

Summary after p. 104, before scene 26

**NARRATOR:** As had happened time and again before, the world was becoming disenchanted. This time, there was a Humbug flying around, beating on his humdrum.

The disenchantment had spread almost everywhere but a basement classroom in Winthrop, Massachusetts. And the only one in all the world who could get him to change his tune was the Lizard of Oz, who lived in Ome, the nicest part of Oz.

At least that's what Mr. Shermin said. Mr. Shermin knew lots of things. He used to be a teacher before he became a fish. And not many people, even teachers know how to change themselves into fish. So the class believed him, and they all set out on a quest to Oz and to Ome to save the world from disenchantment.

There were lots of them, all crowded into one little green VW -- Eugene and Mark and Linda S. and Linda C. and Gaynell and Kathy and Timmy and Kevin and Cindy and Donny and Peter and Miss Morgan and Miss Prysby.

They fell down through a pothole, passed through Potheadland and Eggheadland, and suddenly found themselves lost in the Underworld. There they met Mr. Carroll, the writer. He seemed to know a lot about these lands they'd been through, and he offered to take them down to the next underworld, where they could stand

under and understand both the world and the Underworld. There are many levels of understanding, he explained. Maybe somewhere down there they could find someone to help them get back to Home or go on to Ome.

Soon they arrived in Camelot, where they heard that the Lizard of Oz was actually a huge and dangerous dragon. St. George gave them a few pointers on how to fight dragons, with upper cuts and back strokes and breast strokes and the stroke of luck and the stroke of genius.

Led by Mr. Carroll, the class visited the Mothers of Fact, Miss Hap, Miss Take, and Miss Fortune. Then they arrived at the home of the muses on Mount Parnassus. But instead of telling them how to get to Home or Ome, the muse just made funny shadow pictures on the wall of the cave and made the kids laugh. Maybe they knew what the pictures meant, or maybe it was just the shadowy shapes that made them laugh. But whichever it was, Miss Morgan didn't find the show at all funny. She felt very empty and very helpless, until Mr. Plato motioned her off to the side and explained in words the story of the shadows.

He told her about the world and the unworld, about the unworldly place called Ome where a great dragon radiated a strange light that draws people to it like a magnet draws steel. He let her know that her mission really was important, that she must bring back some of the dragon's strange fire to the world, to enchant

it once again. But it would be very dangerous, for she and her class might well be trapped there by the power of the source of light itself.

Mr. Plato led them up to the top of the mountain where they could play at the amusement park inside Cloud Nine. Miss Morgan was very tempted to stay there forever with Mr. Carroll and the class. But she decided that their quest was far more important. So she slipped away in the night, leaving Mr. Carroll behind, and following the path toward Ome that Mr. Plato had shown her.

They soon arrived back in the Library in Eggheadland, where they had visited earlier. This time Mr. Marx volunteered to lead them to Redland. From there they could proceed to the Moors and then on to the Mouth of the Nile and to Ome itself.

In Redland, they enlisted the help of several Indians -- Chief Crazy Horse, and a gigantic woman named Sue. All together they set off toward the vast wasteland known as the moors, home of the backtiersmen -- people who were trying hard to keep the wilderness wilderness.

Scene 26: a deserted highway in the moors

FX: car running along a deserted highway in the wilderness

**MISS PRYSBY:** Now class, this is a good time for a geography less. First, let's take the word "moor." A moor is a treeless wasteland. But the word is used primarily in England. I saw a few myself when I was over there, in the southwestern part of the country. There was the Exmoor and the Dartmoor and...

**KATHY:** What about the Nevermore?

**MISS PRYSBY:** (laughs)  
Oh, that's something else altogether.

**KATHY:** But I read about it last time we were in the Library. There's this really scary, lonely place called the Nevermore. And a little girl named Lenore lives there. She has raven-black hair, and she's really beautiful.

