

Four little black ants

(Excerpt in English)

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MORNINGS

“I have a problem,” said the first little black ant.

“Really?” peeked the second.

“Again?” smiled the third.

“A big one?” puzzled the fourth.

“Quite so. I love mornings so much! They’re so amazing for everything: taking walks, exercising, reading, painting, writing or tending the garden – simply all of it. But everything won’t fit! I don’t know how to make them last longer.”

“Proper problem, that.”

“Pointy and not perpendicular.”

“I might have a solution for you,” hinted the fourth little ant. “See: if you’re as busy as a bee, wake up earlier than me!”

BOOK

“I’ve got a very smart book,” said the first little black ant.

“The kind that tells me the dos and the don’ts.”

“Amazing!” said the second ant.

“Impossible!” said the third.

“Everyone’d have a book like this, then,” said the fourth little ant, waving its hand.

“They can have one, too,” replied the first. “If they can handle it. Books like this are no joke, they hint, and they poke, and they let you find out for yourself. It’s not magic, it’s like knowledge rolling across the ages. I can’t fully fathom it yet, but each time I glance, I find something new. Old wisdom often rings true.”

PAPER

Four little black ants sat in the heather.

“Sometimes I feel like there’s so many words inside me I’m about to burst,” said the first one.

“And then?” the other three wanted to know.

“Nothing. I grab a paper sheet but the words are all gone.”

HATS

Four little black ants had made up their minds:

“Enough work, time for a trip.”

“On foot?” said the first one.

“Why not?”

“Where to?”

“Past the mountain.”

“Tall order on foot, then.” So they sat in the car and drove off.

The world past the mountain is wonderfully nice, especially in good company. They ate, they drank, and with great delight they each bought a hat.

“Oh, aren’t we lovely!” they merrily exclaimed, “We should wear these every day.”

“No, no! Back home it’s the other side.”

“Everything’s so serious there.”

“Seriously.”

And they made a pact to keep the hats a secret.

But when the moon shines especially bright, they appear amid trees in the middle of night, wearing their hats, playing tag and climbing stalks of grass. They’re alive and hearty, happy to be light of foot, and just to feel, and see, and sense, and be.

DANDELION

It was full moon in mid-April, and four little black ants were digging up dandelion roots.

“Who knows if it’s all true ...” whispered the first one.

“What?”

“Well, all of it. That on such nights, roots might carry special might ...”

“Of course it’s true,” said the second ant in a hushed voice, rhymes spilling right out of her mouth:

“It’s true, it’s true that tea like this, will lift a louse from an abyss, snatching it from heaven’s bliss, with dandelion you can’t miss.”

“Stop it! You’re making fun of ancient wisdom!” complained the other three. But this one shook its head: “No way, I do believe in healing roots. But even more so – happy boots!”

RAIN

It was raining, the four little black ants were silent. Drops glided across the grass, dripping while they huddled under the coltsfoot, gazing at the water.

“Sometimes I’m a little scared,” said the first one.

“Of what?” wondered the rest.

“Of losing you ...”

“Oh, hogwash! How could you lose us ...”

“I don’t know. It’s just that ... I’m really hoping we don’t drift apart. That would make life so lonesome and hard.”

“What nonsense you speak! Where does it start, this troubling part?”

“Well, days can be so mean ... I sit and I’m having bad dreams of losing my friends. My heart and my hands feel so heavy, then.”

“I know how to put this blue to an end,” said the second little ant, hugging the first one tightly, so tightly. The third and the fourth also joined in. “You see,” they all said, “if we hug really close, there’s no way you’ll still be feeling morose. So it goes!”

DANCE

Four little black ants walked through the forest.

“If I only had two legs,” said the first one suddenly, “I’d be taking dancing classes.”

“Why not anyway?” asked the other three.

“I don’t know ... someone once called me a clumsy old log. Said dancing with me was like wading through fog, too many legs causing a bog.”

“What a shame,” said the blackest little ant.

“You’re in your own way. Let’s dance! Right away!”

They whistled and sang, oh, how soft their steps became. Fluttering about the trees and ponds, one spoke for all four:

“I love those joys that just happen, like play. They make you feel fuzzy, inside and for days.”

SLEEP

“I haven’t slept all night, now I’m snoozing. It’s like I’m slowly losing ground,” moaned the first little black ant, surly.

“Close your eyes”, said the other three. “We’ll look after you.”

“I would – but who's gonna cook?”

“Us.”

“And who's gonna sweep the floor?”

“Us.”

“And who's gonna hang the laundry?”

“Us. We just did, actually. Can’t you smell the freshness?”

“Shall I really lie down? Kindly thanks, and thanks again. Don't know what I'd do without you, friends ... I'll be there for you, too, when you need a hand.”

LESS

“I can’t feel my feelers today,” said the first little black ant.

“Just follow us.”

“I can’t feel my legs, either.”

“We’re sitting down for a snack in that case.”

“I don’t even feel hungry. Something’s not right, I’m having trouble staying upright.”

“Bummer. Maybe lie down. Here, that’s right.”

“Indeed, just like that, but this is where ants so often fall flat – we hurry so madly, so badly, even gladly.”

Silence. Quietly they stared ahead. And then, an epiphany:

“Maybe we really do try too hard ...”

“Maybe we do keep rushing too fast ...”

“Maybe we don’t really need all this stuff ...”

“Maybe an ant, too, can unwind. Enough is enough.”

And so all four of them lay in the grass.

“Let’s build a world that isn’t so fast,” they decided. “There’s too many demands, expectations, exhausting temptations. Let’s coin a new phrase: Less. Less. Less.”