place
And so redeem his sad disgrace?

JEROME: For a lion it is a lowly task.
Yet, perhaps, it's not too much to ask.

CHORUS: He toiled patiently day after day,
Listening for the distant bray
Of Brother Donkey who was stolen away.

When the hard day's work was done
He roamed beneath the setting sun,
Faithfully seeking his lost friend.

(A year passes.)

At last a caravan passed his way,
Led by a donkey, silver gray.
Lion crouched low against the sand
Until they passed close at hand.
His long-lost friend he could clearly see.
He roared and made the merchants flee.
Their camels following donkey's lead
To the monastery did stampede.

JEROME: Look who comes as bright as sunshine —
Our brave hero, Brother Lion.
He found our donkey in the end.
We were wrong to misjudge our friend.

BROTHER 2: Forgive me, Lion, whom I misjudged.
I hope you won't bear me a grudge.
You're the noblest lion I ever saw.
I would like to shake your paw.

(They shake.)

JEROME: Lion in his simplicity
Has brought us riches we do not need.
But unless I sorely miss my guess,
We should prepare for a number of guests.

CHORUS: When the lion was out of sight,
The merchants recovered from their fright.

MERCHANT 1: I'm sick with fear, I can hardly stand.
MERCHANT 2: I didn't look back, I just ran and ran.
MERCHANT 3: I tried to burrow deep down in the sand.

ALL: **Hey! Who stole our caravan?**
Perhaps they can solve this mystery
Over at yonder monastery.

JEROME: As honored guests these merchants receive.

BROTHERS: Why, they are nothing more than thieves.
They stole our donkey to their shame
And brought our gentle lion great blame.

JEROME: Our gates are opened to man and beast,
All of God's creatures, highest and least,
To pilgrims, beggars, even to thieves.

(Merchants enter. When they see the lion and the donkey, they are ashamed.)

MERCHANT 1: I must kneel down, I am so weak.
MERCHANT 2: My heart feels empty, sad, and bleak.
MERCHANT 3: I am so ashamed, I cannot speak.

JEROME: What troubles you, brothers? Tell me, I pray.

MERCHANTS: We are those who stole your donkey away.
For this wrong we have come to pay.

JEROME: Your debt cannot be paid with gold.
Forgiveness cannot be bought or sold.
Only the lion can forgive.

(Lion approaches.)

MERCHANTS: All our riches to you we give.
Hold him back, we want to live!

LION: The love and kindness shown to me
Now I gladly offer thee.
(bidding them rise)
Rise, my brothers, you are free.

JEROME: Brother Lion repays wrong with good
And bids us live in brotherhood.
Keep your riches, be at your ease;
We have prepared for you a feast!

(Servants bring wine, bread, and dates.)

MERCHANTS: You offer us your open hand?
You open our eyes, O holy man.
For your kindness let us give thanks
With jars of oil for your lamps.

JEROME: Your gift of thanks will give us light
To read God's word in the starry night.

ALL: Through the desert of sorrow and strife,
Forgiveness flows like the water of life.
Blessed by the sunlight, shining above,
The desert blooms through the power of love.

ODELIA AND ALDARIC

A play for second grade

by Laura Summer

Cast of Characters:

Midwife, Aldaric, Bereswindis, Odelia, Nuns, Bishop, Gudrun, Abbess, Envoy, Chorus

(Processional Song)

ALL:

In the old dark days
When Childeric was king
Of men and women
And everything,

In the days when men
Thought first of war,
Second of feast,
Only third of God,

There lived a man
Who was fierce and proud,
Lord of his land,
Short tempered and loud.

His eyes hard and blue,
Aldaric his name.
Only his wife Bereswindis
His temper could tame.

A child came to them,
Sunny and dear, *(pause)*
But the household cringed
That her father should hear

The news that his child
A girl is born,
Not the son he expected.
His hopes were torn,

So he stormed
At those around.
His displeasure, his anger
Burst all bounds.

MIDWIFE: But, my Lord,
Your daughter is blind.

ALDARIC: I have no daughter,
She is not mine,
Let her die.

BERESWINDIS: My Lord, reconsider.
She is truly like you.
Her hair is gold as honey,
Her eyes are the blue
Of clear sky and deep lake.
The light within her
Will bring you peace.

ALDARIC: I will not see her.
I give her no name.
Take her away.
I banish this pain.
Never speak of her again.

ALL: To the convent the child went
With her nurse to take care,
Away from the man
Whose fate she would bear.

(Angel veils Bereswindis and leads her away.)

But Bereswindis was stricken
At losing her babe.
Her broken heart
Found peace in the grave,
As angels, like stars,
Loving and bright,
Bore her spirit
To the realms of light.

But the child thrived
With loving, patient nuns,
Good natured and beautiful,

Warm like the sun.
Her laughter filled the convent walls.
Her questions with merriment
Tickled them all.

ODELIA: What is my hair like?

NUNS: Honey, they said.

ODELIA: Sticky and sweet,
a treat for my bread?
What are my eyes like?

NUNS: Windows of your pure soul.

ODELIA: If I could see,
how much I would know!

ALL: She was as happy
As a girl can be; blessed,
But no name of her own
Did she possess.

When she was twelve,
The holy Erhard,
Bishop of Regensberg,
Awoke with a start
He rode to the convent;
The nuns were surprised.
What ever the trouble
They could not surmise.

BISHOP: I had a dream
Wondrous and wise,
A child gazed at me,
Love shone in her eyes.
A voice came to me,
Out of light did it speak,
Guiding me here
This child to meet.
To baptize her
With the name
God has given—Odelia.

NUNS: Odelia!

BISHOP: Blessed child of heaven.

NUNS: The child truly is here,
And it has made us so sad
That she had not been baptized.
But it was forbade
By her grief-stricken father,
Aldaric, wild,
Who blamed his wife's death
On the innocent child.

BISHOP: He is not a man
I would want to cross,
But the voice of heaven
Commands me.
I will baptize Odelia,
No matter the cost.
What God wills
Will be.

(song during baptism ritual)

Dear one who has no name,
Now join the communion
Of His heavenly reign.
Blind girl now
Your name receive...
Odelia, for eternity.

ODELIA: Now I know who I am.
My name is Odelia,
I know where I stand.

ALL: She turned to the man
Who had bestowed this grace.
A voice in the darkness...
Odelia saw his face!

(She touches his face.)

ODELIA: Can it be, I can see?
Oh, the world is filled with light!
I'm not blind, I am free!
God has given me my sight.

(She goes from one to the next.)

And now the nun's faces—
And here is my nurse—
And windows and birds—
Where to look first?

Which one is which?
Wait, do not tell.
Sister Mechtild, Sister Bertha,
I know you so well.

(Birds flutter, animals approach.)

ALL: The birds, they were laughing,
The cats purred to see.
Even the pig poked her nose in:
What could this be?

BISHOP: No, no, let the beasts stay
To share in our miracle
On God's joyful spring day.

GUDRUN: Now, Odelia, what will you do?
How will you follow
Your heart so true?

ODELIA: To live as you do
My true path will be.
But first I'll make peace.
My father I'll see.

NUNS: No, not your father,
That never will do.
He wants to hear
No word of you.

ODELIA: Nevertheless, to him will I go.
Of God's blessing,
He surely should know.

ABBESS: May God protect you, Odelia.
I fear your father's wrath,
Yet I will write Lord Aldaric,
For God guides your path.

(She writes letter and sends a messenger. Aldaric tears the message in two and angrily sends the messenger away.)

MESSENGER: Lord Aldaric received the message.
No answer will he give.

ODELIA: Ah, he received it.
That is good.
Write again.
This time he should
Welcome me with
Open arms.
From my father
I fear no harm.

(Messenger goes. Aldaric is furious. Messenger is turned out by soldiers.)

MESSENGER: Lord Aldaric says
He has no daughter!
Anyone approaching
Will be slaughtered.

ODELIA: That is good,
Almost an invitation.
He expects me to come
As his cherished relation.

ALL: Off she went with horse and groom.
The nuns, fearing the worst,
Were filled with gloom.

For hours and days she waited
By the stone castle, outside.
From his patient daughter
Aldaric could no longer hide.
He made to ride by her
With greeting none.
But Odelia stood up
With face like the sun.

ALL: He made to strike her.
"Get away," he said,
But his voice was sad
And full of dread.

ODELIA: Father, how glad I am.

ALL: She said with face aglow.

ODELIA: How long I have waited
My own father to know.
Blind I was, but now I see,
You're brave and strong,
As they said you'd be.

ALDERIC: What do they call you,
Child of mine?

ODELIA: Odelia, sir.
May it strike your heart fine.

ALL: They rode back to the castle
And through the great gate.

(Servants step up sharply.)

ALDARIC: Lady Odelia has come home
For her father's sake.

ALL: From that day on
No step could he take
But Odelia was with him,
Early and late.

She was the hearth warmth
Of his home,
The light and the love.
All were glad she had come.

But so alike they were,
It could not last.
The peace and joy
Would flee fast.

When Odelia reached the age of fifteen,
A marriageable age, it then would seem. . .

(Envoy enters.)

. . . From a German duke
An envoy was sent,

ENVOY: Asking Odelia's hand
For the Grand Duke,
By Aldaric's consent.

ALL: At first he said,

ALDARIC: No!

ALL: With iron clenched fist.
But on further considering,
His thought did list:
Alliance with Germany,
A good match to make,
His Odelia protected,
A good course to take.

ALDARIC: Daughter, good news
I have to tell.
A husband I've found
To suit you quite well.
Good natured and handsome
With rich goods and land,
Happy you'll be
To take his hand.

ODELIA: I do not intend to marry.
A nun I have chosen to be.
Now write to the man.
I will remain free.

ALL: Aldaric stormed
And raged away.
The household shuddered;
They could only pray.
(Servants pray.)

ODELIA: Father, deeply sorry I am,
But I do not intend to marry the man.

ALDARIC: You are my daughter!
Obey me you will!

ODELIA: No, my life
Is to serve God's will.

(Sun and moon show time passing.)

ALL: For five whole days
The battle went on:

Aldaric fuming,
Odelia calm,
Neither giving an inch.
But Odelia was sad
That her vows
Made her father so mad.

She could bear it no longer,
And so in the night
She removed herself,
Away from his sight.

Aldaric followed,
With dogs unleashed
To make her obey him,
And his anger appease.

However swiftly she ran,
The fierce dogs were fleeter.
No hope of escape,
Only harm to meet her.

The country was mountainous,
She was forced to climb
From rock to rock
Salvation to find.

No further to go!
Nowhere to flee!
She cried aloud,

ODELIA: Dear God, help me!
(thunder sheet rumble)

ALL: And the rock opened.
All alone was she
In the comfort of blindness,
Enclosed, but free....

ODELIA: Now I see with God's help
How my obstinate will
Began to grow
When my eyes did fill
With colors and light
And the world's beauty bright...

It was easier, then, only to hear,
To pray and serve others,
And God's will hold dear.

ALL: The music of silence was deep,
but in listening further
Odelia could not keep
From hearing outside
Her father weep.

And so she learned
Within the earth
To give up her will
Toward a greater birth.

ODELIA: Please God, to you I pray;
Now let me go
So my father may
Forgive me if he will it so.

(thunder sheet rumble)

ALL: The rock opened at once
And Odelia stepped out,
With voice quiet
And head bowed.

ALDARIC:
(kneeling) Odelia, my heart,
Forgive me, I pray.
My stubborn anger
Drove you away.

I've been so blind
All my life.
Pride has caused me
Nothing but strife.

(She helps him rise.)

If your heart is set on it,
Be a faithful nun,
But stay here with me.
Do not leave me alone.

ODELIA:

Dear father,
As sure as the sun shines above,
As long as we live,
Be sure of my love.
For God who gave us both new sight,
Opens closed hearts to life and light.

ALL:

He gave her the castle
Of Hohenberg
And the plains below for pilgrims to share.
A convent she built,
A refuge for all,
God's healing
Shone through its halls.

(Recessional Song)

SAINT GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

The legend of Saint George adapted for second graders

by Claire McConnell

Cast of Characters:

Chorus, George, King, Gnomes, Dragon

(Song)

ALL:

Far sails the sailor,

Green sweeps the sea.

Wind blows over yellow sand,

And dragons dance in dragon land.

In the desert of Libya, far from his home,
A soldier marched in the army of Rome.

But George was not like other soldiers he knew,
He longed for a challenge to prove himself true.
One day he awoke, courageous and bold,
He saddled his horse, to the desert he rode
In the name of the Lord.

(Rides, following the leader in circle, arrives, mimes sleep)

That cool desert night above George's closed eyes,
The mightiest battle took place in the skies.
A radiant angel beamed like sun rays,
Shooting stars fell in sparkling sprays.
The dragon below, like a smoky red cloud,
Hissed at the angel, ferocious and proud.

With sword against fire, they battled unending,
No one could tell just which side was winning,
And, as daylight approached and the darkness gave way,
The angel and dragon, still fighting, faded away.
The mantle of shooting stars yet remained,
They fell to earth lightly like showers of rain.

(Children with streamers as shooting stars)

The stars that fell down turned to shiny black stones.
Gnomes gathered these stones to their underground homes.
(Three gnomes appear, one to gather, one to fire forge, one to hammer.)

They fired the forge and melted them down,
And hammered and shaped it with clamoring sounds.
They placed what they'd made in a safe secret place,
It could only be used by Michael's grace.

(Hum "Michael, radiant and bright...", circling round)

George awoke knowing nothing of battles and stars.
He saw he was lost and had wandered afar.
His horse marched ahead to the city Silene,
The quietest kingdom he ever had seen.
No cattle did moo and no sheep did bleat,
No animals scurried in barn or in street;
But more horrible still, he heard no child's voice,
No laughter or singing of girls or of boys.
A silence like death hung upon every face.
George greeted the king of this desperate place.

GEORGE:

Sire, it seems that this land was once great.
Do hunger and illness now trouble your state?

KING:

Good sir, we have everything money can buy.
But our hearts fill with sorrow that none can abide.
For every day stealing a thing pure and mild –

CHORUS:

A dragon has swallowed each beast and each child.

KING:

My very own daughter this day must go.

CHORUS:

She stood there behind him, her white dress aglow.
Then George understood just what he must do.

GEORGE:

In the name of the Lord, I will slay it for you.
This dragon shall steal no more innocent blood!

CHORUS:

And he knelt and he prayed for the help of God.
Then, all of a sudden, the message was heard.
A host of gnomes tiptoed in, bearing a sword.
(Enter gnomes.)

'Twas the thing they had made from the stars that had fallen –
A sword made of light, but as black as an iron.
They took out his Roman sword forged for war.
They flung it away over sand dunes afar,
Then gave him the star-sword with Michael's grace.
It gleamed sharp and true to behold its right place.

The gnomes tiptoed out, never making a sound,
No one knew of the gift they had forged in the ground.

(Exit gnomes, then George rides.)

Then George on his horse galloped forth to the lake.
He prayed at the edge till the dragon did wake,
With red scales a-creeping and smoke from his snout,
With open mouth flaming, the dragon crawled out.
(children covered with cloth follow the leader with dragon's head)

DRAGON: A pretty sword for my treasure, O what could be finer?
A tasty young knight to feast on for dinner!

(Battle)

CHORUS: Had the dragon but known, he'd not have stopped to gloat,
With the only sword able, George pierced the beast's throat.
The dragon spit fire, in his anger lashed out,
He tried pulling George under, but George stood so stout.
The dragon soon sank and the waves settled down.
Now George was a saint and a halo his crown.

In the kingdom Silene, the rejoicing was great,
But not only the kingdoms of earth celebrate.
That night in the sky the same battle took place
Between dragon and angel with sun-golden face.
But now the great dragon, he bowed his head low
And dispersed like a cloud in the star and sun glow.
And only the Archangel Michael stood,
The victory won for mankind and for good.

(Recessional Song)

ALL: *Michael, radiant and bright,
Lead us on with your light,
Archangel Michael.*

SAINT MARTIN LEGEND

An introduction to the Saint Martin's pageant

adapted by William Ward

In olden times there was a city defended by cold stone walls and an iron gate. Many people – young and old, rich and poor, merchants and craftsmen, weavers and tailors, bakers and builders – lived within, safe from the enemy. Soldiers guarded the walls against attack. Among them was Martin. Martin stood apart from his fellow soldiers. He was brave but gentle, strong but kind. The enemies he fought were not other men, but the shadows of hunger, poverty, and sickness.

One bleak November day on the barren hill outside the city walls, a beggar man stood in the cold. He had nothing – no home, no fire, no bread, no friend. He was dressed in rags. Silently he stretched forth his hands to each passerby. Most were blind to him; some saw and quickly turned away, none stopped to offer a bit of bread.

Three soldiers passed by the beggar man, and one mocked, "Be a soldier, beggar. Take whatever you want. Warm fire, comrades, and strong drink await you." A second soldier gave the beggar an icy stare and turned away in contempt. The third soldier, despising the look in the beggar's eyes, said, "Speak out, miserable coward." He raised a gloved fist to strike the silent beggar but his friends restrained him. "We must go, the gate will be closing." They hastened away, for when the iron gate closed at nightfall, no one was allowed in or out. So the beggar man was left alone, without his daily bread, in the darkening day outside the walls.

It grew colder in that forsaken land. The earth itself was hard as stone, the bitter wind cut to the bone; the sparse trees reached gnarled fingers up to heaven. Snow began to fall.

In the twilight a lone wayfarer on horseback made his way toward the walled city. The latecomer had a heavy red cloak wrapped tightly about him against the falling snow. The man was Martin. He saw the dark figure of the beggar, shivering in the cold, reaching out with empty, frozen hands. Martin dismounted, took off his red cloak and cut it in two with a stroke of his sword. One half he gave to the beggar man, wrapping it

warmly around his shoulders. By this deed his life was saved. The poor man paused, gazing deeply into Martin's eyes. In the snowy silence they were brothers. The beggar turned, walked away, and was soon veiled by falling snow in the darkness.

Martin rode on to the iron gate, but it was locked. The people of the city slept comfortably by their glowing hearths. He pulled the remainder of his cloak closer about him. "I will be warm. Tonight I shall sleep with the snow for a blanket and the roots of yonder tree for a pillow." He curled up at the foot of an ancient oak tree. The wind had ceased, the snow no longer fell, but sparkled on the earth like the clear stars in the midnight vault of heaven. They shone like glorious candles upheld by the great tree. With that chill beauty ringing in his soul, Martin fell into deep sleep.

Martin awoke. Heavenly music filled the air. The eternal stars danced in heaven and streamed to earth in joyous procession. As they came closer, Martin was encircled by celestial pilgrims. One with flame, brighter than the rest, came forward, offering a star candle to Martin. He joined the host of light and rose above the earth, ascending higher through deep blue night, until the vault of heaven parted like a cloak torn in two. He followed where the stars led, onward beyond the rose of dawn into the golden warmth of the sun. Here, in the heart of light, ringed with the host of heaven, Martin beheld the Son of Man. He wore the cloak Martin had given to the beggar.

"Martin, you so loved me,
Your blood-red robe you gave.
By your brotherly kindness
This beggar's life you saved.
Now and for all time to come
Your cloak is woven whole
Of what can never tear nor fade
And never will grow old.
Because you gave your cloak away
It ever will increase.
Of courage it is made,
And life and love and peace."

So saying, the Son of Man wrapped a robe of light about Martin.

Martin turned his gaze back to the earth and descended as gold dimmed to rose and rose to violet. The starry dome closed after him. Through the dark night Martin, robed in light, gently fell back to earth bearing his star flame. As his feet touched the ground, Martin awoke to see the sun rise in the rose and golden dawn. Saint Martin strode forth to do the work of the newborn day.

SAINT MARTIN'S PAGEANT

Adapted from the legend of Saint Martin for second graders

by William Ward

Cast of Characters:

Soldiers, Beggars, Saint Martin, Angels, Beggar/Son of Man, Chorus

Note: This pageant has been performed annually outdoors at dusk on Veteran's Day/Saint Martin's Day, November 11th, with third grade soldiers, second grade beggars, and first grade angels as a prelude to a lantern walk accompanied by songs.

(Processional of Beggars and Angels to "November Song")

*Golden light is turning gray,
Mists begin to rule the day,
Bare the trees their branches lift,
Clouds of dead leaves earthward drift.
Deep below, deep below
New life will spring, new life will spring.*

*Through the fields the beggar goes,
Weary feet and tattered clothes,
Trusts the earth to keep him warm,
Shelter him from cold and harm.
Deep below, deep below,
New life will spring, new life will spring.*

SOLDIERS *(chanting and marching in anapest rhythm, pausing during Beggars' sung plea):*

*Barren boughs, whipping wind,
Snow without, ice within,
Soldiers march, spear and sword,
Fear our master, war our lord!*

BEGGARS: *A bitter wind blows through bare boughs,
The beggar man stands all alone.*

SOLDIERS: We are soldiers, we are strong.
Might is right, weakness wrong!

BEGGARS: *The day grows dim, the earth is hard,
The beggar man has no home.*

SOLDIERS: We are soldiers, hard as stone.
Wolves and jackals pick your bones!

BEGGARS: *No fire, no bread, no cloak, no friend,
No shelter from the icy wind.*

SOLDIERS: We are soldiers, grim and brave.
For us the glory, for you the grave!

BEGGARS: *The beggar holds out empty hands,
But no one knows the beggar man.*

SOLDIERS: Haste now, soldiers, black night falls.
Death outside city walls!

(Soldiers circle into a human wall.)

BEGGARS: *The poor man drops down on his knees,
But no one knows, and no one sees.*

SOLDIERS: Feast and fire, light within,
Cold will be the end of him.

BEGGARS: *The dead trees rattle icy bones,
The beggar man kneels all alone.*

(Enter Saint Martin, "galloping" to rhythm of song.)

ALL (song): *A soldier on a charger bright
Winds his way through waning light.
The wild wind whirls his blood red robe;
Fearless through the storm he rode.*

BEGGAR: *The beggar holds out empty hands,
But no one knows the beggar man.*

SOLDIERS: Haste now, stranger, iron gates close (*locking arms*)
To guard against all our foes.

ALL (song): *Martin reached out with helping hand
And then bade his brother stand,
And with his sword so straight and true,
Martin cut his cloak in two,
And wrapped his brother warm within,
To keep him from the howling wind.
Into the snowy silence the beggar walked away,
Never even glancing back, nothing did he say.*

*(Exit Son of Man/Beggar to stand in the center of the arc of angels
looking down from heaven. Martin "gallops" around the circle of soldiers
forming the city walls.)*

SOLDIERS: Martin rode through swirling snow around the city walls.
The iron gates were shut and barred. No one heard him call.

ALL (sing with Martin):
*The snow shall now my blanket be,
And the ground shall be my bed.
I'll sleep beneath the heavenly stars,
Far above my weary head.*

*(Martin sleeps. Lyre music. Angels process to where Martin sleeps.
At their gesture, he rises and journeys with them to heaven during the
following song.)*

ANGELS: *The stars shone down on Martin, lying on the ground,
Each star an angel's candle, glory shone around.
The stars came down to Martin, sleeping on the earth,
And lifted up his waking soul to a second birth.
He walked among the spirit lands beyond the midnight blue,
Which parted wide before his steps as a cloak that's torn in two.
And there he met the Son of Man and looked into his eyes,
In them he saw the sun of love from cold, dark winter rise.*

SON OF MAN (spoken by ALL):
Martin, you so loved me, your blood red robe you gave.
By your brotherly kindness this beggar's life you saved.
Now and for all time to come, your cloak is woven whole
Of what can never tear nor fade and never will grow old.

(The Son of Man wraps a cloak of light around Martin.)

Because you gave your cloak away, it ever will increase.
Of courage it is made, and life and love and peace.

ANGELS (*farewell song as Martin journeys back to earth*):

*Farewell to you, good Martin,
Earth now calls you back.
The sun arises in the east
And lights a golden track.*

ALL: As starry snow falls from above,
He drifted down to earth...
(*Martin resumes sleeping position.*)
Martin awoke...
(*Martin rises as all raise their arms.*)
All wrapped in love
And rose to do his work.

(*Martin leads lantern procession as all sing.*)

*Saint Martin, Saint Martin rode through wind and snow
On his strong horse, his heart aglow.
He rode so boldly through the storm,
His great cloak kept him well and warm.*

*By the roadside, by the roadside a poor man arose,
Out of the snow in tattered clothes.
"I beg you help me in my plight,
Or else I'll die of cold tonight."*

*Saint Martin, Saint Martin stopped his horse and drew
His sword and cut his cloak in two.
One half to the beggar man he gave,
And by this deed his life did save.*

JUMPING MOUSE

Adapted from a Native American legend for second grade

by Patrice Maynard

ELDERS: All in high or humble station, round the firelight lose your worries.
We the elders of the nation, call the tribe to hear the stories
Of the times before the present, of the lands so full of glories,
Far beyond the stretching desert, far beyond the reaching mountains.

Gather round us, old and young ones! Gather round us, wind and
moonshine!
Gather round us, little beings, friends of woodland and of air!
Birds and owlets, hare and possum, mouse and groundhog, listen now!
Four directions bless these stories! North! and South! East! and West!
Ya He! Ya Ho! Ya He! Ya Ho!

STORY TELLERS: Oh, how all leaned in to hear them, all the stories of the Elders.
Boys who dreamed of being warriors, girls who thought of beauty bright,
Little birds and tiny fireflies, rabbit, skunk, heard in the night,
Little Mouse with eyes all sparkling strained to hear the tales aright.

Little Mouse dreamed of beauty of the lands so far away,
Far beyond the reaching mountains, past the searing desert plains,
Stretching past his own sweet River to these lands where hope held sway.
Long he thought of far away lands till he knew that he must go.

MOUSE: If there's hope of ever someday seeing lands so bright and far,
I must leave the places I know! Act! Stop wishing on a star!

STORY TELLERS: Little Mouse plucked up his courage, started trav'ling to his dream,
Until he came to the River's bank by deep and rushing stream.

MOUSE: How, oh! how can I cross over to the desert plain beyond?
If I try I will be swallowed by the current and be gone!

BULLFROG: Who is this who says he can't cross? Who is this who cries in fright?

MOUSE: Oh, I so wished to be trav'ling to the lands so far away!
Hope swelled big and brought me courage, told me that indeed I may.
Bullfrog you ask who is calling. It is I, a tiny thing.
I, a small mouse, thought that I could but see now hope was misleading.

BULLFROG: You are wrong: Hope's not misleading. Hope keeps hearts alive and strong.
Small Mouse is not WHO you are, just what you have been all along.
I have magic deep within me. I shall name you with a new name,
One to help you travel onward, one to help hope never wane.
"Jumping Mouse" I do now call you! See how fast and far it takes you!

JUMPING MOUSE: Ah! I feel my back legs tingle. Oh, I feel my ownself changing
My! See how my legs are stronger! I can through the world be ranging.

BULLFROG: Swim across the river now. Start your journey, Jumping Mouse!

JUMPING MOUSE: I am ready to begin now. What is "swim"? Please tell me how.

BULLFROG: Swim is this under the water. Hurry now and come across!

JUMPING MOUSE: Though my legs are strong I cannot do *that*, Bullfrog. I'll be lost.

BULLFROG: Well, mice are mice and bullfrogs, bullfrogs. Hope on my back, hurry, quick!
Safe to the far shore I'll take you; safe and dry, lickity split!

(when mouse is across)

Always keep hope bright within you, Jumping Mouse, and you will know
Strength in your heart, faith in your plans, courage for the truth to show.

STORY TELLERS: Over to the reaching desert, Jumping Mouse was taken then.
With his new legs and his new name, he bid farewell to his friend.
Long he traveled, hot and thirst till he found another mouse.
Sleek and chubby was the new mouse, who invited him to his house.

FAT MOUSE: Stay with me in my safe dwelling, safe and happy, calm, content.
Here you'll find there is no danger, no things that make mice repent.
There's a snake across the river, but to us he cannot come.
We shall eat and drink and rest, enjoy ourselves and have some fun.
Long ago like you I yearned to find the lands you seek to find.
Now I know it isn't worth it; now I know I'd lost my mind.

JUMPING MOUSE: I can stay and rest myself here, but then I'll be on my way.

STORY TELLERS: Rich, warm comfort and good food kept Jumping Mouse long with the fat mouse;
Weeks and weeks went slipping by, till one day he went to the pond.
Jumping Mouse leaned down to drink. His reflection stared back at him,
And he knew not what to think. For the picture that he saw there
Made him see he was like fat mouse: sleek and chubby, smooth and fair.

JUMPING MOUSE: What has become of my journey? I must leave here right away.
I must tell my friend I'm leaving or I will forever stay.
Oh, and see a log has fallen; we are not safe anyway.

STORY TELLERS: Quickly Jumping Mouse went searching but his friend he could not find.

JUMPING MOUSE: There's a smell that makes me feel sick. It means danger. It means death!
SNAKE! The smell I smell is snake smell. For my friend I am too late.
He was one for whom hope had died; comfort could not change his fate.

STORY TELLERS: Off went Jumping Mouse to travel to the mountains reaching high.
When he came upon a black stone, large and looming, tall and dry,
He thought he could use its shelter for a rest throughout the night.
But when he heard the rock sobbing, he was startled up in fright.

JUMPING MOUSE: I must muster up my courage. There is no escaping now.
Why, large and stone-like creature, are you resting here and crying?
I am Jumping Mouse. What's your name? How can you your tears be drying?

BISON: I am Bison, little mouseling. Poison water I have sipped.
And now blindness is my state; so from me life will soon be stripped.

JUMPING MOUSE: Oh! Good Bison, I can help you! Bison, do not give up hope!

BISON: How can such a tiny creature help a Bison with no sight?
Go away, my little friend. Let me die here in the night.

JUMPING MOUSE: I will try Bullfrog's magic. I now call you "Eyes of a Mouse."

BISON: Oh! How my eyes spark and tingle. Jumping Mouse, it worked, I see!
I can live now. I am well now because you assisted me!

JUMPING MOUSE: Good for you, my Bison friend, that magic helped you in the end.
But now, my eyes no longer see. I can't my journey wend.

BISON: Come with me, my Jumping Mouse; hide in my shadow, have no fear.
I can live now. I am well now because you assisted me!

STORY TELLERS: So the friends walked on together till the mountains loomed before them.

BISON: Little friend, I am a walker on the grassy plainlands wide.
You must climb these hills without me. Up these mountains I can't stride.