**GAYNELL:** (from the bottom of the pile) What's she look like? I can't see her from down here.

**DONNY:** Don't be silly. Nobody can see anything. The weeds are too thick and tall.

**MISS PRYSBY:** (leaning her head out the window)  
My, we really are in the boonedocks.

**CRAZY HORSE:** (from outside, up ahead) White-woman has keen eye. Boonesville very near.



**DONNY:** Gosh!

**GAYNELL:** (from bottom of pile) What is it?

**KATHY:** Just more whacky sings. "Boonesville. Daniel Boone sole inhabitant. Private proerty. Keep out. Untouched wilderness. Do not touch."

FX: car running slowly along deserted road

**DANIEL BOONE:** (shouting from up ahead) Who goes there?

**CRAZY HORSE:** (also shouting, up ahead) Big Chief Crazy Horse and Paul Newman and Sue and Eugene and Mark and Linda S. and Linda C. and Cindy and Donny and Joey and Timmy and Miss Morgan and Kevin and Peter and Miss Prysby and Gaynell and Kathy.

**DANIEL BOONE:** (closer, because the car has come closer) Too much! (sinks to the ground, sobbing) It's too much. I just wanted to get away from it all; to lead a quiet smple life, close to natue. But no, now I have to spend all my time chasing people away. Every day there are more of them. I don't know what's going on up there, but something's driving them this way. I've done my best to close this bit of wilderness, but the people just keep coming and coming. And now this: a whole tribe at once. It's just too much to take. Too much. (sobs some more)

FX: rifle thrown on the ground

FX: man dropping to the ground and sobbing

FX: car stops

FX: engine shut off



**MISS MORGAN:** (getting out of the car and coming over to him) I'm sorry, Mr. Boone. We didn't mean to disturb you. We were just passing through on our way to the mouth of the Nile and to Ome. But we did hope that you might help us change the world...

FX: car door opens  
FX: kids pile out  
FX: car door closes

**DANNIEL BOONE:** Change the world? (suddenly cheerful, stands up) You're going to change the world? You're going to make it so people won't want to leave it?

**MISS MORGAN:** Yes, that's what we hope to do.

**DANIEL BOONE:** Then welcome. Welcome. I'll do anything I can for you. First I'll cook you supper.

... You can spend the night and rest up. You have a long journey ahead of you. Best of luck to you.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Marvelous!  
We're saved!

**MISS MORGAN:** Then you'll join us?

**DANIEL BOONE:** No, of course, not. I have to stay behind and guard the fort.

**MISS MORGAN:** Oh. (very soft and disappointed)

Scene 27: dreams inside  
Daniel Boone's cabin

**NARRATOR:** All these things had worked strangely on Miss Morgan's mind. That night she fell asleep weary and restless. She dreamed that she was home in Winthrop and everything was as it had been before, and she thought that the trip to Ome was just a dream. But then she woke and found herself in the middle of a wasteland, laying on the floor of Daniel Boone's cabin. And she slept again and dreamt that she was home in Windsor, no, in Camelot; and she knew her name was Miss Morgan La Faye.

It was the day of a great tournament, and thousands of people had gathered in the grandstands at King Arthur's court to watch the finals. Miss Morgan paid Attention at the gate, then found a seat in the back of the bleachers.

It was White vs. Tennyson. Tennyson kept rushing the net, with hard smashes and fancy spins, while White played a leisurely game from the back line, tapping the ball so it just dribbled over the net, or lobbing it high over Tennyson's head. It was a close match with long volleys, as they struck and struck again.

Then, suddenly, the match lit, and the whole place was on fire, with people running and screaming. And there

Note: scene changes to  
crowded sports arena

FX: cheering crowd at a  
sports event

FX: sounds of a tennis  
match with long volleys

FX: fire spreading,  
roaring, through a large  
building

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stood Miss Morgan La Faye, all alone, weeping, amid the charred ruins.

Note: scene changes to charred ruins of a building

**MISS MORGAN:** (sobbing)

**MERLIN:** There was a flaw.

**NARRATOR:** Without anyone telling her, she knew it was Merlin speaking.

**MERLIN:** It seems there's always a flaw. Maybe they need more practice.

Oh, well, nothing to do, I guess, but just keep trying.

