
(LAKE enters with a "Superior" air.)

LAKE: Oh for goodness sake! Haven't you ever heard of a lake? Or a river? We feed into oceans or didn't you know that?

GEORGE: I knew that.

LAKE: No you didn't.

GEORGE: I am not having this discussion. I don't speak to large bodies of water.

LAKE: 'Tis a pity. If you were open to new situations, you would be able to find a way out of this theater. You should converse with me. For I know all. I am a superior lake! And I will take all the blame. Don't blame the rain! Don't blame the cloud! They're under my control! It is indeed the waters of the earth that makes your theater flood. It is because of me! And only me—that your building floods and grows mold! I take the blame for the devastation. I am the source! I have no remorse!

(And with a magician's arm – Aesop creates an exit for Rain, Cloud and Lake. They may exit bickering.)

GEORGE: Are you some sort of magician? In all my years here, I have never been approached by a raindrop, a cloud or a lake. I didn't know nature could talk!

AESOP: Why, it was a story. I told you I was a storyteller. I use tales to clarify, to illustrate, to teach!

GEORGE: But—I didn't learn anything.

AESOP: Nonsense! You learned to be very careful where you assess blame. Didn't you?

GEORGE: No.

AESOP: My dear chap, do pay attention! Things are not always as they seem. I beg you to listen to my stories. Truly—

GERTRUDE: You wouldn't be the young man who was supposed to come at six o'clock? The one who is already more than two hours late and so is not deserving of a good wife? That wouldn't be you, would it?

ERIC: No! Well...sort of... Actually I lost my way—

GERTRUDE: You lost your way from the flower shop? We live above the flower shop!

ERIC: I needed to — do — something — what? What?

GERTRUDE: You need to go back to whatever hole you crawled out of and never come near this home again! *Do you hear me?*

ERIC: Yes. I suppose I do.

(Gertrude "slams" door and exits.)

I needed a better excuse. But no matter, there is still the first young girl I met on the street. She would be an adequate wife, don't you think? After all, she has a goat. And she lives right down the street. But which street? I suppose I should go down all of them and see which one has purple peonies in their window box. *(He looks around.)* Oh dear. They all have purple peonies in their window boxes. I know! I shall see who still has their lights on. It's getting late. I wonder if she is still waiting up.

ELLA: No. I am going to bed and if that naughty man rings my doorbell, I shall throw something down on his head! I will not be stood up by any man! I am a woman with means! With property! I own a goat!

ERIC: So I headed down the street—any street. No longer fleet of feet. Remember, I already walked miles searching for the woman in the palace. I looked high. I looked low but no lights did I see. So...I tried another street! And at the end of the last street there was a small light to greet me. A small light

(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!