STORY TELLERS: So alone Mouse climbed upward, stumbling high as best he could,
Stopping at a warm and soft place, thinking he had reached a wood.
He lay down to rest until he jumped up as the soft place heaved!
On the back of Wolf he lay. In his blindness was he deceived!
But the wolf heaved hard in sorrow. Silent tears he shed aggrieved.

JUMPING MOUSE: Oh, great Wolf, although I tremble to address you in my smallness,
I must ask, why do you weep so? You, so cunning, in the allness?

WOLF: Little Mouse, my scent is ruined! And now, certainly, am I!
I misused my keen sense of smell; now, without it I must die!
When the earth gives out her gifts and we defy her, we must pay.
Now I stay here out of trouble, while for quick death I pray.

JUMPING MOUSE: Do not give up hope so roundly, mighty Wolf. Hope must not fade!
I will try to see if my strength will amend this debt you've paid.
Do not protest! I now name you "Nose of a Mouse."

WOLF: Ah! The scent of the aromas of the world! You gave them back!
Little Mouse, you have strong magic. My life force is streaming back!

JUMPING MOUSE: Good for you, Wolf of the great world! Good for you that you have
scent.
But when magic gave your scent back, my own sense of smell just went!
I wonder how my journey will end. Will I find beauty far away?
In the far lands, over mountains, when it's here I must now stay.

STORY TELLERS: Over all the highest mountains Wolf went leaping, running fast.
In a short time he arrived at the ends of the hills at last.
To the lands of distant beauty, to the lovely lands afar,
Wolf placed Jumping Mouse in soft grass underneath a gleaming star.
All night long Jumping Mouse wondered greatly at his journey's end,
Felt a happy, sense of grandeur, though he could not see or smell.
At the dawning he heard a surprising voice he knew quite well.

BULLFROG: Jumping Mouse your journey's ended. Hope has led you to this place.

JUMPING MOUSE: Bullfrog! Is it really you? I wish that I could see your face!

BULLFROG: You shall see more than just my face. You shall see the whole world round
For your courage and your strong hope, you have now a new life found!
I have one last name to give you. Jumping Mouse you are no more.
Perseverance has transformed you. Generosity made you more!
My new name for you is "Eagle." Eagle shall your new name be!

STORY TELLERS: With this new name Mouse felt tingles through his being, down his spine.
He was lifted up and upwards, saw bright colors, smelled sweet pine,
Tumbled through the air, but upwards, towards the sun and towards the sky.
He reached out his arms to feel the rushing air as it poured by,
Till at last he opened his eyes and saw his arms were wings.
And he knew that generosity, courage, and hope can change all things!

PASSOVER CELEBRATION

Adapted from the Haggadah for the third grade

by William Ward

*Freed from Pharaoh's heavy hand,
The Children of Israel crossed the land.
Unleavened bread they took in flight
Led by Moses' gifted sight
Through the wilderness, across the sea,
Out of bondage to be free.*

(Song - "Let My People Go")

BLESSING ON THE CANDLES:

May these candles remind us that we must help and not hurt, cause joy and not sorrow, create and not destroy, and help all be free. We praise God for the gift of life and this happy time.

SEVEN SYMBOLS:

- MATZO:** Here is the matzo bread,
the bread we ate the night we fled.
There was no time to let it rise,
while the stars filled the skies.
Wake up now, we're on our way
to freedom land before break of day.
- BONE:** An innocent lamb has given his life,
that our door may be closed to death's dark night,
to save us from the Angel's knife
that we may see the morning light.
- EGG:** Yellow sun in snowy white,
Spring now renews the light,
hard shell of bondage, cracked is the yoke,
and we are filled with life and hope.

HORSE RADISH: Sad is our fate, heavy the weight,
when you are a slave, no rest 'til the grave.
bitter is our lot, bitter is the lash,
more bitter than the taste of the horse radish.

CHAROSES: We worked all day in the burning sun.
The Pharaoh's heart is as hard as stone.
Yet we will journey to the Promised Land
and receive the bounty of the Lord God's hand.
Apples, wine, cinnamon, nuts,
remind us of God's kindness to us.

CELERY: We worked so hard, but were we fed?
We worked until we were almost dead.
In blazing sun we were parched and dry.
There was not enough water even to cry.
Until the water of life flows free,
quench your thirst with green celery.

SALT WATER: Here the salt water of our tears,
salty from hardships, salty from our fears,
salty as the Red Sea, which opened just for us,
and closed on our enemies when we were across.

KIDDUSH: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who createst the fruit of the vine.
As we share the sweetness of this wine of joy and gladness,
we thank Thee, O God, for the beauty of home
and the love of family.
May the spirit of holiday fill us with love for all.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who hast granted us life, sustained us and brought us
to this festive season. *Amen.*

(Drink first cup.)

(Ritual washing of the hands, pitcher, bowl, water, towel)

(Celery is dipped into water to the following blessing:)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who createst the fruit of the earth.

(Break middle matzo, return smaller piece, wrap larger and hide Afikomen.)

This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate
in the land of Egypt.
Let all who are hungry enter and eat.
Let in all who are forlorn who want join with us
in celebration of the Passover.
Now many people are still enslaved. May next year find
all mankind free and living in peace.

THE FOUR QUESTIONS:

1. On all other nights we eat leavened bread. Why on this night do we eat only matzo?
2. On all other nights we may eat herbs of any kind. Why on this night may we eat only bitter herbs?
3. On all other nights we do not dip even once. Why on this night do we dip our celery in the salt water, our bitter herbs in the charoses?
4. On all other nights we eat sitting. Why on this night do we recline?

THE FOUR ANSWERS: Hard and bitter was our lot,
we worked from dawn to even.
The Angel of death passed over our house,
for this a lamb was given.
Food for our journey baked hastily
was matzo bread unleavened,
But now we are free, we recline at the feast,
all praise to God in heaven.

TEN PLAGUES: The river of life turned to blood,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

Millions of frogs came out of the mud,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

With clouds of gnats the air was filled,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

Innocent cows and sheep were killed,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

Man and beast all fell ill,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

Boils caused the Egyptians pain,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

Stinging hail broke down their grain,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

Locusts consumed all in their flight,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone,

Darkness took away their sight,
but Pharaoh's heart was hard as stone.

The Angel of Death struck the final blow
and Pharaoh let the Hebrews go.

DAYEINU: Who is like You, O God?
You are the Eternal One, the One Who saved us!
Give thanks to God for making our lives and our world better.
We are grateful for everything!

Had He brought us out of Egypt and not executed judgment upon them,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had he executed judgment upon them and not upon their idols,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He executed judgment upon their idols and not slain their first born,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He slain their first born and not given us their treasures,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He given us their treasures and not divided the Red Sea for us,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He divided the Red Sea for us and not led us through it on dry land,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He led us through onto dry land and not plunged our oppressors in it,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He plunged our oppressors in it and not supplied our needs in the wilderness,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He supplied our needs in the wilderness and not brought us the gift of manna,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He brought us the gift of the manna and not blessed us with the Sabbath,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He blessed us with the Sabbath and not led us to Mount Sinai,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He led us to Mount Sinai and not given us the Torah,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He given us the Torah and not led us into the land of Israel,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

Had He led us into the land of Israel and not built for us the Sanctuary,
Dayeinu, it would have been enough, and we are grateful.

(All raise cups.)

Thanks that we may gather and share this feast of freedom.
Blessed are thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who createst the fruit of the vine.

(Drink second cup.)

(Wash hands. Give two small pieces of matzo to everyone)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who bringest forth bread from the earth.

Now we taste the bitter herbs as our forefathers tasted
the bitterness of slavery.

Now we taste the charoses which is brown like the mortar we used in
Egypt, but has a sweet taste of freedom and God's kindness to
us.

(The Passover Dinner, ending with finding and sharing of Afikomen)

FINAL BLESSING: Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who providest food for us all.
Through Thy goodness food has never failed us.
Mayest Thou provide sustenance for all Thy children everywhere and
at all times.
Thou art kind and showerest kindness upon all Thy creatures.
Thou hast given us light and life, food and shelter, joy and peace.

FATHER: May God sustain us all in health. *Amen*
May God bless all here. *Amen*
May God send plentiful blessings upon this house,
and to all who are near and dear to us. *Amen*
May this festival of Pesach fill us with joy and happiness. *Amen*
May He Who creates peace in His celestial heights, grant peace and joy
and freedom to us, to all Israel, and to all mankind. *Amen.*

(Refill cups)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who createst the fruit of the vine.

(Drink third cup.)

Welcome, Elijah, messenger of good tidings.
At the end of the days he will announce the time of peace and perfect
happiness.

Welcome, Elijah. Inspire us to work for the day when peace and
happiness will reign throughout the world for all mankind.

SONG:

*O Every Man 'neath this vine and fig tree shall live in peace and unafraid,
O Every Man 'neath this vine and fig tree shall live in peace and unafraid,
And into plowshares turn their swords, nations shall learn war no more.
And into plowshares turn their swords, nations shall learn war no more.*

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Who createst the fruit of the vine.

(Drink fourth cup.)

(Song - "Let My People Go")

THE MACCABEES

A play for third grade based on the Old Testament

by Patrice Maynard

Cast of Characters:

Antiochus, Mattathias, Judas, the Maccabees, Chorus, Narrators One and Two, Soldiers, Three Women, Four Children

(Processional Song: "By the Waters of Babylon")

*By the waters, by the waters, by the waters of Babylon,
We lay down and wept and wept for the Zion,
We remember, we remember, we remember thee, Zion.*

ALL: We once lived in peace here in holy Jerusalem:
Peaceful in our work and worship, in Jaweh's Promised Land,
Peaceful God's own chosen Hebrew people, till one day
The cruel Emperor, Antiochus, sought to have his way!
To force all to worship pagan gods, he is zealous and proud.
Greek statues are seen all about - Hebrew worship not allowed.

SONG: *(Song: "Havanashika")*

*(Children break into two groups - pantomimers and chorus.
Chorus tells the story, while pantomimers act it out silently, stage center.
As the pantomimers go into position, children make themselves pillars of
the temple and an altar. Eternal flame shown with child's hands over her head.)*

CHORUS: Many Hebrew Holy Temples were turned to vile things,
(stage left) Full of pagan bloody sacrifice and the false gods he

*(Antiochus claps; soldiers march; Torah is ripped from his hands, throw
down.)*

NARRATOR

ONE: Here, one was strong against him and refused to do his will.
(excitedly) Mattathias was his name, a name inspiring still!

CHORUS: *(murmurs agreement)*

NARRATOR

TWO: Soldiers thought he'd follow meekly, seeing his ancient age,
But he refused, and when they pushed, he FLEW into a rage!
(Mattathias destroys the temple, knocks down pillars, altar, the flame, terrifies the soldiers. Pantomimers come to full life and speak.)

ANTIOCHUS: Seize him! Stop him! He's gone mad! The Temple he'll destroy!

MATTATHIAS: It's better off destroyed than used for foul things YOU employ!
(vehemently)

(Antiochus claps; soldiers retreat.)

My five sons have helped me to destroy this heathen altar.
We'll escape into the hills and fight this scourge and never falter.
Our new home will be everywhere among the hills of Zion.

ALL MACCABEES: The MACCABEES we shall be called – the hammer, the lion.

ONE MACCABEE: We will fight till our religion can flourish in this land.

ANOTHER Our way is hard, but God will watch us as we work his plan.

MACCABEE:

(Maccabees exit to back of auditorium at gesture from Mattathias. Children get up.)

CHORUS: Mattathias fought his best but he could not last long.
Judas Maccabee, his eldest son, the battle carried on!

ALL: But alas! We stand here now all wrapped in sad despair.
(back in Chorus places) Three long years have passed – our temple still in disrepair.

NARRATOR

TWO: Hiding! Always hiding! Lest our foes destroy us, too.
We hide in our beloved Zion – little hope shines through.

ALL: Alas! Alas!

(One child at a time overlays to make chorus of complaints.)

FIRST CHILD: How much longer?

SECOND CHILD: It's been too long?

THIRD CHILD: Too long, too long!

FOURTH CHILD: Too hard, too hard!

NARRATOR

ONE: Stop! Daily work and prayer are what we have to keep us strong:
(*resolutely*) Lift our hearts to God and ask His help in daily song.

(All sing "By the Waters of Babylon." Pantomiming work – weaving, carrying water, hauling wood, hauling stones)

A CHILD (*runs in*): Hark! Awake! Look up and see! The Maccabees have come. Victory is theirs! Antiochus is undone!

3 WOMEN (*disbelieving*): No! Not true! It cannot be!

NARRATOR

ONE (*with joy*): But look again – it is!
Praise God! They've come. Judas ... all ... wear smiling faces.
(All kneel with astonishment and gratitude when the Maccabees come.)

JUDAS: Arise, my friends, we are free. (*hugs and expressions of disbelief and gratitude*) Antiochus is cast down. Rebuild our temple. Lift the altar. Give her a birthing gown.

(Children make temple and altar again. Chorus forms in two flanks on either side of altar.)

ALL: Quickly was the temple built again to her great glory.
Quickly was the flame relit that brightens all our story.

JUDAS: Today, my father's memory shines as brightly as this flame,
Never again to be extinguished, burning like his name.
Our enemies put out the lamp that must burn on forever.
This bitter insult, from this day on will be repeated never.
The light will burn like our own hearts to heaven shining bright,
The steadfast prayer of Israel carried high by this strong light.

(He solemnly lights the flame. One child sits on a riser behind the altar with her hands flat on her head. As Mattathias lights flame, her hands rise up and fingers flicker to signify flaming.)

TWO WOMEN: Judas Maccabee, we lit the lamp in too much haste.
(*come in, despair*) All the oil is despoiled: none we have is chaste.
Eight days are needed to prepare the holy oil.

JUDAS (*after long thought, sadly*): Begin then. It seems my father's name and verve are destined to be foiled. I shall watch and pray right here to see the flame rise and fail. (*kneels with back to audience before the altar*)

ALL (*with intensity*): Day after day the women worked with speed to no avail.
There is no hurrying the ritual to make the oil clean.
Judas Maccabee's heartfelt praying made days like months to seem.

(Two come forward to center stage.)

ONE: It's been three days. He must eat, he must sleep...

OTHER: But do you see? The light still burns. Some say it burns by his fidelity.

ONE: Yes, but it cannot last. Make him stop before he dies there.
It's oil we need - not this. The truth before him does glare.

OTHER: Truth as seen by a Maccabee is not for me to say.
A trice of oil has lasted through the third long day.

ALL: Days dragged on as the worry increased, four, five, six, and seven.
Some thought Judas had died on his knees - his spirit now
in heaven.
Until, on the final day, the oil arrived completed.
The people gathered to see if the Maccabee was defeated.

(All lean in to see, then look to audience.)

They found the flame small but burning bright,
Judas brighter still.

(Judas faints on to the floor)

PEOPLE (*whisper*): Is he dead? **No, he lives!** Help him up.

(The women fill the lamp and Judas stands to face audience.)

ALL: They replenished the oil and Judas stood tall and still.

JUDAS (*joy, solemn*): My friends, we are blessed this day by God's own mighty hands.
We cannot say what cannot be - on His will alone it stands.
These eight days are forever blessed with hope and faith and light.
Before us is laid a miracle of God's own might.
Let us remember from this day on with prayer and joy and song,
That light was ours, though there should have been none,
Because our faith is strong.

ALL: *(Back in Chorus places)*

And so with joy the people gave thanks, and through two thousand
years
Chanukah counts the days of light God wrought from Israel's tears.

*(With each word of the last line, a child in the front line kneels until there are
8 children kneeling, and one tall child standing in middle, all with hands on
heads as flames to make the menorah.)*

EXIT SINGING: "Hine Mah Tov"

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

A play for third grade based on the Old Testament

by William Ward

Cast of Characters:

*Chorus, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad,
Asher, Joseph, Jacob, Rachel, Potiphar, Potiphara,
Butler, Baker, Pharaoh, Soldiers*

CHORUS: In Canaan the promised land, rich in pastures and springs,
Israel and his sons and wives pitched their tents and lived their lives,
tending their flocks and herds, faithful to God's holy word.

Now Israel loved Joseph, the son of his old age, more than all his children,
and he made him a coat of many colors.

(coat bestowed)

BROTHERS: How can he love Joseph more than us?

REUBEN: Always so gentle,

SIMEON: Always so kind,

LEVI: Always so good.

JUDAH: Father's so blind.

ISSACHAR: Joseph the dreamer,

ZEBULUN: The little schemer,

DAN: He always shirks

ALL: While we do the work!

NAPHTALI: He of the soft hands,

GAD: He of the pretty face,

ASHER: While we milk the goats,

ALL: He gets a coat!

He dreams all day,

We keep the wolves away!

REUBEN: Be still, he comes.

JOSEPH: Brothers, as I watched our flock, a strange dream came to me.
Pray, what can it mean?

SIMEON (*aside*): I tire of his dreams.

LEVI: His head is in the clouds.

JUDAH: When will he come down to earth?

(lyre music)

JOSEPH: Behold, in the summer sun we were binding sheaves of golden grain.
Lo, my sheaf arose and in the center stood upright.
Your sheaves stood round about and bowed low before my sheaf.

ISSACHAR: So great art thou, little one.

ZEBULUN (*ready to strike*): It is you who should bow to us.

DAN: Ha! Shalt thou reign over us?

NAPHTALI: Dream on.

GAD: Go reign over the sheep,

ASHER: If thou canst stay awake.

(laughter)

CHORUS: And they hated him more for his dreams and his words.
Yet he dreamed another dream.

(lyre music - The sun and moon and stars appear, bowing low to Joseph.)

JOSEPH: Brothers, I have dreamed again, more clearly than the light of day,
yet it was the dead of night. Both sun and moon shone in the sky,
eleven stars also. In their midst, there stood I. Before me all bowed low.

JACOB: What is this dream that thou has dreamed? Shall I and thy mother
and thy brethren come to bow down to thee to the earth?

BROTHERS (*ad lib, simultaneously*):

Upstart! Proud one! Boaster! Lazybones! Honor thy father! We will never
bow to you! Dreamer! Respect thine elders! Pride goeth before a fall.

CHORUS: And they hated Joseph yet more for his dreams and his words.

(Exit brothers and Jacob, leaving Joseph alone.)

JACOB: Joseph?

JOSEPH: Here am I.

JACOB: Thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem. Go, I pray thee, see whether it be
well with them and bring me word again.

REUBEN: Behold the dreamer,
SIMEON: The best beloved,
LEVI: He who hoards our father's favor.
JUDAH: How I hate him,
ISSACHAR: Beardless boaster,
ZEBULUN: Weakling.
DAN: Let us teach him to bow to us.
NAPHTALI: Let us rid ourselves of this pest.
GAD: Beat him!
ASHER: Stone him!
ALL (*but Reuben*): **Kill him!**

REUBEN: **Nay**, then his blood will be upon our hands. Cast him into the pit that he may die if it be God's will.

CHORUS: So Reuben spared Joseph from death at their hands, hoping to deliver him.

(Joseph arrives)

JOSEPH: Shalom, my brothers.

ALL: **Seize him!**
LEVI: Traitor.
JUDAH: Strip off his coat.
ISSACHAR: Hurl him into the pit.
ZEBULUN: Eat the dust, brother.
DAN: Who will save you now?

(The bells of a caravan are heard.)

NAPHTALI: A caravan of Ishmaelites.

JUDAH: Come, let us not slay our flesh and blood, but sell him as a slave.

(They take the coat.)

CHORUS: Thus was Joseph sold to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

(Joseph is led away by the Ishmaelites.)

And they took Joseph's coat and killed a kid of the goats (*cry of the kid*)
And dipped the coat in blood. And the brothers took the coat to their
father and mother.

(Hum song – "By the Waters of Babylon")

RACHEL: My son, my son, where is my son? (*She is given the coat.*)
Joseph, surely thou hast been devoured by a wild beast! (*She weeps.*)

JACOB: We shall never see his face again.
I will go down into the grave, mourning our son.

Exit all. Enter Joseph into the household of Potiphar.)

CHORUS: Joseph was led to Egypt and sold to serve in the house of Potiphar,
the captain of Pharaoh's guard. The Lord was with Joseph,
and Joseph prospered in the house of his master.

POTIPHAR: Joseph, thou art upright and faithful, thou doest well in all things.
I entrust my household into thy hands and make thee steward over all
servants and slaves, over the gardeners and laborers of the vineyards.

JOSEPH: I will repay thy kindness and thy trust with faithful service.

CHORUS: But Potiphar's wife cast her eyes upon the handsome servant and often
sought occasion to be with him alone.

POTIPHARA: Joseph, bring me wine, and tarry with me awhile.
It is so lonely here with my husband often away.

(Joseph brings wine.)

Why do you look away; am I not fair to see?
Will you not rest awhile to keep me company?

JOSEPH: You are my master's wife; him I honor and obey.
He trusts me with his life; his trust I'll not betray.

POTIPHARA: Joseph, bring me dates and grapes and other sweet delights.
The sun is setting in the west; the moon sheds silver light.

JOSEPH: Now I will depart.

POTIPHARA: Please stay . . . or break my heart.

JOSEPH: God knows this to be a sin. I leave you now to honor Him.

(She grasps his cloak as he departs.)

POTIPHARA: Beware, slave, scorned love hatches hate.
(Scream) **Help! Guards! Sound the alarm!**

(Soldiers return. Gong! Servants and Potiphar rush in.)

I am greatly wronged, mistreated by your slave.
The vile Hebrew whom thou trusted is dishonest and depraved.
He hath dishonored me and thee. When I cried out, he fled away;
but here is his cloak, as you can see.

JOSEPH: I have done no wrong.

POTIPHAR: Silence slave! Mock me not. You have dishonored my wife and betrayed my trust. Lead him away to the dungeons dark and deep.
Prison the price of your evil deed.

(Drum beats as soldiers lead Joseph to prison. An angel appears behind Joseph with "E" eurythmy gesture.)

CHORUS: But God was with Joseph and showed him mercy. The Lord gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison who put into Joseph's hand all the prisoners in his charge. And it came to pass that Pharaoh was wroth against his chief butler and his chief baker who were thrown into the prison where Joseph was captive. *(The two are imprisoned.)*
One night they were visited by mysterious and troubling dreams.

(lyre music accompanying tableaux of dreams)

JOSEPH: Wherefore look ye so sadly today?

BUTLER and BAKER: We have dreamed dreams we do not understand.

JOSEPH: Doth not all understanding come from God? Tell me your dreams, I pray.

BUTLER: In my dream, behold, a vine was before me. It was budded and her blossoms shot forth, and the clusters brought forth ripe grapes.
And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into the cup, and I gave the cup unto Pharaoh's hand.

JOSEPH: It is God's will that in three days Pharaoh shall lift up thine head and restore thee to thy place, and you shall deliver his cup unto his hand.
But think on me when it shall be well with thee, that I may be freed from this dungeon, for I am innocent and have been stolen away from my homeland.

BUTLER: I will remember your kindness unto me.

BAKER: Good for you, but what about me?
In my dream I had three white baskets on my head filled with loaves of bread,
baked with care for Pharaoh. Suddenly the sky grew dark, overshadowed
with a host of ravenous birds that descended upon me,
devouring all I had.
Pray, tell me what means this dream.

JOSEPH (*hesitates*): Forgive me, but I will tell thee what God gives me to understand.
In three days Pharaoh shall lift thee up, cut off thy head,
and hang thee on a tree.
The birds of the air shall eat thy flesh.

BAKER: Thou liest! Bread and birds, bah! It means naught to me.

CHORUS: And it came to pass on the third day Pharaoh restored his butler
to the place of honor as cup bearer and hung the baker from a tree,
as Joseph had foretold. Yet, the butler did not remember Joseph, and he
remained in prison. And it came to pass, at the end of two full years,
that Pharaoh dreamed:

(dream music and tableau)

And behold, he stood by the river Nile. Seven handsome, fat-fleshed cows
emerged from the flowing waters and fed their fill in green meadows.
Then seven bone-thin cows appeared and devoured them.

PHARAOH: An evil dream. What can it mean?

CHORUS: And Pharaoh slept and dreamed a second dream:

(dream music and tableau)

Behold, seven golden ears of grain grew upon a single stalk, full and ripe
and gold. Then seven shriveled and blasted ears arose and devoured the
seven that were good.

PHARAOH: Dreams of ill omen trouble my spirit. What cloud shadows the sun?
Wisemen, counselors! (*Enter counselors.*) Tell me the meaning of my
dreams.

CHORUS: But none could divine the mystery of his dreams.

BUTLER: Great Pharaoh, forgive me Lord, in all your realm I know of only one with
the wisdom to unlock your dream. He lies in a prison cell, forgotten till
this hour, a Hebrew slave named Joseph.

PHARAOH: Bring Joseph here to me.

CHORUS: So Joseph was freed and dressed in fine array and presented to Pharaoh who told him of his dreams.

(Joseph is given a cloak.)

PHARAOH: It is said you can interpret dreams.

JOSEPH: Not I, but God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

CHORUS: And Pharaoh told him of his dreams of the seven cows and seven ears of grain.

JOSEPH: God hath showed Pharaoh what He is about to do.
The seven good cows and golden ears are seven years of great plenty through all the land of Egypt. But all shall be consumed by the seven lean cows and withered grain, seven years of grievous famine.

PHARAOH: Continue, wise servant. What do you advise to soften this calamity?

JOSEPH: Seek out a man trustworthy and wise and set him over the land of Egypt. He will appoint officers to harvest the fifth part of the land for the seven years of plenty, storing up grain in great abundance against seven long years of famine.

PHARAOH: Can we find another in all Egypt in whom the spirit of God lives brightly?

COURT: JOSEPH! JOSEPH! JOSEPH!

PHARAOH: Thou shalt be over my house and over the land of Egypt, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled.

*(Cymbals, drums, and bells – Pharaoh places a ring upon his finger.
The people bow before him.)*

Let all be done as thou hast foreseen.

CHORUS: And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth grain abundantly, and Joseph gathered grain as the sand of the sea.
Then the earth was parched, the grain withered and died, famine came to the land. Joseph opened the storehouses and there was grain for bread.
And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy grain.

(Enter Jacob and his family.)

JACOB: Behold, go down to Egypt and buy grain for us that we may live and not die.
(Music for journey to Egypt – The brothers appear before Joseph and bow before him.)

JOSEPH: Whence come ye?

BRETHREN: From the land of Canaan to buy food.

JOSEPH: Ye are spies, come to see the nakedness of the land.

BRETHREN: Thy servants are no spies, but true men, twelve sons of one father.

JOSEPH: I see but ten brothers.

BRETHREN: Behold, the youngest is still with our father, and Joseph is no more.

JOSEPH: If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in prison while ye take grain to your family. Then return to me with your youngest brother, so I may know ye speak the truth.

(Joseph overhears the brothers talk among themselves.)

LEVI: What can we do?

SIMEON: Who will stay hostage?

JUDAH: We deserve this judgment.

ISSACHAR: We must escape.

ZEBULUN: There is no escape.

DAN: This will kill father.

NAPHTALI: Father will never let Benjamin go.

GAD: I fear for us all.

ASHER: God punishes us for our sins.

REUBEN: We are truly guilty towards Joseph, our brother.

ALL: We saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us we would not hear.

REUBEN: Did I not speak unto thee, sin not against the child. Now God demands a reckoning.

JOSEPH: Bind him *(indicating Simeon, who is seized)* and cast him into prison. Let the others return to their father.

(aside to his servants)

Fill their sacks with grain and provisions for the journey.

Secretly return to them their gold.

(Hum song. Exit all. Enter Jacob and Rachel.)

RACHEL: Our sons return safely home, heavily laden with grain. God be praised!

JACOB: Let a feast be prepared to celebrate your safe return. Why so downcast, what dark foreboding strikes my soul?

(One opens his sack, finding a purse of gold.)

ASHER: Brothers! Look! The gold we paid for grain is buried in my sack.
LEVI: What will we do?
JUDAH: We are honest men.
ISSACHAR: We are not thieves.
ZEBULUN: He'll not believe.
DAN: Woe unto us.
NAPHTALI: We are lost.
GAD: There is no escape.
ALL: God's judgment comes, soon or late!

JACOB: Where is thy brother Simeon?

REUBEN: Father, the man who is lord of the country holds Simeon hostage.

JACOB: My old heart breaks. What hast thou done to deserve this punishment?

REUBEN: The lord of the country spake roughly to us, taking us for spies.
We replied we are true men, twelve brothers of one father.
'If thou speak true, where are the twelve?' he asked.
'The youngest, Benjamin, remains at home, the comfort of our mother and
father,' we replied. 'Joseph is no more.'

BROTHERS: Joseph is no more.

JACOB: What then?

REUBEN: The lord of the country commanded us to bring our youngest brother unto
him, holding Simeon as hostage. Then he would know we are true men.

JACOB: Ye have bereaved me of my children. Joseph is not and Simeon is not,
and ye will take Benjamin away? I will not let him go with you, lest harm
befall and ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

CHORUS: But famine was sore in the land. And again they needed grain.

JACOB: Go again in Egypt to buy grain that we might live and not die.

REUBEN: The lord of the land said we would not see his face again unless our
brother come with us.

JUDAH: Father, send the lad with me, and we will arise and go that all our family
may live and not die. If I bring not Benjamin back to thee, then let me
bear the blame forever.

JACOB: If it must be so, then go. Take the best fruits of the land, balm, honey, and spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds; and take double money in your hand and the gold found in the sacks; and take Benjamin, the child of our old age. God Almighty give you mercy before the lord of Egypt that you all may return safely home.

(Brothers process to Joseph, music.)

LEVI: Why have we been brought to his home?

JUDAH: I fear the worst.

ISSACHAR: We never should have come.

ZEBULUN: They think we store the gold.

DAN: What will become of us.

NAPHTALI: Prison or death awaits.

GAD: They will fall upon us.

ASHER: We shall be chained as slaves.

REUBEN: As Joseph was enslaved.

ALL: As Joseph was enslaved.

SERVANT: Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father is with thee. Here is your brother.

(Simeon and Joseph appear.)

ALL: Simeon! Brother! Lord, we have returned.
(bowing low to Joseph)

JOSEPH: Is your father well? Is he yet alive?

ALL: Thy servant, our father, is in good health.
(They bow.)

JOSEPH: Is this your younger brother of whom you spake?

ALL: This is Benjamin, our beloved brother, my lord.
(They bow. Benjamin kneels before Joseph.)

JOSEPH: God be gracious unto thee my son.
(blessing gesture, hands upon the head of the kneeling Benjamin)
Arise. I bid you welcome to the feast.
(As they are served, Joseph covers his face, silently weeping.)

