



In Search of the Magic Lake

Readers Theater Play Script and Performance Notes

AUTHORS: Elaine Lindy & Charis Duke, **COUNTRY:** Ecuador, **GENRE:** Fairytales



CHARACTERS

NARRATOR

Sapa Inca

Court Magician

Prince

Father

Chuki

Mother

Poma

Ampata

Actor 1# (stands behind mountain cutout #1)

Actor 2# (stands behind mountain cutout #2)

Actor 3# (stands behind mountain cutout #3)

Actor 4# (stands behind mountain cutout #4)

Nobleman #1

Nobleman #2

Noblewoman #1

Noblewoman #2

Royal Servant

Guard #1

Guard #2

Llama

Tree

Panther

Macaw #1

Macaw #2

Rattlesnake
Scorpion
Ants

If there are performance notes, they can be found on the pages following the script

Scene 1 – The palace of the Sapa Inca's

Note: "Sapa Inca" is the name given to the Emperor of the Inca Empire.

[**Stage set:** The stage is divided into two areas. On one side is a luxurious room in the Sapa Inca's palace. On the opposite side is a modest adobe hut.]

[Scene 1 opens in the Sapa Inca's palace room. If you have a backdrop, it can be painted to show large windows with nice curtains and tapestries on the walls. On stage there is a small table with vials and jars, a royal throne and a bed (**See Performance Notes** on how to set up the table and how to simulate a throne and a bed.)]

[PRINCE lies on the bed, very ill. A table beside the bed is covered with bottles and vials. COURT MAGICIAN hovers over PRINCE, spooning various potions down PRINCE'S throat and muttering. SAPA INCA paces back and forth.]

NARRATOR:

Hello, everyone. This play is called "In Search of the Magic Lake." It's a story handed down from the Incas of South America. Back in the day, the Incan Empire was the largest empire in the world. The story is brought to you by *Stories to Grow by*.

[NARRATOR steps forward.]

NARRATOR:

(gestures to the palace room) Here we are at the palace of the Incan Empire. And there he is – *(gestures to Sapa Inca)* – the Sapa Inca, the Emperor. That name means he's the supreme ruler of the land.

SAPA INCA:

(stops pacing and addresses Court Magician) You must help him!

COURT MAGICIAN:

(looks up from the Prince) I wish I could, Sapa Inca. *(bows)* It is a difficult case. Your son has not been well since birth.

SAPA INCA:

Don't I know that? Who needs your excuses? This is my only son! Everything I have – my throne, my land, will be his.

COURT MAGICIAN :

(to audience) If he survives. *(tries to feed Prince another potion and gives up with a sigh)* I am afraid the illness has become even worse. *(lays a hand on Prince's forehead, then takes hand away and stands up)* Your Majesty, we must understand something. The fate of the Prince is no longer in our hands.

SAPA INCA:

Speak for yourself! There must be SOMETHING that can be done!

COURT MAGICIAN:

(shakes head) Ah, nothing.

SAPA INCA:

What, nothing?

COURT MAGICIAN:

Ah, nothing!

SAPA INCA:

(goes right up to Court Magician's face and loudly says) What, NOTHING?

COURT MAGICIAN:

(frightened) Well, maybe SOMETHING. Only if he were to drink the water from the Magic Lake. I mean, other than THAT *(shakes head)*, there is absolutely nothing that can be done.

SAPA INCA:

Wait a minute! Are you saying if my son drank water from the – what was it, you said? – Magic Lake?

COURT MAGICIAN:

He would be cured, of course. But the Magic Lake is at the end of the earth!

SAPA INCA:

I heard you. So I'll send someone there!

COURT MAGICIAN:

Oh, Sapa Inca. One cannot truly get to the end of the earth!

SAPA INCA:

Then how do you even know it exists?

COURT MAGICIAN:

Sire, it is known! It has been known about for thousands of years.

SAPA INCA:

If it's so well known, it must be possible to get there! You must tell me, how do you get to the end of the earth?

COURT MAGICIAN:

Well, if you must know *(points offstage)*, to start, go north. Past all of the mountain peaks.

Every one. And still farther on until the peaks become just hilltops. Then beyond the countless hilltops and still farther on till finally, the Magic Lake is there. At the end of the earth.

SAPA INCA:

Tell me something. What gives the water in this Magic Lake the power to heal?

COURT MAGICIAN:

At the very end of the earth, the sky dips so low that it actually touches the lake. When that happens, the lake is sparked with magic healing powers. But of course, no one can actually reach the Magic Lake. The end of the earth is much too far away.

SAPA INCA:

I am the Sapa Inca. I say it will be done!

[All actors exit.]

Scene 2 – The home of Ampata and her family

[**Stage set:** A simple adobe one-room home. (“Adobe” means the walls are made of mud-brick that has been sun-dried.) If you have a backdrop it can be painted to simulate the brownish wall of the hut. In keeping with a typical Incan home, this part of the stage has no furniture. There are only two reed mats on the floor, and props can be kept on the floor out of the way (**See Performance Notes** for the reed mats and suggestions on where to keep props.)]

[On one reed mat MOTHER and her daughter, AMPATA, are seated. They are husking corn and two baskets are in front of them – one for corn ready to be husked, and the other for peeled corn husks. (**See Performance Notes** for how to simulate a basket that’s full of corn.) On the second reed mat is AMPATA’s big brother CHUKI and younger brother POMA. There is a pile of sandals on that mat. The brothers pretend to be weaving sandals.]

[FATHER enters.]

FATHER:

I can’t believe what I just learned. (*sighs*) Chuki (pronounce: CHEW-kee), Poma (pronounce: POH-muh), Ampata (pronounce: am-PAT-uh), come here.

[CHUKI, POMA, AMPATA look up. MOTHER walks over to FATHER.]

MOTHER:

It sounds like the news is not good.

FATHER:

Ah, sad news indeed. It’s from the palace of our Emperor, the Sapa Inca. I’m sorry to say.

CHUKI:

(*worried*) What’s wrong?

POMA:

Is our Emperor sick?

FATHER:

Not that. (*all are relieved*) But it’s the Prince. (*all are worried again*) He’s become very ill. It’s not expected he has much longer to live.

