

Good King Wenceslas Cast List

3 Males, 2 Females, 3 M/F, and Extras M/F

JESTER (M/F) the professional funny-man of the court. This actor should be particularly good with facial expression and physical humor.

TOWN CRIER (M) in charge of public relations for the king

COUNTESS COSMO (F) the King's tightly-wound Image Consultant

WEN (M) looks at being a King as a Divine Duty instead of a Divine Right

FIONA (F) a scullery maid who could really use some help in the kitchen

PENILESS PAISLEY (M/F) a commoner who is down on his luck due to a broken leg

COURTIER 1 (M) a noble at the Royal Table

COURTIER 2 (M/F) a noble or lady at the Royal Table

EXTRAS (M/F) Courtiers, Guards, Pages, and Servants

Sample Pages

FANFARE AND WELCOME

(When the guests have been seated, a BRASS FANFARE will signal all entertainers to clear the hall. Lights up on stage. Another BRASS FANFARE. TOWN CRIER enters.)

TOWN CRIER: *(A bit nervous.)*

Welcome! Welcome, good guests, you all look so courtly
The King will be here ... shortly?

(JESTER and COSMO enter.)

JESTER: Town Crier, what's the hold-up?

TOWN CRIER: The King is late.

JESTER: Maybe he just needs to freshen up?

COSMO: Freshen up? Freshen up?

JESTER: Now Countess Cosmo, there's no need –

COSMO: The King does not merely “freshen up.” The King imbues an image. And I create that image. As the King's Image Consultant, I preside over a whole wing of the castle dedicated to enhancing the King's aura of majesty.

JESTER: Yeah, yeah. We know. You head up the glam squad.

COSMO: I do not subscribe to the vulgar term “glam squad.” Anyway, the King clearly has not reached the castle.

TOWN CRIER: How do you know?

COSMO: There has been no royal carriage, no royal attendants, and no royal honor guard.

JESTER: Who is this new king again?

TOWN CRIER: He's got a name that's hard to pronounce, but I've been practicing. (*Clears throat.*) Lords and Ladies, I present to you, Good King Winceslesslass. (*“Win-cess-less-lass.”*)

JESTER: Are you sure that's how you say it?

TOWN CRIER: Or it's Winces-less. (*“Winces-less.”*)

JESTER: Oh. Maybe he'll like my puns then.

TOWN CRIER: Why?

JESTER: Because he winces-less. (*Laughs overly.*) It would be even better if his name were Good King Groans-es-less.

TOWN CRIER: (*Thinking aloud.*) Or is it Good King Winceslesslessless? (*“Win-senseless-less-less.”*)

COSMO: Clearly, his name is the first thing I'm going to change. “Good King Winterless?” Merely “Good?” Entirely too modest. I've been audience testing some new titles. Tell me what you think. How about “King Marvelous the Great, Keeper of the Divine Flame.”

TOWN CRIER: I don't know. Seems a bit much. It would be hard to announce all that in one breath.

COSMO: Then how about “King Stupendous the First, God’s Favorite Person on Earth.” What do you think of that?

JESTER: You mispronounced stupid.

COSMO: I’ll tell you what’s stupid. That name. Wences ... whatever. Where is he from, anyway?

TOWN CRIER: Bohemia.

COSMO: He’s a Bohemian? Oh, my. I’ve got my work cut out for me. I’d better hire extra staff.

(PENNY enters, walking with a crutch.)

PENNY: Tasting! Get your food tasted here.

COSMO: Oh, no!

JESTER: What?

COSMO: What is that good-for-nothing sluggard doing here?

JESTER: *(Looks.)* You mean Penny Paisley?

COSMO: You mean Penniless, or whatever that ne’er-do-well’s name is.

TOWN CRIER: Penny used to be a regular at the Royal Court. What’s he doing here now?

COSMO: Begging, it would appear. Why doesn’t he just get a job?

JESTER: He broke his leg, you know.

COSMO: No, he irresponsibly broke his own leg. He should have been more careful carrying my luggage. And he scratched my priceless leather Gucci trunk.

JESTER: But still, a broken leg –

COSMO: When I had gout, did that stop me from performing my duties? I was still able to mix my Countess Cosmo Foundation and Blush right on schedule. I wasn’t a lay-about beggar. He should just pull himself up by his own bootstraps.

JESTER: He doesn’t even have boots.

TOWN CRIER: Or straps.

COSMO: It's a metaphor, you illiterate buffoons. Someone needs to get rid of him.

FIONA: *(Enters. To PENNY.)* Ah, there you are.

COSMO: You! Serving wench!

JESTER: Her name is Fiona.

COSMO: What is it with you and names, anyway?

JESTER: Well, you know. People have names.

COSMO: Yes. The key word here is "people." *(To FIONA.)* Serving wench!

FIONA: Did someone bellow?

COSMO: *(Points to PENNY.)* Remove that beggar.

FIONA: You mean Penny?

COSMO: Again with the names? Remove him. We can't have his sort mucking about when the King enters the castle.

FIONA: But I need him in the kitchen. He's helping me develop a new sauce. It's a recipe from his mother who lived in the West Midlands.

JESTER: Which region?

FIONA: Worchestershire. *("Wor-chester-shire" with a long i.)*

TOWN CRIER: No, it's pronounced Woostersheer. *("Wooster-sheer.")*

JESTER: No, I am positive it is pronounced Worstershistershoshire. *("Wurster-shister-sho-shire" with a long i.)*

PENNY: If I may, it's pronounced worcestershire. *("Wurster-sheer.")*

JESTER: Are you sure? *(Pronounced "sheer." Laughs at his joke.)* See what I did there?

