

ACT 1 SCENE 3: MR LEAR'S STUDY
'Going To Sea In A Sieve' (*Mr Lear, Jumblies & Old Foss*)

MR LEAR

Time to write. Right now. Something special for coming home, I think. But I need some inspiration!

OLD FOSS

(Enters) Meeow, Mr Lear, how about a nice cuppatea?

MR LEAR

Thankyou, yes, ple ... Achoo! Phoo, oh no! Achoooo! They're back! My sneezes have come back! I was sneeze-free on holiday.

OLD FOSS

Perhaps it's something in the air?

MR LEAR

Achoooo!

OLD FOSS

Here, have a hankychiefy. It's a bit lacey, but ...

MR LEAR

Pass it here before it's too ... Achoooo! *(Massive sneeze that blows papers around)* Sorry, too late! Chuffin' sneezes. Snuffin' cheeses!

OLD FOSS

It's only a little chill from all the rain.

MR LEAR

Nothing to do with any rain! *(n.b MR LEAR sneezes loudly and frequently through the following scenes without overdoing it)* I need to write. I need to write, right now. Here we go. *(Singing as he's writing)* They went to sea in a sieve they did. ...

OLD FOSS

They went to sea in a sieve? Nonsense!

MR LEAR

Ssh! Fossie! You're making me lose the thread in my head. *(Singing)* Far and few, far and few are the lands where the Jumblies live.

OLD FOSS

Yes, inside that head of yours!

MR LEAR

Ssssh! Fossie! Sssssh, I can't concentrate.

OLD FOSS

Mr Lear, sometimes you can be so impatient! Call if you need anything! *(Exits)*

MR LEAR

(Singing) His name's Mr Lear, he often goes queer, from toes to the ... Achoo! Can't settle. I know, I'll write a letter to Aunt Jobiska. Dear hmm, hmm, hmm ... sorry, it's been such a long time since I've written. So many interruptionings but my sneezes have come back! *(SFX boiler trouble and noisy gurglings! Increases in volume through this scene. Sing-song)* Fossie put the kettle on? *(No answer)* Don't answer then! And as I write this letter, horrible, borrible, bubbling sounds are heard.

JUMBLIES

(JUMBLIES enter joyfully) We're coming!

MR LEAR

Uh-oh! *(Whoozy movement)* That 'whoozy-doozy-feeling' again! Another 'nonsensing'? Oh my goodness! Screams and shouts, stamping; roaring, booming; Oh, the rains coming in the ceiling! Quick Fossie, buckets, buckets to catch the water. Aaargh ... hey, Jumblies! *(A JUMBLY takes the lifebuoy)* Hey! Ooof! Hey! Ow! Ow! Ow! One of them's snatched my lifebuoy!! Hey, it's mine, give it baaaack!

Music starts for #03 The Jumblies**JUMBLIES**

WE WENT TO SEA IN A SIEVE, WE DID, IN A SIEVE WE WENT TO SEA:

JUMBLY

I feel sea-sick!

JUMBLIES

IN SPITE OF ALL OUR FRIENDS COULD SAY,

SOLOS

Daft! Silly! Duh! Stupid!

JUMBLIES

ON A WINTER'S MORN, ON A STORMY DAY, IN A SIEVE WE WENT TO SEA!
AND WHEN THE SIEVE TURNED ROUND AND ROUND,
AND EVERYONE CRIED, 'YOU'LL ALL BE DROWNED!'
WE CALLED ALOUD, 'OUR SIEVE AIN'T BIG,
BUT WE DON'T CARE A BUTTON! WE DON'T CARE A FIG!
IN A SIEVE WE'LL GO TO SEA! 'COS WE'RE JUMBLIES!

JUMBLIES

FAR AND FEW, FAR AND FEW, ARE THE LANDS WHERE THE JUMBLIES LIVE;
OUR HEADS ARE GREEN, AND OUR HANDS ARE BLUE,
AND WE WENT TO SEA IN A SIEVE.

JUMBLY GROUPS

THE WATER IT SOON CAME IN, IT DID, THE WATER IT SOON CAME IN;
(Yuk, soggy feet. Yuk!)
SO TO KEEP US DRY, WE WRAPPED OUR FEET IN A PINKY PAPER ALL FOLDED NEAT,
AND WE FASTENED IT DOWN WITH A PIN. *(Ouch! Ooh! Ow!)*
AND WE PASSED EACH NIGHT IN A CROCKERY-JAR,
AND EACH OF US SAID, 'HOW WISE WE! HOW WISE WE! HOW WISE WE ARE!

JUMBLIES

THOUGH THE SKY BE DARK, AND THE VOYAGE BE LONG,
YET WE NEVER CAN THINK WE WERE RASH OR WRONG,
WHILE ROUND IN OUR SIEVE WE SPIN!

