



Scripts.com

James and the Giant Peach

By Karey Kirkpatrick

Opening Dance/Pantomime

(The opening pantomime begins when the lights dim in the theatre/gymnasium. All is quiet, until slowly music fills the auditorium.

As

if released from a cage, suddenly several "dancers" wearing bright clothing

enter from the back of the auditorium. Each contains a streamer or ribbon

or

flag that is peach coloured, and these wave in the air as they skip down the

centre aisle merrily. Meanwhile, from the front of the auditorium, another group of brightly coloured dancers has entered, also carrying streamers etc.

Both groups converge in the centre, and do a simple dance. NARRATOR #1 is brought in by hand by one of the smallest dancers who leads the narrator to 1

the centre. The dancers engulf NARRATOR #1 in the centre, as they circle/skip around him/her. Finally they open up the circle, creating a semicircle

behind NARRATOR #1 and The DANCER. This dancer takes a peach out of his/her pocket and holds it out for the audience to see. The two conduct

a brief clown/pantomime scene of NARRATOR #1 trying to get the peach etc. At last, in a grand gesture, THE DANCER hands the peach to NARRATOR #1, who takes it, and bows to the dancer. Casually, NARRATOR #1 takes a bite of the peach and strolls to their place on stage, sitting down languidly

while eating the peach. The dance continues with one or two more skipping circles and then the dancers exit through the front entrance of the stage. NARRATOR #2 enters, as if searching for NARRATOR #1. At least they see each other and wave. NARRATOR #2 joins #1.

Most of the action takes place on the gymnasium floor, except for the two NARRATORS who are on the stage, until the shift of the play, when James enters the Giant Peach. The Giant Peach shall be on the stage, and the action

shall shift so that it is now on the stage rather than the gym floor, unless

specified.)

Scene 1

(A story is about to unfold...)

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

moment.

Narrator #1:

peach"?

There is no such thing.

Narrator #2:

all.

Narrator #1:

respect for this

most sacred of fruits!

Narrator #2:

in a

fruit salad and it's quite del-

Narrator #1:

stunning, most magnificent of all pitted gifts into a mash of pathetic bananas

and apples and oranges. (Getting more intense) Don't you know that those fruits have NOTHING on the peach!

2

(There is an uncomfortable silence, while NARRATOR #2 tries to figure out why his/her friend is so passionate about this fruit. NARRATOR #2 takes a seat next to NARRATOR #1, and tries several times to speak, as if a bit afraid.)

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

passionate about

anything really, let alone...(timidly, as if afraid of saying the word) fruit.

Narrator #1:

passionate?

Narrator #2:

don't have
to answer.

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

You can't
handle the truth! Son, we live in a complicated world of microwavable
meals,
fast food restaurants and something pretty awful called Chef Boyardee!
None of that is real food. This here peach is not only a beautiful specimen
of
unprocessed food, grown straight from our given green earth, but this
particular species of fruit is magic.

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

start at
the beginning. Come on out James!

3

(YOUNG JAMES skips to the centre of the gym floor. He's a small boy who is
happy and carefree.)

Narrator #1:

here.
Until this point, he's had a happy life living peacefully with his mother
and
father.

(MOTHER and FATHER cheerily enter, and each stand on either side of
YOUNG JAMES, who just looks SO happy.)

Narrator #2:

beautiful

house beside the sea, and he's got plenty of other children to play with.

Mum

and Dad are lovely and it's the perfect life for a small boy.

Narrator #1:

went to

London to do some shopping.

Mother:

shopping in town.

Father:

you're the

perfect child, we'll even buy you a treat while we're gone!

(They hug him goodbye and wave merrily, as they exit where they came from.

YOUNG JAMES still looks terrifically happy.)

Narrator #1:

(YOUNG JAMES spins around to look at NARRATOR #1 with shock.)

Young James:

(A large silhouette of a rhinoceros appears in the background. It has a moveable jaw, and shows its teeth.)

Mother:

on the

street!

(The rhino opens its jaws as wide as it'll possibly go)

Narrator #1:

on a

crowded street by an enormous angry rhino that had escaped from the London zoo.

4

Father:

(The rhino's jaws snap shut on stage. MOTHER and FATHER scream offstage, and this is end of them. We hear a loud burp from the Rhino.)

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Young James:

Narrator #1:

experience for

everyone involved. Suddenly James found himself alone and frightened in a vast unfriendly world. The only living relatives were his two aunts. Their names were Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker.

(Doom music fills the air, and in waddles Aunt Sponge, a voluptuous woman - her costume is probably stuffed to make her look quite large - and Aunt Spiker who is just that...spikey with a large nose and quite mean. It is very

likely that both are cross cast and males are playing their roles. Their voices

are high and piercing and should probably hurt the ears.)

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

Daddy!

