



Herb and Lois Walker's
SCRIPTS FOR SCHOOLS

**THE ROLY RICE
FROM TAIWAN**

by Lois Walker

Based on an Asian
Folk Tale

A Readers Theater Script
for Intermediate/Advanced
Readers

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THE ROLY RICE FROM TAIWAN

CAST OF FIVE

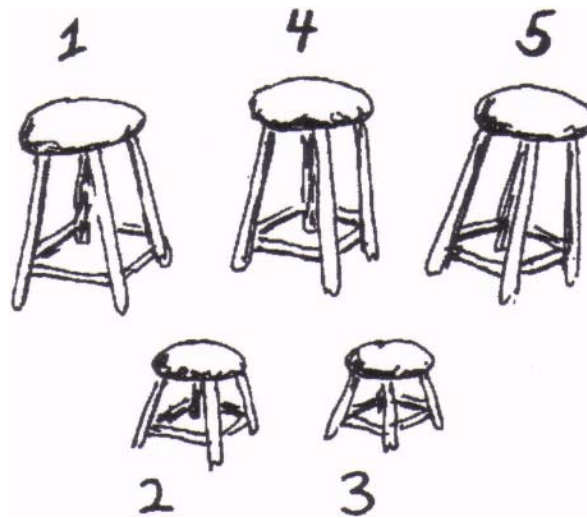
READER 1 - Narrator/Mouse

READER 2 - Narrator/Kind Man

READER 3 - Narrator/Greedy Man

READER 4 - Narrator/Mouse

READER 5 - Narrator/Girl Mouse



STAGE SETTING

Arrange three medium and two small stools, as shown on previous page. A long bench and small chairs may be used in place of stools, if desired.

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 should hold folders at chest level and away from their bodies so that listeners can see facial expressions and hear clearly.

MOVEMENT AND ACTION

This Teacher Script version of THE ROLY RICE BALLS FROM TAIWAN includes movement and action directions which may be used if preparing readers for a more formal, elaborate performance of the story. These directions appear only in the Teacher Script. Disregard directions, if you have chosen a more simplified readers approach.

ENTRANCES

The entrance information for this particular script, THE ROLY RICE BALLS FROM TAIWAN, is incorporated in the script dialogue. Check this special Teacher Script version for specific details.

THE ROLY RICE BALLS FROM TAIWAN

A Fanciful Folk Tale: Kindness Rewarded in Taiwan
Adapted and Formatted for Readers Theater by Lois Walker

Cast: 5 Readers, Including Three Character Voices.

(READER 1 ENTERS, STANDS IN FRONT OF STOOL,
OPENS FOLDER, AND READS):

READER 1: Once upon a time, long long ago in Taiwan,

(READERS 2 ENTERS, SITS ON STOOL, OPENS FOLDER,
AND SAYS):

READER 2: a kind old man and woman lived next door to a greedy
old man and woman.

(ADD THIS LINE AND ACTION, IF DESIRED: READER 2
LOOKS UP AT AUDIENCE, SMILES AND SAYS, "I'LL PLAY
THE KIND MAN TODAY SINCE THAT'S THE KIND OF GUY
I AMI").

(AS READER 3 ENTERS HE MIGHT ALSO SAY, "I'LL PLAY
THE MEAN MAN WHEN HE COMES ALONG. THAT PART IS
PERFECT FOR MY PERSONALITY!" READER 3 SITS,
OPENS FOLDER, AND CONTINUES THE STORY).

READER 3: The kind old man and woman were very poor.

(READERS 4 AND 5 ENTER. THEY STAND IN FRONT OF
STOOLS, OPEN FOLDERS IN UNISON, AND READ):

READER 4: Even though they both worked hard in the rice fields,

READER 5: there was often very little to eat in their small hut.

(ALL READERS LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND AD LIB PHRASES LIKE "OH DEAR," THAT'S TOO BAD," THIS IS A SAD STORY!" READERS 1,4,5 SIT).

READER 1: Early one morning, as the kind old man and woman prepared to go to work,

READER 2: they found only six small peanut rice balls to pack for lunch.

READER 3: So, the kind old man wrapped three rice balls in a cloth.

READER 4: The kind old woman did the same,

READER 5: and off they went to the fields.

(READER 1 STANDS).

READER 1: Around lunch time, the kind old man found a shady spot in which to eat his meager lunch, all by himself.