COSMO: I don't care how you pronounce it. Get Penniless out of my castle!

PENNY: Uh, it's Penny.

COSMO: Once more with the names? *(To FIONA.)* As I said, get Penniless out of my castle.

FIONA: Your castle? Besides, that's not my job.

COSMO: Your job is what I say your job is.

FIONA: All right, already! You're just lucky I've got the time.

JESTER: Oh? You're usually super busy.

FIONA: Yeah, but I've got a new man in the kitchen. He's got a will to work, but he's awfully clumsy. Only good for scrubbing out the cast iron pots. But still a help. Come on, Penny.

PENNY: *(As he exits with FIONA.)* Am I still helping you with the sauce?

FIONA: Of course you are.

PENNY: But the Countess said I have to go.

FIONA: I never said I'd do what she asked. Besides, she never comes into the kitchen. Let's have a bowl of gruel while we work. *(FIONA and PENNY exit.)*

(BRASS FANFARE.)

COSMO: That's the fanfare! The Royal Court procession is beginning! But where is the King?

TOWN CRIER: I don't know. Since they've played the fanfare, the King must be with the procession.

COSMO: Impossible! He was supposed to report to me first. I need to see to his skin care. He's just traveled hundreds of leagues. He desperately needs to exfoliate. How can he show his face to the Court if it is not exfoliated?

JESTER: He will certainly not be appealing. *(Laughs overly.)* Get it? Exfoliate? A-peeling?

COSMO: *(Stares at JESTER.)* I want to thank you, Jester, for being an integral part of my weight loss plan.

JESTER: Really? How?

COSMO: Whenever I'm near you, I can't keep food down. But now, I must join the procession. If the King has not arrived, I must offer the main toast. *(Exits.)*

JESTER: Cosmo offering the toast? Talk about losing your appetite. I'll see you at the banquet, Town Crier. Let me know if you see the new King. My curiosity is piqued about this mystery man. *(Exits.)*

TOWN CRIER: *(Turns to the audience and calls out to the back of the hall.)*
Ready the meal and heat the wassail!
Bring forth meat and the finest of ale!
Blow the clarion; singers appear!
The King, er, the Countess and the Court are drawing near! *(Exits.)*

Later, Countess Cosmo has sent Penny Paisley out into the cold.

WEN: So, where is Penny?

FIONA: Discountess Cosmo forced him to go home.

WEN: During this blizzard? Is she mad?

JESTER: Always. I think it's because she wears a corset that's one tug short of a collapsed lung.

WEN: How far away is his home?

JESTER: His hovel is four miles due west as the crow dies.

FIONA: Dies?

JESTER: Well, you know. Blizzard.

WEN: We have to save him.

JESTER: If you haven't noticed, it's colder than Cosmo's heart out there.

FIONA: And twice as flaky.

WEN: We can do it. Fiona, gather as much food as we can carry in a bag.

FIONA: I cannot do that without permission from the King.

WEN: The King would give his permission for this, I know.

JESTER: *(Confused.)* You know? Really?

WEN: Really.

JESTER: And just where is the King?

WEN: He is engaged in high matters of state. This quest is up to us.

FIONA: I'll go gather the food.

WEN: I'll get some cloaks to wear.

JESTER: I'll work on our epitaphs.

FIONA: Epitaphs?

JESTER: For our tombstones. Here lies the Jester, Fiona, and Wen. They were frozen because they wouldn't let it go.

WEN: You are such a downer, Jester. You need to chill.

JESTER: Oh, I will, Wen. I will.

Later, JESTER, WEN, and FIONA go looking for PENNY ...

(Lights down on stage; lights up in the audience. Enter WEN, JESTER, & FIONA wrapped in cloaks and struggling through the storm. SFX of storm blowing if possible.)

FIONA: Jester, are you sure we're going the right way?

JESTER: Are we going west? I'm having trouble seeing my shadow.

FIONA: What are you, a groundhog? And we are in the middle of a blizzard. There's no shadow.

JESTER: No shadow? Well, that means we'll have an early spring. *(Beat.)* Uh, I think we're lost.

FIONA: I thought you knew where you were going? Why can't you ever stop and just ask for directions?

JESTER: If I stopped and asked for directions, I would have to turn in my man card. *(If JESTER is played by a female, substitute this line: "What, and have my entire quest mansplained?")*

WEN: Wait! I can see the traces of footprints. It's this direction.

They make their way through the audience ...

WEN: We must hurry. The storm is getting worse. Wait! I see more footprints. It must be this way. *(They move in a completely different direction.)*

FIONA: Let's knock on this door.

(WEN, JESTER, & FIONA move toward another table.)

JESTER: *(Leans in toward a woman at the table.)* By my troth! Gilda the Goose Girl? I didn't know you lived around here. So, we are looking for Penny Paisley.

WEN: Do you know where he lives?

JESTER: Can you tell us how to get to his hovel? *(Leans in for answer.)* Thank you, Gilda! She said just follow her goose.

FIONA: But her goose is wild.

JESTER / FIONA: *(Look at each other.)* Hey!

FIONA: *(Leans in toward a man at another table.)* By my troth! *("Troth" with a long O.)* Freddy the Fishmonger? I didn't know you lived around here. So, we are looking for Penny Paisley.

WEN: Do you know where he lives?

FIONA: Can you tell us how to get to his hovel? *(Leans in for answer.)* Thank you, Freddy! He said just follow his herring.

JESTER: But his herring is red.

JESTER / FIONA: *(Look at each other.)* Hey!

JESTER: Oh, just follow me. I'll get the job done.

FIONA: But you, Jester, are a fool.

WEN: And this job is more of an errand.

WEN / FIONA: Hey!

WEN: Let's go this way.