Aunt Sponge:

boy,

you'll be loved by your Aunty Sponge and Your Aunty Spiker!

(Suddenly AUNT SPONGE shoves YOUNG JAMES away, and he falls on his bum on the ground. AUNT SPONGE AND AUNT SPIKER cackle and laugh.)

Aunt Spiker:

wanted

help around the house!

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

(Both AUNTS exit, and YOUNG JAMES is left to sit bewildered on the floor. Now enters a taller, older familiar looking fellow. Though he still has kindness in his eyes, he is tired and broken down by life. No longer the happy

5

young boy we first met, we now see who James has become. JAMES holds out a hand to YOUNG JAMES and helps him up.)

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

with his
aunts for eight whole years.

Narrator #2:

the
happy little kid!

Young James:

James:

happened.

They're horrible people. Selfish, lazy and cruel. And right from the beginning they treated me like a filthy nuisance. They certainly never gave me any toys to play with or picture books to look at. My room is as bare as a prison cell.

Young James:

James:

narrators)
are for.

Young James:

James:

spectacular was about to happen and our luck was about to change.

Narrator #1:

peculiar happened to him. And this thing, which as I say was only rather peculiar, soon caused a chain of events until a really fantastically peculiar thing happened!

(YOUNG JAMES faces JAMES, they make eye contact, nod their heads at each other, shake hands, and then YOUNG JAMES exits. Immediately, JAMES gets to work miming chopping wood. AUNT SPONGE and AUNT SPIKER wander by lazily, inspecting his work. Each are now wearing sunglasses and sipping tall, cool glasses of lemonade. They wander past JAMES, and sit down as if sunbathing.)

Narrator #2:

in the
blazing heat of the day!

6

Narrator #1:

small

piggy eyes doesn't care if James faints in the heat. And Aunt Spiker who is

lean and tall and bony, doesn't care if the insects ate his body while he
fainted in the garden.

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

The kind

that doesn't care about him. In fact while, James is slaving away in the
terrible heat, sweating all over, they aren't watching him when all the
sadness of his life finally consumes him and he begins to cry!

(JAMES sits down and burries his head in his arms.)

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

nasty

little beast!

James:

just for

once, go down to the seaside on the bus? It isn't very far, and I feel so
hot and
awful and lonely...

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

day when I

don't feel so hot. And now Sponge, it's time for our afternoon stories on
the
telly.

Aunt Sponge:

to

Live?

(Gossiping, the two ladies exit. Defeated, JAMES sinks to the ground and begins to cry and cry. THE MAGIC MAN suddenly appears.)

Narrator #1:

things
happened to him.

Magic Man:

7

(JAMES, seeing the Magic Man for the first time is startled and a bit afraid.

But he shouldn't be, because the Magic Man is perfectly harmless and quite magical.)

James:

Magic Man:

(The MAGIC MAN holds out a paper bag that he is gripping to keep closed.)

James:

Magic Man:

this
little bag?

James:

Magic Man:

Something much much much better than candy is in this bag. Take a look!
(The MAGIC MAN holds open the bag for JAMES to see.)

James:

of a
grain of rice! They sparkle and glow in the most wonderful way!

Magic Man:

(JAMES puts his ear to the bag and listens.)

Magic Man:

the rest
of the world put together.

James:

Magic Man:

thousand long slimy crocodile tongues boiled up in the skull of a dead witch for twenty days and nights with the eyeballs of a lizard! Add the fingers of a young monkey, the beak of a greed parrot and three spoonfuls of sugar. Stew for another week and then let the moon do the rest!

James:

Magic Man:

8
(JAMES takes the bag, and holds it like it is the most amazing treasure in the world...probably because it IS the most amazing treasure in the world.)

James:

Magic Man:

water,
and pour all the little green things into it. Then, very slowly one by one add ten hairs from your own head. That sets them off! In a couple of minutes the water will begin to froth and bubble, and that's when you must quickly drink it down. All of it! The whole jug!

James:

Magic Man:

steam will start coming out of your mouth and immediately after that, marvelous things will start happening to you.

James:

Magic Man:

James:

Magic Man:

me, I
know all about it. Now off you go and do exactly as I say! And don't
whisper
a word of this to those two horrible aunts of yours.

James:

(The MAGIC MAN turns to leave, he takes a few steps, and then turns back to

JAMES. Meanwhile in the back of the gym, the CHORUS OF GREEN
MAGIC has gathered. THE CHORUS OF GREEN MAGIC are all dressed in
green, with as many feathers, boas and magical elements as possible, each
one
clutching a glowstick.)

Magic Man:

there
get away from you. If they do escape, then they will be working their magic
upon somebody else instead of you. And that isn't what you want at all is
it
my dear.

James:

9

Magic Man:

tree, that
will be the one who gets the full power of their magic! So hold the bag
tight
James!
Chorus of Green Magic: (Whispering loudly) Hold the bag tight James!

