

## **The Monster Named Year!**

By Lois Walker

A Fanciful Folk Tale: Celebrating The Chinese New Year  
Adapted and Formatted for Readers Theater by Lois Walker

**Cast of 12:** 1 Narrator, 2 Character Parts (Year and Beggar),  
And 9 Solo Reader Parts.

All Class Members May Participate on the **ALL CHORUS**.

**NOTE:** If you wish to include more readers, you might divide the Narrator lines between two or three additional readers and re-number below: NARRATOR 1, NARRATOR 2, NARRATOR 3.

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### **FOCUS AND FOLDERS**

Ask your readers to speak directly to the audience, not to each other. This is called "storyteller focus." Readers will focus upon the audience just as a storyteller focuses upon the listeners. (It is sometimes helpful for readers to focus eyes slightly above heads of audience members.)

Place cast scripts in colorful folders. (Ring binders allow for smooth and easy page turning.) Place folders in front of or on chairs and on music stand before reading begins. Readers will hold folders at chest level and away from their bodies so that listeners can see facial expressions and hear clearly.

### **MOVEMENT AND ACTION**

This script version of "The Monster Named Year" includes movement and action directions that may be used if preparing readers for a performance of this story.

### **COSTUMES**

Chinese costumes or costume pieces might be worn to enhance the reading of this tale. All readers except narrator(s), Beggar, and Year are playing the parts of Chinese children and could be costumed to

suggest that. Narrators might be dressed in all black (the storytellers) or as Chinese nobles in ornate gowns. These are simply suggestions to help spark some creative ideas.

## **ENTRANCES**

NARRATOR and READERS 1 -10 enter. NARRATOR sits on chair or stool in the center of the performing area. (If more than one NARRATOR is used, position them together in center). 5 READERS sit on one side of the NARRATOR, the other 5 READERS sit on the other side of the NARRATOR.

Once NARRATOR and READERS are seated, the ALL CHORUS enters from both sides of the performing area. Some of them carry and wave signs that say: GOODBYE YEAR! GO AWAY YEAR! GO AWAY AND DON'T COME BACK! WE ARE TIRED OF YEAR! NO MORE YEAR!

The chorus members stand behind NARRATOR and READERS. (If possible, place the chorus on risers or a raised platform behind the NARRATOR and READERS).

Last, YEAR stomps into the performance area looking like a monster and making scary noises. Chorus member with signs bounce the signs up and down and shout "Year! Year! Year! Year!

YEAR sits on floor or small stool near NARRATOR.

When all are in place, the reading begins.

NARRATOR: Once upon a time,  
Lived a monster named Year.

*(READER 1 STANDS).*

READER 1: I'm sorry, please repeat.  
I guess I didn't hear.

NARRATOR: Year! Year!  
The monster's name was Year.

*(READER 2 STANDS).*

READER 2: Was that really his name?

**ALL  
CHORUS: YES, THE MONSTER'S NAME WAS YEAR!**

*(READERS 1 AND 2 SIT).*

NARRATOR: Year lived at the bottom  
Of a deep, deep sea.

*(READER 3 STANDS).*

READER 3: The bottom of a sea?

*(READER 4 STANDS).*

READER 4: It's the only place to be!

NARRATOR: And he came out only  
On New Year's Eve.

**ALL  
CHORUS: THAT'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN TOLD,  
AND THAT'S WHAT WE BELIEVE!**

*(READERS 3 AND 4 SIT).*

*(YEAR STANDS AND MOVES TOWARD THE  
AUDIENCE).*

NARRATOR: Whenever Year came out,  
He shrieked and growled:

*(YEAR STOPS MOVING AND YELLS AT AUDIENCE).*

YEAR: "I'm Hungry – woo – hungry,  
I'll shout it out loud!"

*(YEAR STOMPS BACK TO SEAT AND SITS).*

*(READERS 5,6,7 STAND).*

READER 5: Then people in the street,

READER 6: And the people in the crowd,

READER 7: Shivered and shook,  
Cried and howled.

NARRATOR: They called:

**ALL  
CHORUS: "YEAR IS COMING!  
DON'T LOOK OR TURN AROUND.  
HOLD TIGHTLY TO EACH OTHER,  
OH, PLEASE DON'T MAKE A SOUND."**

*(READERS 5,6,7 SIT).*

*(YEAR AGAIN STANDS AND MOVES TOWARD THE  
AUDIENCE).*

NARRATOR: Whenever Year came out,  
He shrieked and growled

*(YEAR STOPS MOVING AND YELLS AT AUDIENCE).*

YEAR: "Hungry – woo – hungry,  
I'll shout it out loud!"

*(YEAR STOMPS BACK TO SEAT AND SITS).*

*(READERS 8, 9, STAND).*

READER 8:           The animals were frightened.

                          They met in the dark,

READER 9:           They tried to be quiet,

                          And didn't wince or bark.

NARRATOR:          They whispered:

**ALL:                   "YEAR IS COMING!  
                          DON'T LOOK OR TURN AROUND.  
                          STAND CLOSELY TO EACH OTHER,  
                          WE DON'T WANT TO BE FOUND."**

*(READERS 8 AND 9 SIT).*

*(READER 10/BEGGAR STANDS AND MOVES TOWARD  
AUDIENCE).*

NARRATOR:          Then a wise old beggar

                          Stepped up to save the day.

*(BEGGAR STOPS MOVING AND SPEAKS TO  
AUDIENCE).*

BEGGAR/10:          "Don't be afraid."

NARRATOR:          He said,