LEVI: You are safe,

SIMEON: By God's grace.

JUDAH: What a feast.

ISSACHAR: I'm hungry as a beast.

ZEBULUN: Where is our host?
DAN: He stands apart.
NAPHTALI: Our fill of bread
GAD: And wine to drink,
ASHER: All is well
BENJAMIN: By God's grace,
BROTHERS: By God's grace.

(Joseph speaks to his servant.)

JOSEPH: Fill the men's sacks with grain, as much as they can carry, and return each man's gold. Hide my silver cup in the sack of Benjamin, the youngest. Send them away at sunrise.

(The cup is hidden. Full sacks brought. The brothers depart – music.)

SOLDIERS: Halt thieves! Our master commands you to return.

(At a commanding gesture from Joseph, soldiers are sent in pursuit. The brothers are made to kneel before Joseph.)

JOSEPH: Wherefore have ye rewarded good with evil? Do you not know that such a man as I can divine the secrets of your heart?

BROTHERS: My lord, we have done nothing.

JOSEPH: The silver cup from which I drink and divine is gone.

LEVI: We are not thieves.
JUDAH: Did we not offer back the gold?
ISSACHAR: If the cup be found among us, let the thief die.
ZEBULUN: The rest will be thy slaves.

JOSEPH: He who has the cup shall my servant be, the rest of ye shall be blameless.

(Servants search the sacks. The cup is found in Benjamin's.)

DAN: Not Benjamin!
NAPHTALI: Spare him, he is so young.
GAD: How could you?
ASHER: Mercy, great master!
JUDAH: God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants.
Behold, we are all thy lord's servants.
JOSEPH: The child alone will stay with me. Depart in peace unto thy father.

JUDAH: Forgive me, lord, our father will die if we return without his son. His wife Rachel bore two sons whom he dearly loves. Joseph is no more. Benjamin you would hold. Take me, instead of him, for thy bondman forever, that this grief not fall upon my father.

JOSEPH: Arise, brethren, come near me, I pray... I am Joseph.

BROTHERS: **Joseph!**

JOSEPH: I am Joseph, your brother, whom ye sold into slavery in Egypt. Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, for God did send me before you to preserve life.

ALL: Behold, God hath made Joseph ruler of all Egypt. Your lives are saved by a great deliverance. Hasten to your father and mother. Tell them all that ye have seen. You shall live in the land of Goshen in plenty and in peace.

(song)

*Praise and thanksgiving let every man sing,
unto our Father, our heavenly King.
Altogether joyfully sing.*

*(Joseph embraces brothers, Jacob and Rachel appear and embrace their son.
Recessional, singing.)*

MOSES

A play for third grade based on the Old Testament

by William Ward

Cast of Characters:

*Pharaoh, Hebrew Slaves, Counselor, Moses' Mother, the Princess and her Handmaidens,
Narrator, Egyptian Overseer, Moses, Aaron, Shepherd Girl, Wild Shepherds,
Voice of God, Magicians, and Messengers.*

The parts of Pharaoh, Moses, and Narrator may be shared by several children.

PHARAOH: Behold! The Hebrew slaves
Grow strong and great.
Slaves their masters overtake.
Double their labors on the plains.
Double our profit, double their pains.
More bricks and mortar double weight,
Tears and sorrow be their fate.

HEBREW SLAVES in
PROCESSION: Bricks and mortar, weight of clay,
Tears of sorrow, day by day.
Back so bent, pain our pay,
All our lives slave away.
Freedom only in the grave,
Deliver us, our God, we pray.

COUNSELOR: Mighty Pharaoh of Egypt King,
The Hebrew slaves to their God still sing.
But if their baby sons should die,
Their great numbers would subside.

PHARAOH: Death to each son, I command.
Soldiers search throughout the land.
You may spare the Hebrews' daughters,
But cast the slave sons in the waters.

(Soldiers march - drum)

MOSES' MOTHER:

My own dear son, my flesh and blood,
I trust you to the river's flood.
My life, my light, my joy, my heart,
Your cradle now must be this ark.
I place you in God's loving hands,
He will guide you to firm land.

(River Song)

*The river is wide, the river is deep,
Hush, little baby, in peace fast asleep.
The stream bears you on,
God's will be done
Until you awake
And rise bright as the sun.
Till then you may dream
On the deep flowing stream,
Till the sun of new day
Sets your people free.*

HANDMAIDENS:

Water of life, renewing blood,
The Princess would bathe
In thy cleansing flood.
Behold Pharaoh's daughter
Comes down to thy water
To bathe in the cool of the day.

Look! A basket of woven reeds.
Hark! A child softly weeps.

PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER:

My poor little man, no need to cry,
You're in my arms safe and dry.
Father Nile gives me a son!
I'll love you as my very own.
Drawn from the water, so you came,
"Moses" shall be your name.

HANDMAIDENS:

Water of life, thy will be done,
You bore for the Princess thy holy son.
Drawn from the water for Pharaoh's daughter —
"Moses," the son.

NARRATOR:

And it came to pass that the Hebrew slave child Moses
was raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.
But Moses looked upon the burdens of his people
and was sore at heart.

SLAVES: Bricks and mortar, weight of clay,
Tears of sorrow, day by day.
Back so bent, pain our pay,
All our lives slave away.
Freedom only in the grave,
Deliver us, our God, we pray.

(Old slave falls.)

EGYPTIAN OVERSEER: Lazy slave, one more slip
I'll teach you, taste my whip.

MOSES: Let him rest, I beg you, please.
He is old. Grant him ease.

OVERSEER: Great Moses, Princess' son, dare you take his burdens on?
There is work to be done, e'er the setting of the sun.
He is but an idle slave, the clay pit shall be his grave.

(strikes slave)

MOSES: Your wish for him be your last breath,
The wages of sin seal your death.

(strikes overseer)

SLAVES *(whisper)*: Moses, flee from Egypt land,
There is blood upon your hand.
To free us from our daily pain,
This man's death your soul has stained.
Flee, Moses, from the Pharaoh's hate
Into the wilderness desolate.

(Moses flees.)

Blinding sun, burning thirst,
Moses, your strong heart will burst.
Jagged rocks, shifting sands,
Moses flees from Egypt land,
Fiery desert, burning hell,
Across sand seas Midian's well....

SHEPHERD GIRLS:

(Song)

*From the well of Midian we draw the living water.
The sheep graze peacefully on the hills with Midian's
seven daughters.*

*Trusting sheep, now drink your fill, no harm will come
to find you.*

*We will guard you from the wolves, each ram and lamb
and gentle ewe.*

WILD SHEPHERDS:

Pretty girls, gentle doves,
Flee my fair ones, fear the wolves.
Out of our way, run for your lives.
Or will you be the wild wolves' wives?
Rough and hairy shepherd men,
We seize the well of Midian.

(Chase away Midian's daughters)

MOSES:

By what right do you claim this water?

SHEPHERDS:

By the right of the wolves to plunder and to slaughter.

MOSES:

Then I, Moses, claim the shepherd's right
To put blood-thirsty wolves to flight.

(Moses drives them away.)

SHEPHERD GIRLS:

(Song)

*Welcome, stranger, to our land,
To the well of Midian.
In our father's tents find rest,
As the sun sets in the west.
From all your trials may you find peace,
Before the sunrise in the east.
Welcome, stranger, to our land,
To the well of Midian.*

NARRATOR:

And it came to pass that Moses dwelt with Jethro, the
Priest of Midian, who gave Zipporah, his daughter, to be
his wife. And God looked upon the Children of Israel
and heard their cry.

SLAVES:

Bricks and mortar, weight of clay,
Tears of sorrow, day by day.
Back so bent, pain our pay,
All our lives slave away.
Freedom only in the grave,
Deliver us, our God, we pray.

NARRATOR: Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro and led them to the mountain of God, Mount Horeb.

THE VOICE OF GOD: Moses, Moses.

MOSES: Here am I.

VOICE OF GOD: Draw not nigh, put off thy shoes,
For thou standest on holy ground.

I am the God of thy father,
The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
The God of Jacob.
(Moses hides his face)
I have seen the affliction of my people in Egypt, I
have heard their cry, I know their sorrows; and I am
come down to deliver them out of the hand of the
Egyptians to bring them unto a good land flowing with
milk and honey.

MOSES: Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh and lead the
Children of Israel out of Egypt?

GOD: I shall be with thee.

MOSES: What shall I say when the Children of Israel ask who
has sent me?

GOD: I AM THAT I AM. Thus shalt thou say unto the
Children of Israel, I AM hath sent you.

MOSES: But, behold, they will not believe that the Lord
appeared to me.

GOD: Cast down thy rod.

(He throws down his rod.)

MOSES: A snake!

GOD: That they might believe. Now go, and I will be with thee.
(procession to Pharaoh's court)

HEBREW SLAVES,
MOSES, AARON:

(Song)

*Moses, lead us out of bondage,
Under Pharaoh's heavy hand.
Moses, lead us out of sorrow,
To the longed-for promised land.
Moses, lead God's chosen people,
By God's grace we follow thee
To the land of milk and honey.
Moses, set thy people free.*

MOSES (to Pharaoh):

Thus saith the Lord: "Let my people go."

PHARAOH

Your Lord I do not know.
I will not let your people go.

AARON:

The God of the Hebrews hath commanded us
to offer sacrifice in the wilderness.

PHARAOH:

Go back to your labors by Pharaoh's law.
Make more bricks. *You* find the straw!

OVERSEERS:

Faster, faster, make more bricks.
Lazy slaves, no more tricks.
Faster, faster, mix more clay,
Or the lash will be your pay.

SLAVES:

Bricks and mortar, weight of clay,
Tears of sorrow, day by day.
Back so bent, pain our pay,
All our lives slave away.
Freedom only in the grave,
Deliver us, our God, we pray.

MOSES:

Lord, evil has fallen upon us.
Why did you send me?
Pharaoh doubles their burden
And will not set them free.

VOICE OF GOD:

I am the Lord, hearken to my word.
I will set my people free;
Pharaoh will release them.
To Jordan's fair and promised land,
Moses you will lead them.

MOSES:

Children of Israel, hear God's word.

HEBREW SLAVES: Moses brought this grief on us.
Moses, you betrayed our trust.

MOSES (*to Pharaoh*): Thus saith the Lord: "Let my people go."

PHARAOH: Your Lord I do not know,
I will not let your people go.

MOSES and AARON: A sign from God for doubters' sake.
Behold the rod ... turns to ...

ALL: **A snake!**

PHARAOH: Your God stoops to childish tricks.
Magicians, (*clap, clap*) throw down your sticks.
Your God is but a fake,
Let Him deal with Pharaoh's snakes.

(*Enter Magicians, twirl staves and cast them down.*)

MAGICIANS: O sire, a hideous sight,
The snakes writhing in a fight!
Surely it is a sign from God,
Our snakes devoured by Moses' rod.

PHARAOH: Your Lord I do not know.
I will not let your people go.

VOICE OF GOD: Moses, by the hand of God,
Above the Nile, stretch thy rod.
Let all the waters of the flood
Turn to flowing, crimson blood.

PHARAOH (*raising cup in blessing*):
Praise to thee, O Father Nile, and thy renewing tide.
Precious river, strong and good, Egypt is thy bride.

(*Pharaoh pours blood red water and drops the cup in surprise.*)

ALL: Pharaoh's heart, hard as stone,
Has brought the curse of God upon
All the waters, wells and ponds
Till the will of God be done.

MESSENGERS (*alternating*): All our water has turned to blood.
Fish gasp and die upon the mud.
The deepest wells begin to stink,
We have no water left to drink.
Israel's God has cursed our land.
We bow before His mighty hand.
Our river with bright blood does flow.

ALL: Until you let our people go.

(*Pharaoh turns his back.*)

MOSES: Thus saith the Lord: "Let my people go."

PHARAOH: Your Lord I do not know.
I will not let your people go.

MOSES: I, Moses, by the hand of God,
Above the Nile, stretch my rod.
Let every river, marsh and bog,
Overrun your land with frogs.

MESSENGERS: (*alternating while "frogs" hop around stage*)
Frogs on the tables, frogs in the chairs,
Frogs in the bath tub, frogs on the stairs.
Frogs in the cooking pots, frogs in the grain,
Frogs in the oven, frogs in the rain.
Frogs in the temples, frogs in the streets,
Frogs in the bedrooms, underneath the sheets.

ALL: All over Egypt, frogs freely roam,
Look, Great Pharaoh, frogs on your throne!

PHARAOH: Moses!

(*Moses comes.*)

Moses, take these frogs from me,
And I will set thy people free.
I beg thee, free me from these frogs.
Take thy people, serve thy God.

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's mighty hand,
Banish frogs from Egypt land.
Depart from the houses,
Depart from the towns,
Go back to the river,
Hide 'neath the ground.

NARRATOR: But Pharaoh's heart turned hard when the frogs were gone, Pharaoh broke his word and defied the Lord.

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's mighty hand,
Smite the dust of Egypt land.
Hard-hearted Pharaoh must pay the price,
Out of the dust, spring teeming lice!

EGYPTIANS: Lice in our hair, lice in our clothes,
Lice in the air, lice on our toes.
Lice on the cows, lice on the cats,
Lice on the sows, lice in our hats.
Lice crawl and they creep,
We can't sleep, we can't eat.
We itch and we scratch,
But more lice do hatch.
How painful the price,
To be covered with lice!

MOSES: Thus saith the Lord: "Let my people go."

PHARAOH: Your Lord I do not know.
I will not let your people go.

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's mighty hand,
Smite the air of Egypt land.
Hard-hearted Pharaoh God's will defies.
Let the clear air be filled with biting flies.

EGYPTIANS: Swarms of flies blind our eyes,
Buzzing flies blot the sky.
Clouds of flies, people cry;
We must hide, or we die!

PHARAOH: Moses!
Moses, take these flies and lice from me,
And I will set thy people free.
Offer God a sacrifice.
Just take away these flies and lice.

(slapping gestures - all sit)

MOSES: I will purge these lice and flies,
But know that if the Pharaoh lies
And breaks his promise and his word,
Beware the Lord's mighty sword.

NARRATOR: But when the flies were all gone,
Pharaoh's heart turned hard as stone.

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's mighty hand,
Smite the beasts of Egypt land.
All the cattle of the fields
Shall die before the Pharaoh yields.

EGYPTIANS: All our cattle, cows, and bulls,
Fall from cruel disease.
But the Hebrew herds are spared –
Healthy, strong, at peace.
Pharaoh, send the Hebrews hence,
Release us from this pestilence!

NARRATOR: But Pharaoh's heart was hardened,
and he would not let the Hebrews go.

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's mighty hand,
Cast ashes on your sins.
Boils and blains for man and beast,
Shall burn upon your skin.

(Moaning and groaning)

EGYPTIANS: Release us from this misery.
Pharaoh, set the Hebrews free!

NARRATOR: But Pharaoh's heart was hardened,
and he would not let the people go.

MOSES: Pharaoh, learn the might of God,
He shall smite thee with his rod.
Fear the Lord's holy ire,
From heaven, thunder, hail and fire!

EGYPTIANS: Hail smites all men and beasts,
From the greatest to the least.
It destroys each leaf and grain,
Strikes the earth and bursts into flame!
Release us from this fiery rain.
Free the slaves, in God's name!

PHARAOH: Moses! Moses!
Take your slaves and go!

MOSES: Still our Lord you do not know.
I will stop the fiery hail,
Yet again your word will fail.
Your heart again will turn to stone,
Until God's will be done.

PHARAOH: Offer God a sacrifice.
Take with you all your men,
But leave behind all your wives.
Then you'll come home again.

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's mighty hand,
Smite the fields of Egypt land.
On the winds, a winged host,
Locusts plague all Egypt's coasts.

EGYPTIANS: *(beating with cloths)*
Darkening of the sky, every blade, all leaves—
Locusts! Locusts! Stop the thieves!
Rumbling in the ground, thunder in the air—
Locusts! Locusts! Fields stripped bare.
Locusts! Locusts! All around.
Only Death makes such a sound.
Locusts! Locusts! How they sing.
Locusts! Locusts! Eat everything.

PHARAOH: Moses! Moses! Moses!
I have sinned against your God and you,
When will this evil plague be through?
Rid us of this pest I pray,
And you may lead the slaves away.

MOSES: Strong west wind arise from sleep,
And cast the locusts in the sea.

NARRATOR: But when the locusts were all gone,
Pharaoh's heart turned hard as stone.

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's might,
Smite Egypt land with blackest night.
Egyptians shall lose all sight,
And pray to God to give them light.

EGYPTIANS:
(wandering blindly)

Gone the sun, gone the moon,
Blackest night, darkest gloom.
We grope in fear, near and far,
Without a lamp, without a star.
When will this endless night be done?
Will we ever find the sun?

PHARAOH:

Moses! Moses! Moses!
Free us from night, give us our sight,
Lead us to light.
I set all thy people free.
Take them all away with thee.
But leave behind the cows and sheep,
The rest take, those I keep.

NARRATOR:

But when Pharaoh saw the sun,
Again his heart turned to stone.

MOSES:

The judgment of God is at hand,
The Angel of Death will walk through this land:
At the midnight hour Egypt's firstborn sons will die,
But the Children of Israel Death's Angel will pass by.
Let every household take a pure, young lamb
And offer up its life.
Mark your doorway with its blood,
Death's Angel will pass by.

Bitter herbs, unleavened bread,
Shall mark Passover's feast.
When Israel's chains were broken,
As the sun rose in the East.

*(The Angel of Death passes through the Egyptians,
and the all firstborn die.)*

HEBREWS:

(Song)

*At the midnight hour Egypt's sons will die,
But the sons of Israel Death's Angel will pass by.
Bitter herbs, unleavened bread shall mark Passover's feast.
A lamb must die that we might live,
And God will set us free.
I AM will set us free.*

NARRATOR:

And God led his people out of bondage in Egypt
through the wilderness to the Red Sea.
And the Lord went before them by day
in a pillar of cloud and by night in a pillar of fire.

HEBREWS: *(Procession song, Angel with fire)*
He has led us out of pain
To a fair and fruitful land.
He has broken off our chains
With His judgment's mighty hand.

*He will lead us out of night
To the glory of his light,
To a land of joy and peace.
Praise to God will never cease.*

PHARAOH: I will pursue them,
I will draw my sword,
My hand will destroy them.

EGYPTIANS: Now the slaves and their Lord
Shall fall before Pharaoh's sword!

(They pursue the Israelites.)

HEBREWS: We are lost, we will die,
Pharaoh's army draweth nigh.
We will fall to sword and spear,
God save us, we die of fear!

MOSES: I, Moses, by God's mighty hand
Raise my rod above the sea.
God sets a pathway through the waves
To set his people free.

(Blue cloth waves open up, forming a path for the Hebrews to pass through.)

NARRATOR: And the Children of Israel went into the midst of the
sea upon the dry ground, between walls of water. And
the Egyptians pursued them with chariots and horsemen.
And Moses stretched forth his rod over the sea.

EGYPTIANS: With sword and with spear
We will fill them with fear.
We will have our revenge
When they crawl and they cringe.

MOSES: This day, Israel shall be free,
And Pharaoh's army drowned in the sea.

(The waves close over the Egyptians.)

HEBREWS (*song*):

*He has led us through the waves
Safely to the farther shore.
All closed the Red Sea like a grave
On those who bore the sword.
Lord, lead us through the wilderness
To the holy mountain.
God, Thy children ever bless,
Thy Word springs like a fountain.*

NARRATOR:

So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea and they went out into the wilderness of Shur, and they went three days into the wilderness and found no water.

HEBREWS:

We burn with thirst, we are dry as stone.
The jackals and vultures will pick our bones.
It was better to live as slaves,
Than to die with the desert for our grave.
Moses, what shall we drink?

MOSES:

Hearken to the voice of the Lord, thy God,
And he will quench thy thirst.

NARRATOR:

And Moses cast a tree into the bitter waters of Mara and they were made sweet. And Moses led Israel into the wilderness of Sin.

HEBREWS:

We faint with hunger, we can walk no longer.
We soon will be dead for want of bread.
It was better to live as slaves,
Than to die with the desert for our grave.
Moses, what shall we eat?

MOSES:

Do what is right in the sight of God,
and He will satisfy thy hunger.

NARRATOR:

And it came to pass that that evening quails came up and covered the camp.
And in the morning, manna, the bread of heaven, lay upon the ground, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.
And God called the Children of Israel to Mount Sinai.

HEBREWS:

The mountain trembles, a cloud descends,
Heaven thunders, the world will end.
Lightning flashes all around,
From Heaven the ram's horn sounds.
God speaks in the flame,
Holy, holy, holy is His name.

VOICE OF GOD:

Moses! Come to me.
These are the words which thou shalt speak unto
the Children of Israel:

I am the Lord thy God who has brought thee out of the
house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before
me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee, any graven image or any
likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, in the earth
beneath, or in the water under the earth.
Thou shalt not bow down to them nor serve them.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Honor thy father and thy mother.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbor's.

Go, Moses, and bear the Word of God to men on earth.

HEBREWS:

The judgment of God will be upon those who
break His commandments.
Goodness and mercy will be upon those who love
Him and keep His covenant.

HEBREWS (song):

*He has led us out of pain to a fair and happy land.
He has broken off our chains with his judgment's mighty hand.*

*Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us
Through the wilderness of sin.
Guide us, guard us, teach us, feed us,
Thy Word springs in the hearts of men.*

*He will lead us out of night, to the glory of His light.
To a land of joy and peace. Our praise to God will never cease.*

ALL:

The story goes on, and it has no end,
How the law was broken, and written again.
How the Children of Israel worshipped a golden calf,
How the wicked died by the sword of wrath,
How Moses' face shone with light,
How Joshua led them in the fight,
How they wandered for forty years,
Their trials and hardships, grief and fears,
Until at last by God's own hand,
Moses led his people to the Promised Land!

THE FORGING OF THE SAMPO

Adapted from the Kalevalah for the fourth grade

written by Kevin Kilb

Cast of Characters:

*Chorus, Vainamoinen, Leminkainen, Ilmarinen,
Mother, Three Singers, Maiden, Old Man, Villagers*

Scene 1: Wintery landscape. Downstage is North Farm. Upstage is Quiet Water Farm. A river divides the two. The Mistress, Maiden, Singers, and Old Man are in North Farm. All others are in Quiet Water Farm.

CHORUS: The wind whipped steadily on the northern shore
 Before the clouds let loose the day.
 The sun beyond broke through the storm
 And bathed himself in oceans of blue.

 Beside those waters and beneath that light,
 A man was born with the blood of the north.
 Long had he waited within the womb
 To breathe the air that blew above.
 Vainamoinen was his name and he set forth
 To fill his lungs to the waking point.

VAINAMOINEN: I must be free to ride the wind
 And find myself bound by the land.
 I wish for a horse to bear me up
 To where no air has been breathed by man.

CHORUS: A winged horse then did appear.
 Over the waves it came his way.
 Vainamoinen prepared to ride the mare
 When from his mother this warning flew:

MOTHER: The seas are rough for those who rush
 To breathe the air that is far from home.
 Wait until you are ready for such a roaming,
 Or you will come back empty of air and wealth.

VAINAMOINEN: Those are wasted words to me inside.
For thirty years I have wanted this ride.

CHORUS: With a run of her legs and a roll of her wings,
The winged mare let sail on her flight.
Bound for the blue of the heavenly wonder
And breathing the air of one who is free.

(pause for deep breath)

Curses! Came quickly from the one who would kill him
Clinging to the shadows of an old dead tree.
A sway-backed, squinty-eyed Lapp called Joukahainen
Was still secretly nursing an enduring grudge.

His bow cast in copper, adorned with gold
And strung with the hair of the devil's colt.
He took three arrows hardened with venom
And made ready to down the horse and her keep.

The first one was flaming and full of desire.
It shot fast and fiery from the bow of the fiend.
High to the heavens it flew unrequited,
Failing to find the flesh of the steed.

The second was spellbound, made magic by a wish.
A shot so sinister, nearly silent save a hiss.
Soaring toward him at first, then it fell from its path,
Still shining despite this show of its fluff.

The third was cold and cursed, steely sharp at the tip.
Pointed with purpose, cutting and quick.
He drew his string tightly, on the target he fixed,
He calmly set the trap that was held by his wits.
Then playing his clever trick with never a care.
He struck the beast dead while it flew through the air.

(pause)

Down fell Vainamoinen toward the depths of the sea,
Desperate and saddened by the death of his wish.
The resounding splash of his body would silence
Someone who witnessed this dive from the sky.

(The darkness around him sets him to ponder.)

VAINAMOINEN: Should I succumb to this drowning in the watery deep?

CHORUS: Cold and grieving and genuinely cheated,
He could just give in to the grasp of the chill.
Yet clutching his chest, he was warm to the touching,
Glowing in the darkness, more a god than a ghost.

His choice now clear, he grabbed for the surface,
Gasping and choking for such air he had sought.
In raising his arms he was reaching for heaven,
Every move that he made was a desperate stretch.

Rolling around like a log in the river,
Resisting the waves and longing for home,
He hoped for his house in the waves of the water,
But knew in his heart it was a ridiculous dream.

Scene 2: The Mistress rescues Vainamoinen.

MISTRESS: Who is this weeping through the song of the wind?
A wandering stranger or one as close as kin?

CHORUS: The Mistress of North Farm was moved by the voice
Of Vainamoinen, the man who had vanished from home.
She vowed she would solve the mystery of the morning
And made way for the waves in her boat now unmoored.
With mighty arms and unwavering resolve,
She rowed toward the man who was wounded and trembling.

SINGER 1: The Mistress of North Farm knew the man by name.

SINGER 2: She hauled his battered body in against the heaving sea.

SINGER 3: Though weakened and weary, Vainamoinen was saved.

SINGER 1: The Mistress of North Farm nursed him back to health, a
miraculous endeavor, to say the least.

SINGER 2: The waking of Vainamoinen, however, was wanting of valor.
He feared his savior and was wary of her intent.

SINGER 3: Vainamoinen knew that those who did return from North Farm
were never the same.

(Vainamoinen now in North Farm)

- VAINAMOINEN: Every shrub and tree is strange to me,
Making this an uneasy place to be.
No neighbors I know to visit nearby,
Neither family nor friends to hear my cries.
And such stuff I have heard of here
Should fill my head with doubts and fear.
- MISTRESS: You made a choice when you began your searching
But Joukahainen the chaser lurched behind a tree.
He bore a childish grudge that changed things.
By chance or a hunch you are now with me.
- VAINAMOINEN: I know I sound ungrateful and foolish
To fear my savior and long to be free.
But still I favor ground more familiar
Or firm or forgiving than this seems to be.
- MISTRESS: If you are certain to be satisfied with a simple life at home
And will stay within your senses, though starving and alone,
I shall show you to the safety of your Quiet Water Farm.
But only if you fulfill a task still undone.
- VAINAMOINEN: What is it? I will do anything.
- MISTRESS: Speak slowly so you can say for sure.
For this is a task fit for mankind.
For many, I mean, together, might fulfill it.
But a few, or one good man, may try it as well.
- VAINAMOINEN: Name it then and it will be done.
- MISTRESS: North Farm needs a Sampo. Forge me a Sampo.
- SINGER 1: A solution to his fears!
- SINGER 2: A solution? He doesn't even know what a Sampo is.
- SINGER 3: Shhhh! We shall see.
- VAINAMOINEN: A Sampo, you say, is needed here.
But of forging and Sampo I have no idea.
However I can firmly suggest a friend of mine
Who could tend your request.

Ilmarinen, the eternal smith, has been forging
From fire since the start of time.
If any could form a Sampo from scratch,
Surely he should be the one to seek.

MISTRESS: Ilmarinen, then, shall be the second to save you.
For I was the first, lest you forget.
Ask him the favor and hope he fulfills it,
Or you will be lost between here and home.

CHORUS: Since the deal was formed, they could soon depart,
But not before Vainamoinen's heart had
seen the daughter of the Mistress of North Farm.
She sat on a rainbow and made him an offer.

MAIDEN: I propose to you a puzzle to win me as your wife.
It is a riddle to be reckoned with today and tomorrow, hence
A mystery for a mind that likes to linger.

VAINAMOINEN: This day is full of them. Give it to me then.

MAIDEN: I have three things to understand and three things to undertake.
A clever man considers what I ask.
The better man would complete the task.

VAINAMOINEN: Proceed.

MAIDEN: One, find me an egg.

VAINAMOINEN: This I can do.

SINGER 1: This, my friends, anyone could do.
MAIDEN: Then, tie the egg into a knot.

SINGER 2: But eggs break before they bend.

MAIDEN: Two, bring me a horse's hair.

SINGER 1: There are plenty of beasts to pluck or brushes to pick with any
luck.

MAIDEN: Then, slice the hair straight down in two with a tool.

VAINAMOINEN: May I use a knife?

MAIDEN: A dull knife with no tip.

SINGER 2: She is a stickler and these details spell disaster.

MAIDEN: Three, from this staff, carve me a boat that floats.

SINGER 1: This third of the three is not so bad.

SINGER 2: Surely she will have something to add.

MAIDEN: And, be certain your axe never touches a single stone.

SINGER 2: I knew she would say such a thing as this. Now there is no hope for him.

SINGER 1: Perhaps she will forget the finer points or lighten his load if he asks her politely.

SINGER 3: Before I guess how things will go, I will watch him and wait for an answer to arrive.

CHORUS: Vainamoinen was clearly clever and thought things through. But this time cleverness simply could not do.

VAINAMOINEN: I will find an egg to fiddle and fuss with.
Then tell her the knot is too small to see.
And two of my tasks would soon be done
If I take two of those horse hairs and say they'd been one.
To carve a boat that floats is the last.
Maybe I could really do that task.

SINGER 2: The stones!

SINGERS: Watch out for the stones!

VAINAMOINEN: Aaaah! My knee! I have cut my knee!

CHORUS: Vainamoinen had never seen blood before.

VAINAMOINEN: Somebody help me!

CHORUS: It poured from the gore and onto the ground.

VAINAMOINEN: I don't want to die here!

CHORUS: The crowd stood around watching it pour.

VAINAMOINEN: Save me!

CHORUS: The poor man's screaming was the only sound.

OLD MAN: This weeping and whining is all I can stand.
We have bled before and we will bleed again.
Wear this bandage on your bloody wound;
Then try to strengthen your watery backbone.
You lack the will to win this bride.

CHORUS: With his patched up leg and wounded pride,
Poor Vainamoinen was led away limping.
Over his pain lay the lingering promise
To pay back the Mistress with a Sampo.