Magic Man:

Chorus of Green Magic: Don't tear the paper!

Magic Man:

Chorus of Green Magic: Hurry up James!
(Suddenly THE CHORUS OF GREEN MAGIC runs down the centre aisle
and surrounds JAMES in a circle. Then, they open up into a semi-circle so
that he can be seen. HE takes off running, with the CHORUS OF GREEN
MAGIC following close behind him. As they all run, the NARRATORS
continue their story.)

Narrator #1:

could
go.

Narrator #2:

perfect jug to
mix the concoction in?

Narrator #1:

distance he
could see Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker through the window sitting in their
chairs in front of the telly.

Narrator #2:

they don't
catch him! (Shouting to JAMES) Go in the back door James!
(As if hearing, JAMES turns suddenly and runs to the front of the
auditorium, the CHORUS OF GREEN MAGIC in pursuit.)

Narrator #1:

but
then suddenly just as he was passing underneath the old peach tree that
stood in the middle of the garden, something terrible happened!
(JAMES slips and falls, letting loose the precious paper bag.)

Narrator #2:

10
(Suddenly, THE CHORUS OF GREEN MAGIC runs around the tree several
times. And immediately tries to spread out through the gym, each running in
a different direction. Frantically, JAMES gets up and tries to catch one or
two
of the CHORUS members, but each escapes until they are all gone from the
gym and JAMES is left alone.)

James:

earthworm? Or a centipede? Or a spider? And what if they do go into the
roots of the peach tree? What have I done?
AUNT SPONGE and AUNT SPIKER appear on the stage now, above JAMES
who is on the gym floor.)

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

those

logs!

Aunt Sponge:

bucket

and leave him there for the night? That ought to teach him not to laze about the whole day.

Aunt Spiker:

him
finish chopping up the wood first. Be off with you at once you hideous brat,
and do some work!

(Slowly and sadly, JAMES gets up off of the ground and returns to the imaginary woodpile. He begins miming chopping wood again. Suddenly we hear SPIKER shouting.)

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

you see
it?

Aunt Sponge:

on
purpose when there's nothing to feed me. Why that trees never even had a blossom on it, let alone a peach.
11

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

(NARRATOR #1 strolls down from his/her position, and approaches the Peach Tree. In his/her hand is a peach about the size of a Chinese lantern with a hook to hang on the tree.)

Narrator #1:

you can

see here, Aunt Spiker was quite right about the beautiful big peach.
(NARRATOR #1, hangs the peach on the tree, and gazes at it admiringly.
Meanwhile, JAMES has noticed the peach, and approaches the NARRATOR,
who briefly puts his/her around JAMES and together they point at the
peach. Then he/she returns to his/her place on stage.)

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

each have

half. Hey you! James! Come over here at once!

(Obediently, JAMES dashes over to his two loathsome aunts.)

Aunt Sponge:

(Obediently, JAMES dashes BACK over to the tree. He assesses it as if
determining how to climb it.)

Aunt Sponge:

branch!

Can you see it?

James:

Aunt Sponge:

Spiker

and I are going to have it between the two of us. Right here and right now.

Half each. NOW GET UP THERE YOU BRAT!

(JAMES mimes about to climb the tree.)

Aunt Spiker:

12

(JAMES freezes.)

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

James:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Narrator #2:

minute it

was the size of a melon. In another half minute it was twice as big again.

Narrator #1:

butter-coloured

pumpkin dangling from the top of the tree.

Aunt Spiker:

slightest

shake and I'm sure it'll fall off! It must weigh twenty or thirty pounds at

least!

Aunt Sponge:

on you.

We wouldn't want the peach to be damaged.

Aunt Spiker:

Narrator #1:

and more

as the peach got heavier and heavier. And still it went on growing.

Narrator #2:

round as Aunt Sponge herself.

Narrator #1:

Aunt Spiker:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

half way

to the ground. Of course by now both Aunts were crazy with excitement. But

13

Spiker's greedy little mind in particular, had turned from filling their bellies,
to filling their wallets.

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

James:

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

whatsoever. Keep
out of it!

Narrator #1:

watch

the peach grow, but soon their lazy eyes couldn't stay awake and they fell asleep.

(AUNT SPONGE and AUNT SPIKER lean against each other snoring very loudly.)

Narrator #2:

fruit.

At last the peach was nearly as tall as a small house. The bottom part of it

rested gently on the ground.

Narrator #1:

was a

massive fruit that towered over them so high, they looked like tiny creatures

next to it.

(The small peach tree is wheeled offstage and the Giant Peach is at last revealed on the stage. AUNT SPIKER wakes first, and shoves her sister awake. Both yawn and stretch and finally waddle their way down to where JAMES is still awake.)

Aunt Sponge:

right away

I want you to start digging great hunks of peach for our breakfast...not yours

of course, just mine and Spiker's.

