

The Ant and the Grasshopper

Retold by Carl Sommer
Illustrated by Ignacio Noé



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Fun Times With

Diligence / Work Ethic / Justice

Sommer-Time Stories—Classics
Sommer's lively retelling of this classic Aesop fable.

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Summary: In this adaptation of the traditional fable, Gary the grasshopper puts together a band and all the grasshoppers dance, while Alex the ant and his fellow ants work to store food--then when winter comes the grasshoppers pass a food sharing law.

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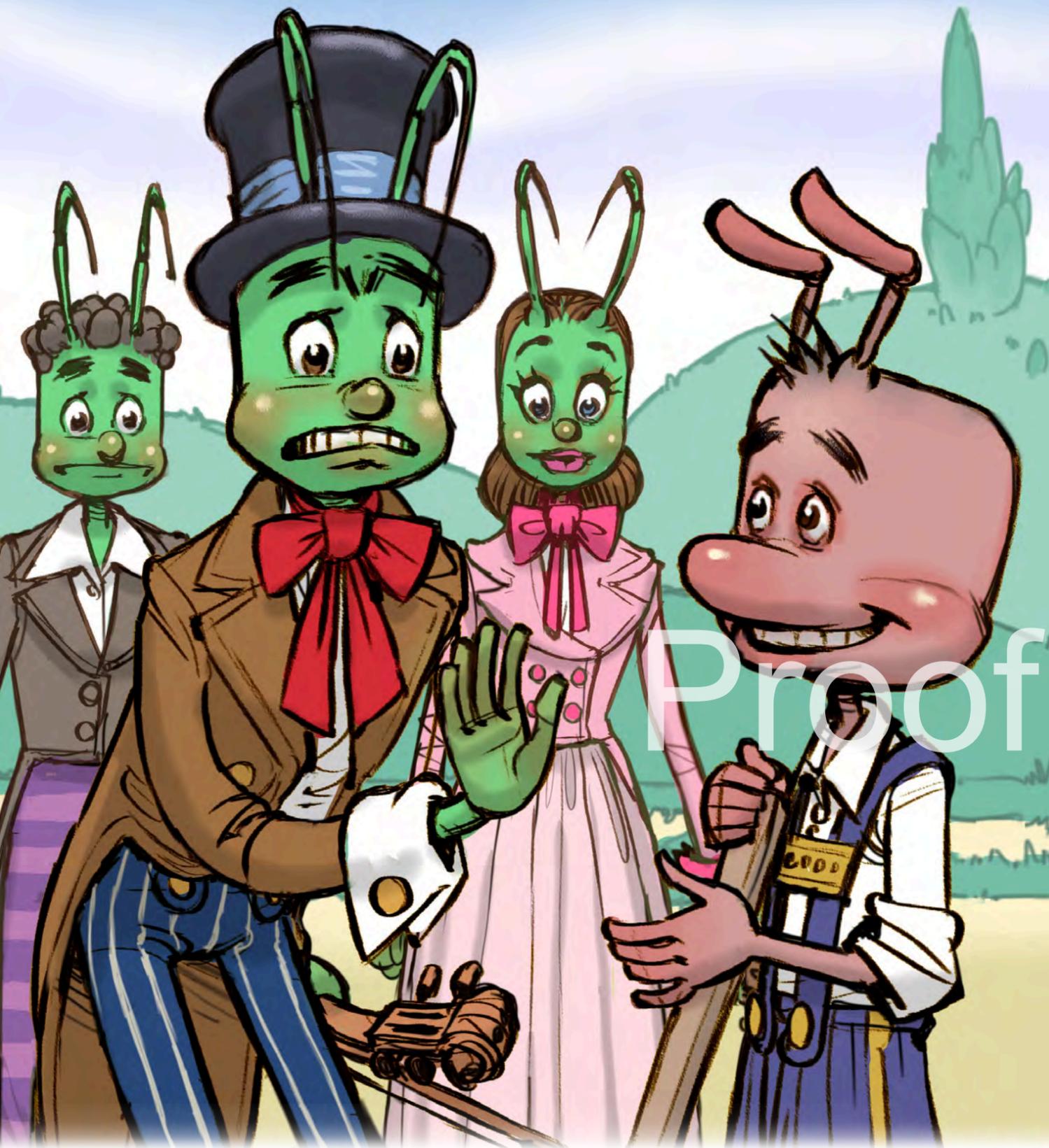
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“Why are you working so hard?” asked Gary, the leader of the grasshoppers. “There’s plenty of time to get food. I’m putting a band together. Come and join us.”



