

AESOP: I'm afraid she cannot go. She's with me.

GEORGE: Then you can both go! No more rain!

AESOP: Just as I am a shadow—Rain is a shadow—from one of my stories. It's quite a good one actually—it's all about blame—you shouldn't blame anyone for your misfortune. You must take care and be responsible.

RAIN: And why do you all blame the rain for flooding the theater? It is not my fault!

AESOP: Ah—but maybe it is—for you are the rain!

GEORGE: What are you saying? She cannot be rain—rain does not speak! Rain—you know—rains!

RAIN: Ha! What do you know? For what are you but a repetitious, echoing, imitation of a sound! I, at least, am real! I, at least, create! Listen to me! You may learn something! I am sick and tired of being belied! I am goodness—I turn the grass green in the spring. And do I ever get so much as a small: "Thank you, Rain!" Never! When I fill the lakes so people can swim and fish, does anyone say, "Oh Rain. How wonderful you are to do this for us!" Not once have I been properly thanked! Do you know what I hear? "Yuck! Too much rain! I wish it would stop already!" "It's so gloomy out!" "I can't stand the rain." Or I hear, "It's so dry out here! Where's the rain?" Everyone wants more of me. Everyone wants less of me, but nobody has the common courtesy to look at me and say, "Thank you, Rain. I'm so glad you came." Why do you blame me for your flooding?

GEORGE: Because it's your fault! (*Aside:*) I can't believe I'm talking to a raindrop.

RAIN: Don't blame the rain! Blame the clouds! The clouds create me. I have no say in the matter. My lot in life is so very

AESOP: Just a little.

ERIC: The man wanted a wife.

AESOP: Better.

ERIC: So he walked into town –

(Four women enter. The Young Woman, ELLA; The Charming Woman; MICHELLE; The Philosopher's Daughter, MARIA and The Mother, GERTRUDE. When not being used, the "extra women" – Aesop's shadows – act as a Greek Chorus. This can be stylized. The women may face the back of the theater until needed or be positioned strategically around the stage – whatever your will.)

To begin a new life.

CHORUS: See him begin his new life.

ERIC: Oh my! That is a very attractive woman. *(Eric approaches Ella:)* Hello.

ELLA: Hello.

ERIC: Would you marry me?

ELLA: Whaaaat?

ERIC: I mean...do you have any money?

ELLA: No. Not really.

ERIC: Oh.

ELLA: I have a goat!

ERIC: That's good. Goats are good. Anything else?

ELLA: No.

ERIC: Oh. Well...

ELLA: Well...

(Lorenzo begins to maniacally sweep without accomplishing anything.)

LOWRY: You're sweeping dirt onto me! Quit it!

LORENZO: Then get out of my way!

LARK: I need the broom!

LYON: Well, we can't all have the broom. Since you have everything under control—I think I'll nap.

LEAH: Oh no you don't! You never do anything!

LYON: That's because I'm the youngest. I get away with stuff!

GEORGE: STOP! I'm not "learning" anything here. All they're doing is complaining!

LEAH: But we complain so well. Don't you think?

(Leah takes the broom.)

We are given an impossible task. Who cleans up the forest, I ask? I think Mother just wants to keep us busy. I am a child. I was made to have fun! And the sun is shining so prettily. I think I will lay down here and bask in the warmth of its rays.

(Lorenzo takes the broom.)

LORENZO: All work and no play! It's our sorry lot in life. Unending chores devised by our loving Mother. She connives and she plots, she plans and concocts busy work to keep us occupied.

LOWRY: *(Taking the broom:)* Why Mother? Oh why do you give us all this work? Why, Mother. Why? Is it your own responsibilities you shirk?

LARK: *(Taking the broom:)* So we work and we toil and complain. I think work has altered our brain! Hard work makes me dizzy! Mother wants us busy! Do you know what I think? It's insane!