

THE FOURTH WISE MAN

(SAMPLE)

CAST LIST

Narrator (could be more than one child)

3 Chinese Villagers (speaking – could add more non-speaking)

Li Chan

No.1. Daughter

No.2. Daughter

No.3 Daughter

Caspar

Caspar's wife

2 Russian Villagers (speaking – could add more non-speaking)

Balthazar's mother

Prince Balthazar

4 Indian servants (non-speaking)

Woman (Melchior's daughter)

Melchior

Mary

Joseph (non-speaking)

At least 17 speaking parts – 5 non-speaking – more non-speaking could be added.

THE FOURTH WISE MAN

SCENE 1.

MUSIC

NARRATOR

Long, long ago – over two thousand years ago, in fact – the people of a small village in China prayed to their gods to send them rain. It had not rained for many years and the villagers were desperate. Every year they performed a dance for their gods, in the hope that the rain would come.

(The villagers stand and watch while some of the girls perform a simple dance with fans. The dance finishes and everyone looks up at the sky.)

1st VILLAGER

It hasn't worked. The spirits are still angry with us.

2nd VILLAGER

It's never going to rain. What shall we do?

3rd VILLAGER

We must ask Li Chan. He is the wisest man in the village. He will help us.

No.1 DAUGHTER

My father is very old and tired. You mustn't bother him now.

1st VILLAGER

But he is the only one who can help us. We must see him.

(Li Chan appears. He is walking slowly and is supported by No.2 Daughter. She is also carrying a basket with three flowers in it.)

LI CHAN

What is it that you want from me?

NO.3.DAUGHTER

Father, the people from the village want to ask your advice.

LI CHAN

What advice can an old man like me give them?

2nd VILLAGER

Can you tell us why the rain has not come?

3rd VILLAGER

Yes, Li Chan. For many years now, we have been without rain. The land is dying. The rivers are drying up.

1st VILLAGER

We have danced and sung for the spirits and they do not help us. What shall we do?

LI CHAN

Foolish woman. Do you think that I know the answer?

2nd VILLAGER

You are the wisest man we know. You read the signs in the sky. What do the stars tell you is going to happen?

3rd VILLAGER

Yes. Do they tell you that it is going to rain?

LI CHAN

No. The stars say nothing about rain.

(All the villagers groan with disappointment)

LI CHAN

But the stars – one star in particular – tells me that something extraordinary is about to happen.

ALL VILLAGERS

What? What is going to happen? Tell us!

LI CHAN

Do you see that very big and bright star up there?

(He points upwards and they all look)

VILLAGERS

Yes! Yes!

NO.3 DAUGHTER

What does it mean, father?

LI CHAN

It means that a great lord will be born very soon. A king, a mighty prince, a great leader – and that he will be the answer to everyone's prayers.

1ST VILLAGER

You mean that the king will make it rain?

LI CHAN

He might. The star only tells me that this great birth will happen.

Anything more than that I do not know.

2ND VILLAGER

When will this king be born?

LI CHAN

In a few month's time. That much I know.

NO.2.DAUGHTER

Where will he be born? In China?

LI CHAN

No. I do not think so. To find the king, you must follow the star. It will lead you to his birthplace.

3RD VILLAGER

Li Chan, you must go and find this king. You must take him gifts and pray to him to bring the rain.

LI CHAN

No, I cannot go. I am too old to make such a journey.

1ST VILLAGER

But someone must go! The king may be able to save us. We must send someone!

LI CHAN

Il know. I shall send my three daughters. They shall go and find some friends of mine – they are also men who watch the skies. They will have seen the star too and they will be planning to follow it when the time comes. Number 1 daughter!

NO.1. DAUGHTER

Yes father.

LI CHAN

You shall travel to Russia to find my dear friend Caspar. Number two daughter!

NO. 2 DAUGHTER

Yes father.

LI CHAN

You shall travel to India to find my dear friend Balthazar. Number three daughter!

NO. 3 DAUGHTER

Yes father.

LI CHAN

You shall travel to Arabia to find my dear friend Melchior.

1ST VILLAGER

But what about gifts. You cannot visit a baby king without taking some gifts

2ND VILLAGER

Li Chan's daughters have nothing to take.

3RD VILLAGER

We have nothing to give them. We are all so poor.

LI CHAN

I have something. *(He motions to his daughter, who holds up the basket of flowers.)* I have managed to grow these beautiful lotus flowers, even though we have had no rain at all. Each morning I have collected the

mountain dew in a bowl and given it to the flowers. Each of you must take a precious flower to give to the great lord. But you must always see that your flower has plenty of water. Never let it die.

ALL DAUGHTERS

No father, we won't.

LI CHAN

Now, my daughters, you must gather food and clothing for your journeys.

MUSIC

End of Scene 1.