MOTHER:

Oh! That’s terrible!

AMPATA:

Is there no cure?

MOTHER:

I am sure the court doctors and magicians are doing everything that can be done.

FATHER:

Actually, the head court magician said there is one cure, but it's impossible.

AMPATA:

What do you mean, Father?

FATHER:

He said the Prince would be cured if he drank some water from the Magic Lake at the end of the earth. But that's the end of the earth. So of course it's impossible!

CHUKI:

(to Poma, making airquotes) "Impossible"?

POMA:

(holds a hand behind one ear) Do we hear a challenge?

CHUKI:

We do!

POMA:

We'll take it!

CHUKI and POMA, together:

(high-five their hands together) Let's go!

FATHER:

Sons, I don't think you understand—

MOTHER:

(to Father) WHY did you tell them? Now they want to go!

CHUKI:

(to Poma) We're going to the end of the earth!

POMA:

This is AMAZING!

CHUKI:

Don't worry, Mother. *(puts arm around Poma)* We'll be together!

POMA:

(puts arm around Chuki) We'll look after each other.

MOTHER:

(sarcastically) Great! At least BOTH of you are putting yourselves in danger.

FATHER:

Your mother's right. You know how steep the mountains are. You could slip down a crevice, like that. *(snaps fingers)*

MOTHER:

The mountains go on forever. You'll get tired. And how will you eat?

FATHER:

Poisonous spiders—

MOTHER:

Panthers and snakes—

FATHER:

(to Mother) AUGHH!

MOTHER:

(to Father) Tell them it's out of the question!

FATHER:

(to Chuki and Poma) It's out of the question!

CHUKI:

But Father! Haven't you always told us our Sapa Inca created the great stone capital city of Cuzco (pronounce: CUZ-cow), the great wonder of the world?

FATHER:

Well, of course he built the capital city—

CHUKI:

And didn't you say the sun itself shone from inside our Emperor's heart when he let our people of the inland keep our sacred ways?

FATHER:

A lot of rulers don't allow that sort of thing, but that doesn't mean—

POMA:

Mother, don't you always say it's because of our good Sapa Inca that every farmer now has land of his own?

MOTHER:

Well, I –

CHUKI:

And why every crafts person has materials for their art? Like how we can make sandals from our very own leather and fabric? (*gestures to pile of sandals*)

MOTHER:

Once or twice I may have said something like that, but–

CHUKI:

Now the Emperor needs us!

POMA:

We want to serve our Sapa Inca!

FATHER:

(*gets in the spirit*) Well, of course you do!

MOTHER:

(*to Father*) Whose side are you on, anyway?

AMPATA:

Father, Mother, please! Let my brothers try. They want to do their part. The Prince will die!

FATHER:

Well, we can't let that happen.

MOTHER:

(*throws up her arms*) AH! I cannot fight all of you! Very well!

[CHUKI, POMA and AMPATA cheer. FATHER doesn't cheer, but looks pleased.]

MOTHER:

Perhaps you won't be gone for long. No doubt the Sapa Inca already sent his best servants to find the Magic Lake. When you pass the mountain villages, you may find his own servants are returning home with the magic water. So you could come right home.

CHUKI:

(*sounds disappointed*) I suppose...

POMA:

But we're headed to the end of the earth!

[CHUKI brightens. He and POMA high-five each other again.]

FATHER:

If you must go, take this spear for hunting. (*hands Chuki a spear*)

MOTHER:

And this bag of toasted corn and nuts. (*hands Poma a cloth bag*) May the Sapa Inca himself smile upon your journey.

AMPATA:

(*picks up a jar made of pottery*) You might want take this so you have something to hold the water. (*hands to Chuki*) For when you get there.

POMA:

Oh, right!

CHUKI:

Definitely.

[CHUKI and POMA are elated. MOTHER and FATHER put their arms around each other.]

AMPATA:

Goodbye, my brothers. Good luck!

CHUKI:

We'll be back soon!

POMA:

With the magic water.

CHUKI:

We'll be heroes!

POMA:

This is AWESome!

[CHUKI and POMA exit to one end of the stage.]

[FATHER, MOTHER, and AMPATA all look after them, worriedly. After a moment, they exit to the other end of the stage.]

Scene 3 – The Andes Mountains

[**Stage set:** This scene takes place at the front of the stage, in front of all set pieces. If you want to make a small backdrop it can be painted to show a mountain range. STAGE HANDS bring it on to hold it up for the scene.]

[MOUNTAIN #1 enters holding the 1st of four mountain cutouts. (**See Performance Notes** for detail on creating the mountain cutouts). Whichever side MOUNTAIN #1 enters from, that is where all MOUNTAINS will enter from.]

[CHUKI and POMA enter. CHUKI carries the spear. POMA carries the bag of toasted corn nuts and the jar. They are sluggish.]

CHUKI:

(pointing at the mountain cutout) Look! Another mountain we have to cross.

POMA:

ANOTHER one!?

[CHUKI and POMA walk to the 1st mountain and “cross” it. To “cross” the MOUNTAIN #1 holds the mountain high above his/her head. BROTHERS climb in place while MOUNTAIN #1 gradually crouches with the mountain cut out until it touches the floor. BROTHERS cross in front of the mountain and climb in place again. MOUNTAIN #1 gradually raises the mountain until it is once again above his/her head.]

CHUKI:

(pants) That’s hard work. I’m glad it’s over.

[MOUNTAIN #1 exits the opposite side of the stage from where she or he had entered. This is where all MOUNTAINS will exit.]

[MOUNTAIN #2 enters with the 2nd mountain cutout.]

CHUKI:

(points at the 2nd mountain peak) Oh, no! ANOTHER one!

POMA:

(tired) Will these mountains never end?

[CHUKI and POMA walk to mountain cutout #2 and “cross” in the same manner as before. They are even more tired.]

[MOUNTAIN #2 exits.]

POMA:

(pants more heavily; stops and covers eyes) Don't tell me.

[MOUNTAIN #3 enters with the 3rd mountain cutout.]

CHUKI:

(looks at mountain cutout #3) Hate to break this to you.