Scene 3: Vainamoinen asks Ilmarinen to build the Sampo.

CHORUS: The people who loved him welcomed him home
And longed to hear of his life lately passed.

VAINAMOINEN: Ilmarinen, old friend, you would not believe the beauty
I have seen waiting to be wed.

LEMINKAINEN: A beauty you say?

VAINAMOINEN: Yes. (To Leminkainen) Get out of my way!
She is a bargain for the taking for any man making
A simple trinket for her mother.

LEMINKAINEN: I love little trinkets and would like to profess
My own propensity for proposals.

VAINAMOINEN: She does not care for the thoughtful type or for
What one considers or thinks or knows.

LEMINKAINEN: What is her name and which way do I go?

VAINAMOINEN: This maiden is the daughter of the Mistress of North Farm.
(Spoken slowly. Everyone drops his/her things and gasps.)

ILMARINEN: I could have guessed by your distress that we've gone past
Proposals and dance around a request.
Are you in some kind of trouble, Vainamoinen?

(Vainamoinen and Ilmarinen go off to the side to talk. The crowd gathers around to listen. Leminkainen stands alone and expresses his intentions.)

LEMINKAINEN: Once I, Leminkainen, stand before this beauty,
The maiden will be reminded of a long lost friend.
For she, no doubt, has looked in a mirror
And her beauty is but a reflection of me.

I dream of her openly and now I will find her.
If she is the flower, then I am the bee.

(Leminkainen goes off stage.)

Scene 4: *People of Quiet Water Farm argue over the building of the Sampo.*

ILMARINEN: I've heard of a Sampo from my father and mother
But never before put my hands to the task.
I don't even know how I would begin one
Or how it could move and how it should bend?

VILLAGER: Shouldn't he know?
VILLAGER: What if he can't?

CHORUS: He's heard of a Sampo from his father and mother.
But never before put his hands to the task.
We must think about how to begin one.
How could it move and how should it bend?

(Townspeople walk around, circling the area, thinking.)

VILLAGER: Here is my guess and I hope it is good. A Sampo goes like this!

VILLAGER: No, I do not think you have understood. This is a Sampo!

VILLAGER: Why can't you see that this is how it should be?

(Townspeople speak these lines as a round in different rhythms. They argue over how the Sampo should be and their movements, when seen as a whole, seem to be like a human machine. Ilmarinen goes around measuring, imitating gestures, testing things out. The Mistress sees this chaos and arrives with her singers.)

MISTRESS: Ignore what they say and listen to me.
Your hands will remember how it should be.

The Sampo is the same from days of old.
Begin with the salt, begin with the bread, begin with the gold.

The Sampo lives and the Sampo breathes.
The Sampo gives everyone what he needs.
It must give each of us what we need.

ILMARINEN: It grinds the salt, it bakes the bread, it shapes the gold.
It must be hard. It must be soft. It must be warm. It must be cold.
The Sampo lives and the Sampo breathes.
The Sampo gives each of us what we need.

Scene 5: Leminkainen arrives in North Farm, on snowshoes, to woo the Maiden of North Farm.

LEMINKAINEN: Hello! I am here! Hang up the banners! Let's hear the wedding bells!

SINGER 3: Who are you?

LEMINKAINEN: I was the beautiful boy and the lovely lad who became the marriageable man who will be the handsome husband of the Maiden of North Farm.

SINGER 3: You've come to marry the Maiden of North Farm?

LEMINKAINEN: Yes. Which one of you is she?

SINGER 2: What makes you think she would want to marry you?

LEMINKAINEN: Well, I am not only beautiful. I can make music and sing songs to move her senses.

SINGER 2: She would have to be senseless to be moved by him.

SINGER 1: Unless he soon starts making sense.

LEMINKAINEN: I will paint pictures to please her and write poems to perform. I have also mastered polite conversation. Plus, I am a man of a far-roving mind!

SINGER 3: A far-roving mind?

SINGER 2: Well, perhaps you should go look for your mind before it escapes.

SINGER 1: Minds have been lost before, you know.

LEMINKAINEN: In a few days' time, I will cast my spell over everyone in North Farm and win their approval. Except you old man. No need to smell the stale loaf of bread when the fresh one is warm, right. So where is she then?

MAIDEN: I am here and have heard your intentions, so let me mention what I will require. It seems that your passions are wild and restless and could consume your attention like an untamed fire. It will take three tasks to win my affection and for one such as you, they are the animal type.

First, there is an elk hiding in the forest. Find him and hold him for one solid hour.

Second, capture the colt of the devil and tie him tightly to a tree, that he may be tamed.

Third, a swan swims slowly down the river of death's domain. Shoot him dead with a single shot.

LEMINKAINEN: All of these things and more I will do, then wait at your door until you give in.

(Music of the Townspeople: While Leminkainen is offstage trying to fulfill the tasks, various rhythm instruments, bells, and chimes mark the "work" of the Townspeople.)

SINGER 3: Look! Someone is coming!

SINGER 1: Is it that fool Leminkainen?

SINGER 2: No, it's the old man.

SINGER 3: Where is he?

OLD MAN: The elk was elusive but with luck he nabbed it.
The devil's colt is normally limber, but today it was
Lazy and easily tied.
The swan swam leisurely not far from the seashore.
Any archer could have nailed it with a single shot.
When that fool leaned over so he could be nearer,
The heel of my boot gave a blow to his rear.
It knocked him beneath that death-dawning river
And likely he drifts toward his home again.

Scene 6: *Ilmarinen has forged the Sampo.*

ILMARINEN: The Sampo is complete.
My hands remembered how to build it.
Each of us has waited for this moment to arrive,
And it may take all of us to move this creation.
Take a rope and tie it to the end.
Pull the Sampo forward and we'll push it from behind.

(Townspeople "pull" the Sampo out from the forge. They pretend there is a rope and that a large object is attached, seen only by the players, invisible to the audience).

VILLAGER 1: It moves.
VILLAGER 2: and it rests.
VILLAGER 3: It heals
VILLAGER 4: and it crushes.
VILLAGER 1: It shines
VILLAGER 2: and it blackens.
VILLAGER 3: It is new
VILLAGER 4: and it is ancient.

CHORUS: The Sampo lives and the Sampo breathes.
The Sampo gives each of us what we need.

MOTHER: It seems that the mystery of the Sampo is solved.
But still, in my mind, a question remains.
Which of these men will marry the maiden?
When they come to collect it, with whom shall she stay?

VAINAMOINEN: I was first to see her and think her quite fine.
I first heard her voice and the questions she proposed.
I have thought of the puzzles she presented to me.
I am prepared with an answer to her complexities.

LEMINKAINEN: Though it may sound selfish to speak of such stirrings,
One must be moved by my heart's musings.
I have dreamed of this woman and sing her like music.
Surely I have wanted and love her the most.

ILMARINEN: Yes, you perceived and you pondered,
And you dreamed about and desired.
But I performed and I perspired.
I held on and I hammered.
I was hurt and I was hardened.
I did what needed to be done.

MAIDEN: And with your will, Ilmarinen, you have won.

Scene 7: *The Breaking of the Sampo*

CHORUS: The Mistress of North Farm had come to collect what was created from curiosity and finished by the forge. Since Vainamoinen had fulfilled the conditions she had set, the Mistress declared that he was now free. She hoisted the burden high on her back and hauled it home where it belonged.

(Questions and concerns follow quickly from the crowd.)

Why should she have what we worked for and want?
Shouldn't the Sampo be ours to control?
Will the Sampo sustain and support us here or will she hold it closely and keep it to herself?

Plotting and planning in the cover of night, the three determined they would travel up north.
They wanted control of the Sampo and its treasures.

VAN., LEM., IL.: If we can't steal it back, then we will prepare for a fight.

(Leminkainen, Ilmarinen, and Vainamoinen journey to North Farm.)

CHORUS: The Mistress and her singers were sleeping and still.
The Sampo rested safely not far from the shore.
The three men snuck carefully to where it was kept
They tied it securely and made ready to row.

They thought she would not hear. They thought she would not know.
As if the Sampo might disappear, washed away by the waves or covered in snow.

(The Mistress awakes, stands firmly, and speaks.)

MISTRESS: I was willing to tend the Sampo and her treasures.
It is a blessing to hold and a burden to bear.
But if mankind would steal the Sampo from North Farm,
Then I will not keep it. Let the Sampo be shared.

(She slowly lifts the Sampo and throws it across the water. Cymbals crash.)

The Sampo crashed on the Quiet Water shore.
The whole was in pieces, scattered and torn.
The promise of the Sampo seemed undone.

(Crowd is disappointed and disperses. One Townsperson walks back to the water and speaks.)

VILLAGER 1: What was lost to all, I will seek alone.
VILLAGER 2: Though many pieces drift past, I long for mine.
VILLAGER 3: Please free the one that was meant for me.
VILLAGER 4: Open up this mirror to all who are looking.

VILLAGER 1: Look, here is a piece to meet my needs.
VILLAGER 2: I longed for one and it was offered to me.
VILLAGER 3: By luck or by magic, I have the one I want.
VILLAGER 4: Though least of all, this was no mistake.

CHORUS: Come to the water and reach for your piece.

The Sampo gave everyone what he needs.
The Sampo gives each of us what we need.

THE DEATH OF BALDUR

Adapted from Norse mythology for fourth graders

by William Ward

Cast of Characters:

Chorus of the Aesir (the Norse Gods and Goddesses), Nanna, Baldur, Skadi, Frey, Freya, Odin, Hodur, Frigga, Loki, Three Norns, Chorus of the Dead, Witch, Thor, Tyr, Uller

ALL: Radiant Baldur, gold son of Odin,
Thy beautiful brow beams bright over heaven.
Best loved of gods, bearer of light,
Yet death's dreary dreams darken your night.

Here slumbers Hodur, Baldur's blind brother,
Odin his father, Frigga his mother.
Dark are his days, dark are his nights,
Dreary his world, void of all sight.

Sadly he shadows his joyous twin
Who seeks to cheer and comfort him.
Soon the sun rises out of the sea,
Sleep, sightless Hodur, your last sleep of peace.

(Baldur wakes.)

NANNA: Bright beaming Baldur,
A cloud dims thy brow.
If sad you may be
Let me share your sorrow.

BALDUR: A dark dream of death
O'ershadows my bed,
Foretelling my fall
To the land of the dead.

NANNA: Be silent sweet husband,
It cannot be so.
All the gods love you,
They'll not let you go.

BALDUR: Gentle Nanna, fair flower,
The Norns know my end,
Neither thy tears
Nor Thor's wrath
Their will will bend.

NANNA: Do your dark dreams tell you
By whose hand you will die?
Who dares cast the sunlight
Out of the sky?

BALDUR: I know not the hand,
His face lies in shadow,
A black bow is bent...
Straight flies the arrow.

NANNA: Odin will know and find the right way
To hold back the dawn of your dying day.

(Gods and Goddesses assemble, stepping forward as they speak.)

SKADI: I, Skadi, Strong Storm King's daughter,
Will defend unto death the life of my brother.
Trolls, giants, and dragons,
All flee in fear,
Lest they taste the sting
Of my shining spear.

ULLER: I, Uller, the archer,
Of the bending bow,
Have arrows enough
For the fiercest foe.

FREY: I, Frey, am your brother,
Beyond battle and death,
No one will harm you
While I have breath!

FREYA *(to Nanna)*: Weep not, Nanna dear,
Gentle love conquers fear.
Let love be your guide,
To bear you across the great divide.
You are bound to Baldur,
Through joy and through strife,
By his side forever,
Beyond death to new life.

ODIN: With heavy heart I look on thee,
With wisdom's eye I can foresee
The doom that is our destiny.
The sun is setting in still twilight.
Yet we will strive with all our might
Against the dying of the light...
We'll not give up without a fight!

AESIR: We'll not give up without a fight!

ODIN: If Baldur's dream of death be so,
Hela herself will surely know
To death's grim gates I gladly go.
While Odin still has life's breath
For my son I face the Queen of Death.

AESIR: For his son he will face the Queen of Death!

(Exit Odin to drum beat.)

HODUR: Baldur, my brother,
Only light I know,
Do not leave me all alone.
Forever in darkness,
Blind am I.
Without your help
I will surely die.
If to death's house you must go,
Take me with you there also.

BALDUR: When the Norns cut the thread of life
O'er the starlit sea I go.
Yet my last day is filled with light
To know you love me so.

FRIGGA: Without my son, no one will live.
Let all the world a promise give.
Let birds and beasts, stones and trees,
Fire and fish, old age, disease,
Wind and water, iron and ice
Vow they will not take his life.
For by his life we all may live.
So let the world this promise give!

AESIR: So let the world this promise give!
On wind's white wings we'll swiftly go
To ask of all a sacred vow,
Of every being in the wide world all,
Let none play part in Baldur's fall.

(Exit all, except Loki.)

LOKI: All call Baldur beautiful and bright.
Let's see if he can light death's night.
Without him here, the gods will see
That I am greater. My name – Loki!
Baldur speaks truth which I twist to lies.
Baldur bears beauty which I despise.
Monsters and beasts are my ugly brood
Let the evil devour all good!

NORNS: Odin All Father
Harnessed his horse
Sleipnir, eight-legged,
And sped down from Heaven
To Hell's hollow halls.
Hell's hound howled
And growled at wise Odin,
Who halted and called
At Hell's eastern gate
And roused a witch from dreams of hate.

*(As Odin summons the witch with eurythmic gestures,
the veiled dead chant.)*

CHORUS OF THE DEAD: We are the dreaming dead.
Our time is past and gone.
We once walked green earth
And sang beneath the sun.
Now we dwell in gloom,
In dark and deep despair,
In Hell's shadowy tomb,
Far from light and air.
Who is he who comes unbidden?
Who is he who wakes the dead?
Beware, stranger, lest your blood be frozen
As you gaze at death's grim head.

ODIN: I am Struggler's Son, Strider, Way-Tamer,
Your secrets I ask: All earth's I know.
Why are Hela's halls hung with jewels?
Why do her chambers flow with bright gold?

WITCH: For Baldur our halls shine so fair,
Agglitter with gold, the sun made cold.
Odin on high in his heart despairs.
Ask no more.

ODIN: Far-seeing witch, your words unriddle.
More will I ask, all will I know.
Who will slay Baldur, best loved of gods?
Who spill the blood of the Son of Odin?

WITCH: Hodur the blind the branch shall throw,
A deadly dart of mistletoe,
Helped by the hand of one we know.
Ask no more.

ODIN: Far-seeing with, your words unriddle.
More will I ask, all will I know.
When Ragnarok's rage and ruin are done,
Will Baldur burst death's dark door?
Will Baldur's bright spirit outlive the storm?
Will the morning sun arise new born?

WITCH: Way-tamer you are not, nor are you Strider.
You are Odin the Wise, All-knowing Father!

ODIN: Witch you are not, nor woman either.
You are heartless Hela, death's own mother.

WITCH: Go, Odin, guest unbidden.
From you far future now be hidden.

CHORUS: No guest again our graves shall shake
Till wild Fenris Wolf his chains shall break.
We will meet on the Day of Doom
When the World Wasters rise with the moon.

(Exit all. Enter Frigga and Oak.)

FRIGGA: Oak, so old at Asgard's gate,
Will you take part in Baldur's fate?

OAK: May death dash me down
If I or my kin
Share any part in so shameful a sin.

FRIGGA: Mistletoe, moonlit Mistletoe,
Twining up so high,
You could not wish my son to die.
You are so small, what harm could you do?
Yet I must ask also of you,
Do you vow Baldur never will die
While shining Sol crosses the sky?

(Silence, a chime rings three times.)

LOKI (*interrupting*): Fair Frigga, forgive
If I intrude:
The gods return
With great good news.

(Gods and Goddesses enter, singing, bearing Baldur on their shoulders.)

AESIR (*except Loki*): Radiant Baldur, spirit bright,
Fountain of renewing light,
All creation the promise gave,
By this vow is Baldur saved.

*All praise Baldur's golden light,
Well of love and joy of life.
All creation the promise gave,
By this vow is Baldur saved.*

BALDUR: Still death's icy hand shadows my sight.
Yet, while I live, I give you my light,
Poured o'er the boughs of the World Tree,
A blessing to you for the love you bear me.

NORNS: We three Norns spin and weave
The golden thread of destiny.
Skuld soon cuts the slender string
Spun for maid or man or king.
The time draws near to cut this thread.
Soon Baldur sets sail for the house of the dead.

THOR: Be troubled not, brave Baldur,
Nothing may harm you –
Not lightning, nor spear,
Nor stick, nor stone,
Nor boulder, nor bone,
Nor snare, nor snake,
Nor fang, nor fire,
Nor dragon, nor dwarf,
Nor giant, nor elf,
Nor me myself,
Nor even my hammer,
Mighty Mjølner, may harm you.
You have nothing to fear.

LOKI: Your bellowing boast is nothing but air.
Prove what you say, if you dare.
If thundering Thor is so sure he is right,
Hurl magic Mjølner with all your might
Straight at Baldur's radiant brow,
To prove the truth of your own vow.

THOR (*threatening Loki*): Father of lies!
Twister of Truth!
The whole world swore,
Here's your proof.

(Thor hurls hammer.)

AESIR: Baldur lives forevermore,
Unharm'd by the hammer of Mighty Thor!

(The Aesir take turns proving their weapons cannot harm Baldur.)

TYR: Baldur, you have nothing to fear,
Not even the singing sword of Tyr.

AESIR: Baldur lives forevermore,
Unharm'd by Tyr's shining sword.

ULLER: Even arrows straight and true,
Miss their mark when aimed at you.

AESIR: Baldur lives forevermore,
Unharm'd by Uller's deadly arrows.

*(As they make sport of aiming weapons at Baldur, Loki sneaks off.
Gods and Goddesses are frozen in tableau.)*

FRIGGA: Laughter and delight
 Ring round the fields of joy.
 What new game is this
 That gladdens so the gods?

LOKI *(disguised as an old woman)*:
 So strange, so odd,
 There stands a god,
 The ground around him strewn
 With swords and spears,
 Arrows and axes.
 Yet he knows no fear,
 For nothing strikes
 Nor comes near.
 Nothing hurts, nothing harms —
 He rests at peace in the Norn's arms.

FRIGGA: He is guarded by the world's vow
 Of all that is or moves or grows
 On earth and sea and air.
 All have faithfully promised me
 To spare my son so fair.

LOKI: Can you be sure
 In all the world
 All creatures gave the oath?
 What if somewhere
 There were one
 That did not speak the truth?
 Is there not one,
 A stone or stick,
 Secretly tucked away
 That will deal Baldur his death blow
 When dawns his dying day?

FRIGGA: All were asked
 And all have sworn
 Their oath most faithfully...
 Except the harmless Mistletoe
 Which grows on yon oak tree.

LOKI: Farewell, Frigga, goddess fair,
It's time for me to go.
The sun soon sets,
The hour is late,
And I have work to do.
My blessing be on Baldur bright,
My blessing be on you.

NORNS: The blessing of this crooked crone
Is but a wicked lie.
See evil, craft, and cunning glitter in his eye.
Drop all your false pretending
And let the world see—
You are falsehood's father,
Father of lies, LOKI!

(Loki drops disguise, plucks mistletoe, and carves dart.)

LOKI: Mistletoe, friend of darkness,
Mistletoe, friend of night,
I shall carve from you a dart of death
To blot out Baldur's light.
To Hela's hated house he shall fall
And in her hollow halls
Behold the Day of Doom dash down
Asgard's mighty walls.

(The Aesir awaken from tableau.)

SKADI: By my true word you need not fear
Even the sting of Skadi's spear.

(Skadi charges.)

AESIR: Baldur lives bright and clear,
Unharm'd by the sting of Skadi's spear.

(With bow and mistletoe dart, Loki speaks to the audience.)

LOKI: How like the gentle dove
Bright Baldur calmly stands
To be struck down in cold blood
By his blind brother's hand.

(to Hodur)

Poor Hodur, all alone and sad,
While all the worlds and gods are glad.
It is a pity, it is a shame
You may not join their joyous game.

HODUR: But blind am I and may not see.
Night and day are alike to me.
What sport does delight them so?
I long to see, I long to know.

LOKI: All honor goes to brother Baldur,
Baldur as bright as you are blind.
No weapon or blow may bring him low
Until the end of time.
Trolls, giants, men, and gods
Aim at him for sport.
But spears and swords, arrows and axes
Happily miss their mark.

HODUR: I too would honor Baldur,
He means the world to me,
Yet I may not, I stand apart,
You know I cannot see.

LOKI: If Hodur would honor Baldur,
I'll show you where to stand,
Borrow my bow and arrow straight,
My eyes will serve your hand.
Fit the arrow to the string...
Bend back the bow, blind brother...
Straight to his heart flies the deadly dart.
Well shot, hapless Hodur!

BALDUR: Brother!

(Baldur falls as the Norns cut string. The Aesir are frozen in horror.)

HODUR: All is still...
I feel so cold...
Lead me to the sun.
There is no laughter,
There is no joy,
Tell me, what have I done?

LOKI: Twilight falls.
Come Day of Doom!
By Hodur's hand
Baldur dies on the Field of Joy.
So sinks the setting sun.

HODUR: No! It is not so.
You lie deceitful Loki.
BALDUR ... Brother help me.
I am lost ... I cannot see.

LOKI: I'll save you, Hodur —
Run for your life, now, while the gods are stunned,
I'll speak to them on your behalf,
And shield you from their vengeful wrath.
Flee now, Hodur, run...

(Exit Hodur.)

(to Aesir)
There goes the wicked murderer,
Baldur's brother, Hodur!

(Aesir encircle Loki.)

After him quickly before he hides.
For his crime he deserves to die.

AESIR: *(closing the circle, step by step)*
Yours the cunning, yours the plan, *(step)*
Your eyes guided the innocent hand, *(step)*
It would be mercy for Hodur to die, *(step)*
Victim of your vile lies.

THOR: *(raising hammer)*
For Loki's lies, for Loki's guilt,
For Baldur's death, Loki's blood be spilt.

ODIN: *(restraining Thor)*
Hold, Thor!
Your vengeance be restrained,
Loki's foul blood must not profane
The holy ground of Asgard's plain.
Will it wash away the stain,
Lessen sorrow's bitter pain,
Make bright Baldur rise again?

*(The Aesir, humming "Now the Green Blade Riseth,"
bear Baldur's body onto ship.)*

ODIN:
(addressing Loki)

You, with heart as cold as ice,
Pay for your deeds a heavy price.
I condemn you forever to dwell in cruel darkness, *(drum)*
Drinking the cup of your own wickedness, *(drum)*
The poison of lies and hate without rest, *(drum)*
No joy, no light shall lessen your pain,
Bound 'neath the earth in cold, iron chains.

(Loki is chained.)

NANNA:

Baldur, my husband, my heart breaks for thee,
Carry me with you over the sea.
(Nanna dies and is gently lifted onto the ship.)

FREYA:
(offering a flower)

Nanna, gentle Nanna, lie at this side
In death as in life, forever his bride.

FREY:

(waving his hand in blessing three times over the ship)
Baldur set sail o'er the shadowy sea,
Bright ship of fire to eternity.

ODIN:

Baldur, my son, light of the world,
Hear in death's sleep hope's holy word.
(Odin whispers to Baldur.)

NORNS:

What word spoke Odin? Whispered so low
Only we Norns are permitted to know...

(The ship drifts away.)

GODDESSES:

Away sails our joy, away sails our light,
Drifting to darkness, lost in the night.
Away sails our hope, away sails our love,
So sinks the sun from heaven above.

ODIN:

Yet in the darkness your light will shine,
Bringing joy, love and hope to the land of the blind.

AESIR:

Though you are distant, though you have died,
Shine in our hearts, our faithful guide,
Your truth and goodness drive away fear,
Though Day of Doom draws steadily near.
When we have crossed that fateful day,
We will see your face again we pray.

ALL:

(Song)

*Bright Baldur sails the starlit sea
Bound for eternity.
His ship of light
Shines in the night,
Bearing Baldur's spirit bright.*

Sail the dark sea
Beyond world's end
Till all evil hearts
By fire have been cleansed.
Beyond Ragnarok
When Yggdrasil burns,
The dawn of new life
Seeks your return...

(Baldur and Nanna appear behind the Aesir.)

Pour forth your love
On the new-born earth.
Light the new world
With joyous rebirth!

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

A play for fifth grade

by Gloria Kemp

Cast of Characters:

Chorus, Gilgamesh, Elders 1-5, Arunu, Sin, Anu, Ishtar, Hunter, Son, Harim, Enkidu, Ninsun, Enlil, Nines, Scorpion Men 1 and 2, Shamash, Sabitu, Urshanabi, Utnapishtim, Wife, Ea, Gatekeeper

I. Before the Gathering of Gods

ALL:

He who saw everything, he who knew everything,
He stood seven cubits high – two-thirds of him was god,
One third of him was man. He was the most glorious of
heroes, the most eminent of men.
And Enkidu was his friend.

The world of Gilgamesh is hemmed in by the Mighty
Mountains of Mashu that are the edge between day and night.
It is circled by the Bitter River that flows round and round it
unceasingly, and that has no beginning and no end. No one
knows what lies beyond the river, since the very touch of it is
DEATH. To the west is the void into which the sun sets. There
open those rocky caves through which the sun passes under the
earth and back into the Eastern Garden where his home is and
whence he arises again in the mornings.

So much is known.

The gods of Gilgamesh are present everywhere: There is Father
Anu, ruler of the High Heaven; Shamash, the radiant sun; Sin,
the quiet moon; Aruru, the creator of Form; Ishtar, the goddess
of love, so amiable in her friendship, so terrible in her wrath;
Enlil, whose domain is the earth; and Ea who rules over the
deep waters. There are many others, but they have been lost
to us.

The city of King Gilgamesh is Uruk-of-the-High-Walls, the most splendid of all the seven cities of Sumer. Its towering walls protect it from all sorts of evil: the armies of enemy kings, floods, wild beasts and unfriendly gods; but most of all, the walls protect it from the monster Humaba, who lives in a nearby mountain and breathes fire, smoke and soot into the sky.

On a certain morning, a group of elders of the city mount to the very highest level of the walls. There they meet in secret with a number of the most powerful gods.

- ELDER 1: O Father Anu, we have come to complain!
ELDER 2: It is about Gilgamesh, the King.
ELDER 3: He continues to build the city walls higher and higher. Yet who has need of such high walls?
- ELDER 4: It has become a heavy burden. We want to rest!
ELDER 5: Mothers no longer see their sons, nor fathers either, for that matter!
- ELDER 1: Our girls languish without companions; marriages have ceased.
ELDER 2: We do nothing but build, build, build!
ELDER 3: Wine sellers cannot sell their wines.
ELDER 4: The musicians are idle, and there is no joy in the streets!
ELDER 5: There is no business and no leisure!
- ARURU: We ourselves rather like the high walls.
- SIN: We often come and linger here at night and watch the goings-on of mortals. It's very entertaining.
- ELDER 1: Father Anu, you must help us!
- ELDER 2: You must punish Gilgamesh!
- ANU: What do you want me to do? Do you want me to throw rocks out of heaven at the KING? Go away. I like Gilgamesh. He is an upright king and perfectly fearless. He wrestles with lions and tames them with his bare hands. And I have heard that he is himself partly god. I am quite sure that if he wants to build the walls higher, he knows best. Let us not tamper too much in the affairs of these human beings.
- ISHTAR: Father, listen to them. I will not see my mothers bereft of their sons, my wives of their husbands.

ELDER 3: Indeed, perhaps you will listen to our plan, for we have one that we know will work.
ELDER 4: It is this: We want you to create a man. . .
ELDER 5: a man even taller than Gilgamesh—
ELDER 1: and more powerful,
ELDER 2: a wild beast of a man!!
ELDER 3: who will come to earth here—
ELDER 4: who will show his mighty strength—
ELDER 5: and attack the King—

ALL: . . .AND DESTROY HIM!

(Gods take council.)

ANU: So let it be done.

(Music – Ishtar leads Aruru to the Cedar Forest and Enkidu is created out of clay.)

II. The Cedar Forest

(Enkidu's coming to life in the Cedar Forest among the animals is performed in pantomime with music. He frees animals caught in traps. This is seen by a hunter's son who runs to his father in fear.)

HUNTER: What's wrong, my son? You seem full of fear.

SON: O Father, there is a strange man in the forest. He is a terrifying sight, and his strength is like that of the hosts of heaven! He filled the pits that I had dug to snare the wild animals. He broke open my traps and freed the animals!

HUNTER: Calm yourself, son, shadows in the forest have frightened you.

SON: The hair springs out of his head in masses like a field of grain, and he has the horns of a wild beast!

HUNTER: If he stole your catch, my son, why didn't you stop him?

SON: Because he is taller and more powerful than Gilgamesh, the King. He is mighty in power like a fighter of Anu. I was numbed with fear!

HUNTER: If what you say is true, son, then we must report the matter to the King.

(Trees disappear and Elders with Gilgamesh appear.)

HUNTER: O Gilgamesh, a man that came from the hills has become strong indeed in the land. He robs the hunter of his game and disperses the shepherd's flocks. He is mighty in power like a fighter of Anu, and he turns all who see him numb with fear! Indeed I've heard that he is taller and more powerful than Gilgamesh the King!

GILGAMESH: Bring us Harim, the priestess who serves the goddess, Ishtar.
(Enter Harim.)

Harim, I have a certain task for you. It is one that turns the boldest hunters numb with fear.

HARIM: Then I am afraid.

ELDER 1: This is not a girl's task, O king. It is a task for a brave man – a HERO!

GILGAMESH: A girl is full of smiles and charms. Go, Harim, soften the heart of the wild man, and bring him back to the city.

(Music--she goes, all exit. Cedar forest returns. Harim tames Enkidu, and the animals flee from him.)

HARIM: I gaze upon you, Enkidu. You are like a god! Come, I will lead you into Uruk-of-the-Walls, to a pure house, the dwelling of Anu and Ishtar, where lives Gilgamesh, matchless in might, and like a wild bull lords over his people.

ENKIDU: O Harim, what have I done? How have I made all my friends into strangers? See, they flee from me. Why do they run?

HARIM: Enkidu is no longer a wild creature. He is no longer a beast of the forest. Enkidu is now a man. He will live among men and become eminent among men. You have eaten bread, Enkidu, the glory of life! You have drunk wine, Enkidu, the custom of the land.

III. Adventures of Enkidu and Gilgamesh

ELDER 1: Enkidu, the wild man, approaches. Let us guard the king.

ELDER 2: Your help would only shame him.

