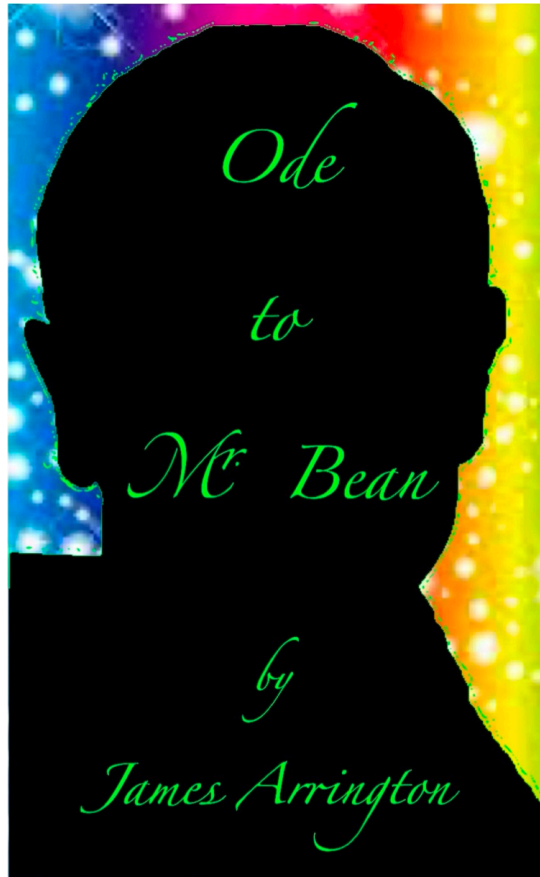


PERUSAL SCRIPT



Newport, Maine

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Ode To Mr. Bean

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ORDER #3353

ODE TO MR. BEAN

by James Arrington

CAST

YOUNG MAN — dressed in slacks and a loud sport jacket. He is neither handsome nor plain, but very expressive. His face is especially active, agile, and demonstrative. He is deeply curious and intent his new environment. His feelings show fully on his active face; and this is apparent in both face and posture at all times.

YOUNG WOMAN — She is cute in her second-tier party dress, gloves, purse, and high platform shoes.

ODE TO MR. BEAN a short play by James Arrington. 12-15 minutes 1m, 1f. Simple park set. This is a tribute to a very funny man. Bean is up to his old discombobulating antics in his fascination with everything about him in this crazy world. A young man enters a park apparently waiting for his lady. After some “park” adventures, the young lady arrives. Are they blind? Can they not hear or see? Between the two, a strange, highly unusual — even nonsensical courtship appears to take place. Just the thing for anxious lovers in the modern era! **ORDER #3353**

James Arrington — Retired former Associate Professor, Former Department Chair at Utah Valley University. James Arrington was schooled professionally at The American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco and then earned a master’s degree in Theatre from Brigham Young University. He has worked professionally for 30 years became a sensation on the Utah theatre scene when he returned to create and star in his one-man show *Here’s Brother Brigham*. It toured the U.S., Canada, and the British isles. He went on to write and produce numerous theatre pieces including several one-man shows: *J. Golden*, *Tumuaki! Matthew Cowley of the Pacific*, and co-wrote *Wilford Woodruff: God’s Fisherman*. He wrote and starred in a quirky TRIPLE *The Farley Family Reunion*, *Farley Two: The Next Gyration*, and *Farley Family Xmas* and a charming musical *Christmas Without Christmas!?* He co-wrote the pioneer musical *The Trail of Dreams* and was granted a commission by the Sesquicentennial UtahWar Committee to co-write and tour *March of the Salt Soldiers: The Utah War*. He has written for stage, screen, outdoor pageant, radio drama, and puppet shows.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE: If the reader is unaware of Mr. Bean's physical comedy and especially his marvelous facial expressions at this point, NOW would be the time to introduce, expand, or evoke your understanding. The script won't make much sense to you otherwise. A simple one-time search of the Internet will bring humorous memes, GIFs, movie shorts, and sketches for your consideration. This familiarity will inform and enlighten your ability to visualize the action throughout the script.

READING: The script reads long. Describing movement, especially simultaneous movement, feels longer than simply watching it. Running time is about 12 minutes.

CASTING: Casting is crucial. The script is very much like a mime or perhaps even a dance. It should be cast accordingly with talented movement-oriented actors or even dancers. The two characters should also be cast very close to each other's height for face-to-face confrontations.

ODE TO MR. BEAN

AT RISE: The stage is set as a park containing an industrial-type park bench with a back is set at down center. It is 5 to 6 ft wide with side-armrests . If any, other set pieces should be cartoony and two dimensional.

