

### “A Cricket’s Holiday”

It was another crystal clear evening in the tall grasses that filled the field. On this particular night the new moon hung low on the western horizon. Its thin white light could barely be seen behind the glow of the firefly lanterns that swung in the gentle summer breeze. A jungle of shadows cast by the individual blades of grass surrounded the gathering of crickets that had come, just like they did every night, to their favorite meeting place.

“What a fine night it is,” chirped Nicket, a dark-colored wood cricket who loved to chatter.

“Yes, indeed!” echoed Chirp and Meadowsong, both field crickets with large, golden forewings and a fondness for composing songs full of rhythm.

“A perfect evening for an adventure,” strummed Nicket. “To a far away place—”

“I know just the place,” began Chirp. “Follow me!”

The three crickets spent the night hopping across darkened meadows and through the cool woods. As they journeyed, they took turns playing songs full of gaiety and telling stories about a whimsical young cricket named Goldenharp. They sang and they played until at last they arrived at the Great Shore where they were greeted by the sweet salt air and a sleeping ocean.

It was early morning and a quiet light was breaking the stillness of the night. They watched the sky from atop a weathered dune as the blackness turned to a deep blue and a final star silently yielded to a yawning sun. And with its stretching arms, the bringer of the

new day seemed to call to the dawnbirds, awaken the morning wind, and ignite the golden sands.

“It’s as if the sun were drying itself from a night long dip,” said Meadowsong.

On the glistening sands nearby, Chirp noticed that the yellow morningcrabs were ditting with dabs of the sparkling grain.

Nicket watched events high above the wind bent reeds, “—and it seems as though the white wavebirds are carving out figures in the morning currents.”

Squinting at the sun’s reflection off the water, Chirp added, “—and you can almost hear the clouds laughing at the sea, mocking the waves for their slowness.”

Then their focus turned to a new delicacy. “Look over there!” chimed Meadowsong. “There are elephants sitting on the beach! And they are showing off their wrinkles and their flab! How silly they look!”

“Listen to their fast flowing gab! How silly they sound!” noted Chirp in agreement.

“And the hungry seagulls appear quite content to play games above their lollipop umbrellas,” remarked a chuckling Nicket.

The crickets soon found the crawling fingers of their shadows huddled up against their resting forms. The views of sea and sand gave way to dreams of twilight melodies and the swaying of tall grasses.

Chirp, Nicket, and Meadowsong napped in the dune rills for as long as the sun shone above. Before they realized the time of day, the sun had settled in the west, taking with it all the color from the cloud tops and leaving the crickets with only the sound of the beating waves, the twinkling of the silvery stars above, and the promise of another adventure.