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SF PERUSALS

The Ants and the Grasshoppers

A GREEK COMEDY FOR CHILDREN IN ONE ACT

Ross Mihalko
and Donna Swift

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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THE ANTS AND THE GRASSHOPPERS was first produced by the Imp For Kids in Edgartown, Massachusetts on May 20, 2011. The performance was directed by Donna Swift, with costumes by Donna Swift and Samantha Messina. The production stage manager was Della Burke. The members of the stage crew included: Ashley Girard, Mariah MacKenzie, Chris Pitt, Aaron Wilson, Clare Boland, Amy Fligor, Carter D'Angelo, and Samantha Messina The cast was as follows:

EPSILON . . . . . Tyler Edwards
BETA . . . . . .Devin Waite, Emily Mello
THETA. . . . . Chesca Potter
ZETA . . . . . Marshall Davidson
MU . . . . . Raven McCormack
ALPHA. . . . . Opal Wortmann
OMEGA . . . . . Paige Fiske
EDDIE . . . . . .Emily Mello, Devin Waite
HOP . . . . . .Nina Moore
SKIP . . . . . Sydney Johnson
JUMP . . . . . Emily Moore
OMICRON. . . . . Liam Watie
ALEXANDRA THE GREAT . . . . . .Alex Habekost

CHARACTERS

BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI & MU – the greek ant chorus

EPSILON – the ant choral master

HOP, SKIP & JUMP – three fun-loving grasshoppers

OMICRON – the wondrous blind oracle

ALEXANDRA THE GREAT – Queen of the anthill

ALPHA & OMEGA – the royal assistants to the Queen

EDDIE – the Queen's son (the one in the eye-patch)

THE STORM – a terrible winter's storm

NOTE: Any of the above characters can be played by/as boys or girls with the exception of Alexandra, who should be a girl.

SETTING

An anthill in Ancient Greece

TIME

The Present

Scene 1

(At rise: **EPSILON, EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA** *and* **OMEGA** *stand in formation.)*

EDDIE, EPSILON, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA. *(in unison)* We are the ants!

BETA. Here we are now in Ancient Greece!

THETA. Winter is over!

ZETA. It is springtime!

PI. We must all work together!

MU. To gather up the golden grain!

ALPHA. So we will have enough to eat!

OMEGA. When winter comes again!

ANT CHORUS. The work is hard and the day is long
But we do what we do for the good of us all!

(The **ANTS** *begin a rhythmic chant.)*

EPSILON.
YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!
FOR THE YOUNG AND THE OLD! FOR THE SHORT AND THE TALL!
FOR THE WEAK AND THE STRONG! FOR THE BIG AND THE SMALL!
YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!

EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA.
YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!

EPSILON.
FROM THE FIRST BUD OF SPRING TO THE LAST LEAF OF FALL!

EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA.
YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!

EPSILON.

WE DIG AND WE DRAG AND WE CARRY AND CRAWL!

EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA.

YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!

EPSILON.

WE WORK AND WE WORK 'TIL THE GRAIN FILLS THE HALL!

EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA.

YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!

EPSILON.

YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!

EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA.

FOR THE YOUNG AND THE OLD! FOR THE SHORT AND THE TALL!

FOR THE WEAK AND THE STRONG! FOR THE BIG AND THE SMALL!

EPSILON, EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA.

YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!
YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!
YES, WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL!

(end of chant)

*(***HOP, SKIP** *and* **JUMP** *enter. They applaud the ants. They have a picnic basket.)*

HOP. That was very good. Very entertaining.

SKIP. A meal and a show.

JUMP. Do it again! Do it again!

BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA. *(chanting)* WE DO WHAT WE DO FOR THE GOOD OF US ALL –

EPSILON. *(interrupting the* **ANT CHORUS***)* Silence! *(to* **HOP, SKIP** *and* **JUMP***)* Who are you and what do you think you're doing?

HOP. Ladies and Gentlemen!

SKIP. In the center ring!

JUMP. For your amusement!

HOP. Hop!

SKIP. Skip!

JUMP. And Jump!

HOP, **SKIP & JUMP**. At your service!

EPSILON. I don't want your service. I want to know what you grasshoppers think you're doing.

HOP. I think we're having a picnic.

SKIP. You're more than welcome to join us. There's plenty of food for everyone.

JUMP. Yeah. What's a picnic without some ants?

EPSILON. This is not the time for fun and games.

HOP. It's not?

SKIP. No…it's lunchtime.

JUMP. Coleslaw?

EPSILON. Ugh! That's it! I'm going to get the Queen. She'll take care of you – you – you – grasshoppers! *(to the* **ANT CHORUS***)* The rest of you get back to work!

*(***EPSILON** *exits.* **EDDIE**, **BETA**, **THETA**, **ZETA**, **PI**, **MU**, **ALPHA** *and* **OMEGA** *huddle together.)*

HOP. Boy…he was fun.

SKIP. A million laughs.

JUMP. I miss him already. *(to* **HOP** *and* **SKIP***)* Coleslaw?

HOP. Thank you.

SKIP. Don't mind if I do.