POMA:

(uncovers eyes) Oh my gosh. It's the highest one yet!

[BROTHERS walk to mountain cutout #3 and "cross" it. They are exhausted.]

[MOUNTAIN #3 exits.]

POMA:

(collapses on the ground) That's it! I've had it.

[MOUNTAIN #4 enters with mountain cutout #4.]

CHUKI:

Come on, Poma! One more! I bet the lake is just on the other side of this one.

[CHUKI helps POMA off the ground, and the two slowly make their way to mountain cutout #4. They "cross" the same way as before, but much slower. They are drained of all their energy.]

[As POMA and CHUKI are crossing, two STAGEHANDS enters with a piece of ordinary blue fabric and either hold it up or spread it on the floor next to the mountain. This signifies a lake, however it is not the Magic Lake. (**See Performance Notes** on suggestions on how to create and differentiate the two lakes.)]

POMA:

(groans) I can't believe my eyes. Hey, look ahead. Do you see what I see?

CHUKI:

You mean that lake?

POMA:

Yep!

CHUKI:

But it can't be the Magic Lake. We're not at the end of the earth. The mountains are supposed to lower into hilltops. Then after THAT we finally get to the Magic Lake. Remember?

POMA:

We're so far from Cuzco and the palace, maybe water from this lake will be almost as good.

CHUKI:

You think so?

POMA:

Why not? Look, we've been at this a long time.

CHUKI:

Our parents and Ampata must be worried about us.

POMA:

Is it really right to leave them home all alone? We have a big maize (pronounce: MAYZE) crop this year.

CHUKI:

We shouldn't leave them to harvest the corn all by themselves.

POMA:

We ought to be there.

CHUKI:

It's the right thing to do.

POMA:

And this lake water will probably work, anyway.

CHUKI:

'Course it will.

[CHUKI and POMA shake hands. They walk over to the lake. CHUKI takes the jar removes its top and pretends to scoop up water from the lake. He puts the top back on the jar.]

CHUKI:

There. Let's go back to Cuzco.

POMA:

Right behind you.

[CHUKI and POMA exit. STAGEHAND picks up blue fabric and exits.]

Scene 4 – The Sapa Inca's palace

[**Stage set:** The same palace room as in Scene 1. PRINCE is in the bed. COURT MAGICIAN and SAPA INCA enter. COURT MAGICIAN fusses over PRINCE. SAPA INCA paces worriedly.]

SAPA INCA:

Any change?

COURT MAGICIAN:

Yes, but I am afraid it's for the worst. It seems he is now in a coma.

SAPA INCA:

Oh, what am I to do?!

[ROYAL SERVANT enters.]

ROYAL SERVANT:

Your Majesty. (*bows low*) I have excellent news. Two of your subjects have returned with water from the Magic Lake.

SAPA INCA:

(*stops pacing and becomes excited*) That IS excellent news! Let them enter.

[CHUKI and POMA enter looking very nervous. CHUKI has the jar in his hand.]

CHUKI:

(*bows low*) Sapa Inca.

POMA:

(*bows low*) Your Majesty.

SAPA INCA:

(*gesturing for them to rise*) I understand you have brought water from the Magic Lake itself at the very end of the earth.

CHUKI:

Yes, Your Majesty. (*holds out the jar*)

SAPA INCA:

Give it to the Court Magician.

[CHUKI hands jar to COURT MAGICIAN.]

COURT MAGICIAN:

There is one way to be sure this is genuine water from the Magic Lake.

[CHUKI and POMA look at each other and shrug, worried.]

[All lean in to surround COURT MAGICIAN as she or he pours water from the jar into a basin on the table.]

SAPA INCA:

Well?

COURT MAGICIAN:

Ah! If this were genuine water from the Magic Lake, it would boil and bubble when it's poured into my magic basin. This is NOT from the Magic Lake! (*points to Chuki and Poma*) These men are imposters!

[Everyone onstage gasps.]

SAPA INCA:

Guards!

[GUARD#1 and GUARD #2 rush onstage.]

SAPA INCA:

Seize these two fraudsters! Throw them in prison! (*to Chuki and Poma*) How dare you try to trick the royal family!

[GUARD #1 takes both hands of CHUKI to behind CHUKI's back and escorts him off stage.]

[GUARD #2 takes both hands of POMA to behind POMA's back and escorts him off stage.]

SAPA INCA:

You can rot in jail your whole lives long, for all I care!

[COURT MAGICIAN goes over to PRINCE, who is lying down. COURT MAGICIAN raises one of his arms and then when he releases it, the arm drops.]

COURT MAGICIAN:

The Prince can no longer take food or water. I am afraid he does not have much time left.

SAPA INCA:

This is a dark, dark day! (*loudly*) I proclaim (*gestures*) from now on there will be no more celebrations in this land. We will know only grief until my son recovers.

[CROWD murmurs, as below.]

NOBLEMAN #1:

No celebrations?

NOBLEWOMAN #1:

Of any kind?

NOBLEMAN #2:

But the Sun Festival is next week!

NOBLEWOMAN #1:

The royal kitchen has been cooking up a storm for weeks.

NOBLEWOMAN #2:

This is not good! Not good indeed!

SAPA INCA:

Enough! (*all are quiet*) I have spoken.

Scene 5 – The home of Ampata and her family

[**Stage set:** The same as in Scene 2, but there are much fewer sandals on the mats now.]

[MOTHER enters, crying, with FATHER and AMPATA following, also noticeably sad.]

MOTHER:

(wails) My sons! To come back from their travels, only to be thrown in prison! How could this have happened?

FATHER:

(tries to comfort his wife) This is a sad time, indeed.

MOTHER:

They may never get out alive!

FATHER:

I'm afraid there's very little we can do.

MOTHER:

(wails) My boys!

AMPATA:

Mother, Father! I have an idea.

MOTHER:

What, child?

AMPATA:

I must go to the Magic Lake myself.

MOTHER:

(wails even louder) What?! The very words that led us to disaster in the first place? Absolutely NOT! You're all we have left, Ampata!

FATHER:

Dear daughter, surely you understand. If your brothers couldn't bring back the water from the Magic Lake, how could you? And they had each other. You'd be alone.

