

# THE LADYBUG AND THE BUTTERFLY

By Edith Weiss

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## CHARACTERS

Narrator

Bob the Butterfly

Lily the Ladybug

Babette the beautiful Butterfly

Meadow animals: Bee, Roly Poly, Dragonfly 1 and 2

Doubling: Babette/any of the meadow animals

## PRODUCTION HISTORY:

Recent productions include the Northglenn Youth Theater, Colorado, University of Redlands, California, and as a touring show produced by Arapahoe Community College, Denver.

### **Awards:**

This play will be featured in the Summer Shorts 3 International Play Festival Williston, North Dakota in 2008.

## SET

A simple hassock with big petals on it so it looks like a flower. A chair for the Narrator

## PROPS

A bag of pollen chips (a bag of potato chips with a label that says "Pollen Chips"), a butterfly net, the bigger the better, Lily's knapsack containing her knitting, a small book, and some tissues, a picnic basket, a blanket, headphones or IPOD with ear buds, small bucket for honey.

## **COSTUMES**

Two sets of butterfly wings, two sets of dragon fly wings. A baseball cap for Bob. For Lily, red and white striped 'footie' pajamas would work, or black tights and top with a red and black polka dotted vest, blouse, or cape.

## **SOUND**

Offstage hammering.

## **MUSIC**

Beethoven's 6<sup>th</sup> Symphony, 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony, "Für Elise" from the Moonlight Sonata, and "Ode to Joy" from the 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

For the sun up and sun down, two of the meadow animals could hold the sun and the moon on sticks and follow the narrator's cues to show the passing of time.

The Narrator could run the music from the stage, or it could be run from offstage or the back of the house.

## **AUTHOR NOTES**

Although you don't have to have the music, it adds a lot to this show, and in an educational setting it enriches the musical knowledge of the actors.

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*AT RISE: The set is a meadow with one flower two actors can sit on.  
Enter NARRATOR SR)*

NARRATOR: Hi. Our play is called The Ladybug and the Butterfly. It's about a butterfly, a ladybug, and another butterfly. I just wanted to explain, before we get started, about our Butterfly.

*(Enter BOB, STAGE left, with beautiful wings, wearing a baseball cap and becoming very agitated as HE tries to open a bag of pollen chips.)*

NARRATOR: There he is. That's Bob. As you can see, he's rather excitable.

BOB: What is with this bag!

NARRATOR: He's often tense-

BOB: *(on the ground, wrestling with bag)* Why do they make bags you can't open? Like there's something top secret in the bag! I'm so hungry!

NARRATOR: -extremely irritable, never looking on the bright side of anything, annoying to others, and rather full of himself.

BOB: I hate bags! *(as HE exits STAGE LEFT)* Think you're smarter than me, huh? Well, I have a hammer! You're dead! You're a bag who has had it!

NARRATOR: You see what I mean. *(offstage, sounds of loud hammering and BOB yelling at the bag)* I just wanted to warn you about Bob, before we got started. I think we'd better begin now, before Bob hurts himself back there.

BOB: *(from offstage)* Ow! Darn it! Stupid hammer! I hate hammers!

NARRATOR: I see it's too late. Well, I'm sure he's fine.

BOB: Take that, you dumb bag! Take that, you stupid hammer!

*(Hammering is loud, NARRATOR is yelling.)*

NARRATOR: *(talking over the hammering)* Let's begin now. Once upon a time, there was a meadow, where early in the morning the wind over the wildflowers sounded very much like Beethoven's Sixth Symphony. *(is using music, play Beethoven's Sixth here)* In this meadow lived a butterfly named Bob. *(pause)* That's his cue. He's supposed to come out now.

BOB: I did it! *(hammering stops)* I win! Victory is mine!

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NARRATOR: LIVED A BUTTERFLY NAMED BOB. BOB! BOB BUTTERFLY!