(A YOUNG MAN enters from Stage Right. He stops, looks approvingly and places his hands on his hips. He takes a deep cleansing breath. Whoops! He suddenly needs to sneeze and wrestles out his pocket handkerchief to accomplish it. Ah, just a little too late! He cleanses off the residue hoping no one saw him do it. He carefully folds his handkerchief replacing it and stretches a bit. He spots the park bench in the center of the stage and is delighted.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(He approaches the bench. He eyes it up, inspects it carefully and determines it's a little dirty. He goes to retrieve his hankie from the wrong pocket. What? Not there?! Did he drop it? No. Oh no! He checks all of his pockets and finally discovers it. He thankfully pulls the hankie from his pocket and goes to work dusting, even cleansing the bench minutely on both seats. He spits on it once or twice buffing it like a careful shoeshine. He inspects his work.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(Pleased, he carefully lays the handkerchief out on the bench's Stage Right side. It hangs over the bench on the front side as far so it won't fall off. He very carefully, even precisely sits on it, at the front bench edge of it, and then tries several poses testing them for comfort. He thoughtfully chooses his favorite — the most relaxed-looking, with an elbow deftly on the arm. He then carefully snuggles his bum back – carefully moving the hankie with his weight and settles comfortably in to the right side.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(He smooths and checks his clothing. I look nice and handsome here, don't I? Nice day and me in it! He smooths his clothing a little, fixing a little here and there. He discovers an invisible piece of feather (we can't see it) on his shoulder. Horrors! He attempts to dust it off. He checks – missed it! He tries to blow it off. Still there. He blows harder. It doesn't go! He blows mightily 'til he's completely out of air. Gasping for breath. He jumps up throwing his arms and hands wildly to shake it off. Still there! He sits unhappily. Again, staring right at it, he gets an idea. As inconspicuously as possible, while he's

looking in other locations, he begins to walk his fingers from his waist toward it. He pauses, looking side-eyed at it. He readies as if in surprise attack. Closing one eye as if to aim, he suddenly snatches at it. He pulls up his closed fist to look carefully inside. Did he get it? He carefully unrolls his fingers, eyeing it down. Nothing. It's not there! Surprised and disappointed he slowly looks around and is surprised to find it still there on his shoulder. Still there!? Ugh!! Finally, in several growing attempts he finally takes off the oat on that side, and simply snatches it directly off his shoulder! Rolling his fingers slowly open, did he get it this time? Yup, he's captured it! Hallelujah!

(He maneuvers it between his thumb and index finger staring at it menacingly. The darn little icky thing! He flicks it deservedly far away to his right side. He watches it float this way, that way, to the ground. There! HE pulls a little face at it. Got you! Satisfied, he straightens out his seat on the hankie and again takes his favorite pose, approving of his look. Does anyone see how great I look? HUMPH, darn little speck on the ground, I guess I showed you! While looking again at his surroundings he suddenly feels hunger. Rubbing his tummy a little and becoming concerned he wonders what to do. But I'm prepared! Yes, I brought something with me just in case.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(He fetches a smallish rolled-up bag of in-the-shell peanuts from his pocket. He gleefully opens the bag and sniffs the odor.

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(He selects one out and happily breaks it on his teeth, and holds the shells in the side of his mouth as he chews it. Delicious!)

YOUNG MAN: *(muddled)* Ahhh!

NOTE: *The actor does not eat peanuts. The bag is only filled with split peanut shells which he mimes opening and eating.*

(He notices the shell(s) now in his mouth – What to do? Hmm. Anyone coming? Nope. He spits the shell(s) on the ground in front of him. Ha, ha, that was fun. He enjoys a few peanuts in various ways and poses spitting or tossing all the shells, in front of him. He discovers a bad one. Ugh. He leans forward spitting the mess out immediately.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(Ugh! Down with you! Now looking down he realizes he's making a bit of a mess with the shells. He looks about for anyone watching – nope – he covertly sweeps the shells under

the bench with his foot. He checks how it looks now. He finishes the job with both feet. That's it! A sudden movement on the ground to the far right catches his eye.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh-ah-aaaah.

(He leans back and happily watches a squirrel that appears to have entered his area. He moves his head, watching its sudden stop-and-start movements, the YOUNG MAN is transfixed. He becomes slowly concerned as he watches the animal travel toward him. He chooses a timid defiance of tossing a shell husk at the animal. The squirrel apparently checks out the shell. Surprised it didn't scare the squirrel. He's more nervous as the animal then works around in front of him.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

(Now it's turned and coming toward him, YIKES! Horrified, he screams a teensy scream and awkwardly pulls his feet up onto the bench.)

YOUNG MAN: AHHHHH! Ahhh!

(He frightfully looks back to the Squirrel. As it seems to move forward toward the peanut shells under him, he leans farther and farther over to track it until it's directly under him. He very nearly falls off the bench.)

YOUNG MAN: AHHH!!!!

(Recovering he looks around. Can anyone help? Nope, no one around. He looks back down... OH NO, THE SQUIRREL'S GONE! He leaps up on the bench looking for it, but in the movement the hankie has fallen off the bench. He double takes! OH NO!!! NOT THAT TOO! Very concerned, he slowly stretches down, to try and retrieve it – BUT WHERE IS THAT FRIGHTENING SQUIRREL?! He stops cautiously looking about. After a couple of terrifying tries, he resolves to find the Squirrel before picking up the hankie. Cautiously, so as not to fall, he rises to his feet, but teeters nearly falling!)