AMPATA:

I am alone here without my brothers. Father, I cannot stay here a moment longer while they waste away in prison.

MOTHER:

Don't even think of it, Ampata! Our family has already given more than we can afford – your big brother, and your little brother, too.

AMPATA:

Mother, the Prince has fallen into a coma. Surely the end is near! If I bring back the magic water for him, our family's honor would be restored! I must do it.

FATHER:

Well maybe, but–

AMPATA:

It's our only hope!

[MOTHER and FATHER look at each other.]

MOTHER:

Why is this making sense?

FATHER:

Well...

MOTHER:

(sighs) All right then. Go on, before we change our minds. Here. Take this toasted corn and nuts *(hands Ampata a cloth bag)*. And this jar *(hands her a clay jar)*.

FATHER:

And take our llama with you. He will keep you company. And help you cross the passes.

[LLAMA enters and trots to AMPATA's side.]

FATHER:

I hope we don't regret this.

MOTHER:

I already do. *(to Ampata)* My dear girl, come home safely. And quickly!

AMPATA:

Don't worry, Mother.

FATHER:

Where did I hear this before? *(Mother stares at husband)* Oh, right.

[They all hug. MOTHER and FATHER put their arms around each other as AMPATA exits.]

Scene 6 – The Andes Mountains

[**Stage set:** As in Scene 3, this scene takes place at the front of the stage, in front of all set pieces. If you have a mountain backdrop, STAGE HANDS bring it on again to hold it up for the scene.]

[TREE enters. Actor playing TREE either represents the tree by them self or brings a cardboard tree on with them (**See Performance Notes** for TREE options).]

[AMPATA and LLAMA walk over to TREE. LLAMA walks on all fours.]

AMPATA:

Look at this nice tree. Let's stop here for the night.

LLAMA:

(lays down) Cuddle up next to me, child. My fur will keep you warm.

AMPATA:

My dear llama. It's almost as if I could hear you speak.

[AMPATA and LLAMA sit under the tree and fall asleep. PANTHER enters, prowling for food.]

TREE:

Wake up, you two. Wake up! A panther is coming! He looks hungry!

[AMPATA and LLAMA jump up.]

AMPATA:

What, is the tree speaking?

TREE:

Quick, climb up in my branches!

AMPATA:

I can, but you cannot, llama! You must run home right away! Go, now! Be safe!

[Llama nuzzles AMPATA for a moment, then runs offstage. AMPATA pretends to climb the tree and then stands behind TREE, as if in the branches. (**See Performance Notes** on suggestions for achieve this).]

PANTHER:

(prowls around the tree) Come, down, girl, come, down. I'm not going to hurt you. *(to audience)* Much! *(snickers)*

AMPATA:

Just the same, Panther. I will sleep in the tree tonight.

[PANTHER exits. A couple of moments pass, indicating the nighttime. MACAW #1 and MACAW #2 enter and fly around the tree. AMPATA wakes us and yawns.]

AMPATA:

What pretty macaw birds. Such bright feathers. *(takes out some toasted corn nuts and munches on a few)* Say, have a few of these. *(scatters some nuts around here)* Come on, over here!

[MACAW BIRDS swoop in and pretend to pick them seeds. They make happy clucking noises.]

MACAW #1:

(munches) Caw! Not bad! Not bad at all.

MACAW #2:

(munches) Caw! Salty crunch!

MACAWS (together):

(happily) Caw! Caw!

MACAW #1:

Look! The human girl is giving us these yummy treats.

MACAW #2:

Why is she here? Humans don't live in trees.

MACAW #1:

This one does.

MACAW #2:

Lucky for us.

MACAW #1:

(to Ampata) Human, don't your people usually live in those huts on the ground?

AMPATA:

We do, but I'm traveling now, and last night I was scared by a panther. That's why I climbed up the tree.

MACAW #2:

(to Macaw #1) Makes sense.

MACAW #1:

(to Ampata) Why are you so far from home?

AMPATA:

I'm going to the Magic Lake. To bring back water to cure our Prince.

MACAW #2:

The Magic Lake?

AMPATA:

Yes. Do you know of it?

MACAW #2:

Who doesn't? Its water will cure anything. But it's at the end of the earth!

AMPATA:

I know, but that's where I'm going.

MACAW #1:

Girl, you can't get THERE (*points offstage*) from HERE (*points to the floor*).

AMPATA:

I have to. It's the only way.

MACAW #1:

(*taps shoulder of Macaw #2*) A word, please.

[MACAWS take a few steps away, out of earshot of AMPATA.]

MACAW #1:

Let's give the kid a break.

MACAW #2:

Just what I was thinking.

MACAW #1:

She'll never make it on her own.

MACAW #2:

She needed every bit of food for herself. And still, she gave us those nutty treats.

MACAW #1:

Those yummy nutty treats.

[MACAWS turn so their backs are touching. They dance and squiggle, keeping their backs touching. In the process, they let three feathers drop to the ground (**See Performance Notes** for suggestions on achieving this effect). They pick up the feathers and go back to AMPATA.]

MACAW #1:

This is your lucky day. (*hands Ampata the feathers*)

AMPATA:

Oh, how pretty! (*puts a feather in her hair*)

MACAW #1:

It's not for that!

MACAW #2:

Careful, don't break them!

AMPATA:

Oh!

MACAW #1:

You see, our feathers have magic. If you make a fan of them.

MACAW #2:

The fan will protect you from any danger, and help you out of any trouble!

AMPATA:

Wow, really? That's amazing! Say, I know how to make a fan of feathers.

[AMPATA takes a ribbon from her pocket and ties it around the bottom of the three feathers.]

MACAW #1:

Clever girl.

MACAW #2:

Industrious.

AMPATA:

Thank you so much. (*fans herself lightly with the feathers*) A magic fan, this is wonderful. Say, may I ask you something?

MACAW #1:

What?

AMPATA:

Could you actually take me to the Magic Lake?

MACAW #1:

We thought you'd never ask!

AMPATA:

That's wonderful!

MACAW #2:

Hop on!

[MACAWS flank AMPATA and she flies off with one MACAW on either side. TREE exits.]