ELDER 3: The king will subdue him.

ELDER 4: Whatever happens is the will of the gods.

ELDER 5: The battle is done. Our king stands victorious.

ENKIDU: I salute you, Gilgamesh, as one matchless! Over all men is your head lifted up. Enlil has allotted to you supremacy over mankind.

GILGAMESH: Welcome to my city, O godlike Enkidu. I have had a dream that cast a dark shadow over your coming. But now all is well. Let us pledge eternal friendship.
Day and night I dream of a great enterprise, and now I see that you are sent to help me. Whenever I close my eyes, voices come to me and say: Arouse yourself, Gilgamesh; there are great things to be done!
You and I Enkidu will climb the mountain and destroy the monster, Humbaba!

ENKIDU: Who would undertake such a daring enterprise? I knew the presence of Humbaba when I was a wild man. His bellow is a storm-wind, his mouth is a fire, his snort is death! I do not fear beast or mortal man, O Gilgamesh, but Humbaba is not mortal. He is the appointed servant of the gods, the guardian of the wild cows and the Cedar Forest. Enlil has set him there, and whoever enters his forest and draws near grows suddenly faint and becomes paralyzed.

GILGAMESH: But he is an everlasting evil. He oppresses the people and is hated by great Shamash, constantly obscuring his face. O Enkidu, shall my life be as an empty wind? What am I if I turn aside from the things I want to do? But if I do this thing, even though I should fail, then they will say, Gilgamesh died a hero's death, and I will have made an everlasting name for myself! Come now, Enkidu, let us do this deed.

ELDER 1: O Gilgamesh, do not undertake this thing.
ELDER 2: You are young and full of pride.
ELDER 3: Your heart has carried you away.
ELDER 4: Settle down, O King, rule and take a bride.
ELDER 5: Let your life be tranquil.

GILGAMESH: Save your counsel for my friend, Enkidu; he'll listen. He has grown soft and timid here in this luxurious kingdom. He no longer loves daring or adventure. You waste your words on me. I will go alone. (*Exit*)

ELDER 1: If the king stubbornly insists on doing this thing, risking danger and defying the gods, then Enkidu, you must accompany him.

ELDER 2: Indeed, you must go ahead of him, for it is known that whoever first enters the Cedar Gate will be the first to be attacked by Humbaba.

ELDER 3: Besides, it is you who know the way, Enkidu.

ELDER 4: May Shamash stand beside you!

ELDER 5: May he open the path for you!

NINSUN: Even though you are not my own son, O Enkidu, you are now like a son to me. I shall petition the gods for you and Gilgamesh. But please remember, that as a man protects his own person, so must he guard the life of his friend.

ALL: Praise be to Gilgamesh who dares everything. Praise be to Enkidu who will safeguard his friend!

HARIM:
ENKIDU (*having caught up with Gilgamesh*): May your feet carry you safely back to the city, Enkidu!
My head is bowed, O King. I am your brother, your servant, and your friend. Wherever you go, I will go also.

NINSUN (*alone on stage*): O Shamash, listen to me! O Shamash, why have you given my son Gilgamesh such a restless heart? Why have you made him so eager for adventure? Now he has gone to fight with that indestructible monster, Humbaba. Why have you sent him? O Shamash, to wipe out the evil that you abhor? You have planted the idea in his heart. May you not sleep, O Shamash, until Gilgamesh and his friend Enkidu return to Uruk. If they fail, may you never sleep again!

(*Enter Cedar Forest and Cedar Gate.*)

ENKIDU: Within three days' time we have covered a distance that would take ordinary men fifteen days to walk. And here stands the Cedar Gate!

GILGAMESH: We must pour meal upon the earth here, for that will gain us the goodwill of the gods. Let us open the gate, Enkidu. Let us be on our way.

(Enkidu touches the gate and is thrown back.)

ENKIDU: Gilgamesh, wait, my hand is paralyzed!

GILGAMESH: Put it on my arm, Enkidu. It will take strength from my arm because I am not afraid.

(Battle with Humbaba, drums – Ishtar descends to watch.)

ISHTAR: Who dares invade the Cedar Forest? Who dares to challenge the servant of the gods? Ah, but these are two noble heroes! King of the City, I have watched your battle and your victory. I have seen the desecration of my forest. Terrible will be your reckoning when the gods learn of this insolence!

GILGAMESH: Will the gods shun a great deed such as this?

ISHTAR: But wait, I am prepared to forgive you. I will take you as my husband and set you among the stars. I will petition the gods to forgive you. As the husband of Ishtar, you will be above reproach.

GILGAMESH: Save your threats, great Ishtar! I am not afraid. Enkidu and I have done a good thing. We have freed the people from a great terror. We have earned honor for ourselves and our people. We need no favors!

ISHTAR: Your chariot will be of gold!

GILGAMESH: I need no chariot, O Ishtar. My friend and I will be carried by the grateful crowd.

ISHTAR: As my husband, O Gilgamesh, kings will bow down before you.

GILGAMESH: Poets will sing our praise, and our deeds will be known throughout the ages.

ISHTAR: Beware your arrogance, Gilgamesh! The goddess Ishtar does not offer her love carelessly!

GILGAMESH: I know about your love. It does not last very long. All those you have loved, you have cast aside.

(Exit – Ishtar returns to heaven.)

ISHTAR: O Father Anu, I will have vengeance and you must help me. The mortals, Gilgamesh and Enkidu have desecrated the Cedar Forest and killed Humbaba. And Gilgamesh has insulted ME—a goddess! I ask you to create the Bull of Heaven. The bull will descend to the city of Uruk. It will demolish everything and trample the people. It will gore and kill Gilgamesh.

ANU: Ishtar, my daughter, how strong is your anger. Perhaps you deserved the insult.

ISHTAR: I will have my revenge, Father.

SHAMASH: Great Anu, powerful Enlil, Ea of the deep waters, hear me! It was I who sought the destruction of Humbaba. To the mortal people whom I love, Humbaba was a curse. I planted the idea in the brave heart of Gilgamesh. Who else could have destroyed the monster but Gilgamesh and his noble friend?

ENLIL: O Shamash, seeing that you go out each day to shed your light on the human race, why don't you go down and join them? Are you a god or mortal? Why should you turn to us to protect them?

ISHTAR: Father Anu, create the Bull of Heaven. Otherwise I will smash down the doors of the underworld and release the dead into the land of the living!

ANU: Who could stand against such a threat! Your will prevails.

(Gilgamesh and Enkidu defeat the Bull of Heaven and enter the city.)

ISHTAR: Woe to you Gilgamesh who has dishonored my name! Woe to you Enkidu who has killed the Bull of Heaven! You have not seen the end of my revenge.

GILGAMESH *(preparing to sleep)*: O great Shamash, accept my prayers of gratitude, my thanks for your protection, for otherwise my friend and I would surely have been killed.

(Gilgamesh and Enkidu sleep.)

ENKIDU: O Gilgamesh, my dreams are full of threats and omens! The gods have agreed that I should die!

GILGAMESH: Listen, Enkidu, I would not let them take you. Haven't we done all things together? I would sit by the gate of the underworld and never move until they released you. Go to sleep, my friend, and have no fear.

ENKIDU: A god has cursed me, my friend. It will not be a noble death in a great adventure. As for me, I will die in my bed.

GILGAMESH: Enkidu! Enkidu! What kind of sleep is this that has seized upon you? You have been seized by darkness. Your ears do not hear me. Your eyes do not see me. Enkidu, remember how we did all things together and how the people greeted us after our adventures? Remember? Enkidu, hear me. Enkidu.

(Enkidu dies.)

ELDER 1: Is there no comfort for our king?

ELDER 2: Let us perform the rites and ceremonies.
(ritual blessing of the body)

ELDER 3: Now all is finished. *(They carry Enkidu out.)*

GILGAMESH *(distraught)*: Enkidu, Enkidu!

IV. The Quest

GILGAMESH: O Ninsun, what fate has overtaken my friend Enkidu? He did not die in battle, no disease attacked him; he did not die of venerable old age. The earth reached up and seized him. Mother, will I, too, die? Will I, too turn into clay?

NINSUN: In time, Gilgamesh, all people die. . . well, except for one who lives on.

GILGAMESH: Even I, Mother, who am two parts god?. . and what of the one who lives on?

NINSUN: One part of you is man, O Gilgamesh, and that part must die. Our ancestor, Utnapishtim, is the one who lives forever and does not die. They say no one knows where his kingdom is.

GILGAMESH: I'll find him. I'll learn from him the secret of life and death.

NINSUN: Utnapishtim, your ancestor, lives somewhere beyond the Bitter River. You know well, Gilgamesh, that no one who is alive can cross the river. It is death itself. Stay here, my son.

GILGAMESH: I will find him. I will find him if it takes every day of the rest of my life.

VOICE: It is not known how many leagues, days and nights Gilgamesh walked. But he crossed deserts and rocky places and came in time to the edge of the world. Before him loomed the Mighty Mountains of Mashu.

GILGAMESH: Can these be the mountains whose peaks reach into the heavens, and whose feet reach below the bottom of the earth? Is this the bank of the sun, the edge between day and night? Is this the mountain guarded by the terrible Scorpion Men whose radiance blinds one and whose look is death?

SCORPION MAN 1: Who is this who comes here? Is he god or man?

SCORPION MAN 2: Two-thirds of him is god, one-third of him is man.

SCORPION MAN 1: Why is it that you've come here on such a long and tortuous journey?

GILGAMESH: O, I have lost my friend, Enkidu, my companion. The earth reached up and seized him. I am searching for Utnapishtim, my ancestor. He was once a mortal man, but he entered the assembly of the gods. He knows the secret of life and death and can tell me where my friend has gone and whether I, too, must die.

SCORPION MAN 2: O Gilgamesh, no one has ever done this thing. Deep are the caverns that lie under the mountain. Those very caverns through which the sun travels on his way back to the Eastern Garden.

SCORPION MAN 1: At first the cold is unbearable.

SCORPION MAN 2: In the middle the heat is unbearable.

SCORPION MAN 1: At a distance of eight leagues, the heart fails.

SCORPION MAN 2: At a distance of nine leagues, the mind fails.

SCORPION MAN 1: Turn back, Gilgamesh.

GILGAMESH: Even if my heart fails, I will go on. In cold or heat I will go on. Sighing or weeping, I will go on.

SCORPION MAN 2: Then go, Gilgamesh, we will open the gates for you.

ALL: When he had gone one league, the darkness became thick around him, for there was no light. He could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him.
When he had gone two leagues, the darkness was thick and there was no light. He could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him.
When he had gone three leagues, the darkness was thick, and there was no light. He could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him.
4, 5, 6, 7.

At the distance of eight leagues, Gilgamesh gave a great cry, for the darkness was thick and he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him.
At the distance of nine leagues, he felt the north wind on his face, but the darkness was thick and there was no light. He could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him.
After ten leagues the end was near.
After eleven leagues the dawn light appeared.
At the end of twelve leagues the sun streamed out.
Before him lay the Eastern Garden, the Grove of the gods.

GILGAMESH: O great Shamash, the darkness has gone from my eyes. Let me only gaze at you. Let me look at you and be filled with your light.

SHAMASH: How have you found this place? Your face is haggard and worn. Your body is thin and frail. Your clothes are ragged.

GILGAMESH: I have lost my friend. The earth came up and seized him, and I weep for him day and night. O great Shamash, I seek Utnapishtim, my ancestor, who lives among the immortals. He can tell me the secret of life and death.

SHAMASH: Why do you run hither and thither, Gilgamesh? The life you seek you will never find.

GILGAMESH: Tell me, shall the one who has died rest his head forever underneath the earth? Shall he sleep forever and never see the light again. Shall I, too, die?

SHAMASH: Why should you waste your young years this way? Stay here beside me. Live in this garden where there is no grief and no memory.

GILGAMESH : In your travels across the sky, O great Shamash, you must see all things. Tell me then how to find my ancestor in the place of the immortals.

SHAMASH: In that direction you will find Sabitu, the wine maiden. She will tell you the way to go. But remember, Gilgamesh, what you seek has never been done.

(Sabitu's house)

SABITU: Help! Some stranger has made his way to this sacred place. Surely he is a savage who will harm me.

GILGAMESH: Please, do not fear. I am Gilgamesh, King of Uruk. I have come for your help and will do you no harm.

SABITU: If you are truly a king, why are you so wan and pale? Your face is full of pain.

GILGAMESH: I must find my way to Utnapishtim, who lives among the immortals. From him I shall learn the secret of life and death.

SABITU: Ah, Gilgamesh, the life you seek you will never find.

GILGAMESH: Only tell me the path, Sabitu, the rest I will carry out.

SABITU: Deep are the waters, Gilgamesh. Whoever has come even so far has never yet made the crossing. For ahead of you now lies the Bitter River whose waters are death. Listen, Gilgamesh, when the gods created mankind, they allotted death to mankind, but life they retained in their own keeping. Rest here, O King. Let your garments be made clean and your heart find peace. Eat and drink, rejoice and take a wife. Such is the life the gods allotted to mankind.

GILGAMESH: I must go on, Sabitu. Just point the direction.

SABITU: That way, Gilgamesh, lies the Bitter River. On the shore you will find an ancient boat and a ferryman, Urshanabi. Only he can take you across, but no living man has ever sat beside him.

(Gilgamesh finds the boat and starts to board.)

GILGAMESH: Is anyone here? Urshanabi? Ferryman?

URSHANABI: Halt! Who are you who dares to lay hands on the boat of Utnapishtim?

GILGAMESH: O ferryman, I am exhausted beyond endurance. I have crossed the Mountains of Mashu and walked under the foundation of the earth. In heat and cold I have come. Sighing and weeping I have traveled to seek my ancestor, Utnapishtim. I have come this far. You are the only one who stands between me and my goal.

URSHANABI: No living being has ever crossed these waters, young man. Broad is the water, O Wanderer, but if it is your will to cross, then you must do exactly as I say. We will use these poles and push our way across. We must proceed carefully for if even so much as a drop of water enters the boat, or touches your flesh, you will die. Do you still wish to cross?

GILGAMESH: I have not come this far to turn back.

(They ferry – enter Utnapishtim and his wife.)

UTNAPISHTIM: I see the boat approaching, but the ferryman is not alone. Come and tell me who is he who rides in the boat with Urshanabi?

WIFE: It is a young man not different from you and me, but his body is thin, and he looks pale and wan.

GILGAMESH: I have come to these shores seeking my immortal ancestor, Utnapishtim.

UTNAPISHTIM: He stands before you now and your eyes gaze upon him.

GILGAMESH: O Utnapishtim, I gaze upon you at last. Your face is not different from mine. I had thought to find you a mighty warrior. But no, you are a mortal man much like any other. I am Gilgamesh, King of Uruk, and you are my ancestor. I have come on a long and terrifying journey to find you and to ask you a question. . .

UTNAPISHTIM: And you don't look much like a king. You have no right to come here, you, a mortal man. The ferryman shall be punished.

GILGAMESH: I beg you to listen to my words. I had a friend dearer to me than a brother. Day and night we shared all things both great and small. Then death came to Enkidu. The earth came up and seized him. I was overcome by grief and terror. Alone, I set out to find you, my ancestor. I have been told that you alone know the secret of life and death. Tell me now, O Utnapishtim, will Enkidu never again see the face of the sun, and must I too die?

UTNAPISHTIM: Do we build a house to last forever? Does the sun stay in the sky forever? Does not the flower fade? When the gods gather, O Gilgamesh, they decree the destinies of men. The days of life they measure out, but the days of death they do not measure.

GILGAMESH: Tell me then, Utnapishtim, what secret you know. In what way did you come to dwell among the immortals? Were you, like me, two parts god and one part man?

V. The Flood

UTNAPISHTIM: It was many, many years ago. I lived in a place called Shuruppak, a city already old and full of vices. The people of the place thought of nothing but pleasure and they spent all their time arguing, shouting, scheming, and protesting. Carrying on like this, they raised commotion and the loud noise rose to heaven and it disturbed the gods, particularly the god Enlil.

ENLIL: They are making too much noise down there. I don't like it. I cannot sleep.

SIN: What do you propose to do about it?

ENLIL: I have conceived a plan whereby I can destroy all the people on earth and thus get some rest. I will call forth a mighty storm that will wipe out mankind – a deluge that will drown every living thing.

(Gods react and confer.)

ENLIL: The earth is my domain and even Ea is under my command. Reveal my plan to no mortal man. No one is to survive.

UTNAPISHTIM: It was true that no god spoke to me, but one night while I was asleep, I heard a voice like the splashing of many waters outside my hut. It seemed to be speaking to my little hut.

EA: Reed hut, reed hut, Wall, listen. Let the man inside tear down this house. Let him build a ship to save his life in the storm. Let him take onto the ship the seeds of every living thing, creeping things and flying things, domestic creatures and wild beasts, his wife and daughters as well.

UTNAPISHTIM: So, when I awoke, my hut spoke to me, and I tore down my home and built a ship. I prayed to my lord Ea on whose waters I would sail. What shall I say to the people of Shuruppak who will surely laugh me to scorn?

EA: Say to them, "The god Enlil is displeased with me. Therefore, I go to dwell upon the waters of Ea."

UTNAPISHTIM: Then I laid the keel and constructed the framework. And when all was ready, I loaded the boat with seeds of every kind and animals and at last I boarded with my wife and daughters. The tempest came over the land. The thunder and lightning were fierce. Darkness came and the water roared over the land. For six days and nights the storm blew. The gods watched terrified

ISHTAR: Enlil, O why did I not oppose you in the assembly of the gods? What suffering lies below! My children now lie like dead fish in the sea!

UTNAPISHTIM: When the seventh day came, the storm abated. I opened a window and looked about. I released a dove. She flew round and round, but she came back for there was no place where she could alight. After some time I sent out a swallow; it too returned but there was mud on its feet. In due time, I sent out a crow and she flew this way and that. She found food and places to land. She did not return. Then I knew the waters were receding. Then I felt the boat touch solid ground and in a few days we could step onto the ground. I poured wine onto the barren earth and I set up seven kettles and burned the fragrant herbs with cedar, cane, and myrtle. The gods smelled the odor and gathered round.

ENLIL: What, has a mortal escaped? No one was to live through the destruction!

EA: O Enlil, how could you willfully do this thing? You might have punished those who did wrong. You might have sent wolves or lions against those who offended you. You might have wiped out some of the people, but why should you want to destroy all of mankind.

ENLIL: Never again will I do such a terrible deed. Come before me and receive my blessing. Hitherto, Utnapishtim, you and your wife will be like unto us gods. You will be immortal and shall dwell at the starting place of the waters.

UTNAPISHTIM: So you see, it was a god that interceded for me. But who will intercede for you O Gilgamesh? Who will call together a meeting of the gods for you? Who will grant you the life you seek?

VI. The Seven Loaves and the Magic Weed

UTNAPISHTIM: Asleep! Don't you know that it is rude to sleep as a story is told. (*can't wake Gilgamesh*). See how he nods. Waken him, wife, let him go back along the way he came. (*can't wake him*) Remember, wife, how deceitful are the ways of mortals. I must prove to this one that he is not fit to dwell among us. He will deny than he has slept. Go, bake loaves of bread for him each day and lay them at his head. (*Shamash and Sin change places seven times.*)

GILGAMESH: I am sorry to have nodded off for a moment. I was asleep for only an instant.

UTNAPISHTIM: Then count your loaves, young man. A fresh one has been baked for you each day. The first is fresh and still warm, but the second is cold; the third is already stale, and the fourth is hard. The fifth is cracked and dry, the sixth is black, and the seventh has begun to mold.

GILGAMESH: O Utnapishtim, where shall I go now? Numbness grasps at my limbs; the earth holds my feet. And wherever I flee, Death is there.

UTNAPISHTIM (*to Ferryman*): Take him to the washing-place and ferry him back from whence he came. As for you, Urshanabi, you have disgraced the crossing and the landing-place. May the shore turn you away. You may never be seen here again.

WIFE: O husband, the young man has suffered much pain and hardship only to see you and talk to you. How can you send him off like this. What will you give him from this place so that he may return to his city in honor?

UTNAPISHTIM: Gilgamesh, I will tell you a secret of the gods. At the bottom of this river grows a weed that bears a flower with the fragrance of a rose. Like a rose, it has sharp thorns that can pierce the skin. Nevertheless, if any mortal can grasp this weed and taste some morsel of it, youth will return to him, as the springtime returns to the year. This secret I send with you on your way.

GILGAMESH: Urshanabi, we shall find the weed and pull it loose. We will return to Uruk together and share it among the aged of the city so that they will regain their youth and strength.

URSHANABI: Beware, Gilgamesh, this is a trap for your wayward heart. You will be overcome by the bitter water, O King. Come, let the weed stay where it grows.

GILGAMESH: But if I can grasp the weed, it will restore my strength and life. Take the boat out, Urshanabi, and wait for me.

(Gilgamesh "dives down" into the deep and returns with the weed.)

At last. . . oh, I have forgotten my manners. You have helped me and you should have the first to bite.

(Gilgamesh shares it with Urshanabi. But before he can taste it himself, a snake creeps forward and snatches it away.)

Urshanabi, for whom is all my blood spent? For a snake, for an earth-prowler? O my magic weed, o my flower. Who will bring it back to me from under the earth?

URSHANABI: Let's go on to your city. I am no longer tired. My limbs are light and my back is straight.

GILGAMESH: Come, Urshanabi. Behold, is it not the noblest of cities? Look out over the full extent of the city, see how it is arranged, and observe the marvelous walls. Isn't it the finest you have ever seen? Judge for yourself: Was it not laid out by the Seven Wise Men?

VII. Conclusion

ELDER 1: We greet you with joy, O king!

ELDER 2: What new adventures have you had?

ELDER 3: What deeds will you add to your glory?

ELDER 4: What sights did you see?

ELDER 5: Here is your mother who has wept bitter tears for you.

GILGAMESH: There is much to tell. But first I still must find my friend. He was lost to me and there will be no rest until I find him. Father Shamash, listen to me, Gilgamesh, who weeps day and night for his friend. How can I make my way to him?

SHAMASH: I cannot say, for all my ways are the ways of light, and I know nothing of the darkness.

GILGAMESH: O Father Enlil, listen to me, Gilgamesh, who weeps day and night for his friend. How can I make my way to him?

ENLIL: (silence)

GILGAMESH: O Sin, listen to me, Gilgamesh, who weeps day and night for his friend. How can I find my way to him?

SIN: (silence)

GILGAMESH: O Ea, listen to me, Gilgamesh, who weeps day and night for his friend. How can I find my way to him?

EA: Gatekeeper, Gilgamesh wishes to speak with his friend, Enkidu. Open a hole in the earth near the Western Field. Lead Enkidu's shadow up out of the earth that he may greet Gilgamesh. Follow this gatekeeper if you are to see your friend again.

(Enkidu, shrouded in death, appears.)

GILGAMESH: O Enkidu, I have searched for you through mountains and rivers. No rest have I had since the day you left me. Gatekeeper, my friend Enkidu did not fall in battle, neither did he die of sickness or venerable old age. The earth came up and seized him. The underworld took him in the prime of this youth. Therefore, release him. Let him return with me to Uruk-of-the-Walls that he may live out his days as a hero.

GATEKEEPER: It is decreed, O Gilgamesh, that the dead may not join the living; the living only may join the dead.

GILGAMESH: Now that I have found you, Enkidu, never will we be parted again.

ENKIDU: Come, my friend, the place is dark and dreary, but we have been reunited.

GILGAMESH: Then our friendship will light the way and bring light and comfort to the shadows. Never will we be parted again.

ALL: Behold the walls of Uruk. This was the work of Gilgamesh, the king. He was wise, he saw mysteries and knew secret things. He went on a long journey, was weary, worn out with labor, and when he returned brought back a story from the days before the flood. The whole story is engraved here on stone so that all generations might know that his destiny was fulfilled.

ZARATHUSTRA: THE GOLDEN STAR

Adapted from Persian mythology and the Vedas for fifth grade

by Jolene Jackson

Cast of Characters:

Chorus, Ahura Mazdao, Ahura Mainjah, Bull, Vohu Manah, Zarathustra, Amosha Spontas

CHORUS:

Harken with open ears,
See with enlightened eyes,
Make your choice between the two,
Each for himself, aright and true,
Before the last judgment that it may be favorable for us.

O ye Sun-spirits, Mazdao Ahuraongo,
Come to us, Thy allies on high,
That the good thought will be united in us
With thee, Vohu Manah, hear our cry.

In service to the earth,
To the gods of light,
We lift up our souls
To thee, Ahura Mazdao,

May we belong to those who renew the world
And make it to progress,
May the plea for truth be heard by thee,
May thou our efforts bless.

In the beginning the universe whole,
Zervan four-fold, divided in two
Between darkness and light,
Partly time, partly oceans of space,
Both the evil and good,
Both born from *Zervan*,
The godhead on high.

Ahura Mazdao and Ahura Mainjah were to order creation,
A brilliant tableau,
From out of the realms of cosmic spaces,
Through the wide realms of space,
Harmony, beauty and truth bestow.

But the two sons of Zervan stood separate, apart,
And the battle still raging here took its start.

AHURA MAZDAO: Bring help to creation, your goodness in deeds.

AHURA MAINJAH: No, I will not, but destroy you indeed.

AHURA MAZDAO: You are not so all powerful, dark spirit, keep back.
I will now set the time for your final attack.
Come now and see what the far future holds,
Come as I tell you, it will unfold.
In twelve thousand years you will come to your end,
Disabled and ruined, with naught to defend.
Your kingdom will perish,
And freedom will reign.
Earth shall be free,
By goodness sustained,
Gone sickness and suffering,
No shadows will be cast,
One speech will be spoken by all at last.

CHORUS: Struck deaf and blind, these words like a blow
Made Ahriman tall, reel and sink below,
Where bound to matter in darkness with evil.
Bitter and frozen, he lay lifeless and still.

AHURA MAZDAO: Till the end of time I must watch over thee
Protecting the earth (*music*) from your lifeless decree.

CHORUS: Long Ahriman slept ... then awoke in a fury,
Seeking to storm the heavens above!
But failing in this he came down to earth's surface,
Poisoning life with greed and great cleverness.
Now the powers of evil reigned over the land.
The demons performed at Ahriman's command.
The earth became lifeless, hardened, and cold.
The slaves powers of darkness had taken strong hold.

(CHORUS continued): Then Ahriman stabbed at the heart of the bull,
Whose soul then rose upward to Mazdao's throne,
Filled with the voices of thousands lamenting
From the abyss of corruption and lies.

BULL: To whom hast thou given dominion over earth?
The plants they all wither, the waters are fouled.
Where is he, the one born to purify?
Thou hast said he would redeem all creation –
A healer, a savior, man's consecration.

AHURA MAZDAO: Sick thou art, thou Gosh Urvan,
Weary from suffering at Ahriman's hand.
Him I will create in time for the world
Who, through the power of his word,
All goodness will unite.
When darkness has spread far beyond its bounds,
The spirit soul life of man mightily resounds.
The fire of love will be rekindled,
Flaming bright as the sun at midnight!
On earth shall be born one true and pure
To obliterate the demon's enticing lure.

CHORUS: Then the bull let his seeds from the moon spring forth
To replenish and nourish all life on earth.

We worship the piety and *Frawashi* of the holy Zarathustra,
Who first thought what is good,
Who first spoke what is good,
Who first did what is good,
Who was the first priest, the first warrior,
The first plougher of the ground,
Who was the first Prophet,
His will to expound,
The Teacher who first possessed and deserved
The Bull, the divine order and the Word,
The obedience to the Word and Dominion
And all good things made by Mazdah
That are the offspring of the Good Principle.

Brought down from the sun by his angel
In a garment veil of light in his mother to dwell,
From the spheres of the planets and moon descended
The *Khvareno* of Zarathustra to earth its way wended
Into bright flames of star fire by angels attended.

(CHORUS continued): Out of the starry dome came a host
Of gods from the heaven's most high,
Bearing the life-giving dew of the stars
Down to the chalice immortal and shining,
Haoma, the star tree divining,
Singing praises of what will become.

Now in birds' nest
Where the young
Had been eaten
By merciless snakes
The *Daena* of Zarathustra was laid.
Blinded by light
The cold snakes retreated
And the birds to the *Daena*-administered aid.

Pouroshaspa Spitama, out walking one day
Met with the gods, the keepers of *haoma*.
They made an elixir of cow's milk and plant dew
And Pouroshaspa and Dugdhoa, his wife, drank the brew.

Now the seed of the soul of Zarathustra grew
In the womb of the mother it was prepared.
One night as she lay asleep came a dream,
A vision dark with foreboding and rare.

Out of a cloud lurked dark creatures of prey
Attempting to tear the child Zarathustra away,
When a mountain of light descended from heaven—
A fair youth emerged with a scroll in his hand.

As he lifted his staff the creatures receded
And his mother upon waking did understand
The blessed, true nature of what was to come—
The battle against evil would be led by her son.

All nature did join the jubilation at this birth:

In whose birth and growth
The waters and plants rejoiced.
In whose birth and growth
The waters flowed and plants sprang forth,
In whose birth and growth
All creatures of good creation cried out:
"Hail! Hail to us!"

(CHORUS continued): For he is born,
the athravan, Spitama Zarathustra!
Zarathustra will offer the good law of Mazdao
And spread through all the seven Karshvar of earth!"

Oh! What a radiant light shone forth
From the house which the sun gods surrounded.
So bright was the light in the village that night
The light song of the sun at midnight resounded.

So devils and demons, (*rattling, ominous sounds*)
With Ahriman, their king,
Saw their greatest opponent born on the earth.
The evil-doing Daevas rush away shouting,
Rush away shouting, casting the Evil Eye.
He is the weapon that fells the fiends
And wipes out the wicked false-speaking lie.
Into the depths of the dark, raging hell
The demons fled, tumbled and fell.

Now, they plotted and schemed to destroy the child
With the help of the sorcerers, black magic vile.
King Duravisarum among them went first
And drew his dagger. For blood he did thirst.

But before he could slay the young child who lay sleeping,
His hand was struck – paralyzed – and he left barely creeping.
Thrice more they tried to kill the child,
Thrice more they failed, driving them wild.
To steal the child and burn him with fire.
The dark, evil demons did sorely conspire.
But peaceful and harmed not
He slept through the blaze
While choirs of angels sang Mazdao's praise.

Under the hooves of wild bulls and horses
They laid the small child to be crushed by such forces.
But around him they trod and no harm to him came.
The sorcerers, foiled, still strove toward their aim.