“I’m working now, so we’ll have lots of food for winter,” explained Alex the ant.

“Aw, quit worrying,” said Gary. “You need to take some time off and have fun.”

Alex pulled out a weed and said, “If I don’t get rid of these weeds, they’ll crowd out the plants. We ants know that hard work in spring provides food for winter.”





“That’s a sad way to live,” said Gary, shaking his head. “It’s a beautiful day. Why don’t you relax and enjoy yourself?”

“I’d love to join you,” said Alex as he took

the hoe to remove the weeds. “But my family is more important. I need to prepare for the coming winter. By the way, we do play, but only after our work is done.”



“That’s such a sad way to live!” said Gary as he walked away. “All Alex thinks about is work, work, and more work, and then he plays a little in the evenings. I feel so sorry for him.”

Then Gary saw some grasshoppers resting. “We’re putting a band together,” he said. “Want to join us?”

“Sure!” exclaimed the grasshoppers.

News of the band spread quickly, and many grasshoppers joined them. When the band played, the grasshoppers danced.

“This is great!” said the grasshoppers. Then Gary laughed and said, “The foolish ants are missing all the fun by working all the time.”





“We need to do this more often,” said Gary.
“We’re having so much fun.”
“Yesssss!” shouted all the grasshoppers.
“Why not tomorrow?” yelled someone.

“Yesssss!” they all screamed.
The next day they came again. As news spread
about how much fun they were having, more and
more grasshoppers started bands.

Every day the grasshoppers made music, danced, and had lots of fun. However, this year winter came early, and it was time to find food. The grasshoppers began complaining, "It's too cold and too hard to find food."

"Why don't you ask the ants for help?" suggested Gary. "They have plenty of food."



The grasshoppers left and went to the homes of the ants. When Gail met an ant outside her house, the ant said, "Come in."

"It's very cold," said Gail, "and it's very hard to find food. Could you please give me and my family some food?"



“You played and danced all summer while we worked,” the ant explained. “If you were sick or weak, I would be glad to help, but it wouldn’t be right to give you food when you can still find it for yourself.”

When the grasshoppers gathered the next day, Gary asked, “How did it go?”

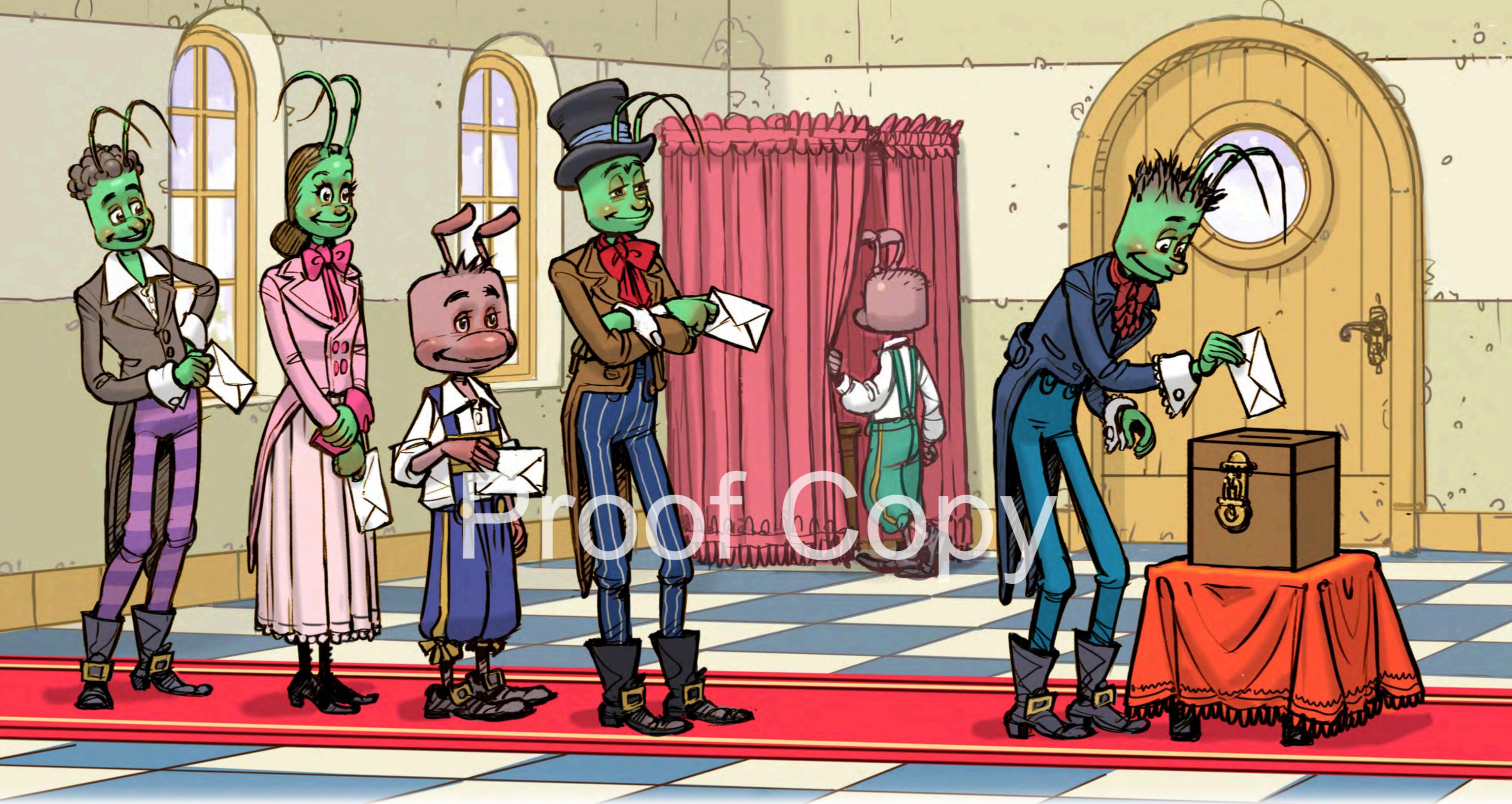
Gail stood up and said, “I went to an ant, and she wouldn’t give me and my family any food.”