James:

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

14

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

of this

peach. You wait and see.

Narrator #1:

house

spread like wildfire across the countryside.

(The crowd of CUSTOMERS rushes down the back aisle, and lines up. Each has fistfuls of money, which they hand over to SPIKER and SPONGE, and then individually, the customers, walk by the Giant Peach "ooing" and "ahhing". They return to the back of the line to do it all again.)

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

Narrator #2:

men,

women and children, all pushing and shoving to get a glimpse of this miraculous fruit.

Narrator #1:

of

Sponge and Spiker.

(AUNT SPONGE grabs JAMES roughly by the arm, and starts to lead him up the stage steps.)

Aunt Sponge:

to your

prison cell - er um, I mean bedroom.

James:

years and

there are going to be lots of them down here for me to play with.

Aunt Sponge:

millionaires, and the last thing we want is the likes of you messing things up

and getting in the way!

(AUNT SPONGE returns to taking money, and JAMES kneels on the stage, looking below him at all the people in his yard that he is longing to meet.

15

Finally, AUNT SPIKER STEPS in front of the line. Everyone is quite disappointed by her news.)

Aunt Spiker:

down.

We'll reopen bright and early at 6am tomorrow. If you want to camp out, you're welcome, but it'll cost you extra!

(The crowd murmurs, disappointed. They turn to the back, and shuffle out.

JAMES comes down the steps, and approaches his aunts.)

James:

all day.

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

we're going

to leave you outside in the cold garden all night!

Aunt Spiker:

all the

banana skins, orange peels and bits of paper that the crowd has left behind.

It should take you...oh all night!

(The two AUNTS link arms and exit out the gym door.)

James:

(While the NARRATORS speak, JAMES sits down, hugging his knees to his chest.)

Narrator #1:

quite scared

of being out of doors alone in the moonlight. James felt exactly like that now.

He stared straight ahead with large frightened eyes, hardly daring to breathe.

Narrator #2:

the giant

peach towering over everything else.

Narrator #1:

James:

happen to

me soon.

16

(As the NARRATORS describe the action, JAMES gets up and makes his way to the Giant Peach up on the stage.)

Narrator #1:

drawn

by some powerful magnet James Henry Trotter started walking slowly towards the Giant Peach.

Narrator #2:

bulging

sides. He put out a hand and touched it gently with the tip of one finger. It

felt soft and warm and slightly furry, like the skin of a baby mouse.

Narrator #1:

and

below him, close to the ground there was a hole in the side of the peach. (JAMES crouches down low to the ground to inspect the Giant Peach.)

Narrator #2:

about the

size of a fox might have made.

Narrator #1:

James:

(JAMES crawls beside the beach, as if he is going through it. He crawls

backstage, and the Giant Peach is turned around by the INSECTS to reveal the centre of the Giant Peach, where much of the rest of the action of the play takes place.)

Narrator #2:

of the
Giant Peach.

(Now that the centre of the Giant Peach is revealed, the INSECTS make themselves quite comfortable. JAMES comes around the other side of the peach from which he entered, and stops suddenly when he sees these creatures.)

Grasshopper:

Ladybug:

Narrator #1:

took in
the strange creatures sitting on chairs, and others on stools.

Narrator #2:

17

Narrator #1:

A
grasshopper, for example is an insect.

Narrator #2:

large as
yourself? You could hardly call that an insect.

Narrator #1:

He
glanced behind him, thinking he could bolt back into the tunnel the way he had come, but mysteriously the doorway had disappeared.

Narrator #2:

before him.

Narrator #1:

(GRASSHOPPER stands and bows to JAMES.)

Narrator #2:

(SPIDER does a curtsy.)

Narrator #1:

her
scarlet shell.
(LADYBUG curtsies as well.)

Narrator #2:

(CENTIPEDE does not stand but waves from where he is seated.)

Narrator #1:

earthworms have no vision at all.
(EARTHWORM tries to bow to JAMES, but bows in the completely wrong direction. SPIDER gently turns him so he is facing JAMES, and he bows again.)

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

attention
to her.
(The SILKWORM is sleeping cozily.)
18

Spider:

Grasshopper:

Ladybug:

Narrator #1:

this
announcement from several giant insects, all while being trapped inside a
Giant Peach with them.

Narrator #2:

Spider:

(JAMES backs up all the way until he is trapped against the Peach wall.
Miserable, terrified and trembling, he knows this is how his life will
end.)

Grasshopper:

Centipede:

(laughs)

Ladybug:

him we

want to eat!

(All the INSECTS burst into laughter, as if this is the most ridiculous thing

they have ever heard.)

Spider:

Ladybug:

you. You

are one of us now, didn't you know that?

Grasshopper:

were

never going to turn up! I'm glad you made it.