JUMBLY GROUPS

WE SAILED TO THE WESTERN SEA, WE DID, TO A LAND ALL COVERED WITH TREES,

AND WE BOUGHT AN OWL, AND A USEFUL CART, AND A POUND OF RICE,
AND A CRANBERRY TART, AND A BUZZY HIVE OF SILVERY BEES,
(buzz, buzz, buzz)

JUMBLY GROUPS

AND WE BOUGHT A PIG AND SOME GREEN JACKDAWS,
AND A LOVELY MONKEY WITH LOLLIPOP PAWS,

ALL

AND FORTY BOTTLES OF GINGER BEER, (Hic! Burp! Aaah! Aaah!)

MR LEAR

(Speaking) I cannot abide ginger beer!

JUMBLIES

AND NO END OF STILTON CHEESE. (Hmmm)
IN TWENTY YEARS WE ALL CAME BACK, IN TWENTY YEARS OR MORE,
(Spoken) We're much older!
AND EVERY ONE SAID, 'HOW TALL YOU'VE GROWN!
FOR YOU'VE BEEN TO THE LAKES AND THE TERRIBLE ZONE,
AND THE HILLS OF THE CHANKLEY BORE;'
AND THEY DRANK OUR HEALTH, AND GAVE US A FEAST
OF DUMPLINGS MADE OF BEAUTIFUL YEAST;
AND EVERYONE SAID, 'IF WE ONLY LIVE, WE TOO WILL GO TO SEA IN A SIEVE, -
TO THE HILLS OF THE CHANKLEY BORE! LIKE THE JUMBLIES!

JUMBLIES

FAR AND FEW, FAR AND FEW ARE THE LANDS WHERE THE JUMBLIES LIVE;
OUR HEADS ARE GREEN AND OUR HANDS ARE BLUE,
AND WE WENT TO SEA IN A SIEVE. WE'RE TUMBLY JUMBLIES FROM OVER THE SEAS!

JUMBLIES

(Applause and JUMBLIES excitement) We're tumbly Jumbly from over the seas.

MR LEAR

(Assertively takes back lifebuoy and carefully puts in it in its special place) I'll have my lifebuoy
back, mischievous Jumbly, if you don't mind! Back inside my head, all of you!

JUMBLIES

(MR LEAR does unwhoozy-movement as JUMBLIES disappear. AD-LIB) Bony elbows, stop your
pushing. Oof, Ouch. Tight squeeze etc.

OLD FOSS

(Enters with a mop and bucket) Mee-ow! What's all that noise? There's water everywhere! Yuk! My
paws are all soggy.

MR LEAR

(Hugging the lifebuoy) Yuk! My fluffy slippers look like soggy doggies!

OLD FOSS

All this mess! It's all your fault, Mr Lear. What is going on inside that head of yours!

MR LEAR

I sometimes wonder that myself!

OLD FOSS

And such nonsense about ‘going to sea in a sieve’! Full of holes! All that water. And it’s down to me to mop it up! (*Starts mopping up then stops*) Why didn’t the Jumblies sink in their leaky sieve?

MR LEAR

Simple. They blocked up the holeses with their fingers and toeses! Achoo!

OLD FOSS

Yuk! All over my fur! It’s very strange, Mr Lear, but have you noticed, you don’t sneeze when the Jumblies are around?

MR LEAR

No, I hadn’t noticed. Achooo!

OLD FOSS

You, and your sneezes. Very odd but I can’t quite put my paw on it yet. (*Brightly*) Come on, let’s play ‘The Limerick Game!’ I’ll go first.

MR LEAR

(*Childishly*) But I wanna go first.

OLD FOSS

(*Firmly*) Not this time. Learn to take turns. (*Clearing throat*) The Limerick Game. Old Foss is a cat who loves mopping, And searching for holes in the skirting. On spiders I’m munching, on robins I’m brunching. Fastidious Foss who loves mopping!

MR LEAR

Not bad, Fossie. And is it my turn now?

A traveller whose lifebuoy was lost with his waterproof coat, and much flustered.

His usual demeanor of ‘Nonsensing’-dreamer, was lost, so his travels were busted. Boo! Hoo!

(*Brighter*) Glad to have my lifebuoy back!

OLD FOSS

(*Cheerily*) Here’s a good one.

A writer whose beard caused a flutter, would frequently wax it with butter.

So when he got peckish, he’d wrap it in lettuce, and suck it until he felt better!

MR LEAR

(*Laughing*) Yes, very funny, Fossie. This one’ll really make you laugh. (*Laughing*)

Old Foss, who loved Marmite with custard, would top it all off with strong mustard.

OLD FOSS & JUMBLIES

Yuk!

MR LEAR

From dawn until late; she’d lap at her plate, making so many Jumblies disgusted. Achoo! Dearie me! These ‘chuffin’ sneezes!

OLD FOSS

(*Angry*) They’re nearly as annoying as you! Be nice and I’ll make you a cuppatea. (*Pause*) With a biscuit? (*Pause*) Crackers.

MR LEAR

No tea! Achooo! No biscuits!! And I’m not crackers, thankyou! (*Louder*) Just get me a doctor!

(*Shouting*) Achooo! For goodness sake, ‘Get Me A Doctor!’