“That happened to me, also!” a grasshopper yelled.

“Me, too!” cried another.

Soon all the grasshoppers were complaining about how unfair and selfish the ants were.





“It’s not fair that the greedy, selfish ants won’t share!” shouted Gary.

All the grasshoppers began to chant, “It’s not fair! It’s not fair!”

Then Gary said, “There are more grasshoppers than ants. Why don’t we vote and make it a law

that those who have food must share?”

“Yesssss!” shouted all the grasshoppers.

The grasshoppers and the ants voted, and the law passed that stated: “Anyone who has food must share it with others.”

The grasshoppers danced for joy over the law.



When the ants heard about the law, they were furious they had to share their food with the lazy grasshoppers. But in spite of their complaining, they had to obey the law.

When spring came, Alex, the leader of the

ants, called a meeting. “Why should we work so hard?” he asked. “The grasshoppers don’t work, and they get food. Why don’t we do the same?”

“Yesssss!” shouted the ants.

The next day the ants found the grasshoppers playing their fiddles and dancing. “We’d love to join you,” said Alex. “Do you mind?”

“We’d be happy for you to join us,” said Gary. “I’m so glad you finally learned to take

some time off and have fun.”

While they were dancing, Gary walked over to Alex and asked, “Are you having fun?”

“This is great!” exclaimed Alex. “I’ve never had so much fun in all my life. This is much, *much* better than working.”





However, when winter came, the grasshoppers and ants had little food. They went to other insects to buy something to eat. This went on year after year until they had no more money.

One day Gary called a meeting. "I have some very bad news. We don't have any money left to buy food, and no insects will sell us food unless

we pay for it."

A grasshopper yelled out, "Did you ask the beetles? I know they have lots of food."

"I've asked the leader of the beetles to help us," said Alex. "But the greedy beetles won't share!"

"It's not fair! It's not fair!" shouted the grasshoppers and the ants.



“Let’s put an army together and go to war against those selfish beetles so we can get some of their food!” shouted Gary. “We have many more grasshoppers and ants. We should easily win.”
“Yesssss!” shouted the grasshoppers and the

ants. “We can beat them!”
The grasshoppers and ants went to war against the beetles. “Attack!” yelled Gary and Alex when they saw the beetles. But the beetles were much too strong.