Centipede:

give me

a hand with these shoes. It takes me hours to get them all off by myself.

Narrator #1:

disagreeable, so he crossed the room to help the Centipede.

(JAMES crosses to the CENTIPEDE. He kneels beside him, and begins helping him with his shoes.)

19

Centipede:

James:

Centipede:

Earthworm:

about his

legs. He doesn't have anywhere close to a hundred of them. He's only got forty-two. The trouble is that most people don't bother to sit down and count

a centipede's legs. They just take their word for it. And anyway, there is nothing marvelous, Centipede about having a lot of legs.

Centipede:

look.

Earthworm:

legs at all
and be able to walk just the same.

Centipede:

are. You
just slither along.

Earthworm:

Centipede:

Earthworm:

creature.
Ask any gardener you like. And as for you-

Centipede:

Ladybug:

understand why.

Centipede:

green
Grasshopper. But he's long past it now. He's too old to be a pest anymore.

Grasshopper:

a
musician.

Ladybug:

Centipede:

James:

20

Centipede:

marvelous
colossal Centipede as me?

James:

that?

Centipede:

the old

peach tree and suddenly a funny little green thing came wriggling past my nose. Bright green it was, and extraordinarily beautiful. It looked like some

kind of tiny stone or crystal...

James:

Ladybug:

Sider:

The soil

was full of them!

Earthworm:

Ladybug:

Centipede:

Don't

interrupt.

Grasshopper:

Centipede:

many more

shoes need to come off James?

(GRASSHOPPER and SPIDER disappear momentarily.)

James:

Centipede:

Earthworm:

Centipede:

Ladybug:

(The CENTIPEDE roars with laughter.)

Centipede:

that?

21

(SPIDER return.)

Spider:

(CENTIPEDE joins GRASSHOPPER offstage.)

Ladybug:

James:

(LADYBUG comes to stand beside JAMES, she puts her arm around him comfortingly.)

Ladybug:

from the

top of this ghastly hill that we've all been living on for so long. We are about

to roll away inside this great big beautiful peach, to a land of...of...of..to a

land of...

James:

Ladybug:

this

lonely hill and those two repulsive aunts of yours-

All Insects:

Ladybug:

this Giant

Peach from rolling away is the stem attaching it to the tree. Break the stem,

and off we go!

(Suddenly everyone physically reacts as if the Giant Peach has moved slightly

and they've all lost balanced.)

Earthworm:

Spider:

jaws as

sharp as razors is up there on top of the peach nibbling away at that stem.

In
fact, he must be nearly through it, as you can tell from the way we're
lurching
about.

Ladybug:

won't fall
over when we start rolling?

James:

22
(Abruptly, GRASSHOPPER runs back into the Giant Peach.)

Grasshopper:

(CENTIPEDE follows.)

Centipede:

All Insects:

Centipede:

(The action in the Giant Peach freezes, and then moves through a series of
tableaus that depict the movement of the peach.)

Narrator #1:

and
Aunt Spiker had just taken their places at the front gate.
(AUNT SPONGE and AUNT SPIKER appear, and stand on the gym floor,
directly in front of the Giant Peach on the stage.)

Aunt Spiker:

crowds
coming up over the hill!

Aunt Sponge:

last
night. He never did come back, did he?

Aunt Spiker:

Aunt Sponge:

Aunt Spiker:

to stay

out all night again by the time I've finished with him. - Did you see something move?

Narrator #2:

movement of

course was the Giant Peach, dropping from the tree and rolling across the garden, gathering speed as it went.

(Both AUNTS turn to face each other and scream. They begin running but, of course crash into each other.)

Aunt Spiker:

23

Aunt Sponge:

(They begin cat fighting. AUNT SPONGE grabs all the money from AUNT SPIKER's pocket, but some falls. SHE bends to pick it up and falls flat on her face. SPIKER laughs cruelly, then tries to grab the money, and falls on top of SPONGE.

Suddenly everyone in the Giant Peach jumps at the same time, and both AUNTS roll off each other screaming and lay flat on the ground like a pancake.)

Grasshopper:

Centipede:

(Back to frozen.)

Narrator #1:

were

squashed as flat as a pancake.

Narrator #2:

women,

the crowds screamed and ran away, out of the path of destruction.

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

(The sound effect of a mooing cow is heard.)

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

went

leaving a trail of destruction in its wake.

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #1 and #2: The ocean!

24

Narrator #2:

edge

of a cliff.

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

(The WATER CHORUS comes out with long sheets of blue. They stand on the gym floor, on either side of the stage, and wave the water about. There is near darkness inside the Giant Peach.)

Centipede:

All insects:

Glowworm:

James:

Glowworm:

James:

Centipede:

(A faint greenish light begins to glimmer from the Glowworm's tail. The stage lights come up, as if the Glowworm's light is enough to light the interior of the Giant Peach.)