**NARRATOR:** It rained heavily, and a thick fog moved in. Miss Morgan was standing in a cloud, and the cloud was Cloud Nine.

FX: heavy rain

Gaynell went riding by on a unicorn, and Kathy was reading Merlin's book of charms. Nearby lay Mr. Carroll, sound asleep.

Note: scene changes to Cloud Nine; sounds echo, like last time there

FX: soft classical music from inside Cloud Nine

She stepped up to him very softly, knelt, and kissed him. He woke suddenly, but he didn't see her. She didn't see herself. She screamed, but made no sound.

FX: passing pony

**MR. CARROLL:** Judy? Where are you, Judy?

**NARRATOR:** He looked so alone and helpless. She reached out but couldn't touch him: she was somewhere else, somewhere on the road to Ome and Home. There was really nothing she could do.

The clouds went away, but the sun didn't come out. And Miss Morgan





screamed again, this time loud and clear. But there was nobody around to hear her, nobody but Merlin.

**MERLIN:** I'd like to help, but I'm much too old and tired. Arthur and his knights would help, but they're caught on that merry-go-round table, that carousel of time.

**MISS MORGAN:** Will they ever get off?

**MERLIN:** Arthur will return. His day will come. But don't hold your breath. For one brief shining moment they had it, they really had it. And the world was ablaze with the fire that doesn't burn. Then it was gone. And there was the emptiness, and chasing after false fires to fill the emptiness. But they had it for that moment, and it was splendid. Ah, those were the days.

But no need to wait for him. Why the world could be enchanted and disenchanting dozens of times before Arthur returns. And chances are he won't be back for long. It seems there's always a flaw. But here. Take this stick, and have a go at it.

**MISS MORGAN:** But...

**NARRATOR:** It was the same stick that Plato had given her. Merlin was gone, and she had a book in her hands. She

Note: scene changes to an open field

**MISS MORGAN:** Help! Help!

FX: soft, soothing, classical music



knew it was about Arthur, but was shocked by the cover, contemporary, with a non-Arthurian title: **They've done it; can do it.** She opened it again. It was about Arthur. She looked again at the cover, and under the title was an epigraph in elaborate Victorian type.

**MISS MORGAN:** (reading)  
"They've done it. You can do it. Whither you've known the shadow of its secret glow."

**NARRATOR:** Or was it "sacred glow" or "secret vow" or "sacred vow." She woke up, trying desperately to remember the words. And the more she tried to remember, the more muddled and uncertain the dream became, till all she knew was that they could do it. Why or how she didn't know. But they could and would bring back the fire.

Note: scene changes back to Daniel Boone's cabin

FX: cabin noises, e.g. creaking bunk, crackling fire in fireplace



Scene 28: the moors

**NARRATOR:** So the next morning, Miss Morgan made sure everyone got up at dawn; and after a hurried breakfast, she packed them all into the VW.

About noon, Donny spotted the redcoat sergeant. He was on the porch of a little cabin, smoking a pipe, rocking in a rockingchair beside his wife.

**SERGEANT:** 'ome is where the 'eart is.

**NARRATOR:** He waved to them, but Miss Morgan, curious as she was, had not tme to find out what the place he was at had to do with the place she was going. She just had to get to Ome, and nothing was going to slow her down or stop her.

**MISS PRYSBY:** You don't think we're lost do you? I'd hate to be lost in a wilderness.

**MISS MORGAN:** There's nothing to worry about, Miss Prysby. Crazy Horse is a good guide. He knows the way.

**MISS PRYSBY:** But surely we'll have to stop somewhere to eat.

**MR. NEWMAN:** (outside, up ahead, shouting) Man alive!

**DONNY:** Gosh! It's raining bread.

FX: kids pile into VW  
FX: engine starts  
FX: car starts moving along deserted highway slowly, with Sue on roof, Crazy Horse and Paul Newman running on ahead

Note: scene changes to deserted highway

FX: rhythmic squeak of a rockingchair on a wooden porch

FX: slices of bread falling to the ground  
FX: kids grabbing and eating and squirming and squabbling



**MISS PRYSBY:** Like manna from heaven.

FX: car moving slowly along deserted highway

**MISS MORGAN:** It probably is.

**MARK:** What's manna?

**MISS PRYSBY:** Well, it's usually just a figure of speech, but since we're approaching the Nile, this just may be the real thing. I certainly don't know what else it could be. Probably some sort of local phenomenon, due to the climate and everything. You see, long ago there was a man named Moses who led the children of Israel out of Egypt.