In the lair of wild wolves
Savage, starving for meat,
They left the small babe
For the beasts to eat.
All at once their jaws locked,
They could only retreat.

(CHORUS continued): Protected from evil, the child grew and thrived.
He studied and served while fifteen years flew by.
The time had come to declare him of age,
To go forth from the care of his father and sage.
A banquet was held to which all were invited,
As Zarathustra stood upright, hope's flame was ignited.

In the sight of all gathered he spoke his intention.
He avowed his loathing for the selfish contrivings
Of the sorcerers' spells in darkness and hiding.
Clearly he spoke, shining radiant with power.
Confounded and hindered was darkness this hour.

He wrapped the *Koesti* three times around his waist.
Demons and sorcerers left the banquet in haste.
Duravisarum, in fear, rode his horse at such pace
That he fell and met death, his dark steps to retrace.

Zarathustra went forth from his father's home.
He traveled afar, foreign lands he did roam.
With compassion and warmth he brought aid to the needy,
Unlike the rich who stood scornful and greedy,
Generously sharing his good with the poor,
Zarathustra's heart and kind deeds were pure.

When one day as he rested by a river's side,
A figure approached him, his spirit guide.

VOHU MANAH: Who are thou and whose allegiance is thine?

ZARATHUSTRA: Zarathustra I am, from Spitama my home.
What splendor of light shines forth from thy form?

VOHU MANAH: Shed thy body as garment temporal,
And I will lead thee upward, to the eternal.
Together we ascend to His bountiful glory,
Lifted on wings of angelic harmony
The most merciful of spirits thou didst create,
What radiant spirit at heaven's gate.
Through Him we live,
From Him do I emanate.
To earth as messenger I come
Of all in one that is called the Sun!
In heavenly ecstasy shall we receive bliss –
O! Zarathustra Spitama! You have come for this.

He followed each step, his journey did start.
In the fullness of faith of a devoted heart.
Seven stars stood shining,
Revealing their light,
Archangels resounding —
Koesti great spirit might.

AMOSHA SPONTAS: Hail to thee who are drawing near,
Our hymns to Ahura Mazdao you hear.
You are predestined by the thoughts of the gods
To be mankind's proclaimer,
God-will sustainer,
We who are all seven of one thought,
Who are all seven of one speech,
Who are all seven of one deed.

ZARATHUSTRA: Glory be to thee, O Ahura Mazdao,
And thy archangels' starlight streaming bright.

AMOSHA SPONTAS: Come, take your place.
Guard the gift we bear weaving.
Speak what you hold,
Your purpose revealing.

ZARATHUSTRA: What is the first best,
What the second best,
What the third best in the world?

AHURA MAZDAO: The first best is GOOD THOUGHT.
The second best, GOOD WORDS.
The third best, GOOD DEEDS.

ZARATHUSTRA: Which practice is good,
Which better,
And which best?

AHURA MAZDAO: To invoke the Archangels is good,
To behold the Archangels is better,
To fulfill their intent is the best practice.

ZARATHUSTRA: This I ask thee, O Ahura, tell me aright:
Who was at the beginning of creation the Father of Asha?
Who shows the harmoniously resounding sun and the stars
their way?
Who makes the moon to wax and wane?

This I ask Thee, O Ahura, tell me aright:
Who yokes together the winds and the clouds?
Who, as a skillful artist, makes the light and the darkness?
Who makes morning, noon, and night?

CHORUS:

Zarathustra was shown all the resplendent glory
Of the heavenly world at Ahura's side.
All the stars of heaven as a cloak surrounded
As the nature and proportion of creation was expounded.

The angels then showed him
A bright cleansing fire
Through which he would pass
With clear thoughts, pure words, and good deeds

(Zarathustra passes through flames)

Burn he did not, as his God-will transcended.
He shirked not, nor shuddered,
As his spirit was freed.
Molten metals were poured
From a golden fire
Unto a great, glowing heart.
He grasped in mid-stream
Pure light's spirit power.
Sun's life surged in his blood
And his breath in that hour.

ZARATHUSTRA:

I lift up my voice to thee, O Mazdah,
And with reverence unite my soul with Asha.
I am Zarathustra.

May the creator of my soul power
Guide my tongue
Through the precept,
The good thought Spirit has taught me.

Then I will harness the swiftest steeds,
Born afar by the spur of devotion,
They who are strong through the power of Asha
And Vohu Manah may ride to help me.

With my feet moving gracefully in the rhythm of song
Shall I stride around thee, O Mazdao, in praise,
With hands lifted high to you in devotion,
Asha and Vohu Manah in beauty ablaze.

I will strive so that all goes well on earth,
So that we may behold the flaming light
And, through the word from heaven above,
Help guide each to the soul's clear sight.

CHORUS:

Being spring of the World-All – you, in stature of light,
From the Sun-orb empowered, in the Moon's pure might,
You are beshowered by Mars' form-fashioning ringing
And by Mercury's motion-swift quickening swinging.
You are illumined by Jupiter's wisdom out-streaming
And by Venus' love-bearing beauty out-beaming –
So that Saturn's age-old innermost spirit-embrace
May consecrate your entry into time and space.

Now through wisdom, love, and power of will
Zarathustra descended back down to earth.
He would carry from out of the cosmos a flame
Bringing sun-warmed forces to earth again.

Through miracles and deeds of healing he brought
The world will's loving Word to all.
The sun's bright beam to us imparts
The light of hope to human hearts.

Hail to us, for he is born –
The athravan, Spitama Zarathustra!
Zarathustra will offer the good law of Mazdao
And spread through all the seven *Karshvar* of earth.

THE PEACEMAKER

Adapted from Iroquois legend a play for sixth graders

by Beatrice Cohen

Cast of Characters:

*Mother, Grandmother, Deganawida, Adodharo, Hyonwatha, 3 Fishermen – Wawa, Shushuga, and
Adjdaumo, Woman, Chief, War Dancers, Narrators, Dreamer, Dreamer's Wife,
Onondaga Men and Women*

PROLOGUE:

By the rushing brook in springtime,
By the cornfields in the summer,
By the scarlet woods in autumn,
By the white hills in the winter,
In this green and quiet valley,
In this valley of the hawthorns,
Here we sing of Hyonwatha
And his friend Deganawida,
How they dreamed and how they wandered,
How they lived and toiled and struggled
With their fellow friend and prophet
That the tribes of men might prosper.

(drums)

By the Northern lakes and rivers
In the eastern hills and mountains,
Dwelted the people of the Longhouse.
Many families dwelled together
In the shelter of the Longhouse,
Sharing food and fire and friendship,
Sharing their tribe's old traditions,
Songs and dances, joys and sorrows.

(singing)

Hla-chi-dai-nin

(low drums – tribes stand, arms crossed.)

Yet their faces flared in anger
When they heard the loud wild drumming
Of another nation's war cry.

(Drums intensify.)

Fear and hatred lined their faces,
Families feuding with each other.
After years of wrath and wrangling,
The Master of Life who made them
Was weary of their killing and bloodshed.
To remind them of the pathway
Offered them for peace and friendship,
He sent to them the promised prophet
Who would guide them and would teach them
That in peace there is true power.

ACT I, SCENE 1

(Mother sits center stage, kneels, a basket next to her.)

MOTHER:
How can I make her understand
That he who came is in good hands?
How can she see that this is good?
I trust my dream - I understood
The name I am to give this child.
His mind is great - his manner mild.
Deganawida he'll be called.
His mission's peace, my dream foretold.

GRANDMOTHER *(enters)*: I've been of heavy heart and mind.
My thoughts and deeds have been unkind.
Your forgiveness I must ask,
Ahead of you lies a great task.
A dream has come to me last night
That told me all you said was right.
The name you are to give your child
Whose mind is great, whose manner mild -
"The Thinker" your son will be called.
His mission is peace, my dream foretold.

DAUGHTER:
Mother, my mind you have set free,
A heavy weight you take from me.
Our dreams and minds are now as one;
We'll raise him in honor - it can be done
Though we're alone - our family perished.
It is through him we will be cherished,
In his life we will both live on;
Our dream's come true - and peace will come.

ACT I, SCENE 2

CHORUS:

Many moons and years have flown,
And the child has grown to manhood.
Strong and sturdy is his body,
Bright his mind and mild his manner,
Clear and handsome are his features,
Clear and strong his dreams and visions.

But none around him hear his message,
Listen to his peaceful mission.
Deaf their ears and hearts become.
Through the years of war and anger,
Hardened are their hearts in hatred,
Numbed their minds and dulled their senses.

Now the Thinker plans his journey,
Builds his canoe by the seashore,
Carves it from the stone of quarries,
White stone shimmering in the sunlight,
Shimmering as the wings of white doves
In the deep blue skies of summer.
He sets out to seek the nations
That are weary of the war cry,
That will hear the Master's message.

ACT I, SCENE 3

GRANDMOTHER:

(enters with mother as Deganawida is packing)
You plan to go to yonder shore
Where other nations are at war,
Where feuds are fought, far worse than here,
And terror's cry is more severe?
Fast burn their fires of tribal hate.
What on those shores will be your fate?

MOTHER:

Mother, take hold now of the dream
In which the future we have seen.
The Great Spirit guides my son
And tells him that his time has come.
The Master of Life our birth ordains,
And in his hand our fate remains.

GRANDMOTHER: Your journey you must face alone
In this canoe you built of stone.
It worries me, for I sure think
Carved all of stone your boat will sink.

MOTHER: Let the Creator be his guide.
He'll safely steer him with the tide.

DEGANAWIDA: Mother, your heart may be at peace.
Soon you will see your worries cease,
And as a sign for you to see
My boat will float - all's well for me.
This way I shall not return.

But should your heart with questions burn
And you must know how I shall be,
Go climb the hill to yonder tree
And cut a wedge into its bark.
If blood flows from it, red and dark,
My hour of death this sign will tell.
If no blood flows, then all is well.

MOTHER: Farewell, my son - be on your way.
Hope fills my heart, that one bright day
Will come when all these wars will cease,
And we will know that you brought peace.

*(Mother and Deganawida embrace. Deganawida steps into canoe.
Grandmother and Mother wave farewell.)*

(Song - "Land of the Silver Birch")

*Land of the silver birch, home of the beaver,
Blue ridge and rocky shore, I will return once more,
Boom-da-da-da-da boom da,
Boom-da-da-da-da boom.*

ACT II, SCENE 1

(Deganawida steps out of the canoe and meets three fishermen.)

WAWA: What brings you here and whence do you come?
It seems you have not been here long

DEGANAWIDA: I have come from the crooked tongues,
 Though not to them my heart belongs.
 I come to bring the news of peace,
 It shall be heard from west to east.

SHUSHUGA: Tell us what was your given name
 In this far land from whence you came?

DEGANAWIDA: Deganawida I am called.
 My name was in a dream foretold.
 What brings you three here to this place?
 What is this fear that lines your face?

SHUSHUGA: We've come here to this shore today
 Since in our village none can stay.
 Destruction, fire, and terror reign there;
 Our tribe is weak and in despair.

WAWA: Our fields are wastelands, all crops burned.
 Too long for fighting's end we've yearned,
 But hatred, vengeance, bloodshed, sorrow
 Foreshadow there is no tomorrow.

ADJDAUMO: Our families are near starvation;
 We've come to fish here for our nation.

DEGANAWIDA: Take heart and of good courage be;
 The peace I bring shall set you free.

ADJDAUMO (*doubtful*): You think to set our minds at ease
 With empty words, the hope of peace?

SHUSHUGA: Deaf to such news have grown most ears
 With war drums beating through the years.

WAWA (*pointing*): Look! Made of stone is his white boat,
 And yet across this lake did float.
 This man must be of powerful mind;
 He brings a light – but we are blind.

DEGANAWIDA: Go to your village, tell your chief
 That one has come to bring relief.
 "He the Thinker" is my name,
 And in this region I'll remain
 To open ears and eyes and heart
 To news of peace – and a new start.
 (*Three fishermen exit.*)

ACT II, SCENE 2

(Deganawida packs bundle, bow and arrow, starts walking, meets New Face, a woman.)

NEW FACE: Greetings and food to you I bring
That war songs with new strength you'll sing.

DEGANAWIDA: You give me food, and thanks I'll say,
But not for war I've come this way.
When men of war you daily feed,
You strengthen those who in their greed
And blind vengeance's cruel slaughter
Kill even kin, their neighbor's daughter.
These feuds that all your families fight
Must end, so peace can shed new light.

NEW FACE: I do agree with what you say,
And a new light I see today.
Your thoughts are good, your message sound,
Yet words are worthless, 'til we've found
The form that brings them into deed.
How will you build the peace we need?

DEGANAWIDA: The House of Peace will serve us well
Where in one longhouse five tribes dwell,
And 'round the council fire plan
To rule in peaceful ways every clan.
Guard and protect the League of Nations
And keep the peace for generations.

NEW FACE: I see your vision's light full well.
To all who pass, of it I'll tell.

DEGANAWIDA: You are the first to heed my call.
For this we will in Law install
The power of women to choose their chief
Whose mind's alight with our belief:
In peace and friendship lie our strength.
For your good faith you have my thanks.
Your change of heart has made you new,
The name "New Face" I give to you.

NEW FACE: May he who brought you here today
Safely guide you on your way.
(Deganawida and New Face exit.)

ACT II, SCENE 3

- ADJDAUMO: We bring you news that one has come
Who claims a new age has begun,
Who foretells an end of all this strife.
Peace will renew the power of life.
- CHIEF: Who told you this? What is his name?
What claims has this man to his fame?
- ADJDAUMO: "He the Thinker" he is called.
His manner's mild, his words are bold.
- SHUSHUGA: He's come across the great blue lake,
A white canoe of stone did make
That brought him safely with the tide.
He claims the Great Master is his guide.
- CHIEF: So tell me how this peace will come.
- WAWA: Through this man's mind it can be done.
This is no ordinary man,
Does not belong to any clan.
His boat is made of heavy stone—
Yet floats. In this his strength is shown.
- CHIEF: The news that he brings must be heard,
And other tribes should know his word.
- (War dancers exit.)*
- But let us put him to the test
So any doubt be laid to rest.
Tell him to come and let us know
By what great test his power he'll show.
(Third fisherman exits, returns with Deganawida.)
- CHIEF: Great things indeed you prophesy,
Show us on what ground your power lies.
- DEGANAWIDA: You see, high on that rocky ledge,
A tall pine stands right on its edge.
I will climb to the very top
And with your hatchet you shall chop
The tree that thus will cause my fall

Into the depth – but then you all
Will know by this my word is true,
For alive I shall return to you.

(Drums)

CHORUS: As he climbed the lofty tree top,
All the tribe stood gathered watching.

(Drums culminating in one loud drumbeat)

No more was he seen by daylight.
All were sure that death had found him.

(War dancers enter, amazed.)

SWIFT FALCON: Come, let us run and tell our chief –
We saw what no one would believe.

SHINING FEATHER: Although from such great height he fell,
We both saw him alive and well.
I'll run and tell the women too
That the Thinker's word is true!

SWIFT FALCON: Red Hawk, Great Chief,
Good news we tell:
The man who from the treetop fell,
We saw him by the stream alive.
The dreadful fall he did survive!

RED HAWK: Call on my council, let them know
We'll join the peace if this is so.
Our Mohawk tribe will be the one
With whom the peace was first begun.

ACT III

CHORUS: In the land across the water
Feuds of hatred were still burning.

(War dancers assemble in open circle.)

Weary were by now the warriors.
Still the Onondaga nation feared the tribesmen
Who lived eastward,

Feared the Mohawks, the Cayugas.
The Oneidas fought the nations
Of the Flint Stone and the Great Hill,
Who in turn fought the Cayugas,
Nation turning against Nation.

(War dance close circle.)

NARRATOR I: But a chief among the Nation
Of the Tribe of Onondaga
By the name of Hyonwatha *(appears)*
Had grown tired of the quarrel,
Of the love and lust for bloodshed.
He sought to pacify his nation
To appease the chiefs and tribesmen.

NARRATOR II: One chief there was who lived among them
And his name was Adodharo. *(appears)*
With Evil was his mind inflamed,
Seven crooks were in his body,
Crooked were his mind and body.
Snakes were writhing from his headgear,
Hissing with his twisted thinking,
Monstrous was his mangled mindset.
Feared he was by his own people.
No one yet had found a manner
To persuade and pacify him.
Twice the plans to pacify him
Adodharo, evil's master,
Overturned with wicked slyness.

NARRATOR III: Once again Chief Hyonwatha
Called his tribe to meet in council.
Yet among them was a dreamer
Called by name – He the Great Dreamer.
He announced the selfsame morning
With these words his dream's clear vision
That he dreamed of Hyonwatha:

DREAMER *(motioning to others to come near)*:
Come, friends, step close, gather round.
An answer in my dream I've found;
To our chief's plans do not give heed!
Hear now the message that we need:
Soon Hyonwatha must depart,

Leave all his kin behind and start
To travel far away from here.
A prophet's word he will hear:
From this man peace will come indeed.
He holds the vision that we need.
And his right hand, my dream tells me,
Lord Hyonwatha is to be.

SMOOTH WATER:
(Dreamer's wife)

I see the picture that you draw
With dream's true words.
But I, your squaw,
Know that our Lord will never leave
His daughters and his wife to grieve
In loneliness with worried mind.
He will not leave his kin behind.

WHITE DEER:

This is well said, I think as she.
We've chosen him our chief to be
For his true and faithful heart.
Hyonwatha must stay here.
Another must be sent, I fear.

(Three Onondaga women – Smooth Water, White Deer, and Evening Star – and old Onondaga man, Wise Owl, enter.)

WISE OWL:

High in the sky the eagles soar,
The bear trails on the forest floor.
In rushes build the loons their nest,
The deer beneath the pine finds rest.
To each one gave the Master's hand
Its place and tasks at His command.
So listen to the Dreamer's tale –
His dreams fare true and never fail.

DREAMER:

My dream spoke Hyonwatha's name –
No other man can do the same.
Although he will leave with heavy heart,
The task is his – he must depart.

(All exit. Enter Circle of Mourners, girls and boys in two separate half circles, singing and gestures.)

EVENING STAR:

Oh, how did this come to be?
How cruel is our chief's destiny,

All his daughters dead and gone,
The third one passed away at dawn.
Just days ago all three were well,
This seems to be an evil spell...

SMOOTH WATER: Yet I recall the dreamer's dream
Where Hyonwatha was foreseen
To leave our tribe where he is chief
And find the one to bring relief...

(Hyonwatha appears.)

WHITE DEER: Here goes Hyonwatha now –
Look how heavy is his brow,
No song, no gesture can appease
The depth of sorrow that he sees.
The sky is dark and gray to him.
Alone he feels and without kin.

COYOTE: Let us go over and suggest
The ball game he loves playing best.
The whole tribe gather for the game
To which our chief has brought true fame.

BLACK EAGLE: Great Chief, shall we to clear your mind,
Some players for a ball game find?

COYOTE: We'll call together all our kin
So that the game can soon begin.

BLACK EAGLE: Too burdened is his heart with sorrow.
We'll come again and ask tomorrow.

(Tribesmen off, Hyonwatha walks across stage and back.)

HYONWATHA: Where shall I go? How shall I start
To heal this pain, this broken heart?
You who gave their life to me,
How can you take away all three?
They were my hopes, my dreams, my life.
For them I tried to end this strife.
No matter where from here I roam,
Sorrow is my only home.

(Hyonwatha wandering)

CHORUS: Aimlessly he started walking,
Tried to walk away from sorrow,
Yet no rest he found in wandering,
Yet no comfort in wild nature,
And at last came to a lakeshore,
Found there snail shells by the thousands,
Lifted some of white and purple,
Put them in his pouch of deerskin,
When he reached the other shoreline,
Sat and strung these shells of wampum,
Hung them up before his wigwam,
With these words stood by his wigwam:

HYONWATHA: Should I the path of one man cross
Who mourns his family's death and loss,
These beads of wampum would I take
And they would for the mourner's sake
To words of comfort turn, and spoken,
Would heal the heart that loss has broken.

CHORUS: Onward, onward now he traveled,
Eastward on the Mohawk River.
None was there to ask the question,
None to hold the beads of wampum,
Find the words of light and comfort
To heal Hyonwatha's sorrow.
And at last he built his wigwam
By the edge of one tribe's dwelling,
Where at first Deganawida
Found a tribe to hear his message.
Here Deganawida found him,
Saw him sitting by his wigwam,
Sitting by the strings of wampum.

DEGANAWIDA: Your face shows me the pain you feel.
This deep scar only time can heal.
Yet let me take these beaded strings
To find some word that comfort brings.
Lines of sorrow mark your face,
May you return to light and grace.
The dark for you will turn to dawn
With pity's white skin of a fawn,
My brother, let me wipe your tears . . .
Now lift your eyes, cast off your fears.
The sky above is wide and blue.
Look up, the sun shines down on you.

HYONWATHA: The Master sent you to relieve
This load which weighed me down with grief.
Your word of comfort cast a light
Where until now was darkest night.

DEGANAWIDA: Now that your mind is free and clear,
The peaceful message you can hear
That we to all the tribes will bring
So that the song of peace they'll sing.

The Tree of Peace for generations
Shall shelter under it five Nations.
Its roots shall spread to nourish all
Who hear the news and heed the call.
And from its top an eagle's eye
Shall scan horizon, earth, and sky.
If you will help me spread the word
Of the Power of Peace, it will be heard.

*(Song – "Can You Be Like the Earth")
(Hyonwatha paces through the tribes.)*

NARRATOR: To each tribe he brought the message
Of the danger of their discord,
Of the strength they'd find in union.
One by one they met in council,
Sent at midsummer their message:

ALL: We agree to join the union.
We agree to find our shelter
In the Longhouse of the Nations
Underneath the tree's safe shelter.

NARRATOR: Only one had not submitted.
Haunted still by howls of hatred
Was the tribe of Onondaga,
Still in Adodharo's power.

DEGANAWIDA: This challenge I now ask of you,
Since you alone this task can do—
To bring to Adodharo's lair
Our news and comb from his wild hair
The snakes that still infest his mind.
When they are gone, the path he'll find.

HYONWATHA: This wild man's angry heart we need
To win, if peace is to succeed.
The Four tribes with us he will bring
That all the Hymn of Peace may sing
And show this man of crooked mind
How many in this League he'll find
Who have made peace their tribe's new song
And to the union now belong.

*(Tribes gather – drums. Song – “Can You Be...”
(Deganawida and Hyonwatha approach Adodharo.)*

ADODHARO: What is this nonsense that they speak?
What is this great Peace that they seek?
Revenge and rivalry, war and strife,
Where scalp for scalp and life for life –
That is the power that I know.
This way of Peace seems meek and slow.
I've heard of it too long indeed.
What comes with might will fast succeed!
I see two come. What brings them here?
Let them dare to come too near!

HYONWATHA: To this great chief our hand we show.
We come in peace and hope to go
When you, a man of power and might,
Have seen this message's brilliant light.

ADODHARO: What is this nonsense, these empty words?
Of gabbling geese I've better heard!
What is there in this peace for me?
I may be blind, I fail to see!

HYONWATHA: If to this union you'll agree,
The power in it soon you'll see.
If you can open up your heart,
Then you will be the fire's guard
And keep the fire of five Nations.
Your name shall last for generations.

ADODHARO: Show me that what you speak is true.
I think one of split tongue are you!

(Tribes file in to music, humming.)

DEGANAWIDA: See – these tribes have gathered.
No longer thy wild wrath they fear.
They have joined hands, as you can see;
Unite with them, from war be free.

(Peace Song is heard. Hyonwatha approaches Adodharo and combs the snakes from his hair.)

ADODHARO: The Power of Peace is plain to see.
I'll join in it – I do agree.

(Peace dance)

DEGANAWIDA *(to Adodharo)*:

Guard and protect the League of Nations
and keep the peace for generations.
Call her forward, whose face was new,
When once she found that peace is true.

(New Face comes forward.)

She was the first who heard the call.
So let her, as we're gathered all,
Select the chief among her kin –

NEW FACE: Who has a seven-fathomed skin,
Whose patience will last sevenfold,
And who will the great truth uphold,
That peace will last. It can be done
If we unite our minds in one.

DEGANAWIDA: And, giving thanks to the Great Spirit,
Let all the nations come to hear it.
NEW FACE: As Mother Earth guards sprouting seed,
These mothers shall, it is decreed,
Protect the great Peace Tree's spreading roots
And see that it will bear new shoots.
Call on your men and choose now one
With whom this great work can be done.

(Drums. Women circle their tribe, moving counterclockwise with the selected chief in the center. They stand behind him. The tribe forms a third circle on the outside.)

DEGANAWIDA: Set on their heads the crown of deer,
Their strength and grace we all revere.
And thanks to all their gifts we owe
Which warmth and food to us bestow.

(Women set deer antlers on Chief's head.)

HYONWATHA: As a symbol of united mind
I will five strings of wampum bind.
Five arrows will be bound to one,
In union will our work be done.

DEGANAWIDA: Weapons of war we now at last
Into this deep dark hold must cast
And plant in it the Tree of Peace.
The day has come when our wars cease,
So let us now in peace join hands
As all around this fire we stand.
Remember what was here begun
And let our minds be joined as one.

(Song - "Ay-ay-ay")

THE SACRED FLAME

by Selma Lagerlof

Adapted as a play for sixth graders

by William Ward

Cast of Characters:

(includes several playing multiple parts)

Narrators 1-4, Raniero, Francesca, Jacopo, Ellena, Page, Inspector, Taddeo, Maidens 1-3, Umberto, Messenger, Priest, Mullah, Soldiers, Godfrey, Fool, Saint Peter, Lord, Knights 1-3, Giovanni, Robbers 1-4, Phantoms, Goatherd, Passersby 1-3, Stableman, Maidens 1 and 2, Pilgrims 1-4, Old Woman, Robert the Troubadour, Woman, Peasant, Beggar, Urchins, Townspeople, Canon, Priest.

- NARRATOR 1: A great many years ago, when Florence was a young republic, a man lived there named Raniero di Ranieri. He was the son of an armourer, but did not care much to pursue his father's trade.
- NARRATOR 2: Raniero was the strongest of men. He bore heavy armor as lightly as others wear silk shirts. Once he was in a house where heaps of grain were stored in the loft. One of the ceiling beams cracked, and the whole loft was about to cave in. Raniero raised his powerful arms and held the ceiling up until the men rushed in with beams to brace it.
- NARRATOR 3: It was also said of Raniero that he was the bravest man that had ever lived in Florence. He could never get enough of fighting. (*mock fight*) As soon as he heard any noise in the street, he rushed out of the workshop, in hopes that a fight had arisen which he could join. He fought as readily with humble peasants as with armored horsemen and rushed into a fight like a lunatic, without even counting his opponents.
- NARRATOR 4: The people of Florence were mostly wool spinners and cloth weavers who performed their tasks in peace. Sturdy men were plentiful, but they were not quarrelsome, and they were proud of the fact that in their city peace prevailed.

RANIERO: Shall I die of boredom? Give me the storm of battle over this tedium of trade. There is glory to be won, kingdoms to be conquered by might of arms. But here, only the rooster's crow breaks the silence.

NARRATOR 1: Raniero was loud-mouthed and boastful, cruel to animals, harsh toward his wife, and not good for anyone to live with. He would have been handsome if he did not have several deep scars across his face, which disfigured him. He was quick to jump to conclusions and quick to act, though his way was often violent.

(Enter Francesca followed by Jacopo and his wife, Ellena. Raniero listens off stage.)

FRANCESCA: *I will too* marry Raniero. We shall run away, you cannot stop us.

JACOPO: Impossible, foolish child, without my blessing. You are forbidden to mention his name again.

FRANCESCA: Raniero, Raniero, Raniero! *I love Raniero!* I will say only his name until you give us your blessing.

JACOPO: **Silence!**

FRANCESCA: **Raniero!**

ELLENA: My poor child. Cupid's arrow has pierced your heart.

JACOPO: Poor child, nonsense. She's as stubborn as you are. Raniero's a bully, a braggart, so full of himself he knows not the meaning of love. His so-called strength leads only to bloodshed and pain.

FRANCESCA: By the Blessed Virgin, I vow *never* to marry unless it be Raniero.

ELLENA: Jacopo... remember... my father's doubts? How headstrong you were, how handsome...

JACOPO: "An unlettered fool, a moonstruck poet, a pestiferous fly in the bower of my beauty."

ELLENA: But our love eroded his stubborn refusal.

JACOPO: Even cold marble melts at a woman's tears.

ELLENA: Look. *(Francesca pretends to cry.)*

JACOPO: ... Against my better judgment, I give my consent...

FRANCESCA: Oh, dear Father...

JACOPO: ...Provided Raniero gives me his pledge.

(Enter Raniero.)

RANIERO: I would bring the sun down from the sky to win Francesca for my bride!

JACOPO: I have observed that men like you can more easily win a woman's love than keep it. Therefore I exact this promise: If my daughter finds life with you so hard that she wishes to come back to me, you will not prevent her.

FRANCESCA: *(going to Raniero)* Nothing will ever separate me from my beloved.

RANIERO: Rest assured, Jacopo, I would not try to hold any woman who wishes to flee from me.

NARRATOR 2: Francesca went to live with Raniero and all was well between them for a time. But when they had been married a few weeks, Raniero took it into his head that he would practice marksmanship. *(Raniero and servant pantomime)* For several days he aimed at a painting that hung upon the wall. He soon became skilled, and hit the mark every time.

PAGE: On the nose!

NARRATOR 2: At last he thought he would like to shoot a more difficult mark. He found nothing except a dove that sat in a cage above the courtyard gate. The bird belonged to Francesca, and she was very fond of it; but despite this, Raniero sent a page up to open the cage...

RANIERO: Free it.

PAGE: Fine shot, master. Right through the heart.

RANIERO: Is there another in Florence who can bring down a dove in flight?

NARRATOR 2: When Francesca learned that Raniero had killed her bird, she grew pale and marveled that he had wished to do a thing which must bring grief to her. But she forgave him promptly and loved him as before. All went well for a time. . .

NARRATOR 3: Raniero's father-in-law, Jacopo, was a flax weaver. He had a large establishment which produced cloth of the finest quality.

RANIERO: What's this? Cheap hemp mixed with the flax? So that's how the old man turns a tidy profit. It is my duty to make this trade secret known. Jacopo, who so prides himself for honesty in all his doings, may find his reputation threadbare.

(Citizens come, guild members inspect cloth.)

NARRATOR 3: At last Jacopo also heard the chatter and tried at once to put a stop to it. He let several other flax weavers examine his cloth and they found it to be of the very finest flax.