James:

Grasshopper:

without her, we would be in pitch black all day long.

James:

25

Grasshopper:

of course. When we got knocked about, I'm afraid her light must have gone out.

James:

Grasshopper:

Spider:

Ladybug:

Worm:

Centipede:

Earthworm:

life, and I'm quite fragile right now.

Grasshopper:

Ladybug:

Spider:

Grasshopper:

Earthworm:

forever.

Grasshopper:

of songs
and music!

James:

sand for
me to play with.

Ladybug:

bobbing
up and down?

Spider:

Grasshopper:

Centipede:

for going
quite crazy you know.
26

James:

a look?

All insects:

Centipede:

have to get
all my shoes on first. James?

Earthworm:

again!

Ladybug:

Narrator #2:

weaving a long

rope-ladder that would reach from the floor up to a hole in the ceiling.

Narrator #2:

sure

they didn't risk going out of the side entrance, when they didn't know where they were.

Narrator #1:

ladder had

been finished and hung-

Narrator #2:

Narrator #2:

Then

suddenly there they were out in the open, standing on the very top of the peach, near the stem, blinking their eyes in the strong sunlight.

Spider:

Earthworm:

Grasshopper:

James:

Ladybug:

Grasshopper:

a rather

awkward situation.

Earthworm:

of

us will perish. I may be blind, but I tell a catastrophe when I see one!

27

Centipede:

Ladybug:

Spider:

James:

sooner

or later a ship is bound to pick us up.

Ladybug:

James:

((GRASSHOPPER peers over the side of the Giant Peach into the waves below.))

Grasshopper:

indeed. Now

we must all stay perfectly calm. Everything will be all right in the end.

Earthworm:

Ladybug:

a

disaster. He hates to be happy. He is only happy when he is gloomy.

Earthworm:

going to be

drowned, then every one of us is going to starve instead.

James:

Earthworm:

rub it

in.

James:

that-

Earthworm:

James:

don't you

realize that we have enough food here to last us for weeks and weeks.

All insects:

Grasshopper:

what we

would do without you. Ladies and Gentlemen! We are saved once again!

Earthworm:

sink.

Centipede:

Earthworm:

Spider:

James:

make

any sort of a dent in this enormous peach.

Grasshopper:

Centipede:

Earthworm:

problem!

Everyone:

(All of the INSECTS and JAMES begin miming eating their delicious meal. Sounds of "yum" and "delicious" can be heard quietly as the NARRATOR speaks.)

Narrator #1:

down, and

enjoyed a delicious meal of peach. And as they finished up their delightful

meal, they gazed out upon the sparkling sea.

(Through the waves, SHARK #1 has made his way through the waves, and only his fin can be seen above the watery waves.)

Centipede:

water over

there!

(SHARK #2, now joins the first shark.)

Spider:

(SHARK #3 now joins them.)

Ladybug:

James:

Earthworm:

29

Grasshopper:

Shark #1:

Shark #2:

Shark #3:

Earthworm:

to eat

us up.

Centipede:

(The SHARKS laugh menacingly.)

Earthworm:

(JAMES makes his way to the edge of the Giant Peach and leans over the edge.)

James:

Shark #1:

James:

you are?

Shark #1:

Shark #2:

skeleton?

Shark #3:

Shark #1:

Shark #2:

which is full

of nice sharp teeth.

Shark #3:

Earthworm:

Centipede:

danger

with them down there, and us way up here.

30

(SHARK #1 suddenly opens his jaws quite wide and takes a giant bite of the peach. The other two SHARKS circle around and then run at the peach to head but it. All of the INSECTS and JAMES lose their balance.)

Shark #1:

fish love

to ram against ships and vessels?

Shark #2:

Shark #3:

(The CHORUS of SHARKS swarm out and join the lead sharks. Each shark bite, and ram against the peach.)

Narrator #1:

occurred, all of

the sharks came swimming towards the peach.

Narrator #2:

furiously. Each

one pushing and fighting and lashing their tails and churning the water into

a froth.

Narrator #1:

the

Giant Peach.

Earthworm:

Spider:

then

there'll be nothing left for us to stand on.

Glowworm:

Ladybug:

Earthworm:

and have
no bones!

Centipede:

trouble
of eating up the peach first!

Earthworm:

Grasshopper:

31

James:

Ladybug:

to a pulp.
It's worth a try.

James:

any string.
We'd need hundreds of yards of string to make this work.

Grasshopper:

James:

Grasshopper:

got all
the string you could ever want!

James:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

earlier?

Narrator #2:

Grasshopper:

downstairs.

She never moves, just lays there sleeping all day long.

Ladybug:

Spider:

Silkworm. What's more, I can spin patterns.

James:

Spider:

James:

Spider:

James:

Spider:

James:

32

Earthworm:

(SPIDER scuttles backstage.)