(READER 2 READS FOLLOWING LINE, PLACES FOLDER ON KNEES AND MIMES UNWRAPPING THE RICE BALLS).

READER 2: He sat down under a Nutmeg tree and began to unwrap the three rice balls.

(READER 3 READS LINE, POINTS AT IMAGINARY RICE BALLS, AND FREEZES WITH FINGER POINTED).

READER 3: Suddenly and without warning,

(READER 4 DOES THE SAME).

READER 4: one rice ball hopped right out of the cloth...

(READER 5 DOES THE SAME).

READER 5: and began to roll along the ground!

(READERS 3,4,5 BREAK FREEZE AND MOVE FINGERS IN A CIRCULAR DIRECTION THREE TIMES TO CORRESPOND WITH THE READING OF "HURRY, HURRY, HURRY! THE CIRCULAR MOTIONS ARE MEANT TO INDICATE ROLLING. ALL FINGERS DOWN AFTER THE LAST "HURRY!").

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快!

READER 1: Now the kind old man was hungry! He did not want to lose a rice ball, so he cried out,

(2/MAN JUMPS UP AND CALLS OUT TO THE IMAGINARY RICE BALLS WHICH ARE ROLLING INTO THE AUDIENCE).

2/KIND MAN: "Stop Roly Rice Ball!
Don't you see?
You can't roll away.
You belong to me!

Stop Roly Rice Ball!
Don't you know?
You're my lunch.
Please don't go!"

READER 3: But the roly rice ball continued to roll along the ground...

(ALL READERS EXTEND POINTED FINGERS TOWARD AUDIENCE AND MOVE FINGERS IN CIRCULAR DIRECTION THREE TIMES AS FOLLOWING IS CHANTED):

ALL: 急忙急忙急忙

READER 4: until,

ALL: PLOP!

(ALL FINGERS DOWN ON "PLOP").

READER 5: it rolled right into a hole under the nutmeg tree.

(2/MAN SITS AND LOOKS AT FLOOR AS THOUGH HE WERE LOOKING DOWN THE HOLE).

READER 1: The kind old man bent over the hole and, to his great surprise, heard tiny voices calling from deep inside:

(READER 4 PUNCHES AIR WITH RAISED FIST IN BEAT TIME TO THE FOLLOWING CHANT. READER 4 DOES THIS LIKE A CHEERLEADER MIGHT LEAD A CHEER).

READER 4: "Roll Roly Rice Ball

1,2,3,4: DOWN THE HOLE!

READER 4: Roll Roly Rice Ball

1,2,3,4: ROLL, ROLL, ROLL!"

(FIST DOWN. READER 3 POINTS AT IMAGINARY RICE BALLS AGAIN AND MOVMENTS ARE REPEATED AS BEFORE).

READER 3: Suddenly, and without warning,

(READER 4 DOES THE SAME).

READER 4: a second rice ball hopped out of the cloth...

(READER 5 DOES THE SAME).

READER 5: and began to roll along the ground.

(READERS 3,4,5 CIRCLE WITH FINGERS, AS BEFORE).

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快!

READER 1: The kind old man did not want to lose a second rice ball, so he cried out,

(2/MAN JUMPS TO FEET AS BEFORE).

2/KIND MAN: "Stop Roly Rice Ball!
Don't you see?
You can't roll away.
You belong to me!

Stop Roly Rice Ball!
Don't you know?
You're my lunch.
Please don't go!"

READER 3: But the roly rice ball continued to roll along the ground...

(ALL READERS POINT AND CIRCLE FINGERS AS BEFORE).

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快!

READER 4: until,

(ALL FINGERS DOWN).

ALL: PLOP!

READER 5: it rolled right into that hole under the Nutmeg tree.

(2/MAN SITS AND PRETENDS TO LISTEN OVER HOLE).

READER 1: Again they kind old man heard tiny voices calling from deep inside:

(READER 4 LEADS CHANT CHEER, AS BEFORE).

READER 4: "Roll Roly Rice Ball

1,2,3,4: DOWN THE HOLE!

READER 4: Roll roly rice ball

1,2,3,4: ROLL, ROLL, ROLL!"

(READER 3 AGAIN POINT TO IMAGINARY RICE BALL AND FREEZES INTO POSITION).

READER 3: Suddenly, and without warning,

(READER 4 DOES THE SAME).

READER 4: the third rice ball hopped out of the cloth...