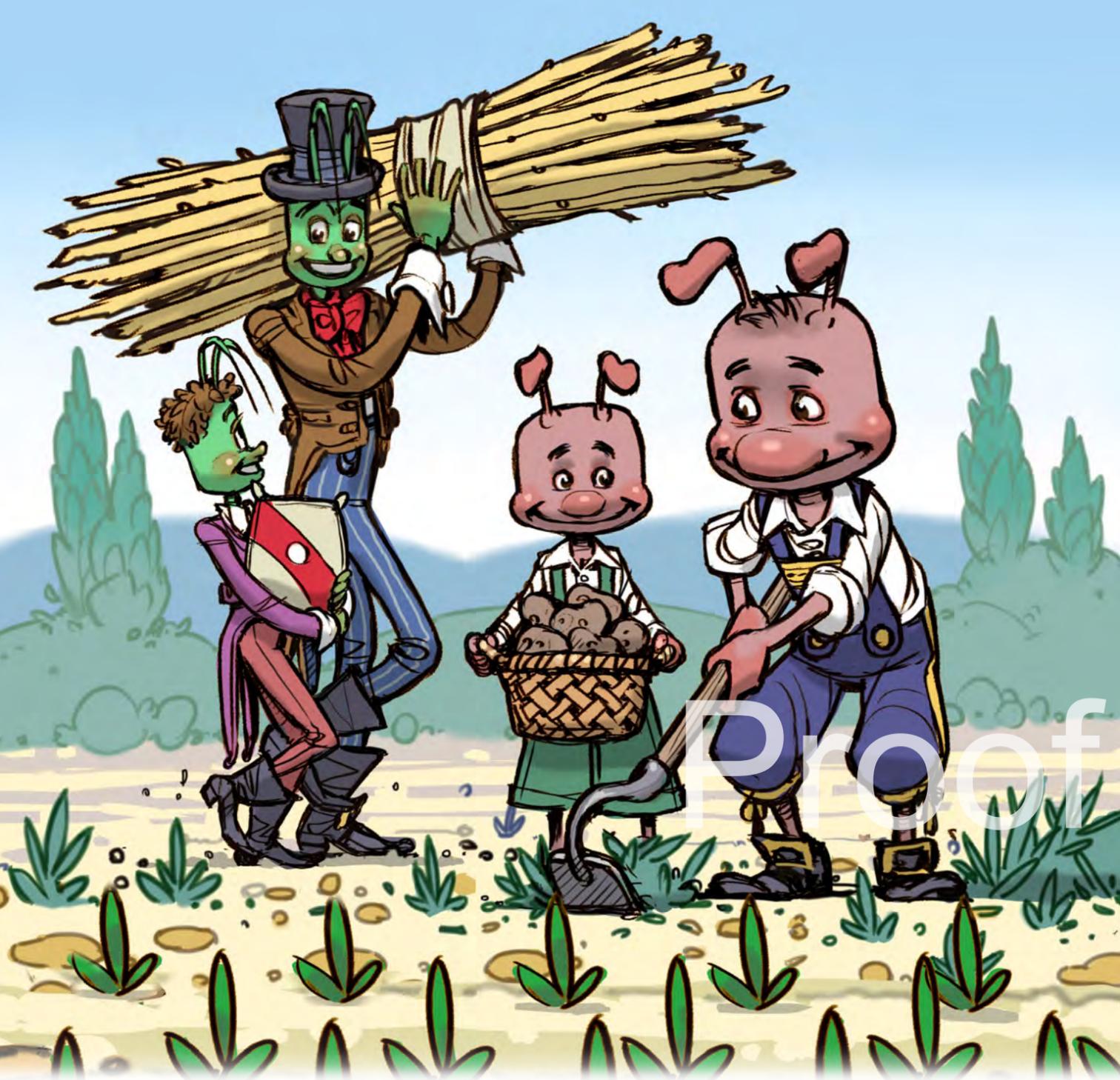


The leader of the beetles said to the ants and the grasshoppers, “We don’t want to be your rulers. You were once a very rich nation, but now you are poor. We want to help you.

“For us to help you, we’re going to make you

obey our law that says: ‘We will help the sick and needy, but those who do not work will not eat.’”

“Ohhhhh!” groaned the grasshoppers and ants. “Now we all *have* to work.”



When Gary left the meeting, he complained, “Now we won’t be able to have anymore fun.”

“You know what?” said Alex. “That’s the way we used to live, and we were a rich nation. We can still have fun. What we need to do is work first and then play.”

“You’re right,” said Gary.

The grasshoppers and ants went to work, and soon they had lots of food again.

When the beetles saw that the grasshoppers and ants were obeying the law, they had a meeting. “We see you have learned to work first and then play,” the beetle leader said. “We want to make a peace treaty with you.”

“Hoorayyyyy!” shouted the grasshoppers and the ants.





Then Gary walked up to the leader of the beetles and said, “Thank you for teaching us the importance of work.”

“Yesssss!” shouted all the grasshoppers and ants.

Since that time, grasshoppers and ants have never forgotten to work first and then play.

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