[They "fly" around in a wide circle, by walking with arms out. While they "fly", MOUNTAIN #1-#4 enter with their mountain cutouts. As MACAWS and AMPATA approach them, MOUNTAINS lower their mountain cut outs so MACAWS and AMPATA can "fly over" them.]

[MOUNTAIN #1-#4 exit. MOUNTAIN #1 and #2 prepare to come back onstage with hill cutouts.]

[STAGEHANDS enter with the piece of ordinary blue fabric and hold it up or spread it on the floor next to the mountain. This signifies the same ordinary lake from Scene 3- this is still not the Magic Lake.]

AMPATA:

Oh, there's a lake! But it must not be the magic lake... I don't think we've come to the end of the earth yet.

MACAWS:

Nope, not yet!

[STAGEHANDS exit with lake.]

[MACAWS and AMPATA "fly" around again in a wide circle, by walking with arms out. While they "fly", MOUNTAIN #1 and #2 enter with two hill cutouts. These have a rounded top and are lower, representing hills (**See Performance Notes** for suggestions for the hill cutouts). MACAWS and AMPATA "fly over" these, as before.]

[MOUNTAIN #1 and #2 exit. As they are exiting, two STAGEHANDS enter with a piece of blue fabric. It should be larger than the first blue blanket, and sparkly. It is the Magic Lake (**See Performance Notes** for suggestions).]

AMPATA:

Oh my! This must be it – the end of the earth. (*looks around*) It's beautiful! (*points*) And that – why, it's the Magic Lake?

MACAW #2:

You nailed it.

MACAW #1:

And now, we bid you goodbye.

AMPATA:

Must you go?

MACAW #1:

Places to go. Folks to see.

AMPATA:

Well then goodbye, my friends!

[MACAWS “put her down” and fly away.]

AMPATA:

(*to audience*) Oh my goodness, I forgot to ask how to get back. (*turns to Magic Lake*) But first things first. (*takes out jar and goes toward Magic Lake*)

[RATTLESNAKE enters.]

RATTLESNAKE:

What'ssss thiss? A tasty girl?

AMPATA:

A girl with a ... magic feather fan? (*holds it in front of her and braces, closing her eyes*)

[RATTLESNAKE lunges for AMPATA. She holds out her fan. RATTLESNAKE freezes and collapses onto the floor, motionless.]

AMPATA:

I don't believe it, this fan really works! Now to get the water– (*steps over Rattlesnake to the Magic Lake*)

[SCORPION enters, waving its claws.]

SCORPION:

What's this? Easy deliciousness! Let me at her!

AMPATA:

Oh no! I hope this works a second time!

[SCORPION lunges for AMPATA. She holds up her fan. SCORPION freezes and collapses on the ground, motionless.]

AMPATA:

It worked again! (*steps over Scorpion*) Now I must get that water quickly, before another—

[ANTS #1-#4 enter.]

ANT #1:

What's this?

ANT #2:

A large, fleshy meal!

ANT #3:

She'll last for a long time!

ANT #4:

Not the way YOU eat!

ANT #3:

Look who's talking!

ANT #2:

You two, pay attention! This one will last our whole colony for weeks.

ANT #1:

Yum, yum!

AMPATA:

Oh, please, feather fan, do your magic one more time!

[ANTS rush to AMPATA. She holds up the fan. Together in an instant, they all freeze and collapse on the ground. AMPATA runs to the lake, takes out her jar and dips it into the lake.]

AMPATA:

I've got it! (*to audience*) I'm going to try something and I REALLY hope it works. (*holds up fan*) Please fan, take me to the palace.

[ALL exit.]

Scene 7 – The Sapa Inca's palace

[**Stage set:** The same palace room in Scene 1.]

[SAPA INCA, COURT MAGICIAN, PRINCE, NOBLES and NOBLEWOMEN enter. PRINCE, sluggishly, takes his place on the royal sick bed. SAPA INCA takes his seat on the royal throne. Everyone looks worried and murmurs sadly.]

[ROYAL SERVANT enters.]

ROYAL SERVANT:

(wearily) Your Majesty, another of your loyal subjects has brought water from the Magic Lake.

SAPA INCA:

No doubt another waste of time. *(sighs)* Very well then. Show him in!

ROYAL SERVANT:

Ah, Sapa Inca. This time it's a girl!

SAPA INCA:

What?!

[AMPATA enters with the pottery jar of water. NOBLES and NOBLEWOMEN looks at her in amazement.]

COURT MAGICIAN:

What is this, a joke?

ROYAL SERVANT:

She insists she has the magic water.

AMPATA:

I do!

COURT MAGICIAN:

Begone with her! The Sapa Inca cannot be bothered with the likes of you.

[ROYAL SERVANT takes AMPATA's arm to escort her out.]

SAPA INCA:

Wait!

AMPATA:

Your Majesty?

SAPA INCA:

You say you have water from the Magic Lake? At the end of the earth?

AMPATA:

(bows) Indeed yes, Your Majesty.

SAPA INCA:

(to Court Magician) What's five minutes? Give it a try.

[AMPATA gives the jar to COURT MAGICIAN. He pours it into the same basin on the table. There is a bubbling sound and sparkles. **(See Performance Notes** for description of how to create this effect.)]

COURT MAGICIAN:

She did it! This is the real water from the Magic Lake!

SAPA INCA:

This is astounding! Well, what are you waiting for? Give it to my son!

[COURT MAGICIAN scoops a small cup into the basin. He sits the PRINCE up in bed and helps him drink a little of the magic water from the bowl. PRINCE raises his head and sits up in bed.]

PRINCE:

I feel better!

SAPA INCA:

You're back!

COURT MAGICIAN:

It really worked!

SAPA INCA:

You doubted it?

COURT MAGICIAN:

No, I mean.. It's only that no one had ever really... I mean— *(bows)* I am so happy, Your Majesty.

SAPA INCA:

Not half as happy as I. *(stands behind Prince and puts his hands on his son's shoulders)* How are you feeling now, son?

PRINCE:

(looking at Ampata) Better and better!

AMPATA:

(bows) It was truly my pleasure, Sire.