YOUNG MAN: Ah-ah-ahh!

(Clutching the top bench rail, he rises as far as he can, carefully balancing, and searching for the animal. He discovers it at the Stage left of the bench! Taking his hand off the bench he dramatically points at it.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh-HAAA!

(He comically loses his balance and falls to the ground in a lump.)

YOUNG MAN: AaaaaAAAHHH!

(Sputtering oddly and clearly disoriented, he's uncertain what has happened to him. He suddenly "comes to" and realizes he's on the ground with the squirrel. Wildly looking for it, he spies it nearby.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(GASPING and GURGLING like a drowning man he reaches up and desperately grasps the bench. He dramatically pulls himself up to and onto the bench, panting. OH WOW! That was close. I nearly was eaten by a pesky squirrel! After recovering his breath, a little, he hunts, frightened, for the squirrel and finds it now at the right of the bench. With some diligent effort, he secures himself with his knees on the bench. He looks down at his hankie, still on the ground, and then around for the squirrel. Nowhere. Now's the moment. He carefully sneaks his hand down and quickly picks the hankie up with two fingers. There, staring at him is the squirrel! He SCREAMS like he's seen a shark in the water.)

YOUNG MAN: AAAAAHHHH!!!!!!

(He pulls instantly up again to perch on the bench. He's suddenly surprised that his hand has the hankie anyway. He hugs it and gently rubs it on his cheek. O, TRA-LAA, my little hankie.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh.

(He looks around to the silly squirrel now far right, and hoists the hankie triumphantly...)

YOUNG MAN: Ah-ah—ahhhhh.

(I showed you! He mockingly shakes his finger and scolds it.)

YOUNG MAN: Ah-ah-ahhhh

(He begins to clean himself off with his hankie, finally relaxing a bit.)

(Suddenly, and without the YOUNG MAN seeming to notice, a YOUNG WOMAN enters Stage Left. She looks about, then walks with an insane pertness, looking around for someone. Not seeming to see anyone, she stops momentarily at the left. She holds up her purse and fishes out a little mirror to see herself. Obviously delighted with her looks she coos.)

YOUNG WOMAN: *(As in YOU)* Oooo!

(He has paid no attention in the least, but she is coy and pleased. In checking the area,

she spies the squirrel, and takes tiny running steps past the front of the bench, to see it. Again, The YOUNG MAN pays no attention. Now somewhat past him she puts both hands on her knees and tilts her head, cutely looking at the animal. As she watches, it clearly retreats out of the area. She's a bit disappointed.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Oooo!

(She turns back to regard the park bench. This is delightful. What a day! She starts toward the bench taking in her surroundings, then skips the rest of the way to left side of the bench Fun! She issues a sweet little sound.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Oooo!

(As she skips toward him, the YOUNG MAN decides to get up and circle around the bench.)

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(The two go toward each other very nearly smashing into one another. She inspects the seat for dirt, using her glove. Nope. She finds it, surprisingly, clean as a whistle.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Oooo!

(She sits pertly on the Stage Left side of the bench, and she snuggles back into the left back corner, taking exactly the same pose, but oppositely, as the YOUNG MAN's favorite. Meanwhile he has been doing some high stepping calisthenics behind her. He grunts and stops rather breathlessly. They speak at close-to-the-same moment.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Oooo!

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(Enough of that! He comes around to the bench, mopping his face with his hankie. He rearranges his hankie, and again slides into his favorite pose on the bench. There they sit – like bookends! They both seem comfortable. They both lean out at the same moment and look oppositely right and left. As their faces look directly at one another there is a moment... They seem to look at each other right in the face. Then a simultaneous disappointment.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Oooo!

YOUNG MAN: Ahhh!

(He suddenly spots the bag of peanuts smashed on the bench. He picks it up. Oh, it's

smashed and almost out! Dang. He searches for the final few peanuts. He picks a few out and eats them as before. While doing so, he begins to slightly wiggle his legs sideways with pleasure.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Oooo!

(After a few moments of checking her clothing and hair, she crosses her legs smartly. She checks her skirt to not allow it hike too far up. He begins to open and close his knees widely and rhythmically. She starts kicking the crossed foot in his direction, opposite but at the same exact rhythm. His knees and her foot intersect the same exact space but never touch. After a few moments of this he stops and crosses his knees. Right after this she decides to shift to another position. As she does so, her leg is poked by some little sharp element of the bench between the two.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Ah-ooo!

(The YOUNG WOMAN carefully examines her hurting leg, then searches, pertly, through her purse, finally pulling out a fingernail file. She finds, then goes to work on the sharp part of the bench, until it is smooth enough for her.)

FIVE MORE PAGES TO THE END