

"THE KING IS COMING"

By

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FADE IN:

ACT 1 SCENE 1

A SIMPLE STAGE SETTING. ANCIENT AND TRADITIONAL. MULTIPLE LIGHT SOURCES. THREE EXITS. CENTER STAGE ARE STOOD FIVE YOUNG AND PRETTY MAIDENS. THEY REMAIN PERFECTLY STILL. ONE OF THEM SPEAKS.

BEAUTY: *[Most Beautiful. Elegantly dressed. Adorned in fine jewelry. Full make up on her face, more than the rest. She sways proudly to the sound of soft music in the background]*

My name is Beauty. The fairest in the land. I am adorned beautifully as you can see... *(runs her hand over her appearance)* When men see me, they are - *(awestruck expression)* Awestruck. *(giggles)* I bet you are wondering why I'm here... *(pauses and glances at the others irritably)* Why we are all here. *(shrugs excitedly.)*

Well, the King's son is returning to the land and he is returning to pick a bride. He will marry her and take her to the new land his father has given him to rule. Isn't that exciting? *(giggles excitedly.)*

There is no doubt he will be coming for me. And when he sees this beauty he will be - *(awestruck expression)* Awestruck.

GOLD, THE SECOND MAIDEN BESIDE HER HISSES LOUDLY. THEY ALL BEGIN TO REACT EXCEPT FOR THE LAST ONE WHICH REMAINS CALM.

GOLD: What is in beauty? Are we not all beautiful? *(the other maidens murmur in agreement.)*

BRILLIANCE: *[Smartly dressed and pompous. Clears her throat.]* Exactly what is beauty without brains? *(lays a hand on her chest proudly.)* I am Brilliance. I have the mental ability and strength to rule the world. With my skills, I will stand before King's *(disdained look to the other maidens)* and not before mere men. *(Counts*

*her fingers*) Do you know how many books I have read? How many degrees I have acquired? Which King would not want an educated and intelligent wife?

GOLD: (*laughs*) If you like be a bookworm and have nothing to show for it. You will die naked like the worm. Have you not heard that a rich man's wealth is a strong city? Have you not heard that the rich will rule over the poor! Don't you know that money is power?

BRILLIANCE: (*lifts her hand over head.*) God forbids.  
(*angrily*) I may not be as rich as you, but I am certainly not poor. And it is you that doesn't know that knowledge is power, not money.

GOLD: (*giggles mockingly*) At least money answereth all things. (*steps forward slightly*) My name is Gold. I am the wealthiest person in this land. The most precious and priceless. My resources are endless.

FAME: (*rolls her eyes*) And what is wealth if people despise you? (*smiles proudly*) My name is Fame. I am famous, well known and a person of influence. The only woman to seat in the council of chiefs. I have many followers, both the old and the young. These are my great armies of people who listen to me. So, tell me, what king will not want to marry a wife of influence?

THE OTHER MAIDENS ARE DISPLEASED EXCEPT FOR THE CALM ONE WHO REMAINS OBSERVANT. SHE SHAKES HER HEAD, FOLDS HER ARMS AND SIGHS LOUDLY. THEY ALL STOP SUDDENLY AND LEAN IN TO LOOK AT HER.

BEAUTY: And you? What is your name?

GRACE: (*humbly*) My name is Grace and I am highly favored. I have nothing to bring the King except my heart. (The four maidens start to laugh loudly.)

BEAUTY: (*eyes Grace's entire frame*) Yourself? I'm not sure I understand.

GRACE: What will I bring the king that her does not already have? We all know that the king's son is incredibly handsome. His beauty is beyond

description, too marvelous for words. Besides, the beauty I possess is not merely one from outward adorning, it is the beauty of a gentle and submissive heart.

BRILLIANCE: And will the king eat your heart?

GRACE: It will be a living sacrifice.

GOLD: You speak of sacrifices. The same king that owns cattle on a thousand hills. Every beast in the forest belongs to him. What is your heart to him?

FAME: I also heard there are certain requirements for a sacrifice...

BRILLIANCE: A worthy sacrifice must be without blemish, consecrated from the day of birth. The first fruit.

FAME: (*looks intently at Grace*) So, are you any of these?

BRILLIANCE: She can't be, because the heart of man is desperately wicked.

GRACE: (*chuckles pitifully.*) You all forget that the King's son was himself that sacrifice once and for all of us. (*More murmuring.*)

GOLD: Do explain...

GRACE: Before the king's son left this land, he paid a huge price for our freedom. So, I can be like him. Those who are free bear this mark. (*Grace shows them the mark on her right wrist. They gasp.*)

BEAUTY: (*sneeringly*) You are to be his wife, not his equal.