**MARK:** How many kids did Israel have?

**MISS PRYSBY:** Oh, many, many kids.

**MARK:** As many kids as our class?

**MISS PRYSBY:** Oh, more. Many more than that.

**DONNY:** Gosh.

**MISS PRYSBY:** And Moses led the children of Israel across the Red Sea.

**MARK:** Were they in Redland like us, Miss Prysby?

**MISS PRYSBY:** No, I don't think so. But they did finally leave their place of exile and head for their promised homeland.



**DONNY:** Gosh, everybody's looking for Home or Ome.

FX: car moving slowly along deserted highway

**GAYNELL:** (from the bottom of the pile of kids) where are they? Can you see them, Kathy? What do they look like?

**MISS PRYSBY:** There's really no point in looking for them. That was a long, long time ago.

**MARK:** You mean they're all grown up now?

**MISS PRYSBY:** Yes, I suppose they are. You see, after they crossed the Red Sea, they wandered lost in the wilderness for forty years.

**EUGENE:** I guess it was just like in Winthrop, without any signs or anything.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Yes, I suppose it was. But they finally found their promised land.

**GAYNELL:** (from under the pile) And did they live happily ever after?

**MISS PRYSBY:** For a while, yes. But what I started to tell you was that while they were in the wilderness a bread-like substance they caled 'manna' rained on them, and it was that that kept them alive through their long journey.

**GAYNELL:** That's a good story, Miss Prysby.



**MISS PRYSBY:** I thought you'd enjoy it. History is full of good stories. Some people say that history repeats itself, and that's why we should read it. That's a silly idea, what with the way things change and people learn and progress and everything. But history's got so many good stories that there's really no need to think up reasons for reading it. When we get back to school, maybe you'll want to read some.

**DONNY:** Gosh, what a big mouth.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Why, Donny, how could you say such a thing?

**DONNY:** But that's what it is. Right over there. It's wide open and swallowing lots of manna.

**MARK:** Gee, that must be the mouth of the Nile.

**DONNY:** It's a whale's mouth, and there's somebody inside.

FX: car moving slowly  
long deserted highway



Note: scene changes to  
seaside

FX: sea gulls and ocean  
waves in the distance,  
getting closer



Secne 29: seaside, near a whale

**GAYNELL:** (under the pile of kids in the VW) Who's that inside the whale's mouth?

**KATHY:** It must be Jonah.

**JOAN:** (from inside the whale's mouth) No, my name is Joan, and this is the Ark. Haven't you ever heard of Joan of Noah's Ark?

**MISS PRYSBY:** Why, of course, yes, children. Long, long ago, there was a great flood that covered the whole earth. Some people say that it happened because people are evil.

**MARK:** What's evil?

**MISS PRYSBY:** That's when people are naughty all the time.

**EUGENE:** What was wrong with them? Were they disenchanted or something?

**MISS PRYSBY:** That's one way of putting it. Probably they were bored and disenchanted and that was what made them naughty. But there were a few people who weren't that way. Noah was one of them. And he and the other good people got aboard a big boat called the "Ark" and took along two of every animal they could find. And when the flood came, they just sailed away and had a long boat ride.

FX: sea gulls  
FX: waves hitting the shore

FX: car stops  
FX: engine shuts off  
FX: kids pile out

**GAYNELL:** That sounds like fun.

FX: seaside sounds continue

**MISS PRYSBY:** And when the flood went down, they went ashore and started the world all over again.

**GAYNELL:** What happened to all the other people?

**MISS PRYSBY:** They drowned.

**GAYNELL:** Euh! That's awful.

**JOAN:** (left) If you'll just step aside, I'll let down the gangplank and let the gang out. It's supertime, and they're all very hungry.