SAPA INCA:

(to Ampata) Child, come stay with us. You belong here, at the palace.

[EVERYONE on stage gasps, dramatically. They are impressed.]

AMPATA:

You are very kind. But of course I cannot accept such a great honor, my liege.

[EVERYONE on stage gasps again, dramatically. They cannot believe AMPATA would turn down this royal offer.]

AMPATA:

If I may, instead may I ask for three favors?

SAPA INCA:

Depends. What are they?

AMPATA:

(bows again) My Sapa Inca. Would you release my two brothers from prison? I'm sure they are sorry for their mistake.

SAPA INCA:

Very well, I shall. Hopefully next time they do a better job at serving me.

AMPATA:

I know they would like nothing better than to try!

SAPA INCA:

If you vouch for them, consider it done. The second request?

AMPATA:

I'd like to return these magic feathers to the Macaws who helped me.

SAPA INCA:

Magic feathers, eh?

COURT MAGICIAN:

(to audience) I knew it!

[Enter MACAWS. Then flit about, pick up AMPATA'S magic feathers, bow to her, and exit.]

SAPA INCA:

That was easy. Third and last favor?

AMPATA:

Your Majesty, please grant a flock of llamas and alpacas for my parents. And enough land to herd them. So they will not be poor in their old age. My brothers and I will take care of the flock, of course.

SAPA INCA:

I will grant your three requests. However, on one condition.

AMPATA:

Anything, my Sapa Inca.

SAPA INCA:

You must come to the palace frequently, to visit me.

AMPATA:

Of course! (*bows*) I will be most honored.

SAPA INCA:

And to visit my son.

[PRINCE nods heartily.]

AMPATA:

Both of you. Of course, yes.

SAPA INCA:

And now I declare a feast day! A time for celebration!

[Everyone at court cheers. It's been a long time with no celebrations.]

[PRINCE stands. He holds both arms stretched out as if in a 'Victory' sign. Everyone cheers again.]

NOBLEMAN #2:

Hooray!

NOBLEWOMAN #2:

The Prince is back!

NOBLEMAN #1:

We're getting a feast, too!

NOBLEWOMAN #1:

Which is better?

NOBLEMAN #1:

I'm not sure!

NOBLEWOMAN #2:

Let's eat!

NOBLEMAN #2:

Can't wait!

NOBLEWOMAN #2:

At last!

SAPA INCA:

(to everyone) Enough!

[All are silenced.]

SAPA INCA:

(to Ampata) And you will stay for the celebration, of course.

AMPATA:

Of course, Your Majesty.

SAPA INCA:

After you return with ANOTHER jar of water from the Magic Lake.

AMPATA:

What?!

[Everyone at court gasps in horror.]

SAPA INCA:

(laughs) Just messing with you!

[Everyone at court laughs, relieved.]

NARRATOR:

The Sapa Inca honored Ampata's three requests. After all, the Prince was well again! When the time came the Prince took the throne, with Ampata at his side as his wife. And the two of them ruled wisely and well, and lived happily ever after.

[PRINCE and AMPATA hold hands.]

[If you have a curtain, close it now. If you do not, fade the lights. If you have no stage lights, all actors come on stage and bow to the audience.]



Performance Notes for In Search of the Magic Lake

THREE WAYS THAT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN UTILIZE THIS PLAY

1. Students can read the play aloud while sitting in the classroom. Ask the readers to skip all bracketed stage directions. You may prefer to rotate your actors to give all students a chance to read the speaking parts.
2. Students can perform the play in the classroom. Clear an area that can be used as the stage. Have the audience sit on the floor in front of the stage. Students in the play can make simple costumes and/or sets as described below. When the scene change, the characters "on stage" simply walk to the back of the room where they wait until their next appearance "on stage."
3. Students can perform the play on stage. Refer to the production notes that follow. Ask the actors to enter from the back of the room and move through the audience as they approach the stage.



COSTUMES

- NARRATOR— Simple, nice clothes.
- SAPA INCA— Brown or khaki pants and a yellow shirt with gold necklaces and chains, gold bracelets, and a feathered headdress. The headdress can be made by hot gluing feather to a headband. You can do a Google image search for Incan headdresses, and chose a style to emulate.



- **COURT MAGICIAN**— Brown or khaki pants with a colorful shirt and a feathered headdress less elaborate than the Sapa Inca's.
- **PRINCE**— Brown or khaki pants with a white shirt and a few gold necklaces, less than his father.
- **FATHER, BROTHERS #1 AND 2**— Brown or khaki pants, a brown shirt.
- **MOTHER AND AMPATA**— Neutral colored long skirt and a neutral colored top. They can braid their hair and have colorful ribbons in their hair.
- **MOUNTAIN #1-#4**— Solid grey, black, brown, or tan. They don't all have to be the same shades, as the mountains can be different colors. The mountain cutout they carry should match their clothing.
- **ROYAL SERVANT**— Brown or khaki pants and a colorful shirt. He/she can have gold bracelets.
- **GUARDS**— Brown or khaki pants with a gray shirt and a red sash.
- **NOBLEMEN and NOBLEWOMEN**— Brown or khaki or neutral bottom and bright colored tops.
- **LLAMA**— Solid brown or khaki clothing and a headband with short, pointy ears. Ears can be cut from paper or cardboard.
- **PANTHER**— Solid black clothes and a headband with cat ears, cut from paper or cardboard. Cat eyes, whiskers, and nose may be painted on with face paint or make-up.
- **MACAWS #1 AND 2**— Bright blue, red, or yellow pants and shirts. They can have a headband or hat with bright feathers attached. Feathers can be attached with hot glue. Bright feathers may also be attached to the back of their shirt or to a sash around the waist in order to create a tail.
- **RATTLESNAKE**— Brown leotard and tights, or brown leggings and long sleeved t-shirt. A brown hat with paper fangs and snake tongue glued to the under side of the brim.