BRILLIANCE: (*hushes everyone*) I remember this tale. The King's son laid down his life to save the people and the King raised him up. That is why the King's son is called Savior. But not everyone has the mark. (*thoughtfully*) I read in the ancient book that it is given to those who commit themselves wholly to the service of the King.

They become his children. The mark is a sign of their dedication.

BEAUTY: And so what if you dwell in the King's presence...or if you have this mark...we are still better qualified than you..

FAME: (*curious*) How can the rest of us get this mark?

GOLD: (*expectant*) Can it be bought with money? I have enough.

BRILLIANCE: Wait...wait. Don't get ahead of yourselves. What is the guarantee that this mark will result in the King choosing us? Don't forget that we all have unique and amazing qualities. What can a mere mark do?

BEAUTY: Exactly my point. I don't even think I want any mark on my beautiful skin.

GOLD: (*ignores the rest and moves to Grace's side*) Grace you have a point. If it is just my wealth I am relying on, there is nothing that the king does not have. I can't take my wealth with me...so please let me know how I can get this mark?

GRACE: It's simple. You need to believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that these things happened.

GOLD: So, I need to believe that the King's son laid down his life for me and that he died and that he is alive now because the King raised him from the dead? (Grace nods.)

GRACE: And you need to be baptized.

BEAUTY: (*clasps her hands in disbelief*) Lobatan! [It is finished] I cannot allow my beautiful hair or my elegant clothes to get wet. It will not happen.

BRILLIANCE: The stream is also 2 miles away. That is approximately 3km. In simple terms 10,560foot. You will not make it back on time.

GRACE: It is not merely water baptism but the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of the King is given

to those who believe. Then you will receive the mark.

GOLD: *(thoughtful)* Okay then, show me how.

GRACE TAKES GOLD'S HANDS AND THEY MOVE TO THE CORNER AND PRAY SILENTLY. AFTER THE PRAYER GOLD LOOKS AT HER HAND IN AWE.

GOLD: *(holds up her hand excitedly)* I have received the mark!

THERE IS A SUDDEN TRUMPET SOUND. GOLD AND GRACE RUSH BACK TO JOIN THE OTHER MAIDENS.

SAVIOR APPEARS. HIS APPEARANCE IS ANNOUNCED BY A TOWN CRIER SINGING PRAISES. SAVIOR STANDS BEFORE THE MAIDENS. THE WOMEN ARRANGE THEMSELVES.

SAVIOR WALKS UP TO BEAUTY FIRST. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD. SHE LIFTS HER NOSE DISAPPOINTEDLY. HE MOVES TO GOLD. HIS FACE BRIGHTENS.

SAVIOR: *(incredibly pleased)* You have the mark! This is amazing. Come. Come. *(He hugs her. He takes her hand and moves her to stand aside.)*

SAVIOR CONTINUES TO CHECK THE OTHER MAIDENS. HE STANDS BEFORE BRILLIANCE. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD. SHE IS SHOCKED. HE MOVES TO FAME. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD. SHE IS SAD. HE STOPS AT GRACE.

SAVIOR: *(very pleased)* You have the mark too. Come. *(He hugs her. Takes her hand and moves her aside. Looks compassionately at Grace and Gold)* Let us go to the place I have prepared for you.

SAVIOR, GOLD AND GRACE TURN THEIR BACKS TO THE OTHER MAIDENS. THE TOWN CRIER GOES BEFORE THEM IN PRAISES. SAVIOR WALKS BEHIND HIM. GRACE AND GOLD FOLLOW SIDE BY SIDE BEHIND SAVIOR.

THE GUARDS MOVE CLOSE TO THE OTHER MAIDENS. THEY STAGGER BACKWARDS FRIGHTENED. FAME TRIES TO RUSH FORWARD. THE GUARDS RAISE THEIR SWORDS AND BLOCK HER OFF.

FAME: (*wailing and yelling over their shoulder*) Savior, I know people. I have connections. Please give me a second chance!

GUARD 2: (*firmly and emotionless*) It is too late.

BEAUTY: (*tensed*) We should have listened oo. What are we going to do now?

GUARD 1: (*clears throat*) Those who have not been chosen will be cast out. (he points to the exit with this sword)

BRILLIANCE: (*looks over her shoulder*) Can't we just return to the land?

GUARD 1: There is also a place prepared for you.

FAME: (*excitedly*) Really?

GUARD 1: (*sternly*) The place where the non-believers go. (*Fames excitement turns to fear. She continues wailing.*)

BEAUTY: But we believe...it's just that we did not receive the mark.

GUARD 2: Not everyone who claims to know the King is known by him. Only those who do what he says and receive the mark are his true believers.

THE GUARDS' EDGE IN CLOSER, POINTING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE EXIT. THE MAIDENS STAGGER IN HORROR TOWARDS THE EXIT.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END