JACOPO: Officers of the guild I assure you I would sell nothing but the purest linen. Inspect the looms and raw flax to your satisfaction that my name be cleared of this false witness.

FRANCESCA: Father, who could have said such a thing? Everyone knows you.

JACOPO: Raniero, your husband, in every tavern in the city.

FRANCESCA: No!

(Inspector comes forward with bag.)

INSPECTOR: Gentlemen, look—

OTHERS: Adulterated goods.

JACOPO: Merchants of Florence, I cannot deny this sack is tainted. This deception has been practiced without my knowledge or consent... I cannot explain it, perhaps an apprentice... You must believe me... My honor is at stake.

(They walk away.)

NARRATOR 3: Raniero preened himself upon having succeeded in exposing a fraud, and he bragged about it even in Francesca's hearing.

RANIERO: The lengths some people will go to to make a profit. This cannot be tolerated in our fair city. I for one have the courage to speak the truth.

FRANCESCA: Why did you not report it to my father first?
(She turns away.)

NARRATOR 4: Francesca felt deeply grieved; at the same time she was as astonished as when he shot the bird.
(Apparition of two maidens holding gold cloth. A bit is cut away.)

As she thought of this, she seemed suddenly to see her love before her. It was like a great piece of shimmery gold cloth. But from one corner a piece was cut away.

FRANCESCA: May the golden cloak of my love last as long as I live. It is so great, surely it can never come to an end.

* * *

NARRATOR 4: Again, there was a period during which she and Raniero were just as happy as they had been at first.

FRANCESCA: Taddeo! Momma, Papa, Taddeo has come home.

ELLENA: My son. *(They embrace. She crosses herself.)* Long have I prayed for your safe return.

TADDEO: Thank you for your prayers, Mother, but no need. I can take care of myself.

ELLENA: How elegant you look, like a prince.

RANIERO: The prince of roosters!

JACOPO: Welcome home, my son. From your silks and velvets—

RANIERO: *(interrupting)* Soft as a maiden's cheek. . .

JACOPO: —By the richness of your attire, I judge you made a fine profit in Venice. Is this the style...

RANIERO: For peacocks?

FRANCESCA: Raniero, please.

RANIERO: Welcome back, wife's brother. Let us take to the tavern that all may behold your splendor! *(aside)* And we make sport at the emperor's new clothes. *(Exit Raniero, Taddeo, et al.)*

(Raniero, Taddeo and friends carouse in slow motion at the wine shop.)

NARRATOR 4: They were out in the wine shops. Taddeo was dressed in a green cloak with sable lining, and a violet jacket. Raniero tempted him to drink so much wine that he fell asleep, and then he took Taddeo's coat off him and hung it on a scarecrow. Taddeo became the laughing stock of Florence.

(Music. Two maidens holding shimmering cloth of gold speak alternately. Francesca looks on.)

MAIDEN 1: My love shines a golden sun,
MAIDEN 2: But sun sets when day is done.
MAIDEN 1: My love shines pure and bright,
MAIDEN 2: Love today, for swift comes night. *(cutting away a bit of cloth)*

* * *

(Raniero appears with shield.)

FRANCESCA: Raniero, what now?

RANIERO: Like an eagle I flew to Olympus and plucked this trophy for you, my love.

FRANCESCA: The war shield of my great grandfather's victory? This belongs on the bell tower, emblem of the peace which blesses Florence.

RANIERO: Too much peace. Wake the dull peace to life! Glory! Adventure! Honor!

FRANCESCA: Dishonor. You have dishonored our family with your conceit.

RANIERO: I risked life and limb climbing the tower to please you.

FRANCESCA: If you cared for me, you would not make such a fool of yourself.

RANIERO: You never rejoice in my success.

FRANCESCA: It is not for me that you do these exploits, you think only of yourself. I am thinking of something else and that is my love. I know not what will become of it if you keep on in this way.

NARRATOR 2: After this, things were patched up between them for a time, but Francesca was no longer as happy as in former days because she always feared that Raniero would commit some misdemeanor that would hurt her love.

NARRATOR 3: After this they frequently exchanged harsh words, for Raniero happened always to do the very thing that was most distasteful to Francesca.

(Francesca remains at the corner of the stage, her back to Raniero.)

NARRATOR 4: There was a workman in Raniero's shop who was little and lame. This man had loved Francesca before she married, and continued to love her even now. Raniero, who knew this, ridiculed him before all who sat at table.

RANIERO: Umberto, will we see you at the dance tonight?

UMBERTO: You know I do not dance, nor have I been invited.

RANIERO: Come as our guest. You work too hard. Francesca asked after you.

UMBERTO: Master, you jest.

RANIERO *(winking)*: Oh, I know all about you and Francesca. Who would not notice the love-sick look in your eyes?

UMBERTO: My lady is kind to me.

RANIERO: I think she grows too fond ... but he who reaches for the sun may be burned. By my leave, if you serve me well, I grant my permission for one dance...
Oh, forgive me, you don't dance. Well then, permission to gaze on my wife, Francesca, the keeper of your heart.

(General laughter)

UMBERTO: Laugh, mock me as you will. But disgrace my lady with such unworthy remarks, this I forbid.

RANIERO *(imitating)*: "This I forbid." Little man, I jest as I will.

UMBERTO: Not against my lady.

(He rushes against Raniero, who flings him easily aside.)

RANIERO: Have you forgotten your dancing slippers?

(Umberto, ashamed, hobbles off. Maidens appear with cloth. Francesca gazes on.)

MAIDEN 1: My love shines warm as day,
MAIDEN 2: Yet winter's cold cuts summer's love away.

MAIDEN 1: My love shines a golden sun,
MAIDEN 2: Yet sun must set when day is done.

MAIDEN 1: My love shines pure and bright,
MAIDEN 2: Love today, for swift comes night.

MESSENGER: Forgive me, m'lady...

FRANCESCA: What news?

MESSENGER: Umberto, m'lady...

FRANCESCA: Tell me swiftly.

MESSENGER: Umberto has hung himself...

(Francesca gasps. She tears the cloth.)

FRANCESCA: If I stay with Raniero another year, he will destroy my love. I shall become just as poor as I have been rich. I will live with Father and Mother that the day might never come when I should learn to hate Raniero as much as I have loved him.

(Francesca goes to her father.)

ELLENA: My daughter, you are pale as death.

FRANCESCA: Mother, I have come home.

JACOPO: I knew this day would come. Does he know? Never mind. *(shouting)*
Latch the shutter, a storm is brewing. Drop your work. Bar the door.
My sword! Arm yourselves!

(Confusion. Jacopo and guards go to Raniero.)

My daughter has this day returned and begged that she may live again under my roof. I expect that you will not compel her to return to you, after the promise you have given me.

RANIERO: Even if I had not given you my word, I would not demand the return of a woman who does not wish to be mine. *(Aside)* She will be back before evening.

NARRATOR 4: Yet she did not return that day or the next. The third day Raniero went out and pursued a couple of robbers who had long disturbed the Florentine merchants. He succeeded in catching them, but it did not bring Francesca back to him.

Raniero had the greatest desire to appeal to the courts, to force her return to him, but he could not because of his promise. It seemed impossible for him to live in the same city with a wife who had abandoned him, so he moved away from Florence.

NARRATOR 1: He first became a soldier,

NARRATOR 2: And very soon he made himself commander of a volunteer company.

NARRATOR 3: He was always in a fight.

NARRATOR 4: He recklessly threw himself into battle

NARRATOR 1: And served many masters.

NARRATOR 2: He won much renown as a warrior,

NARRATOR 3: As he had always said he would.

ALL: He was made a knight by the Emperor, and was accounted a great man.

RANIERO: *(kneeling before statue of the Virgin)* I vow by the love of the Blessed Virgin to lay at your feet the best and rarest of the treasures I win in battle. *(Aside)* Dear lady, grant that I may yet win back my Francesca.

(Exit Raniero. Offstage the sound of clashing steel. Messengers bring treasures to the Blessed Virgin to the sound of snare drum. Francesca, illumined in light, turns away. Raniero reaches towards her, then bows his head. Military drums, Arab soldiers, and Crusaders.)

PRIEST: Knights of the Cross, release the Holy City of Jerusalem from bondage. Set free the city of our Lord from the contamination of the unbelievers. Take up the cross. Raise high your swords. God will give us the victory!

CRUSADERS: Victory! Victory!

PRIEST: Crusaders, heaven awaits the hero who falls in the service of our Lord. The riches of the earth await the victors! Free Jerusalem!

CRUSADERS: **Free Jerusalem! Free Jerusalem!**

MUSLIM PRIEST: Faithful soldiers of Allah. Defenders of the Faith, attackers come from foreign lands to seize the Holy City of Jerusalem. Paradise awaits the fallen in battle. Almighty God, we will smite thine enemies with the sword of thy wrath. It is the will of Allah. Defend Jerusalem, city of the Prophet.

SOLDIERS: **Defend Jerusalem! Defend Jerusalem! Defend Jerusalem!**

(A battle scene follows in slow motion, Raniero storms the battlements. The Crusaders are victorious; many die on both sides. Blackout.)

* * *

(Procession of Crusaders and monks led by Godfrey, then Raniero)

GODFREY: Merciful Father you have given us the victory. Holy Jerusalem, city of the sacrifice of our Lord, is delivered from bondage. Wash the blood from our hands and hearts that we may know your peace. Knights of the Red Cross, here in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, let us give thanks to our Lord who endured death for the forgiveness of our sins. In this place of darkness a sacred flame burns eternally. This sacred flame, the light of life, the light of love, the hope of peace, burns in the hearts of all who turn toward the "Light of the World" to receive his grace.

Loyal knight, brave heart, comrade, you who first stormed the fortress with me, Raniero di Raniero, have the honor to light your light from the Sacred Flame. May it never be extinguished.

(Raniero, kneeling, lights his candle at the sacred flame. Knights exit, singing a hymn.)

* * *

NARRATOR 1: That night there was great rejoicing in the Crusaders' camp. In almost every tent they celebrated with drinking bouts, and noise and roistering were heard in every direction.

(Enter Fool and masked Saint Peter and Our Lord.)

FOOL: It happened once that Our Lord and Saint Peter sat a whole day upon the highest tower in Paradise Stronghold and looked down upon the earth. Our Lord kept perfectly still the whole time, but Saint Peter clapped his hands for joy or shook his head in disgust. Sometimes he applauded and smiled, and anon he wept and commiserated. Finally, as it drew toward the close of day, and twilight sank down over Paradise, Our Lord turned to Saint Peter and said that now he must surely be satisfied and content.

SAINT PETER: What is it that I should be content with?

OUR LORD: Why, I thought you would be pleased with what you have seen today.

SAINT PETER: It is true that for many years I have bemoaned the fact that Jerusalem was in the power of unbelievers, but after all the slaughter of today, I think it should have stayed as it was. Do you see those mounds of corpses? And do you see the naked and wretched prisoners who moan in the night chill? And do you see all the smoking ruins of the conflagration?

OUR LORD: Still, you cannot deny that the Christian knights have risked their lives with the utmost fearlessness.

CRUSADER 1: That's us. Fearless! Our fame has climbed to heaven already.

CRUSADER 2: Risked our lives and crushed our enemies.

CRUSADER 3: Freed Jerusalem! Raise your cups to the Knights of the Red Cross!

ALL: Victory!

FOOL: Oh, don't interrupt me! Now I don't remember where I left off...ah! To be sure, I was just going to say that Saint Peter wiped away a tear or two which sprang to his eyes and prevented him from seeing.

SAINT PETER: I never would have thought they could be such beasts. They have murdered and plundered the whole day. Why You went to all the trouble of letting Yourself be crucified in order to gain such followers, I can't in the least comprehend.

RANIERO: You're a daring fellow. What are you driving at?

FOOL: Those with ears to hear, let them hear ... Finally our Lord said a few words.

OUR LORD: Do I see wrongly, or is it true that one of the Knights guards a burning candle?

(Raniero, angry with the Fool, reaches for a heavy wine pitcher to throw at his face.)

FOOL: Saint Peter could not help pitying our Lord.

SAINT PETER: Can't you understand why he keeps the candle burning? You must not believe that he thinks of Your suffering and death whenever he looks at it. He thinks only of the glory he won as the bravest man in the troop after Godfrey.

(Knights laugh.)

KNIGHT 1: Look, Raniero's candle still burns.
KNIGHT 2: To Raniero! First over the wall.
KNIGHT 3: The flame of his fame live forever!

(Raniero bows.)

FOOL: But Our Lord contradicted Saint Peter.

OUR LORD: See how careful he is with the light? He puts his hand before the flame as soon as anyone raises the tent-flap for fear the draught will blow it out. He constantly chases moths which fly around it and threaten to extinguish it.

(Knights laugh again.)

KNIGHT 1: I'll help you, Raniero. *(drawing his sword, cutting the air)*
Look, an army of moths!

KNIGHT 2 *(joining the fun with drawn sword)*: I will crush you like all the others.

KNIGHT 3: Stand and fight, my fluttering foe.

(Mock battle. Raniero protects flame. When one knight jostles the table, Raniero, hurls him to the ground.)

RANIERO: **Peace!** I do not need your help.

SAINT PETER: Lord, do you know that knight? He's not one who goes often to Mass, even less to confession, with good reason.

(Crusaders laugh.)

OUR LORD: Saint Peter, Saint Peter, know that henceforth this knight shall become more pious than Godfrey. Whence do peacefulness and gentleness spring, if not from my sepulcher? You shall see Raniero di Raniero help widows and distressed prisoners. You shall see him care for the sick and despairing as he now cares for the sacred candle flame.

KNIGHT 1: Raniero, gentle as a lamb!

KNIGHT 2: Did you say ram?

KNIGHT 3: I say gentle as a lion!

KNIGHT 1: Raniero, as peaceful as...

KNIGHT 2: A thunderbolt! As pious as a...

KNIGHT 3: Monk... that is, a monkey!

RANIERO (*slamming the table*): **Enough!**

(The table is jostled and the lights dim. The candle falls. Raniero carefully tends it. The Fool, Saint Peter, and the Lord vanish.)

RANIERO: He's gone. Send the Fool to me tomorrow. I wish to reward him as he deserves.

KNIGHT 3: One thing, however, is certain, Raniero. This time you can't send the most precious prize of battle to the Blessed Virgin in Florence.

RANIERO: Do you doubt my vow?

KNIGHT 1: How could you? The most precious thing you have won is this sacred candle flame. Surely you can't send that to Florence!
(Knights laugh.)

RANIERO: Make ready, Giovanni, for a long journey. Tomorrow you shall travel to Florence with this holy fire.

GIOVANNI: Impossible! A fool's errand. To travel to Florence with a lit candle? It would be out before I left camp.

KNIGHT 2: He commands an army, but not his own servant.
(Again laughter)

RANIERO (*losing all patience, shouting*): I swear that this candle flame shall nevertheless be borne to Florence. Since no one else dares go, I will do so myself!

KNIGHT 3: Sire, consider before you promise anything of the kind! You ride away from a principality.

RANIERO (*solemnly*): I vow to you that I will carry this sacred flame to Florence!

GIOVANNI: Master, it's another matter for you. You can take with you an armed guard, but me you would send alone.

RANIERO: I too shall travel alone! *(The Knights cease laughing, terrified.)*
Why don't you laugh anymore? This journey is but a child's game for a brave man.

(Raniero takes the flame from its holder. From this point on he guards an actual flame. On a technical note for staging, if the flame should accidentally go out, the actor would conceal this from the audience with his protective gesture until it could be relit from a candle in the wings during a scene change.)

* * *

NARRATOR 2: Before dawn the mists veiled the deep dales surrounding Jerusalem. The whole troop slept as Raniero, shrouded in the white dawn, passed the guards silently. None called out his name.

NARRATOR 3: He took the road to Joppa. He rode very slowly as the candle burned feebly in the thick mist. Moths kept dashing against the flame. Raniero had all he could do to guard it, but he was in the best of spirits and thought a child could manage it.

NARRATOR 4: Then the horse grew weary of the slow pace and began to trot. The flame began to flicker in the wind. Raniero tried to shield it with his hand and cloak. He saw that it was about to be extinguished. He dismounted and tried sitting backwards, so that his body might shield the flame from the wind. For the first time he realized the immensity of the journey before him.

NARRATOR 1: When he had passed the mountains that surrounded Jerusalem, the fog lifted. He rode forward now in greatest solitude. There were no people, houses, green trees, nor plants – only bare rocks.

(Robbers in ambush)

ROBBER 1: A lone rider.

ROBBER 2: Knight, merchant, or pilgrim?

ROBBER 1: Armed knight.

ROBBER 3: No match for the four of us.

ROBBER 4: Idiot! More than a match for a dozen such as you. Besides, I see only two men here, plus an ass and a cockerel.

ROBBER 3: I count four.

ROBBER 1: Hold, he comes. Is he a penitent? He rides backwards.

ROBBER 2: An idiot. Ripe for the plucking.

ROBBER 1: At last a steed worthy of my calling.

ROBBER 3: His armor is mine.

ROBBER 4: Over my dead body.

ROBBER 3 (*threatening*): As you wish.

ROBBER 1 (*drawing his sword*): Save your quarrel for our benefactor.

(Robbers ambush Raniero.)

ROBBER 1: Alms for the poor, generous knight.

ROBBER 2: A fair trade, all you possess in exchange for your life.

ROBBER 3: Or shall we take that as well?

RANIERO: You do not have the strength to take my goods or my life. But I have no wish to fight. I have a vow to keep that will not be thwarted by men such as you. I let you live and give you gifts as well. Take what you wish, only leave me these candles and this living flame.

ROBBER 4: On our sacred honor as knights of the road, we accept the terms of your entreaty. I'll wear your shield and sword like a true knight of the cross.

ROBBER 3: Of the crossroads, more like. Is this a pouch of gold? I take it upon myself to distribute this to the poor, namely my brethren and myself, as our Savior has taught.

ROBBER 4 (*snatching the purse from his hand*): Starting with me.

ROBBER 1: Dismount, my backward friend. Your steed has a new master. Fear not, we would not be too cruel toward a fellow Christian, in this God-forsaken desert. You shall have my noble nag to ride.

ROBBER 2: Safe journey, good knight. May your feeble light guide your path through the wilderness.

(The Robbers depart, leaving Raniero alone in the barren hills.)

RANIERO: I must be bewitched by this candle flame. For its sake must I now travel along the roads like a crazy beggar?

(Veiled phantoms appear, weaving about Raniero like wind.)

PHANTOMS: Death, despair, and destruction lie in your wake,
Ahead hunger, thirst, and thorns lie in wait.
Give up, turn back, forsake this foolish quest.
The flame soon dies when you lay to rest.
Snuff out the flame and save yourself.
Jerusalem's call is fame and wealth.
Pinch out the flame, or let it die.
Only a fool would even try.
One breath of wind relieves this sorrow,
Or, if you will, light it tomorrow.

(Francesca appears as the Blessed Virgin.)

FRANCESCA: Your word given in the Virgin's name
May steadfast guard the sacred flame.

NARRATOR 1: Raniero knew it would be wise for him to turn back.
But such an intense yearning to accomplish his journey had come over
him that he continued through the bare, parched hills.

NARRATOR 2: After a while he saw an Arab goatherd, tending four scrawny goats.
The rest of his herd had fallen prey to the invading army.

GOATHERD *(attacking Raniero with his staff)*:
You shall not have my last goats. Bandits! Wolves! What harm have
I done to you? To take the last shred of life a poor man has left. A curse
upon you. *(spits)* You must *kill* me first to steal my goats.

NARRATOR 2: Raniero, concerned only for the sacred flame, does nothing to defend
himself from the rain of blows.

GOATHERD: Allah, forgive me, save me from the beating I have given this poor
madman.
O! He's caught fire. Leave him alone. Ow! Aiii! Out! Out! *(extinguishing
flames)* This man has done nothing. ...Now I have given you two
beatings. One to hurt and one to help. The desert has turned your wits,
or you are a holy man doing penance? I am ashamed. ...The trail is a
razor's edge between chasm and abyss. Do you understand me? He
has eyes only for the flame. I will lead you across. Allah, guide his
steps and mine, as Thou wilt in Thy wisdom.

NARRATOR 3: Rumors of the fall of Jerusalem had already spread to the coast.
Pilgrims, merchants with provisions, and fresh troops hastened to
the Holy City. When these throngs met Raniero, who came riding
backward with a burning candle in his hand, they took him for a
lunatic.

(Throngs of people passing)

PASSERBY 1: Hey, idiot, turn your horse around.

PASSERBY 2: Stupid, look up. Who needs a candle before the sun sets?

PASSERBY 3: I had heard these people were ignorant, but I didn't know they were so *backwards*.

RANIERO *(thrashing them)*: Mock me knaves? *(knocking heads together)* Follow the stars to Jerusalem. *(taking rogue's tongue)* If thy tongue offend thee, tear it out. If thine enemy smitest thee on the cheek *(slap)*, turn the other cheek also. *(boot)*

(Mockers retreat. Raniero searches frantically for his candle.)

What have I done? In truth they were right to call me a madman. My anger has snuffed it out.

NARRATOR 3: The candle, indeed, was extinguished...

RANIERO: Look! Smoke, a flicker of fire!

NARRATOR 3: Fire gleamed from a dry grass-tuft, ignited by the dying flame.

RANIERO: This might have been an inglorious end of a good deal of trouble. I must hold my own reins more tightly. How shall I ever succeed?

NARRATOR 4: By starlight and the light of his solitary candle, Raniero reached the caravanserai of Ramle. There were no rooms, but folk could sleep beside the animals. The stable man, thinking Raniero a half wit, kindly brought him bread and wine and fodder for the old horse.

RANIERO *(to himself)*: I almost believe the robbers did me a service when they took my armor and horse. Now my burden is light and people take pity on the poor half-wit I have become. Here on a bed of straw I will keep my vigil.

(Music. Fearfully exhausted, Raniero falls asleep. While he sleeps, the stable man removes the candle. A rooster crows.)

My candle! Did I sleep? Someone has put it out. It is over. I should feel relieved. But I do not. I feel empty... alone.

STABLE MAN (*bearing candle*): When you fell asleep last night, I had to take your light from you, but here you have it again.

RANIERO: It was wise of you to extinguish it.

STABLE MAN: I have not put it out. I saw it burning when you came, and I thought it was of importance to you that it should continue to burn. See how much shorter it is?

RANIERO: Thank you, my friend. I have nothing to give you for your kindness to me.

STABLE MAN: Your joy is thanks enough. Besides, you would do the same for me, would you not? God watches over us all.

(They embrace. Raniero departs.)

NARRATOR 1: With no gold to pay passage from Joppa over the sea to Italy, Raniero headed northward, up the Syrian coast. During the whole journey Raniero lived upon the humble gifts of pilgrims as they streamed towards Jerusalem. As he rode alone, his days were timeless. He must always guard the candle flame moment by moment and could never feel at ease. A puff of breeze, a raindrop, could put a sudden end to his journey.

RANIERO: I know this journey. Where have I heard tell of a patient, faithful vigil...over what glowing treasure?

(Music. Two maidens appear, holding a shimmering gold cloth. Francesca, as an apparition, looks on.)

MAIDEN 1: My love shines warm as day,
MAIDEN 2: Yet winter's cold cuts summer's love away.

MAIDEN 1: My love shines a golden sun,
MAIDEN 2: Yet sun must set when day is done.

MAIDEN 1: My love shines pure and bright,
MAIDEN 2: Love today, for swift comes night.

RANIERO: How blind am I? I see now Francesca's love for me was such a warm and tender light which she had always wished to keep burning. Brute that I am, I killed it. Once out, no fame nor feat of arms can re-light this gentle flame.

NARRATOR 2: One day, when he rode over Mount Lebanon, Raniero saw that a storm was brewing. He was riding high up among the awful precipices, a frightful distance from any human abode. On the summit of a rock he saw the tomb of a Saracen saint. He had barely entered the cramped chamber when a snowstorm struck which raged for two days.

(winds swirling)

RANIERO: Faithful flame, warm me through.
Protect me, as I have guarded you.
I will not leave you alone in this howling storm,
I pray you, do not die, but keep me warm.
No common fire will you ignite,
Save the Blessed Virgin's candles bright.

NARRATOR 2: The storm only increased in fury. Suddenly, a bolt of lightning rent the heavens, setting fire to a tree beside the holy man's tomb. Numb with cold, Raniero was just able to gather branches and warm his frozen bones.

NARRATOR 3: In the desolation of the Silician Mountains, Raniero's store of candles was exhausted.

RANIERO: Shall you flicker out and die, my friend, because I cannot feed you?
Stay with me faithful flame. Do not let my pilgrimage be in vain.
(Gathering a few twigs and dry grass) This is all I can offer – dead twigs and withered grass. This poor fare you can transform to new life and light for all to share, but I must grieve, for I have let your light go out and I shall be left alone in darkness.
(Music as a procession of pilgrims bearing candles come up the path. Raniero runs to them.)

Are you flesh and blood or angels sent me in my need?

PILGRIM 1: Poor sinners like yourself on pilgrimage to the holy hermit's grotto.
PILGRIM 2: You are far from home and alone. Are you lost?

RANIERO: Yes...

PILGRIM 3: What do you seek? New life, new light...?
PILGRIM 4: Come join us, brother. You shall find both at our journey's end.

RANIERO: Is it far?

PILGRIM 1: We have journeyed far to seek this blessing. But you are already here.

OLD WOMAN: This is my last journey. I cannot go on, too old and lame to climb the final ridge. Please ask him to remember me in his prayers.

RANIERO: I will carry you up the mountain.

OLD WOMAN: Are you the holy one himself?

RANIERO (*laughing*): No, I am just an old donkey placed here to carry you. I have left my heavy burdens far behind and you are light for me.

OLD WOMAN: Bless you, my son.

(Music as procession continues with Raniero carrying the old woman. They come to hermit's cave.)

God grant you your heart's desire, as you have granted mine. I can give you no other thanks save this small candle. When it sheds its gentle light, remember me.

PILGRIM 1: Take my candle, too.

PILGRIM 2: And mine. I have no more need for it, but your journey yet goes on.

PILGRIM 3: Here, take mine. A small gift for a great kindness.

PILGRIM 4: Here's a bundle. It's all we have. This is one burden that gets lighter the farther you go.

RANIERO: Sister and brothers, I had all but given up hope. I cannot tell you what a treasure this is to me. God be with you.

(Raniero swiftly returns to his fire.)

OLD WOMAN: And with you, my son.... He's gone. What a kind gentleman.

PILGRIM 1: You would think a candle's light for him was more precious than gold.

PILGRIM 2: There was a light in his eyes, and he fairly beamed. A good man, no doubt.

NARRATOR 3: Raniero arrived in time to light the old woman's candle with the last spark from the fire lit by the sacred flame.

* * *

NARRATOR 4: One day at the noon hour it was very warm, and Raniero had lain down to sleep in a thicket. He slept soundly, and the candle stood beside him between a couple of stones. It began to rain...

(Thunder, rain stick. A bird comes, protecting the flame with its wings.)

At last, he was startled out of sleep. He hardly dared look at the flame.

RANIERO: Am I so tired and weak that I have lost my dear one for a little sleep?

(seeing the bird protecting the flame) Do I dream? Have you been sent to guard this flame? Do you not fear me? Have I, a hunter and warrior, become a dove that God's most timid creatures take me for a friend? How many of your brothers and sisters have I slain? Yet you show me this mercy and protect this flame. ...No wonder God frees you to fly in light and air and gives you voice to sing His morning praise.

(Raniero prays.)

I have no harm left in me. The flame has burned it all away.

NARRATOR 1: Raniero rode in the vicinity of Nicaea. Here he met wandering knights conducting recruits to the Holy Land. Among them was Robert Taillefer, a questing knight and troubadour.

KNIGHT 1: A madman.

KNIGHT 2: A cracked pot.

KNIGHT 3: Deaf and dumb, a backwards lad.

ROBERT: Silence! Have you journeyed far in this manner?

RANIERO: I have ridden like this all the way from the city of Our Lord.

ROBERT: Has your light been extinguished many times during the journey?

RANIERO: Still burns the flame that lighted the candle with which I rode away from Jerusalem.

ROBERT: I am also one of those who carry a light, and I would that it burned always. But perchance you, who have protected your light all the way from Jerusalem, can tell me what I shall do that this light not die?

RANIERO: Master, it is a difficult task, although it appears to be of slight importance. This little flame demands you cease to think of anything else. It will not allow you to have a sweetheart, nor dare you sit at revel. This flame alone must become your sole happiness. I advise you not to make this journey I have weathered, for, no matter how many perils you may have passed, each instant may be the last.

ROBERT *(proudly)*: What you have done for your sacred flame, I may do for mine.

* * *

NARRATOR 2: At last Raniero arrived in Italy. As he rode lonely roads among the mountains, a desperate woman came running after him.

WOMAN: The fire in my hut is out. My children are hungry and cold. Give me a light that I may heat my oven and bake bread for my children.

(She reaches for the candle, but Raniero draws it back.)

RANIERO: The flame of this candle is holy. It may not be used for common light. It is destined to light the altar candles of the Blessed Virgin in Florence.

WOMAN: Pilgrim, give me a light, for the life of my children is the holy flame God has given me to keep burning.

RANIERO *(now offering the candle)*: The light of Our Lord be with you.

(The woman lights her oven, and returns the candle.)

WOMAN: God repay you for your kindness, sir.

RANIERO: It is you who have opened my eyes.

NARRATOR 2: Several hours later he rode into a mountain village.

PEASANT: Poor wandering fool, who will look after you? Here you may die from cold. Take my cloak for your journey.

(He tosses cloak which snuffs out the candle)

RANIERO: My light! Have you forsaken me?.....
(Hope dawns on him.)
No, only my faith flickered, for the flame still burns where I gave it away for the mother and her children.
(He retraces his steps.)

RANIERO: Help me, good mother. May I relight the flame where it now warms your house and bakes your bread.

WOMAN: Without you, I would not have it. Here. *(She relights the flame.)* And take this fresh bread for your journey.

RANIERO: You say that the sacred flame which you must guard is the life of your children. Can you tell me what name this candle's flame bears, which I have carried over long roads?

WOMAN: Where was your candle lighted?

RANIERO: It was lighted at Christ's sepulcher.

WOMAN: Then it can only be called Gentleness and Love of Humanity.

RANIERO (*laughing*): Who am I to carry such a tender light?

(Bows and leaves)

* * *

NARRATOR 3: At last Raniero rode forward between the beautiful blue hills surrounding Florence.