James:

I need.

Ladybug:

James:

Earthworm:

All insects:

James:

to take a

long silk string, and I'm going to loop one end of it around a seagull's neck.

Then I'm going to tie the other end to the stem of the peach. Then I'm going

to get another seagull and do the same thing again and again.

Ladybug:

Grasshopper:

up into
the air and all of us as well? It would take hundreds...thousands of
seagulls!

James:

Earthworm:

propose to
get a loop of string around the neck of a seagull? I suppose you're going
to fly
up there and attach it yourself?

James:

Centipede:

What
sort of bait?

James:

Centipede:

us, we
have the biggest, fattest, juiciest Earthworm in the world!

Centipede:

Ladybug:

33

Grasshopper:

James:

so many
circling up there. Look how they are getting closer and closer.

Earthworm:

Centipede:

Earthworm:

Centipede:

thousand

seagulls. But other than that, it has absolutely nothing to do with you!

Earthworm:

Centipede:

it make

whether it's sharks or seagulls?

Grasshopper:

Earthworm:

Centipede:

your life.

Ladybug:

James:

won't let

them touch you. I promise. But we've got to hurry, our lives depend on it!
(SPIDER returns with SILKWORM by her side. Each has a length of rope around their arms.)

Spider:

Silkworm:

(JAMES gathers everyone into a huddle, leaving the EARTHWORM out, perhaps because he refuses. They break from the huddle.)

James:

Grasshopper:

34

Earthworm:

(JAMES gently moves the EARTHWORM so he is standing on the edge of the stage, JAMES and the GRASSHOPPER crouch down low. On either side of the them are either the SPIDER or SILKWORM, handing rope to their partner. The rest of the INSECTS are offstage or "below deck".
The seagull chorus is made up of people, each with a seagull "puppet" on a

stick; each SEAGULL has a streamer or a string to represent the rope that JAMES is tying around them. The first of these SEAGULLS "flies" in, close to the edge of the stage, and goes to peck at the EARTHWORM. JAMES, with the rope in his hand, mimes attaching it to the SEAGULL, GRASSHOPPER then mimes attaching the other end to the stem of the Giant Peach. The SEAGULL then goes to stage right, on the gym floor. Perhaps they attach the streamer/string to the stage with tape. The SEAGULLS remain here and on stage left until their departure later in the play. As the SEAGULLS enter and repeat this action, the water lowers closer to the ground, and the SHARKS start to disappear.)

Earthworm:

(CENTIPEDE and LADYBUG appear.)

Centipede:

Ladybug:

Spider!

James:

(EVERYONE on stage suddenly acts as if their balance has been shaken a bit.)

Grasshopper:

Earthworm:

Ladybug:

(GRASSHOPPER peaks over the edge.)

Grasshopper:

just
hovering there, not going much higher.

James:

35

(The last SEAGULL approaches the Giant Peach, makes a stab for EARTHWORM who screams a little, then gets caught in the final noose made by JAMES. The SEAGULL joins stage left, and the WATER CHORUS along with the last of the SHARKS all rush out of the gym, as if the whole Giant Peach is high in the air now.)

All the INSECTS who were below deck, rush out and cheer.)

Ladybug:

Spider:

Grasshopper:

Earthworm:

Centipede:

right brave
too!

Spider:

James:

wish.

Earthworm:

Grasshopper:

Earthworm:

James:

Ladybug:

land in
some terrible place, we make a plan then?

Spider:

be quite
lovely. A new home, a fresh start!

Earthworm:

Ladybug:

about it

Grasshopper?

(GRASSHOPPER begins to play as if he has a violin. Only the bow of the violin is his back leg, and the strings are his wings. Violin music fills the air.)

36

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

just
don't take the time to listen.

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

blue air,
the insects and James sat back and listened to the most magical melodies
all
afternoon. At last, the Grasshopper finished and took a bow.
(The music stops, and the GRASSHOPPER bows.)

Everyone:

Grasshopper:

James:

violin in your
hands.

Grasshopper:

Centipede:

fascinating as
having one hundred legs!

Earthworm:

James:

play any
kind of music?

Earthworm:

James:

Earthworm:

this:
every single grain of soil upon the surface of the soil has passed through
the

body of an earthworm. Isn't that wonderful!

James:

Earthworm:

James:

37

Earthworm:

James:

Earthworm:

crumbly so that things will want to grow.

Ladybug:

James:

Ladybug:

ruining

the farmers' crops. We don't even charge a penny!

Spider:

but good.

All day long, I catch flies and mosquitoes in my web. I am a decent person.

James:

Spider:

last week

your own horrible Aunt Sponge flushed my poor dear father down the toilet!

James:

Spider:

was

ghastly. We never saw him again! (Begins to cry on Ladybug's shoulder.)