**EUGENE:** Miss Prysby, maybe this is that big white whale that Sinbad the Sailor was looking for.

FX: vast variety of zoo noises all at once

FX: the sound of many animal feet going across wood

**MISS PRYSBY:** I don't know that story, but I do know one about a man named Ahab.

FX: animal noises mixed with sounds of children playing and enjoying themselves

**EUGENE:** What happened to Ahab?

**MISS PRYSBY:** He drowned.

**EUGENE:** That's not a very good story. Sinbad just kept having more and more adventures. I bet he's still having adventures.

**DONNY:** Miss Prysby, maybe this is like Circus Island, and they're all people who just turned into animals.





**MISS PRYSBY:** That sounds like reincarnation.

**DONNY:** Is that some kind of milk?

**MISS PRYSBY:** No, it means being born again. You see, some people think that all animals were once people and all people were once animals. They say that every living thing has a soul and feelings, just like the little blue wallflower, and people should be careful not to hurt them.

**NARRATOR:** Gaynell was riding a unicorn, and Kathy had found a white charger and was looking all over for its rider. It all seemed strangely familiar to Miss Morgan, like she had been here before. Everything was turning out so well. The whole would take the class to Ome, and everybody would live happily ever after.

Crazy Horse and Sue said their good-byes.

**CRAZY HORSE:** We give' em music. Music might strong medicine.

**CRAZY HORSE & SUE:**  
(singing) Joshua at the Battle **(PAUL NEWMAN joins in)** of Jericho, **(EVERYBODY joins in)** Jericho, Jericho. Joshua at the Battle of Jericho, and the walls came tumbling down.

FX: animal noises continue  
FX: children playing noises continue

FX: seaside sounds continue



**GAYNELL:** (reciting to herself) ... egghead south to the mouth of the Nile and find the tooth, the whole tooth and nothing but the tooth for smiles and smiles till suffer-time

...

For a real meal, see Sir Real; then egghead south to the mouth of the Nile and find the tooth, the whole tooth, and nothing but the tooth, for smiles and smiles till suffer-time. (keeps repeating this over and over, softly)

FX: sound of a scrub-brush vigorously scrubbing

FX: seaside noises continue
FX: animal noises continue

**MARK:** What's suffer-time, Miss Prysby? You know, in the witch's poem. What's suffer-time?

**MISS PRYSBY:** I'm sure it's just a mistake. The witch just mispronounced it. She said "tooth" when she must have meant "truth," and "suffer" when she must have meant "supper."

**MARK:** (walking off to the left) Miss Joan, what are you doing?

**JOAN:** (left) Brushing the whale's big tooth here. You have to brush up on the tooth every once in a while. Otherwise, it'll decay; and there's nothing worse than having to go around with a false tooth.

**MARK:** (left) And why are you wearing armor?

**JOAN:** (left) Oh, that's just moral rearmament.

**KATHY:** (left) Is it made of moral fiber?

**JOAN:** (left) What a sweet idea. No, my dear, it's made out of stainless steel. It's much stronger and lighter than the old iron-type



armor; and with relatively little scrubbing, you can keep it immaculately clean. (starts whistling "Onward Christian Soldiers")

**MISS PRYSBY:** (sound now focuses on Joan's area. Miss Prysby approaches that area from the right) How did you ever get here?

**JOAN:** Oh, I came on a lark. That big one right over there. I meant to go to Ome; but when I got here, I saw the error of my ways.

I used to be a maid, a simple maid, scrubbing floors and pots and pans. Then voices started speaking to me, heavenly voices, telling me to fight the Lord's battles. Unfortunately, the lord at the time happened to be weak-kneed king, who had all sorts of battles that needed to be fought. I knew I was performing the will of heaven, but all around me raged the hell of battle. The ways of God are indeed mysterious; a body could get mixed up.

When I arrived here on my way to Ome, the place was a terrible shambles. All these animals were rambling about, and there was no one to clean up after them. And the whole's tooth hadn't been brushed since Noah left.