- **SCORPION**— Solid black, grey, or brown clothes. You can cut two sets of claws from poster board or cardboard and hot glue them to a pair of mittens or gloves. The actor can wear the mittens/gloves and when the open/close their hands it will look like claws.
- **ANTS**— Solid black or brown clothes and a headband with antennae, made from paper, cardboard, or pipe cleaners.
- **TREE**—Brown or khaki pants and a green shirt. Green leaves cut from paper or fabric can be attached to the shirt. (Note: TREE can either act as the tree alone or bring on a cardboard tree with him/her. See Set Notes for staging options and achieving the climbing effect.)

Costume Note: STAGE HANDS that bring on the lakes can wear blue to represent water. Or they can wear traditional solid black.



PROPS

Scene 1

- A few vials, jars, and/or bottles for the COURT MAGICIAN. These should be plastic, and can even be taped down to the table so that they don't fall. COURT MAGICIAN only needs to be able to pick up one of them. (You do not have to fill anything with liquid. The COURT MAGICIAN can just pretend to give potion to PRINCE.)
- Spoon for COURT MAGICIAN to give potions to PRINCE.

Scene 2

- Two baskets with corn for AMPATA and MOTHER. In one basket, place a few cobs of corn with husks. You can use real corn, so the actors can actually husk them, or you can make corncobs out of cardboard and have the actors pretend to shuck.

In the other basket, place some leaves or yellow/green paper to look like peeled husks. If using real corn, the remaining husks are placed in this basket. If using cardboard, the actors just pretend to put it husks in there.



- A pile of sandals on each mat. CHUKI and POMA can pretend to weave the sandals. They can use strips of leather (or leather shoelaces) or other fabric, and pretend to weave through the sandals.
- A spear for FATHER to hand to CHUKI. You can use a plastic spear, or make one from cardboard.
- Bag of “food” for MOTHER to give to POMA. This should be a cloth bag, or you can use a piece of fabric or a bandana, gathered and tied at the top. It can be empty, or you can put any small object in the bag to give it weight.
- A jug or jar for AMPATA to hand to CHUKI. It should be plastic, and can be painted tan or reddish-brown to resemble pottery.

Scene 3

- Mountain peak cut-outs for MOUNTAINS to hold. These can be made from cardboard or cardstock. Cut triangular mountain shapes of four various sizes (starting as big or as small as you want), each one bigger than the previous one. Paint each peak a different shade of brown or gray, to match the clothes of the MOUNTAINS. Make handles for the back of the peaks so that MOUNTAINS can hold them. Handles can be made with strips of cardboard, duct-taped to the back of the cardboard/poster board.
- An ordinary light blue blanket, sheet, or piece of fabric for STAGE HANDS to bring on as the lake.

Scene 4

- Jar/jug for CHUKI to hand to COURT MAGICIAN. This is the same one CHUKI had been carrying in Scene 3.

Scene 5

- Another bag of food for MOTHER to give to AMPATA. This should be a cloth bag, made the same way as the first bag. This one can also be empty or filled with small pieces of yellow and brown construction paper, to represent corn and nuts.
- Another jar or jug for AMPATA to take. This should also be plastic, and painted tan or reddish-brown.
- Optional: A shoulder bag/satchel-type bag for AMPATA to carry. She can put her jar/jug and her bag of food in this bag, and it will make things easier for the actor when doing certain actions.



Scene 6

- Corn and nuts for AMPATA to throw to MACAWS. AMPATA can pretend to throw corn and nuts, or you can make confetti with yellow and brown construction paper, and put this in the cloth bag so that AMPATA can toss it in the air.
- Three detachable colorful feathers, one for each MCAWS to give to AMPATA. These can be fake plastic feathers or you can make them out of construction paper. The MCAWS can keep their feather in their hair, Velcro it to their clothes, or tie it to their waists with a colorful ribbon or string- it just needs to be easily detached.
- A ribbon or piece of string for AMPATA to keep in her pocket, to tie around the feathers.
- Mountain peak cut outs, same as in Scene 3.
- An ordinary light blue blanket, sheet, or piece of fabric for STAGE HANDS to bring on as the lake. This is the same one as in Scene 3.
- Hill top cutouts for MOUNTAINS #1-#2 to hold up after AMPATA passes the mountain peaks. These can be made the same way as the mountain peak cutouts, just smaller and rounded at the top instead of pointed.
- A bright blue blanket, sheet, or piece of fabric for STAGE HANDS to bring on as the Magic Lake. This should be a different blue from the first lake- a more vibrant color. It should also be shiny or sparkly. You can simply use a blue fabric that is already sparkly or shiny, or attach a shiny sheer fabric (like a silver tulle) over a regular blue material.

Scene 7

- Jar/jug for AMPATA to hand to COURT MAGICIAN. This is the same one AMPATA had been carrying in Scene 6.
- Shiny confetti, for STAGEHAND to throw to represent the “sparkles” in the basin. STAGEHAND can hide behind table at the beginning of the Scene, and throw the shiny confetti up behind the basin when it’s time.
- Bubble wrap, for STAGEHANDS to pop to represent the sound of bubbling in the basin. Another option is to play a Sound FX recording of bubbles, if you have one.
- Small cup for COURT MAGICIAN to scoop “water” into/feed Prince with. You don’t have to use any real liquid. It can all be pretend.



SETS

The stage is divided into two areas, both of which remain in tact throughout the play. On one side is a royal bedroom room in the Sapa Inca's palace. On the opposite side is Ampata's family's home, a modest adobe hut. If you want to make a backdrop, you can paint it to show both locations.

Scene 3 and Scene 6 take place in the Andes Mountains. These scenes can take place at the front of the stage, in front of the other sets. See below for details.

- **Scene 1—** The Royal bedroom. If you paint a backdrop, it can show tall windows, paintings, and tapestries on the wall- a luxurious bedroom.

There is a bed on stage, and a table next to the bed.

The bed can be simulated with a chair and an ottoman, or something to act as an ottoman, such as a stool or milk crate. Place the ottoman at the foot of the chair, and cover both in a brightly colored sheet or blanket, such as dark red, purple, or gold.. The PRINCE can sit up in the chair, with his legs stretched out over the ottoman. Use another blanket to place over the prince, and put a pillow behind his back by his head. The blanket and pillow should be in good condition and nicely colored or patterned.

Next to the bed is the table, and on it are various plastic vials and jars (best to not use breakable objects, just in case). A large bowl (to represent the basin) should be taped down on the table. There also needs to be a spoon and one small cup on the table.

