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THE DOUBLE NINTH DAY

by Lois Walker

The Origins of The Double Ninth Day

A Readers Theater Script for Intermediate/Advanced Readers

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THE DOUBLE NINTH DAY

A Fanciful Folk Tale: The Origins of The Double Ninth Day

Adapted and Formatted for Readers Theater by Lois Walker

Cast: 5 Readers, Including 2 Character Parts

READER 1: In the Han Dynasty, many years ago,

READER 2: lived a master of the immortal arts.

READER 3: His name was Fei Chang-fang.

READER 4: One day, the master spoke to his student, Huan Ching.

He said,

MASTER/5: "On the 9th day of the 9th lunar month, a plague will strike your homeland.

HUAN CHING/1: "That’s terrible! What do you think I should do, master?"

MASTER/2: "If you want to escape from it, and ward off this kind of bad luck in the future, you must quickly lead your family to the high mountains."

READER 3: These instructions sounded reasonable to Huan Ching, but his master was not finished. He then said,

MASTER/5: "Take some dogwood branches with you. When you reach the top, stop and drink some chrysanthemum wine."

READER 3: The second set of instructions sounded strange to Huan Ching, but he did as the master said.
READER 4: He quickly gathered his family together, told them the plan, and told them,

HUAN CHING/1: "Follow me!"

READER 5: Huan Ching’s family began climbing up a nearby mountain carrying cloth sacks filled with dogwood branches and jugs of chrysanthemum wine.

READER 1: Huan Ching’s children enjoyed the journey. They laughed and sang as they marched up the mountain. They knew they were going on a great adventure,

READER 2: so they celebrated by chanting these words:

READERS 1,2: The ninth day of the ninth moon,

Bad things may happen to you.

READERS 3,4,5: The ninth day of the ninth moon,

Here’s just what you must do.

ALL: Climb high into the mountains,

Take dogwood on your hike,

Drink wine from the chrysanthemum.

READER 1: And then you just might

READER 1: Go fly a kite!

READERS 1,2: The ninth day of the ninth moon,

Calamity may strike,

READERS 3,4,5: The ninth day of the ninth moon,
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READER 5: That’s something you won’t like!

ALL: So take a tip from Fei Chang-fang,

He’s shown us the way,

READER 3: To run and duck,

READER 4: And beat bad luck

ALL: On every Double Ninth Day!

READER 1: At the very tip top of the mountain, the whole family rested and drank chrysanthemum wine.

READER 2: When the family returned to their home a few days later, they found that all the farm animals were dead.

HUAN CHING/1: We’ve certainly had bad luck here, but the good luck is: we’re still alive.

ALL: Our family survived!

READER 3: Then the master explained that the animals had been punished for the sins people had committed. He said,

MASTER/5: “All of this has been done so that you may escape death.”

READER 2: The children knew their family had been truly blessed, so they celebrated again by chanting:

READERS 1,2: The ninth day of the ninth moon,

Bad things may happen to you.

READERS 3,4,5: The ninth day of the ninth moon,

Here’s just what you must do.