(READER 5 DOES THE SAME).

READER 5: and began to roll along the ground.

(READERS 3,4,5 MOVE POINTED FINGERS IN CIRCULAR
PATTERN THREE TIMES AS FOLLOWING IS READ):

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快! HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!

READER 1: The kind old man did not want to lose his last rice ball,
so he cried out,

(2/MAN JUMPS UP AS BEFORE).

2/KIND MAN: "Stop Roly Rice Ball!
Don't you see?
You can't roll away.
You belong to me!

Stop Roly Rice Ball!
Don't you know?
You're my lunch.
Please don't go!"

READER 3: But the third roly rice ball continued to roll along the
ground...

(ALL READERS POINT AND CIRCLE FINGERS).

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快! HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!

READER 4: until,

ALL: PLOP!

(ALL FINGERS DOWN ON PLOP).

READER 5: It rolled right into that same hole under the nutmeg tree.

(2/MAN SITS AND PRETENDS TO LISTEN OVER HOLE AGAIN).

READER 1: Again came the tiny voices from deep inside:

(READER 4 AGAIN LEADS CHANT CHEER).

READER 4: "Roll Roly Rice Ball

1,2,3,4: DOWN THE HOLE!

READER 4: Roll Roly Rice Ball

1,2,3,4: ROLL, ROLL, ROLL!"

(2/MAN PUTS FOLDER ON FLOOR, THEN PRETENDS TO LISTEN OVER HOLE AGAIN).

READER 1: The kind old man did not know what to do. He bent way over and looked down into the deep, dark hole.

READER 3: Then he heard the tiny voices calling again:

(READER 4 LEADS CHEER CHANT AS BEFORE).

READER 4: "Roll Roly old man

1,2,3,4: DOWN THE HOLE!

READER 4: Roll Roly old man

1,2,3,4: ROLL, ROLL, ROLL!"

(READER 3 POINTS AT 2/MAN AND FREEZES, AS BEFORE).

READER 3: Suddenly, and without warning,

(READER 4 DOES THE SAME).

READER 4: the old man felt himself tipping and slipping,
weaving and sliding.

(READER 5 DOES THE SAME).

READER 5: Then he somersaulted, head-over-toe, down the hole.

(2/MAN FALLS OFF STOOL AND SOMERSAULTS ACROSS FLOOR AS READERS 3,4,5 CIRCLE FINGERS AS BEFORE).

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快! HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!

READER 1: The kind old man landed with a

(2/MAN STOPS SOMERSAULTING AND ALL FINGERS DOWN ON "PLOP!").

ALL: PLOP!

READER 1: He looked around to find himself in a tiny land under the earth where millions of mice made their homes.

(2/MAN LOOKS TOWARD AUDIENCE, AMAZED.
PRETENDING TO SEE).

READER 3: He saw millions of lady mice, wearing beautiful
costumes, dancing.

READER 4: He saw millions of men mice pounding grains of rice with
tiny golden mallets.

(READERS 1,4,5 STAND).

READER 5: All the mice were singing:

ALL: "When the cat is not around,
Pound the rice
Beneath the ground.

When the cat is far away,
Sing and dance
Throughout the day."

READER 1: Then the little mice stopped and bowed to the kind old
man. They said,

1,4,5: "Thank you, old man, for the rice balls. You are such a
kind old man that we have a gift for you."

READER 1: A tiny costumed mouse stepped forward and presented
the old man with a tiny golden mallet. She said,

(READERS 1 AND 4 SIT AS READER 5 SHUFFLES OUT TO
WHERE 2/MAN LAYS UPON THE FLOOR. READER 5
STOPS, BOWS, AND READS. AT THE END OF SPEECH,
READER 5 BOWS AGAIN, RETURNS TO STOOL, AND
SITS).

5/GIRL MOUSE: "Take this magic golden mallet. Whenever you feel hungry, pound the mallet upon your table. Because you shared your lunch with us, we will share with you for as long as you live."

(2/MAN MAY SAY, 'THANKS MICE!' BEFORE HE CRAWLS BACK TO STOOL AND SITS UPON IT).

READER 3: The kind old man thanked the millions of mice and crawled back up the mouse hole.

READER 3: He found his wife and they hurried home.

(2/MAN MIMES FOLLOWING FROM STOOL).