*(BOB enters. HE is eating disgustedly from the bag of smashed chips.)*

BOB: These chips are like dust! They're disgusting!

NARRATOR: Cut the music! Bob! BOB BUTTERFLY!

BOB: What!

NARRATOR: We've started, and you missed your cue.

BOB: How am I supposed to hear anything while I'm hammering? Nobody can hear when they're hammering!

NARRATOR: Let's start over, shall we? Get backstage, and wait for your cue.

BOB: Oh that's just great. I come on, I go off. I come on, I go off. What do you think I am, a housefly?

NARRATOR: Just go. *(BOB exits SL.)* All right. Meadow. Music: Beethoven. *(the Sixth Symphony plays again)* And in this meadow lived Bob the Butterfly. *(Bob Butterfly enters, SL, takes a cool, hip like stance.)* He loved to skip, merry and light hearted, -

BOB: SKIP? You want me to skip? You're kidding, right?

NARRATOR: No, I'm not. I'm the narrator. Narrators don't kid.

BOB: Oh, man!

NARRATOR: He loved to skip, so merry and lighthearted– *(BOB does, begrudgingly)* as through the grasses and flowers he happily darted.

BOB: *(BOB stops, glares at NARRATOR)* Skipping wasn't enough? Now I have to dart? Why?

NARRATOR: Because it's a beautiful day in a splendid meadow and that's what butterflies do! Now do the happy darting!

BOB: *(making fun)* All right! I'm darting over here! Oh, look, some grass! Oooo! And I'm darting happily over here- oh my goodness it's a flower! Oh, happy day!

NARRATOR: Stick to the script or I'm getting the net.

BOB: All right, all right, I will. I shall spend this sun shining hour reclining on my flower.

*(Sits on flower, NARRATOR smiles. Puts on headphones or ear buds for an IPOD. NARRATOR frowns.)*

NARRATOR: *(to audience)* Headphones are not in the script. *(goes to butterfly, lifts earphones)* But soon, he was bored, how could such a beautiful day be ignored? He should be dancing and prancing in the meadow!

BOB: No, he shouldn't. He should be listening to his music!

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*(BEETHOVEN music stops as BOB puts his headphones on, listens to his music and does some “air drumming” NARRATOR EXITS SR, gets net, comes back immediately. Crosses to BOB and silently stares at him with the butterfly net.)*

BOB: Enough with the net! All right, I'll dance and I'll prance! *(which HE does with very begrudgingly)*

NARRATOR: Because it was such a beautiful meadow, sometimes a swarm of bees, looking for honey, flew through the meadow.

*(Enter BEE SR)*

BOB: Hey! What are you doing?

NARRATOR: And the bee answered:

BEE: The Queen bee sent me out to look for honey!

BOB: Hey! This isn't funny! This is my meadow! Out you go!

BEE: But I won't be in your way, I'll just gather some-

BOB: Buzz off! It's my honey! You can't stay- and tell the rest of them to stay away.

*(BOB chases BEE off STAGE R, UPSTAGE of NARRATOR, who shakes head disapprovingly as they pass by behind.)*

NARRATOR: And then, looking for a sunny place to picnic, came two dragonflies and their roly-poly sidekick.

*(DRAGON FLIES and ROLY POLY enter SL, with picnic basket and blanket. They start to set up a picnic STAGE LEFT. BOB, at extreme SR, turns, watches for a moment, then runs to STAGE LEFT.)*

BOB: No, no, no, no, no! *(ROLY POLY bug rolls into a ball)* Put the blanket away, I have had just about enough! Get out right now or I'm gonna get rough!

DRAGONFLY: You scared the roly poly right into a ball!

DRAGONFLY 2: You're acting like a Neanderthal!

ROLY POLY: How can you be so nasty to someone so small?

BOB: I know you're dragonflies, but I have no fear! I know karate. . . so get your dragon butts outta here!

