

sad. I am woefully misconstrued! The fault lies with the clouds!

CLOUD: (*Entering as a mass of wisps and possibly speaking in an airy voice:*) Pardon me, did you call?

AESOP: Why, yes, Cloud. I believe someone did.

GEORGE: What's this? First we're talking to a raindrop and now a cloud?

CLOUD: It's true I create raindrops. Why it's elementary my dear fellow—cause and effect. But one shouldn't blame me. Oh no. I have no power over what happens to me. My lot in life is a force of nature. My explanation is evaporation. I just grow heavier as I float through the sky. I am a mere waterspout for oceans and lakes. It is not my fault that when I get overloaded with H₂O—I explode.

AESOP: Then whose fault is it?

CLOUD: It's the fault of large bodies of water! I am a mere tool for the waters of the earth to manipulate. Water evaporates into the air and I am created. For a while, I remain a gentle wispy cloud. Light and airy—I float above all and give thanks for my lot in life. But you see, greedy oceans are not happy when I am happy. Oh no! They send up more moisture, and more moisture and EVEN MORE until I get heavier and heavier. Soon—I *am weighted down with so much water that I cannot float! And that makes me furious. So furious that I squeeze myself dry and let the water drop back to earth where it came from! Sometimes I drop a little at a time and sometimes I am so mad that I drop buckets of water!* And then I am light and airy again. So, if you want to blame someone for your theater flooding—blame the oceans!

GEORGE: But—we're not near any oceans. So I am blaming you!

(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!