RANIERO: I must soon part with you, my friend. How eager my comrades will be for my sword to return to battle. But I have no will to live by the sword. Guide my path in the ways of peace. Where I have brought death, let me bring life. Where I have wrought harm, let me learn to heal. Where I have sown fear, let me raise joy. Where I kindled hate, let me light love. The snake has cast off his skin... the one I was has died away. Truly, this flame has re-created me.

* * *

NARRATOR 4: It was Easter Eve when Raniero rode through the city gates into Florence. Riding backwards on his horse, hood drawn over his face, burning candle in his hand.

BEGGAR: A madman, a lunatic!

URCHIN 1 (*sing-song*): Crazy, crazy, crazy. (*continuously*)

URCHIN 2 (*trying to blow out flame*): Candle in the sun, wait till day is done.

URCHIN 3: Wake, fool, it's Easter morning!

WOMAN 1: We have no need of madmen, Florence has more than enough!

MAN 1: A benighted knight in broad daylight. Hindsight is better than foresight.

WOMAN 4: If you're looking for midnight, it went that way. It should be back if your candle lasts.

WOMAN 7: A demon has him, call the priest!

MAN 2: Maniac on the loose. Call the guard!

(As the people taunt and shout, many try to grab the candle, waving shawls and caps at it. Others laugh at the sport. Raniero becomes desperate, holding the flame as high as he can. Francesca sees it all. She reaches down from her balcony and rescues the flame. Raniero collapses. The mob abandons the fallen man. Francesca descends with the flame. She kneels by Raniero. As the light shines on his face, he revives.)

FRANCESCA: Here is your candle. I held it for you, as I saw how anxious you were to keep it burning. I knew of no other way to help you.

RANIERO (*looking only at the flame*): God bless you for your mercy, good lady.

(Raniero, dazed, tries to walk, but wavers. Francesca helps him.)

FRANCESCA: Where do you wish to go?

RANIERO: I want to go to the Cathedral.

FRANCESCA: Then I will accompany you, for I am going to Mass.

(Mass is being celebrated before an unlit altar when they arrive.)

RANIERO: My lady, gentle spirit, I thank you for your kindness to a poor fool. I have journeyed far, but could not have reached journey's end without you by my side. *(Raniero turns and walks unsteadily up the center aisle.)*

FRANCESCA: The light of my hope has now gone out. My love has returned but knows me not. War and suffering have turned his wits. His soul has flown and left the thin shadow of my beloved.

(All eyes turn to Raniero in silence.)

MAN 1: The madman!

WOMAN 1: It is a sin to interrupt the Mass.

MAN 2: Throw him out!

WOMAN 2: He is God's fool, a holy man, let him speak.

PRIEST: Welcome to the house of the Lord. You are weary from your journey. Will you celebrate the Lord's Supper with us this Easter Eve?

RANIERO: I bear with me this light, this sacred flame lit from our Lord's tomb in far-off Jerusalem. May I light the altar candles before the Blessed Virgin?

PRIEST: A living flame from Jerusalem? Is such a journey possible?

RANIERO: Only by God's grace.

CANON: Who exactly are you?

MAN 3: Why should we believe you?

CANON: Beware. It is blasphemy to profane the altar with a lie.

RANIERO: God knows the source of this light...the light that fails not failed, as he has given me grace to guard it. I give you my word, by this fire, as a knight.

WOMAN 3: A miracle!
WOMAN 4: Imposter!
MAN 4: He's out of his mind.
MAN 5: A Crusader's word, a knight of God.

CANON: If you have nothing to hide, tell us your name.

RANIERO: Raniero di Ranieri.

CROWD: Raniero!

ODDO: If you are truly Raniero, your word is death. Do you deny your taunts drove my dear Umberto to kill himself? Even a sacred flame from Jerusalem cannot burn away this shame. I do not believe him.

MAN 6: Bring forth witnesses to back your boast.

RANIERO: I rode alone. This mute flame is my only witness.

FRANCESCA: Why need we witnesses? Listen to your hearts. Look into this man's eyes. Hear the humility in his voice. The Spirit of Truth is upon him.
(Raniero for the first time looks at Francesca.)

WOMAN 5: He speaks the truth. God be praised.

MAN 7: The story is too impossible to be invented. Therefore, I believe it.

ODDO: Witnesses must be found. How convenient that he has no servant or page. Put this delusion before the tribunal!

WOMAN 6: For God all things are possible.

JACOPO: Friends, hear me. There was no great love lost between my son-in-law and me. I am old and have seen much of life. One thing I have acquired more precious than gold, a sense for honesty and fair dealing. I believe Raniero has performed this remarkable task, a penance and a pilgrimage. I see before me a new man. Welcome back, my son.
(They embrace, Raniero still caring for the candle.)
(Crowd murmurs, taking sides as each speaks.)

ODDO: My family will not allow this sacrilege until we have proof.

MAN 8: Let him pass for the greater glory of Florence.
WOMAN 7: I want it to be true, but who can believe a madman?
MAN 9: Is this for the glory of God, or the glory of Raniero? Why believe a braggart?

WOMAN 2: Our Lady watched over him.
WOMAN 1: Even with Our Lady's help, no candle burns so long.
MAN 10: He has vowed as a Crusader and called God as his witness. Let him pass.

MAN 1: Empty words. Where is the proof?
(commotion)

PRIEST: Brothers and sisters, remember where you are. PEACE!

(They freeze in gestures of anger, uncertainty, or prayer. Raniero has lifted the flame aloft to protect it. Flute "birdsong." An angelic maiden in white touches the flame with a white bird bearing a candle on its back. Unseen, she moves to the altar, as the crowd comes back to life.)

WOMAN 1: The flame is out! As God punishes liars, the flame is out.
MAN 1: There is your witness.
WOMAN 2: No, look, a bird!
WOMAN 3: A miracle!

ODDO *(crossing himself)*: The dove is aflame!

FRANCESCA: The sacred flame!

(Raniero, forcing himself through the crowd, relights his candle from the bird which lies upon the altar. Raniero lights all the candles.)

CROWD: The sacred flame!

PRIEST: God willed it! God has testified for him!

CROWD: God has willed it!

(Congregation, crossing themselves, kneel and sing.)

NARRATOR 1: So it is told to this day that the Crusader Raniero di Raniero brought the sacred flame from Jerusalem to Florence.

NARRATOR 2: It is said that he became a wise and just man, compassionate and generous.

NARRATOR 3: Each year on Easter Eve, a festival was celebrated in the cathedral to commemorate Raniero's homecoming with the sacred flame. Always an artificial bird would fly with fire overhead.

NARRATOR 4: Since then there have been many bearers of sacred fire who have lived in Florence which became one of the most glorious cities on earth. Such is the nature of even one flame faithfully tended. How mysteriously its light spreads and grows, from one to many.

MICHAELMAS PAGEANT INTRODUCTION

by William Ward

Shortly after the autumnal equinox, many Waldorf schools celebrate the festival of Michaelmas, honoring the archangel Michael, conqueror of the dragon. Michael is known to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, and appears in ancient religions as Indra (Indian), Marduk (Chaldean), Vohu Manu (Persian), and Apollo (Greek). The archetypal confrontation with the dragon, vividly described in the Book of Revelation, is a universal theme in both the broad diversity of world mythologies and also in the unconscious depths of the individual psyche. Aside from the beneficent powers of elemental dragons of wind, water, and fire in Chinese mythology, the malevolent dragon epitomizes cold-hearted greed, all-devouring brute force, instinctive reptilian will, inhuman evil. Traditionally, the dragon not only lays waste the earth and its creatures with his venomous and fiery breath, but also he threatens to devour the maiden—the king's daughter, the woman robed with the sun and crowned with the stars; Sophia, goddess of wisdom; Natura, Mother Nature. By contrast Michael bears the sun shield of cosmic intelligence, the sword of truth, the scales of justice as his spiritual attributes.

Subduing the heartless dragon power and transforming its primordial energy for good is a true and living imagination which resonates with a host of real world situations in symbolic terms: rapacious exploitation of the environment, irresponsible corporate greed, ethnic cleansing, pollution of the elements, war, famine, fanatical religion, political intolerance, unsustainable consumption, and selfish egoism. To confront the "dragon" in oneself or the world requires the utmost courage. It is an act of self-transformation that leads to the transformation of the beast and a return to harmony and peace.

The pageant which follows is one festive way of bringing together an educational community around the confrontation with the dragon during the Michaelmas season, starting on September 29th, shortly after the autumnal equinox, extending into early October. The archetypal structure is simple, age-old, and susceptible of myriad variations. It is a quest for spiritual aid to the six directions. Its ground plan is based both on the medicine wheel ritual of Native Americans and the Foundation Stone meditation of anthroposophy.

The ways in which this structure might be adapted to the individuality of a given school community arise from the greater or lesser degree of participation of its members. A scaled-down version could be done as a single class. In our case, contributions of the six gifts from the six directions (the points of the compass and above and below) were solicited from the community of classes in a cosmopolitan spirit related to the curriculum for the year. The question was: "What gift for the future of humanity flows from each direction of the globe for the overcoming of the dragon?" Unless all gifts flow together the dragon remains invincible. A close examination of the text we developed reveals that the gifts from various cultures include the four elements and the four kingdoms of nature as well as culture heroes from many parts of the globe. An essential aspect of this festival is that our own center – the unique sense of place arising from our own cultural, historical, and geographical setting in relationship to the ground that we stand upon – awakens in us a new sense of gratitude and purpose.

Artistic contributions from various constellations of people to help define the space for the pageant, in our case a natural amphitheater, included a geometrical laying out of the "sacred precinct" in chalk, silk banners to mark the aisles, prayer flags created by children and families to mark the perimeter, batik emblems, larger-than-life papier-mâché puppets and dragon, sculptures, a sun mask, emblematic gifts, and a processional gateway. Each class had a contribution to offer as song, dance, speech chorus, sculpture or fabric art, or gymnastics. Rehearsal was also decentralized by class, everyone coming together as a whole only twice before public performance. It was not polished drama but a spontaneous pageant mosaic, unfolding before us and held together by the narrative thread. A grand procession complete with bagpipe, drums, and flags wound its way to the hallowed ground on a sunny day of the Columbus weekend.

Gratitude for the bounty of nature, the gifts of diverse cultures, the abundance of inherited wisdom, our shared aspirations of peace and brotherhood, and a deeper sense of responsibility towards the land which sustains us and the community which supports us pervaded the festival. From such a community celebration, courage to creatively forge the future is planted in seed form in the hearts of young and old.

MICHAELMAS PAGEANT

*For the 25th Anniversary Celebration
of the Hawthorne Valley Association*

by William Ward

NARRATOR: "War broke out in heaven..."

(Music/cacophony. Villagers flee, pursued by dragon.)

"...And the dragon was cast down to earth and was very wroth,
knowing that his time was short."

RESPONSES: *(7th and 8th Grades)*

8th: And the dragon grew sly

7th: Feeding on lies,

8th: And the dragon grew greedy

7th: Feeding on envy,

8th: And the dragon grew bold

7th: Feeding on fear.

8th: He spews forth his venom

7th: And poisons the rivers.

8th: The smoke of his nostrils

7th: Blackens the sky.

8th: The lash of his tail

7th: Shatters the forests.

8th: The wake of his trail

7th: Turns gardens to deserts.

8th: The fire of his breath

7th: Turns life to ash,

8th: Destruction his pleasure,

7th: War his delight.

ALL: CHAOS, CONFUSION, SICKNESS, AND SPITE,
SORROW AND VENGEANCE INCREASE HIS MIGHT!

(Dragon motif yielding to Sophia's theme as it retreats from her)

YOUNG WOMEN: What courage it takes to look in his eye.
What loving heart will his hatred defy?
What sword of truth will conquer his lies?

(As dragon hides behind the stage, flowers, grains, and plant beings, emerge from opposite side led by Sophia.)

FLOWER DANCE

YOUNG MEN: In the widths of the world
And here where we stand,
YOUNG WOMEN: Will love of the earth protect the land?
Can you hear the call of the beings unseen,
Working in flowers, rocks, orchards, and streams?
YOUNG MEN: They are guardians of deep wisdom and light,
Shrouded from ignorant, uncaring sight.
YOUNG WOMEN: Only heart's reverence may set them free.
ALL: O CHILDREN AWAKE! LEARN HOW TO SEE!

(A few ninth graders carelessly pass by, littering, noisy, pushing, unmindful, tearing off a flower and discarding it.)

NARRATOR: But dullness of the senses, the clouding of the mind,
The roaring of the traffic, the deadly daily grind,
An ocean of distraction turn the people blind.
No one sees the beauty, no one has the time.

(Sophia and flowers wilt.)

The flowers begin to fade and wilt,
Sophia hangs her head in sorrow,
The seeds lay on barren ground,
Drained of living power.

(Dragon emerges to Dragon Music.)

ALL: BEHOLD THE DRAGON!

(Dragon chases terrified flower beings.)

NARRATOR: How greedily he devours the spirits of the flowers! Who can
withstand his power at the midnight hour?

(Flowers have fled with the Dragon pursuing.)

SOPHIA: Awake! Awake! For pity's sake.
(gesturing to audience) Does no one notice? No one care?
Who will face him in his lair?
Who will turn him from death's feast?
Who will tame the dreadful beast?

(silence)

5th GRADE (coming forth from the audience):
How can we help?
What can we do?
Show us the way.
We'll follow you.

Give us the weapons.
Give us strong rope.
Lead us in battle.
Give us all hope!

SOPHIA: I cannot lead you, my nature is peace.
You must change yourself to transform the Beast.

YOUNG WOMEN: Are you willing to seek to the ends of the earth?
Stand on the edge where the sun has his birth?
Follow his path from the East to the West,
Over mountain, through wasteland, continue your quest?

YOUNG MEN: From the ice of the north
To the fire of the south,
Into the Abyss of the Dragon's mouth,
From the heights of the heaven's,
Through the valley of death,
To the ends of the world,
While you have life's breath?

ALL: Till in the end you reach your goal,
Embracing the world in the depths of your soul,
The grail cup of life, elixir of health,
Wells up within when you conquer yourself!

5th GRADERS: Which way should we go?
How can we know?
Look! The North Star! Be still inside.
May the bright stars be our guide.

6th GRADERS: We are the stars that sing,
We sing with our light,
We fly over the sky,
Our light is a voice.
We make a road for the spirits,
For the spirits to pass over.
Among us are three hunters who chase a bear.
There never was a time when they were not hunting.
They look down on the mountains.
This is the song of the stars.
- Passamaquoddy tribe

*(Fifth graders kneel as stars descend.
Song – “Harmony of the Stars”
Sleepers wake surrounded by stars ready to lead.)*

5th GRADERS: The Dragon grows great, we must not delay.
Are we willing to seek to the ends of the earth?
(placing hands together in center as spokes of a wheel)
Yes!

*(They divide into four groups, to journey to the four
quarters of the earth, each group led by stars.)*

NARRATOR: Defy freezing ice and blinding snow
To seek crystal gifts the North can bestow.

*(Northern theme music, i.e. “Wild Geese” or
“Far over the depths of the boundless sea...”
Ice, wind, and snow figures with blue and white streamers
accompany their journey. Snow maidens appear, sprinkling “snow.”)*

VOICE OF THE NORTH: O Michael, the victorious,
Thou king of the angels,
Shield thy people
With the power of thy sword...

Spread thy wing over sea and land,
East and west, south and north,
Be with them in the pilgrimage
And in the twistings of the fight.
Thine be the might of river,
Thine be the might of ocean,
The might of victory on field.
Thine be the might of ire,

Thine be the might of Levin,
The might of a strong rock...
Nor sword shall wound thee,
Nor brand shall burn thee,
Nor arrow shall rend thee,
Nor seas shall drown thee...

Thou art the pure love of the clouds,
Thou art the pure love of the skies,
Thou art the pure love of the stars,
Thou art the pure love of the moon,
Thou art the pure love of the sun,
Thou art the pure love of the heavens,
Thou art the pure love of the angels,
Thou art the pure love of the heart of love,
Thou art the pure love of the God of all life.

*- Adapted from Carmina Gadelica
edited by Alexander Carmichael*

Forge for them the iron sword of truth,
Give to their hand a spade for work,
Lay in your heart the Foundation stone
That the whole world may be your home.

GNOMES:
(hammering)

Ding dong didero,
Blow big bellows,
Ding dong didero,
Black coal yellows,
Ding dong didero,
Blue steel mellows,
Ding dong didero,
Strike, good fellows.

Up with the hammer,
Down with the sledge,
Hark to the clamors,
Pound now the edges,
Work it and watch it
Round, flat or square. Oh!
Spade, hook or hatchet,
Sword for a hero.

Ding dong didero,
Ding dong didero,
Spade for a laborer,
Sword for a hero,

Hammer it, stout smith,
Rightly, lightly,
Hammer it, stout smith,
Hammer it brightly.

*(They present gifts to seekers of sword, spade,
and Foundation Stone dodecahedron.)*

NARRATOR: Across deserts of fire and plains cracked with drought,
the seekers sought the soul of the South.

*(The South seekers hear distant drumming, Fire dancers
accompany their progress. Lions and tigers may threaten them.
Drumming heightens. Dancers and Spirit of the South emerge.)*

HS CHORUS: Face your fear. Free yourself!

MANDELA: Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond
measure. It is our light, not our darkness,
that most frightens us. We ask ourselves:
Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented,
fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You
are born to make manifest the glory of God that
is within you. It's not just in some of us. It's
in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we
unconsciously give other people permission to do
the same. As we're liberated from our own fear,
our presence automatically liberates others.

- Nelson Mandela

HS CHORUS: Hear in this drum the heart of the South.

(Song - South African national anthem)

NARRATOR: Where day is reborn from the sea of peace,
The Way will reveal the light of the east.

*(Seekers head towards east. Water beings accompany their journey.
Lao Tzu arises and music of the East is heard.)*

VOICE OF LAO TZU: The highest goodness is like water.
Water is beneficent to all things but does not contend...
When water is still, it is like a mirror...
Who is able to purify the dark till it becomes slowly light?
Who is able to calm the turbid till it slowly clears?

There is a thing inherent and natural,
Which existed before heaven and earth.
Motionless and fathomless,
It stands alone and never changes;
It pervades everywhere and never becomes exhausted,
It may be regarded as the Mother of the Universe,
I do not know its name...I call it Tao...
Man follows the laws of the earth:
Earth follows the laws of heaven:
Heaven follows the laws of Tao,
Tao follows the laws of its intrinsic nature.

He who knows others is wise;
He who knows himself is enlightened.
He who conquers others is strong;
He who conquers himself is mighty.

He who fights with love will win the battle;
He who defends with love will be secure.
Heaven will save him and protect him with love.

(Lao Tzu offers seekers the Lotus.)

NARRATOR: Across Rocky Mountains, through the Valley of Death,
May we be inspired by the breath of the West.

(Seekers journey. Native American music. Wind beings whirl round them. The Spirit of the West appears as an eagle.)

8th GRADE: O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill:
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere,

Destroyer and preserver, hear, oh, hear!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

*- excerpted from Shelley's
"Ode to the West Wind"*

SPIRIT OF THE WEST: Oh Great Spirit...
Whose voice I hear in the winds,
Whose breath gives life to the world, hear me...
I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom.
May I walk in beauty.
Make my eyes behold the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise so that I may know
the things you have taught your children,
the lessons you have written in every leaf and rock.
Make me strong, not to be superior to my brothers,
but to fight my greatest enemy – myself.
Make me ready to come to you with straight eyes
so that when life fades as the fading sunset,
my spirit may come to you without shame.
- Chief Yellow Lark, Lakota 1887

CECELIA: Our Mother the Earth is lying here.
She has given of her fruitfulness.
She has given us her power.
Give thanks to Mother Earth who is lying here.

(Sophia begins to revive, the flowers gather round her.)

Look at Mother Earth growing fields!
Look towards the promise of her fruitfulness!
Her power she has given us.
Give thanks to Mother Earth who is lying here.

Look at Mother Earth spreading trees!
Look towards the promise of her fruitfulness!
Her power she has given us.
Give thanks to Mother Earth who is lying here.
– Pawnee tribe

The mountains, I become part of it...
The herbs, the fir tree, I become part of it.
The morning mists, the clouds, the gathering waters,
I become part of it.
The wilderness, the dew drops, the pollen...
I become part of it.
– Navajo

Look, I see the Sun...
He is my Father
He is my Beginning
Look, I see the Moon...
She is my Grandmother
my Guardian Keeper
Look, I see the Stars...
They are my friends, my relatives
Look, I see the Universe...
I see myself.
– High Eagle, Osage/Cherokee

NARRATOR:

From the North to the South,
From the East to the West,
The seekers of knowledge
Were four times blessed:
Clarity of thought, (*hold up dodecahedron*)
Heart-warmed dance of soul, (*beat drum*)
Selfless peace and harmony, (*hold up lotus*)
The spirit's breath in all. (*eagle gesture*)

Yet one more gift was needed
To face the dragon's might.
They joined their voice in prayer
To seek sun's loving light.

(*As the morning verse is spoken, the sun rises behind the stage.*)

ALL:

The sun with loving light
makes bright for me the day,
The soul with spirit power,
Gives strength unto my limbs.

In sunlight shining clear,
I reverence, O God,
The strength of humankind
Which Thou so graciously
Hast planted in my soul,
That I with all my might
May love to work and learn.
From Thee come light and strength.
To Thee rise love and thanks.
- Rudolf Steiner

NARRATOR: The dragon lashed his tail in fury,
Knowing his time was short,
For the people were united
East and West, South and North.

(A sun mirror is taken from the sun pole. The dragon sees his own reflection. It retreats but cannot escape from the circle.)

Loving light streamed into darkness
From the sun's shining mirror,
Dissolving the Dragon's power
Of terror and of fear.

FACULTY: Victorious spirit,
Flame through the impotence of irresolute souls,
Burn out the egoism,
Ignite the compassion,
That selflessness,
The life stream of mankind,
Wells up as the source
Of spirit rebirth!
- Rudolf Steiner

NARRATOR: The mighty beast was tamed
So that a child could ride him,
His power was hitched to a plow
With good farmers to guide him.

(Parade led by Sophia, flowers, stars, seekers, dragon, and third grade farmers sowing seeds begins to exit as all sing A.C. Harwood's "Of all created things of earth and sky...")

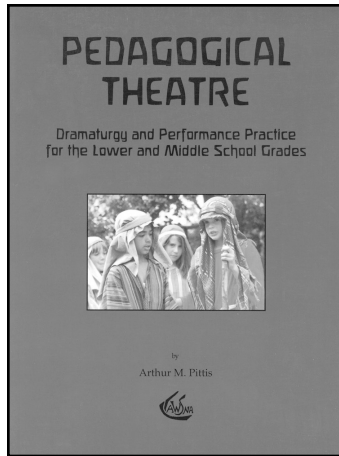
AFTERWORD: PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

- Keep it simple. Upper grades plays (6th–8th) will be more elaborate. Rely on simple costumes and simple staging early on.
- Casting provides great therapeutic opportunities. Give students a chance to shine and help them unlock hidden potential in dramatic work. Be sure not to overwhelm someone who is simply too self-conscious to be in the limelight for long, but don't underestimate the capacities of someone who hangs back. Explain to the class that "we are a team, an ensemble, like an orchestra." Each voice is essential to bring the play to life, from the person with the most lines to stagehands behind the scenes. These plays have been written with many parts expressly for classes for maximal participation, even when the play may have a central character.
- Don't give out scripts too early. This is important. Let them hear your dramatic rendition as a story so they have an overview, then as dramatic dialogue read by the teacher to bring out nuances before they have the text. In first through third grade you may teach the play entirely orally before handing out text for reading practice. An already familiar play can be a breakthrough text for those just on the brink of reading.
- As the class reads through a play together, ask a few children who may be interested and others you would like to hear recite particular roles. This is like "trying on" a personality for size. Let them know you will have some hard decisions to make. You will decide from your overviews of both the play and the class who will best serve where. "You may not get a part you really hoped for as I take everyone into consideration, not looking just for who may be able to do a role very well, but also for who now needs a challenge to do something brand new." Casting is the hardest thing. You may have to do some behind-the-scenes diplomacy to prepare the way for the right thing to happen. Sharing the lead roles is also possible when multiple performances are given or the number of lines is better shared by two or three. Double casting is also possible, but a lot more work, especially with rehearsal time at a premium.

- Practice the language of gesture with the class. Help them learn to speak with gesture to underscore their words. There is nothing drier than talking heads with nothing to do. Note in your text with hieroglyphic stick figures in the margins the key gesture for a given line before you begin, and, subsequently, as you discover what is needed during rehearsals. The gestures help the students remember what they are to say and significantly contribute to the “action.” Often you can communicate the next line without prompting through the gesture. Help them learn to expand the gestures theatrically so they can be seen by an audience.
- Project, project, project. You can’t repeat this enough. They must practice projecting their voices during rehearsals as though the hall were already full or it won’t happen during performance. Warm-up speech exercises with the “javelin throw” gesture with each phrase will help reinforce this, i.e., “Speed the spear, split the tree, slit it clear and evenly.” Consult a speech artist for helpful warm-ups.
- Plays are language arts blocks, integrate them into your yearly block schedule. Educate parents that drama is one of the best ways to instill love of language in children. It is not a nice artistic extra, but is a key building block of the language arts curriculum. Characterization, motivation, dramatic tension, nuance of word choices, vocabulary building, clear speech, inflection, context, critical analysis, the search for meaning, themes of life and death, moral choices, etc. ... It’s all there for class discussion. Plays take time to realize. Parents and students should understand that, no matter how large or small one’s role is. Abundant, immediately relevant learning arises in innumerable ways through drama.
- Have clear maps in your script margin notes of where you want the characters to stand, enter and exit, before you begin rehearsing the scene. Change it if you need to. The maps are essential to remind the children where to stand the next time. Choreographed processions, dances, brief battles, chases, etc., greatly enhance plays that otherwise are too dependent on dialogue.
- Sound effects, chimes, drumbeats, recorder music, songs, thunder, the sound of the wind, bird calls, and scene change or journey music help the play breathe and provide valuable cues. Sometimes an internal count, 1-2-3, the dramatic pause, the silent interval is needed. Mark it in the script.
- Divide the play into rehearsal size components on a calendar. Figure out where you can find time to work individually with a few key

- players. Is there a parent or colleague who can help students prepare a scene for rehearsal, perhaps working simultaneously in another room. Experiment with which is more effective, cycling sequentially through the play scene by scene or repeating and firming up the work of the previous day before going on.
- Ask for help with sets, costuming, and backstage support. Work with special subjects teachers, keep them in the loop, try not to impose upon their rhythm of lessons, give advance warning if you will need to request extra rehearsal time from them. It may be that one or two students could be infrequently released for individual work with a special subject teacher's permission.
 - It is better to feed the students their unmemorized lines when rehearsing on stage than let them read them, script in hand. This echoing helps imprint the lines and helps them understand what you, as director, are looking for in this situation. Set a deadline for memorization of the parts. Enlist parent support for known procrastinators. Help students apportion their memorization over the available time if they have longer parts by marking on their script a speech to learn every two days. Set up partners for students not on stage to be practicing together.
 - Plan what students who are not on stage might be doing while you are directing a few. Is there a book assignment? Is there a main lesson illustration or geometric construction, a library period? Is there a person who can monitor the children waiting to rehearse? Rehearsal time is too valuable to lose with distractions coming from the periphery. Many of the lower school plays include all or most of the players as on-stage cast or chorus, so they can witness the drama that they are creating together.
 - Give pep talks before rehearsals that add another dimension to a character or deepens the importance of the scene about to be rehearsed for the whole play. Articulate briefly what is about to happen, what is the mood, what might the characters be feeling, what consequences follow. The whole play does not become visible and real until dress rehearsal. Help them picture in a few sentences a new aspect that holds the bits that you are rehearsing together into a majestic whole.
 - Play!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM AWSNA

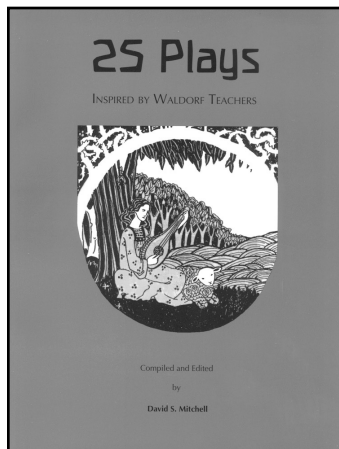


Pedagogical Theatre Dramaturgy and Performance Practice for the Lower and Middle Grades

by Arthur Pittis

This book is a description of how to write plays and why a play written by a class teacher is important. It contains several plays written by the author.

173 pages 8.5 x 11 inches
ISBN 1-888365-01-1

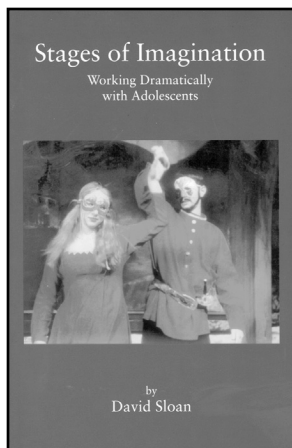


25 Plays Inspired by Waldorf Teachers

by David Mitchell, ed.

Both elementary and high school are represented in this collection of plays, along with practical advice on how to write a play.

298 pages 8.5 x 11 inches
ISBN 1-888365-04-8



Stages of Imagination Working Dramatically with Adolescents

by David Sloan

This book is alive with the author's conviction of the importance of drama for adolescence. Included are speech exercises, dramatic exercises, an outline of how to stage a play, and suggestions for developmentally appropriate plays.

218 pages 6 x 9 inches
ISBN 1-888365-33-1



William Ward grew up in Niles, Michigan. He received his undergraduate degree in English Literature from Columbia University in 1968 and his Master's Degree in Waldorf Education from Adelphi University. For the next 30 years he was a class teacher at Hawthorne Valley School in upstate New York, writing many class plays that enjoy continuous performance by all grades at the school. Following a diagnosis of brain cancer in the fall of 2005, he embarked on an adventure of treatment, healing, connection, and revelation that culminated in his recently published memoir, "Traveling Light: Walking the Cancer Path" (Lindisfarne Books, 2008). William died on October 5, 2008.

"Hawthorne Valley Harvest" is a book of class plays by William and a number of teachers at HVS. A project very dear to his heart, it contains in dramatic form the transformative ideals of Waldorf education.



AWSNA Publications Office
65-2 Fern Hill Road
Ghent, NY 12075