I said to myself, "Joan, now, who are you to be running off to sit yourself in the light of

FX: scrubbing continues, intermittently

FX: seaside noises continue  
FX: animal noises continue



God's glory? And what will you be doing when you get there?" I was never very comfortable with courts and kings and important people. It might very well be that I wouldn't feel right there. And once I was there, I couldn't just turn around and run off. So I decided to stay here. I know my place. There's work to be done, and it's work I know.

Some interesting folks pass this way now and then. Some have heard voices, like I did, and have spent their lives following the mysterious and difficult commands. There's a man from Penzance who was told to be a pirate. Someone else was told to be a writer of warnings, and he's written many thousands. Then there are the inorganic food eaters: they can't bear the thought of eating any living thing, so all they eat is dirt and rocks.

They're all well-meaning folks, even the Captian. But some of them seem to have gotten things mixed up.

God works in mysterious ways, especially when he uses words. It's so easy to mix up words. They can mean so many things at once.

Thank the Lord that I understood Him. But these others. Some of them are really pitiful, though far be it from me to sit in judgement.

And then there's the Captain... Well, speak-

FX: scrubbing continues

FX: seaside sounds continue  
FX: animal sounds continue



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ing of the devil himself  
... It's Captian Ahab.

**DONNY:** Gosh, he's got a false leg. Did he forget to brush it or something?

**AHAB:** (approaching as he speaks) All right, ye landlubbers. enough of fun and games. It's suffer-time.

**MISS PRYSBY:** What's the meaning of this?

**AHAB:** It means it's time to suffer, missy. All my life I was weeping and whaling and weeping and whaling. Then a voice creid out to me, "Suffer the little children," and I discovered the joys of suffering and making suffer: it's good for the soul, I tell ye. All aboard. Children first.

**MISS PRYSBY:** But these children are insufferable.

**AHAB:** None of that back-talk, missy. I know my job: I'm here to usher ye into the very jaws of Hell. Now all aboard, I tell ye.

**MISS MORGAN:** I'm sorry, sir. Apparently, there's been some mistake. We're on our way to Ome, but it seems we've chosen the wrong way to et there. I made the mistake of believing in a witch. I'm afraid we'll have to miss this boat.

FX: sound of a peg-legged man walking down a wooden gangplank, moving toward the microphone

FX: frightened stampede of animals back inside the whale

FX: seaside sounds continue
FX: animal sounds continue



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**AHAB:** If ye be feared of yonder whale, as well ye might; then sholdye be a thousand times more feared of the fires of Ome. They'll burn yer very soul.

**MISS MORGAN:** Everyone in the car.

**AHAB:** Run if ye like, if ye think ye can. But ye'll never escape the darkness within ye. The wise stay. They suffer for their sins and learn to love to suffer. They pay penance.

**EUGENE:** I've got a few pennies.

**AHAB:** (ominous echoing laughter)

FX: seaside sounds continue

FX: everyone instantly piles into the VW (run previous loading sound effects at fast speed)

FX: engine turns on  
FX: accelerator  
FX: gears grind (driver overanxious)  
FX: car starts, but in reverse, up the gang-plank, and into the whale's mouth  
FX: mouth suddenly clamps shut, muffling everyone's screams  
Note: scene changes to inside whale



Scene 30: inside a whale

**NARRATOR:** Inside the whale, the darkness was filled with every imaginable danger.

**GAYNELL:** I've never been this scared before, Miss Morgan. Not even in the Fun House.

**EUGENE:** (right) Fun House? That's kid's stuff. I saw this Dracula movie once...

**DONNY:** Dracula? That's nothing. You should have seen...

**NARRATOR:** And everybody had a more horrible horror story they wanted to tell. And soon they were singing song, like "The worms crawl in" and "Found a peanut" and "Fifteen men on a dead man's chest."