Ladybug:

Spider:

Ladybug:

you. No

one could be sad while gazing at this splendor!

(All the INSECTS gaze over the edge of the stage at the land below.)

Grasshopper:

Ladybug:

Spider:

Ladybug:

life!

38

Centipede:

to it.

Earthworm:

Centipede:

Ladybug:

Grasshopper:

peach

juice falling down to the ground!

Centipede:

Earthworm:

James:

the

sharks have done underneath.

Spider:

make sure I

use a safety thread, so I don't fall.

(SPIDER ventures down the stage steps, tosses a bit of rope to JAMES who is close at hand, and curls her body around the half-wall. She inspects the

bottom of the Giant Peach carefully.)

Ladybug:

Grasshopper:

Spider:

James:

Spider:

James:

Spider:

cracks

beginning too.

(SPIDER returns.)

39

Grasshopper:

sharks,

I'm not sure we can travel much further without catastrophe.

Centipede:

Won't

the seagulls keep us afloat?

Grasshopper:

James:

Grasshopper:

James:

(CENTIPEDE does so, on either side of the stage as the NARRATORS speak.)

Narrator #1:

James:

Ladybug:

Grasshopper:

James:

the
Atlantic ocean!

Centipede:

all the
wonderful places to buy shoes!

Earthworm:

James:

can't quite
keep us in the air. Down we shall go, slowly and gently until we reach the
ground.

(All INSECTS and JAMES sit down to watch their peaceful decent. The
NARRATORS continue their story.)

Narrator #2:

down
from the sky.
40

Narrator #1:

mayor of New
York gathered together in a panicked meeting. They warned all of New York
to take cover.

(FIRE CHIEF, POLICE CHIEF and the MAYOR all enter to confer with each
other.)

Police Chief:

Fire Chief Chief: No Mr. Mayor, it's a Russian Spy plane.

Mayor:

Fire Chief:

Police Chief:

Mayor:

Police Chief:

want
you tell me exactly where you've come from!

(Centipede leans over the side of the stage.)

Centipede:

(All three humans below scream.)

Fire Chief:

Ladybug:

(Now the GRASSHOPPER joins the CENTIPEDE.)

Grasshopper:

Police Chief:

Mayor:

Grasshopper:

They
seem to be in an awful stew about something.

Centipede:

41
(SPIDER joins them at the edge.)

Spider:

Fire Chief:

Police Chief:

Mayor:

Fire Chief:

Spider:

us get
down?

Mayor:

Police Chief:

Fire Chief:

Mayor:

million

people are standing on the streets now, watching our every move.

Police Chief:

and you can

go up and see what's going on?

(JAMES joins them at the edge.)

Police Chief/Fire Chief/Mayor: (They all gasp.) A little boy!

James:

Police Chief:

James:

a

Glowworm and a-

Mayor:

James:

Fire Chief:

42

Mayor:

peaceful? Get

the ladder, and we shall see.

(The FIRE CHIEF puts a ladder next to the stage stairs. One by One all the INSECTS and JAMES come down, and shake hands with all three of the MEN.)

Mayor:

Not only are

we such a special city to be gifted with these unique visitors, but we are the

only city to ever have a spaceship visit!

James:

Mayor:

we are the

only city to have been graced with a giant piece of flying fruit!

(The Fire Chief and Police Chief rally the audience.)

Fire Chief:

Fire Chief/Police Chief: Hip! Hip! (gesture to the audience) HORRAY!

Mayor:

(The MAYOR, followed by the POLICE CHIEF, FIRE CHIEF and all the insects march and wave down the aisle to the back of the gym. Only JAMES is left.)

Narrator #1:

streets

and they leaned out of the windows of skyscrapers to watch this marvelous procession.

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

Narrator #2:

Narrator #1:

(The NARRATOR #2, looks down and sees JAMES.)

Narrator #2:

43

James:

Narrator #2:

James:

Narrator #2:

James:

don't
you?

Narrator #2:

James:

class shoe
company, with their head office here in New York.

Narrator #2:

James:

model.

Narrator #1:

factory to
make silk stockings?

James:

light
inside the torch of the Statue of Liberty. It's saved New York quite a bit
on
their electricity bill.

Narrator #1:

Symphony Orchestra.

James:

written about her.

Narrator #2:

fly
away home, Your house is on fire..."

Narrator #1:

James:

Fire Chief!

Narrator #2:

44

James:

is all gone,
made into delicious sherbert before it went rotten and given to all the
children in Central Park. Now it's just the stone that's left.

Narrator #2:

James:

where
all the children come to visit me everyday.

Narrator #1:

James:

friends come
to visit all the time. (Pause) May I ask you something now?

Narrator #1:

James:

Narrator #1:

here
stated that this fantastic piece of fruit was "just a peach"...
(The three friends laugh. The music swells, and the actors take their
curtain
call.)
Curtain
45