

CHINESE LOVERS' DAY

A Fanciful Folk Tale: The Origins of Chinese Lover's Day
Adapted and Formatted for Readers Theater by Lois Walker

Cast: 5 Readers Including 3 Character Parts

READER 1: Once upon a time, there was a kind cowherd.

COWHERD/2: Hi! I'm reading the part of the kind cowherd.

READER 3: The kind cowherd lived with an old ox.

OX/4: And, for a short time, I'm reading the part of the old ox. Now that we've made that clear, I want to know - what's a *cowherd*? I've never heard of one.

COWHERD/2: It's a person who takes care of cows. I even take care of you, you old ox.

OX/4: Well, that's the silliest thing I've ever heard, but let's move on. I have a job to do. I'm supposed to read something important. There's an announcement to be made.

READER 1: The ox is right! Let's get on with the story.

READER 5: O.K., here we go:

One day the old ox made an announcement. He said...

OX/4: "Tomorrow there will be seven beautiful fairy weavers taking their baths in the river."

COWHERD/2: Well now, that's the silliest thing I've ever heard! Who cares about fairy weavers taking baths?

OX/4: We do! You and I have been living alone here in this little cowherd cottage long enough. We need a woman in our lives and this is our chance to get one.

COWHERD/2: So, do you have a plan?

OX/4: You can sneak down to the river and hide one of their fairy dresses. If you do this, the owner of the dress won't be able to return to heaven without her dress and she'll have to stay here and marry you.

COWHERD/2: Doesn't seem quite fair to me.

OX/4: Well, that's the way the story goes.

READER 3: As usual, the old ox was correct, so the next day, the cowherd did just what the old ox told him to do.

READER 1: And everything happened just as the old ox said it would happen.

OX/4: When I'm right, I'm right!

READER 3: The fairy weaver couldn't return to heaven without her dress, so she married the cowherd and settled into his cozy cowherd cottage.

WIFE/5: Hi! I'm now reading the part of the fairy weaver and the truth is, I've been hoping to find a kind cowherd husband and a cozy cottage for a long time. I couldn't be happier!

READER 1: Soon the cowherd and his fairy wife had two children and they all lived happily...

OX/4: Including this old ox!

COWHERD/2: I'm happy.

WIFE/5: I'm very happy.

OX/4: I'm happier than I've ever been in my whole life!

READER 3: But when God learned what had happened, he wasn't happy.

READER 1: In fact, he was very, very angry.

READER 3: He was so angry that he decided to kill the old ox and take the fairy weaver back to heaven.

OX/4: Oh, no!

WIFE 5: Oh, no!

COWHERD/2: Oh, no!
Nobody can take my wonderful wife away from me. When God takes her, I'm going to follow them into the sky.

OX/4: Oh cowherd, what about your favorite old ox? Remember me?

COWHERD/2: Sorry, you're history!

OX/4: I was afraid you'd say that.

READER 1: So, the cowherd left the old ox behind and ran after his

Di and Tien at the Ghost Festival
A Readers Theater Script for Intermediate Readers

DI AND TIEN AT THE GHOST FESTIVAL

A Readers Theater Script: The Ghost Festival
Adapted and Formatted by Lois Walker

Cast of 4 Readers: 2 Narrators, Di and Tien

- NARRATOR 1: Di felt free and excited.
- NARRATOR 2: He stood on the other side of the giant gate looking for his friend, Tien.
- TIEN: I wonder what's happened to Tien. He said he'd meet me right here by the gate.
- NARRATOR 1: Di could hear the sounds of people celebrating in the village below. He wished Tien would hurry so they could start having some fun! Finally, he heard someone coming...
- TIEN: Hi Di! Sorry I'm late. I told you I'd be here, though, and here I am.
- DI: Hi Tien. I'm glad you made it. Sounds like they're having a good time down there. Let's get going!
- NARRATOR 2: Tien led Di down to the village for the fair. The village people were celebrating the Ghost Festival.
- NARRATOR 1: Tien and Di got right into the action. They helped put out food, drinks and fruits for the ghosts from the underworld.
- TIEN: Hey Di, let's go down to the river and help with the water lanterns.
- DI: O.K! I've never done that before.

Di and Tien at the Ghost Festival
A Readers Theater Script for Intermediate Readers

NARRATOR 2: When the boys reached the riverbank, they stopped and gasped.

DI: Wow! Look at those lanterns. Some of them are two stories high! What are they doing now?

TIEN: The monks are chanting from the scriptures.

DI: Why is this all happening?

TIEN: To provide light for the spirits in the water so that they can find the shore and enjoy the festival. I hope it's high tide.

DI: Why?

TIEN: So the spirits can arrive with the rising waters. Well, that's what some folks believe. Others think the further and faster from shore the lantern floats, the more prosperous the owner will become. So they like the low tide. They roll up their pant legs and pole a bamboo raft to help their lanterns along as they push them away from the shore.

NARRATOR 1: Di was interested and fascinated.

DI: And I thought this festival was just about having a good time.

TIEN: Well, it is about a good time. The lanterns are there to guide the ghosts to the feast. And the feast is a good time!

NARRATOR 2: Next, Tien led Di down to the streets for the parade.

NARRATOR 1: There people were dressed up like the gods or the ghosts who were in charge of the underworld. They all wore costumes, but some walked on feet and some...

DI: Look! There's somebody walking on stilts!