READER 4: Once inside their small hut, the kind old man pounded the tiny golden mallet upon the table. At once the table was covered with more food than the old couple had ever seen before.

READER 5: They filled themselves with rice cakes, chestnuts, persimmons, fresh fish, and ripe peaches. Then went happily to bed.

READER 1: The old man said,

(2/MAN STANDS TO MAKE THIS IMPORTANT PRONOUNCEMENT).

2/KIND MAN: "We will never be hungry again!"

READER 1: And they never were.

(2/MAN SMILES HAPPILY AND SITS).

READER 4: But when the greedy old man next door heard about his neighbor's magic mallet, he said,

(3/GREEDY MAN STANDS AND GLARES AT AUDIENCE).

3/GREEDY: "I will share my lunch with those silly mice and get an even better mallet. I want a mallet which will make me rich!"

(3/GREEDY SITS, PLACES FOLDER ON LAP, AND MIMES WRAPPING BALLS).

READER 2: So the greedy old man wrapped three rice balls in a cloth and went off to find the mouse hole.

READER 1: Once there, the greedy old man rolled all three rice balls along the ground...

(ALL READERS POINT TO 3/GREEDY AS HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE AND CIRCLE FINGERS).

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快! HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!

READER 4: until,

ALL: PLOP!

(ALL FINGERS DOWN ON "PLOP!").

READER 5: They rolled right into the hole under the nutmeg tree.

(3/GREEDY MIMES LISTENING FROM STOOL).

READER 1: The greedy old man bent over the hole and, to his great surprise, heard nothing!

READER 2: The greedy old man was not pleased, and so he
impatiently called out,

3/GREEDY: "Roll Roly old man
Down the hole.
Rolly Roly old man

ALL: ROLL, ROLL, ROLL!"

(READER 4 POINTS AS BEFORE).

READER 4: Suddenly, and without warning,

(READER 5 POINTS AS BEFORE).

READER 5: The greedy old man somersaulted, head-over-toe, down
the hole.

(3/GREEDY PLACES FOLDER ON FLOOR AND
SOMERSAULTS JUST AS 2/MAN HAS DONE BEFORE).

(READERS 4,5 CIRCLE FINGERS).

ALL: 趕快, 趕快, 趕快! HURRY! HURRY! HURRY!

READER 1: The greedy old man landed with a...

ALL: PLOP!

(FINGERS DOWN, SOMERSAULTING STOPS).

READER 1: But the mice had not invited him and did not notice him
rolling in. So the greedy old man hid behind a rock to
watch and listen.

(3/GREEDY CRAWLS BACK TO STOOL AND PRETENDS TO HIDE BEHIND IT).

(3/GREEDY LOOKS AT AUDIENCE. AMAZED, PRETENDING TO SEE MICE).

READER 2: He saw millions of lady mice, wearing beautiful costumes, dancing.

READER 4: He saw millions of men mice pounding grains of rice using tiny golden mallets.

(READERS 1,4,5 STAND).

READER 5: All the mice were singing:

ALL: "When the cat is not around,
Pound the rice
Beneath the ground.

When the cat is far away,
Sing and dance
Throughout the day."

READER 1: The greedy old man had an idea! From behind the rock he called loudly,

3/GREEDY: "Meow!!! Meow !!! Meow!!!

(READER 1,4,5 RUN RAPIDLY IN PLACE).

READER 2: Millions and millions of tiny mice squeaked in terror and scampered away shouting,

1,4,5/MICE: "Run...Scat...the cat is back!"

(RUNNING STOPS).

READER 4: When the coast was finally clear, the greedy old man looked around until he found a tiny golden mallet.

(3/GREEDY MIMES GETTING MALLET, LAUGHS, THEN SITS ON STOOL).

READER 5: Then, laughing, he crawled back up the mouse hole and went home to his greedy wife.

READER 1: When the greedy old woman saw the tiny golden mallet, she grabbed it from her husband and quickly pounded it upon the table.

READER 2: At once the table was covered with

(3/GREEDY STARES OUT TOWARD AUDIENCE, HORRIFIED).

READER 4: mud...slime,

READER 5: spiders...snakes,

READER 1: slugs...and other horrid things!

READER 2: The greedy old man cried,

3/GREEDY: "This is the most horrible, disgusting mess I have ever seen!"

READER 4: And it was.

READER 5: So, once upon a time, kindness was rewarded and
greediness was not, long ago in...

ALL: **TAIWAN!**