*(BOB, CENTER STAGE, does absurd karate kicks and sounds at them.)*

DRAGONFLY: Come on, Roly Poly, I think he's insane.

DRAGONFLY 2: Maybe all that karate has rattled his brain.

*(BOB chases them off STAGE LEFT.)*

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BOB: Out! Scram! It's mine! All mine! Go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go! My nerves!

*(BOB sits on flower, picks up bag of chips.)*

NARRATOR: So the butterfly, once again happy, started flitting merrily *(BOB glares at NARRATOR, who motions with the net, then BOB gets up, but keeps holding bag of chips)* -and as he fluttered in the sun, in came a ladybug on the run .

*(Music: Beethoven's Symphony 5 in C Minor. Enter a striped LADYBUG, LILY, STAGE RIGHT, running, matching actions to music, panting, sees flower. Rushes to it, sits on flower, calms down. BOB stands SL, stunned, for once, into speechlessness.)*

LILY: *(to audience)* I was chased by a crow, who wanted me for a snack! I ran far away and I'm not going back. I'll live here, on this flower, and be safe from attack. Everything I need I have in my knapsack.

*(Takes out knitting and a book. Knits and reads.)*

BOB: Hey! What the—No, not again! No! It's my meadow. It's mine! Get out! Out! O! U! T! Out!

*(LADYBUG looks at him calmly as BOB waits for her to leave.)*

NARRATOR: Our butterfly Bob, very appalled, fussed and fidgeted and finally he squalled:

BOB: What's this? Who's that? Why, it's overalled! It's striped and it's weird! *(HE studies her)* It's a bug, it's a she—it's just as I feared!

LILY: That beautiful butterfly looks kind of mad. If I had those pretty wings, I'd be nothing but glad.

BOB: And she's sitting on my favorite flower! I'll go over there with a look so mad and sour she'll be out of the meadow within the hour.

*(Drops empty bag of pollen chips on ground, marches over to LILY and glares at her.)*

LILY: Hi. By the way, while you were flittering about, you dropped that bag. That's littering.

BOB: This is my meadow! I can do whatever I want!

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LILY: Littering is piggish, gross, and really dumb. It's simply never done where I come from.

*(LILY picks up litter, puts it in her knapsack.)*

BOB: Well wherever you came from you can just go back. You are so uncool with your knitting and knapsack.

LILY: My name is Lily. I don't care if I'm uncool. If you don't like me cause I'm different, then I know you're just a fool.

BOB: What!

LILY: Oh—perhaps I've been rude. Would you like to sit down, would you like to share my food?

*(LILY makes room on the flower.)*

BOB: No! You're missing the point! That's my flower. You are sitting on my flower. In my meadow.

LILY: No.

BOB: Whaddaya mean, no?

LILY: No, it's not your meadow. This meadow belongs to everyone. I see no trespass sign, I see no fence—so I'm going to set up residence. I won't make a mess, I'd never ever litter—think of me as your new house sitter.

NARRATOR: Well, Bob just had a fit! *(BOB throws one heck of a temper tantrum.)* It didn't bother Lily—she just started to knit.

BOB: Just who do you think you are?!

LILY: I, Sir, am a ladybug, and—

BOB: A ladybug? Ugh. A ladybug with stripes? Yuks and yipes. You're short and squat and everything. You don't even have a decent wing. Get out of my meadow—you're ugly you know. *(SHE walks downstage away from the insults. It looks like SHE's leaving)* Move it! Out you go! Beat feet! Hit the street!

*(LILY stands downstage.)*

LILY: Sticks and stones will hurt my bones and names can really hurt me. But they won't make me move! *(making a mad dash for the flower, beating BOB there)* I'll sit here and prove, completely and fully, that I won't be pushed around by a butterfly bully! *(knits)*

BOB: Are there any more like you? I mean one is bad enough, but two! That would be really tough to take. Just think of three—do they think the meadow is free?

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