*(***EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA** *and* **OMEGA** *are whispering together in their group. Suddenly* **MU** *is pushed forward towards* **HOP, SKIP** *and* **JUMP**.*)*

MU. Excuse me…

JUMP. Hi there.

MU. Why aren't you working?

HOP. It's a beautiful day.

SKIP. Nobody should be working on a day like this.

JUMP. Especially us.

MU. Aren't you worried about the food running out?

HOP. Nah. We've got plenty.

SKIP. There's enough for everyone.

JUMP. And there's more where that came from.

HOP. The field is full of grain.

SKIP. The grass is green and sweet.

JUMP. The leaves are this big!

BETA. But winter will come and then there will be no food.

THETA. And you will starve to death.

ZETA. And it will be horrible and painful.

PI. And everyone will cry.

MU. Everyone.

HOP. You have got to learn to relax.

SKIP. You have got to have some fun.

JUMP. Let's play Sneaky Statues!

HOP. I'll be the curator!

SKIP & JUMP. We'll be the statues!

SKIP. Count to ten –

*(***HOP** *closes his eyes and* **SKIP** *and* **JUMP** *make faces behind is back.)*

HOP. One, Two, Ten! Statues do not move about, for if I catch you, you are out!

*(***SKIP** *and* **JUMP** *freeze like statues as* **HOP** *opens his eyes and turns around to face them.)*

ALPHA. What are you doing?

HOP. *(to* **ALPHA***)* Ha! I saw you move! You're out!

OMEGA. What?

HOP. *(to* **OMEGA***)* You're out too!

ZETA. But…

HOP. *(to* **ZETA***)* Out! Wow – you guys are really bad at this.

SKIP. Or maybe you're just really good.

HOP. *(to* **SKIP***)* Talking is moving. You're out!

JUMP. Yup. He's really good.

HOP. Out!

SKIP & JUMP. Let's play again!

ALPHA. This is a waste of time. We need to get more food.

HOP. Fun is never a waste of time.

SKIP. Winter is nine months away.

JUMP. There's plenty of time to get more food.

*(***OMICRON** *appears.)*

OMICRON. There is no time like the present! Time flies when you're having fun! A stitch in time saves nine!

BETA. It is Omicron! The wise old oracle!

THETA. He needs no eyes to see!

ZETA. Every word he speaks is the truth!

PI. He sees the past!

MU. He sees the future!

EDDIE. He sees everything!

EDDIE, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI, MU, ALPHA & OMEGA. All hail, Omicron!

*(***HOP, SKIP** *and* **JUMP** *applaud.)*

HOP. Nice entrance.

SKIP. Very impressive.

JUMP. We should get a chorus.

*(***OMICRON** *goes into a trance.)*

ALPHA. Look! He's having a vision!

OMEGA. Oh great Omicron… tell us what you see!

OMICRON. I see a field of white. Frozen flakes of water falling from the sky. And I see wayward travelers. There are three of them…no four…wait, maybe three…but it could be four… *(pause)* More than two and less than five wayward travelers will be turned to ice where they stand. *(Pause – He points at* **HOP, SKIP AND JUMP.***)* You're all gonna die!

HOP. You're absolutely right. We're all gonna die.

SKIP. Death is just a part of life.

JUMP. Usually the last part.

(The **GRASSHOPPERS** *begin a spoken word, beat poetry session – complete with bongos, sunglasses and berets.)*

*(POEM: **THAT'S HOW IT GOES**)*

HOP.

FRIEDA THE FLY HAD FLOWN IN FROM AFAR.
HER WINGS WERE WORN OUT LIKE THEY USUALLY ARE.
SHE FOUND A NICE SPOT TO LAY DOWN HER HEAD.
BUT THE HAMMOCK WAS A SPIDER'S AND SHE ENDED UP DEAD.

HOP, SKIP & JUMP.

WELL THAT'S HOW IT GOES.
YOU NEVER DO KNOW.
WHEN IT'S THE END OF THE SHOW.

SKIP.

WILLY THE WORM WAS AS NICE AS COULD BE.
HE HAD A GOOD HOME AND A LARGE FAMILY.
HE TOOK A VACATION TO SEE THE SUNRISE.
BUT THE EARLY BIRD GAVE HIM QUITE A SURPRISE.

HOP, SKIP & JUMP.

WELL THAT'S HOW IT GOES.
YOU NEVER DO KNOW.
WHEN IT'S THE END OF THE SHOW.

JUMP.

MANNY THE MANTIS WAS TO MARRY A GIRL.
ON TOP OF THE CAKE AND ON TOP OF THE WORLD,
SHE BIT OFF HIS HEAD WHEN THEY GOT IN A FIGHT,
NOW THE HONEYMOON IS OVER AND SO IS HIS LIFE.

*(**ALEXANDRA** and **EPSILON** enter unnoticed.)*

HOP, SKIP, JUMP & ANT CHORUS.

WELL THAT'S HOW IT GOES.
YOU NEVER DO KNOW.
WHEN IT'S THE END OF THE SHOW.

*(The **ANTS** and **GRASSHOPPERS** laugh. Alexandra is furious.)*

ALEXANDRA. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS!?!

(end of poem)

ALPHA, OMEGA, BETA, THETA, ZETA, PI & MU. *(gasp!)* The Queen!

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