There is also a nice throne-type chair that can be represented by using a high-backed chair and covering the chair in some nice fabric, preferably a royal color such as red, gold, or purple.

Note: As mentioned in Prop notes, the vials and bottles that will not be picked up can be taped to the table.

- **Scene 2—** Ampata's family's home. If you paint a backdrop, it can show simple dirt-colored walls and a small window.

On the floor, near the mats but out of the way, there are at least two plastic jugs or jars (remember, avoid anything breakable, just in case). In order to make the jugs or jars look ceramic, you can paint them a tannish



or a reddish-brown color. The spear (see props) also lies on the floor, or rests against a wall.

There are also two reed mats on the floor, in the middle of the space. Reed mats can be substituted with small woven blankets or brown yoga mats.

- **Scene 3**— The Andes Mountains. The Mountains are represented by MOUNTAINS #1-#4 bringing on their mountain peak cut-outs (see Props Notes). They can stand at the front of the stage, in front of all the other sets. CHUKI and POMA can walk in front of the MOUNTAINS.

If you want, you can make a small backdrop, painted to show a mountain range, and have STAGE HANDS bring it on to hold it up for the scene.

While CHUKI and POMA “cross” the fourth mountains, two STAGE HANDS bring on a blue sheet/fabric (see Props Notes) and spread it out on the floor or hold it up about waist-high to represent the lake.

- **Scene 4**— The Royal bedroom, same as Scene 1.
- **Scene 5**— Ampata’s family’s home, same as Scene 2.
- **Scene 6**— The Andes Mountains, same as Scene 3, except there is a tree added. There are two options for the tree- either an actor can represent the tree, or you can make a free-standing tree from cardboard.

If you choose to have an actor portray the tree, the actor can dress all in brown (see costume notes) and stand with arms wide. When AMPATA “climbs” the tree, she pretends to do so in place while the TREE lowers to the ground so that he/she ends kneeling. This gives the impression that AMPATA is now higher in the tree.

The other option is to make a tree for TREE actor to bring on and hold up. You can make this from cardboard, cutting out a tree with a short stump and one wide space created in the branches, for AMPATA to stand between.

Cover a stepstool in brown paper, to match the color of the tree. STAGEHANDS enter with TREE and place the step stool directly behind the cardboard tree. TREE actor stands behind or next to cardboard tree, holding it in place.

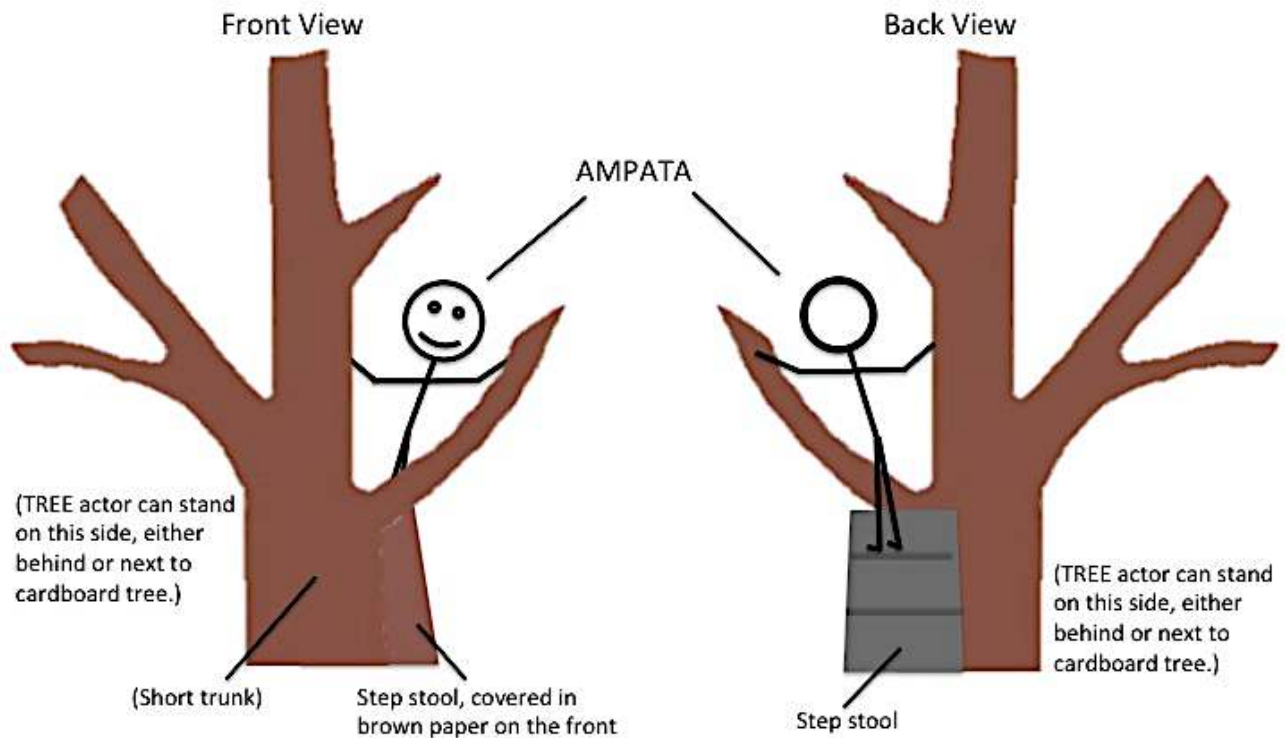
When AMPATA “climbs” the tree, she climbs up the stepstool and looks out from between the branches, giving the illusion that she is in the tree. (See images next page.)

While crossing the peaks and hills, MACAWS and AMPATA can



“fly” in front of them. After MACAWS and AMPATA “cross” the mountains, two STAGE HANDS bring on the same ordinary blue fabric from Scene 3, then take it off. After MACAWS and AMPATA “cross” the hills, STAGEHANDS bring on a different blue sheet/fabric for the Magic Lake (see Props Notes.)

See images below for the cardboard TREE:



- **Scene 7**— The Royal bedroom, same as Scene 1.