**MR. NEWMAN:** Music might strong medicine.

**MISS PRYSBY:** My, this is exciting. It's just like being swallowed up by Nature. I feel, so, so natural.

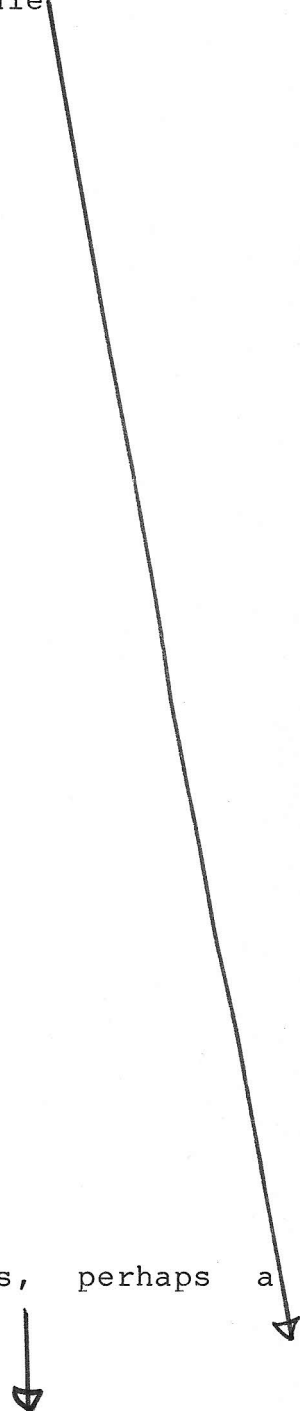
note: inside the whale, voices and sound echo

FX: screams, crying, first frantic, then gradually subsiding and mixing with laughter

FX: in background, the heartbeat and breathing of the whale

**CLASS:** (singing) Fifteen men on a deadman's chest, yo ho ho and a bottle of rum. Fifteen men on a dead man's chest, yo ho ho and a bottle of rum. (fades into) The worms crawl in, the worms crawl out, the worms crawl in and out the snout; the worms crawl in, the worms crawl out, the worms crawl in and out the snout... (voices get drowsy, fewer and fewer singing; fade out)

FX: yawns, perhaps a snore



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**NARRATOR:** Soon everybody was stretching out on the whale's soft tongue, taking a nap.

Then the whale's belly started to twist and turn. Everybody woke up and huddled together. And a great retching noise came from somewhere down deep, and the whale threw up, and the whole class was thrown up on the shore.

FX: yawns, perhaps a snore



**GAYNELL:** What's going on? I can't see a thing.

FX: whale heartbeat and breathing speed up

FX: burping, retching sounds (the whale has an upset stomach)

FX: huge retching sound, and a rush of water as from a flushing toilet



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Scene 31: on the beach

**MR. NEWMAN:** Man, I feel like a new man.

**DONNY:** Gosh, yeah, (while running off) now I know what you mean.

**MISS MORGAN:** Now, don't go running off. There's no telling where we might be. This could be Ome you know. Everything feels so good it just must be Ome. So everybody put on your sunglasses now. We'll be perfectly safe, I'm sure, (sounding now too sure) if we keep our sunglasses on.

**DONNY:** (right) Come look. Over here. There's a bush on fire.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Watch out there. You'll get burnt.

**TIMMY:** (right) But it isn't burning.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Of course it's burning. I can see from here that it's on fire.

**TIMMY:** (right) But it isn't, Miss Prysby, it isn't burning. It's on fire, but it isn't burning.

**MISS PRYSBY:** I wish Mr. Shermin were here. He was always so good at explaining things. I learned so much from him.

**MISS MORGAN:** (right) Why that's the fire that doesn't burn.

FX: kids running along beach, splashing in water, laughing, playing

FX: seaside sounds (but no sea gulls)



**DONNY:** (right) Hey, Miss Morgan.

FX: many steps running to the right (toward Donny)

FX: more steps to right



**MISS PRYSBY:** What are you doing?

FX: seaside sounds continue

**MISS MORGAN:** (right)  
This is the stick that Plato gave me. I want to see if it will catch fire, so we can bring the fire back home.

**PHYSICIST:** (booming amplified voice, as if from loud speaker, electronic sounding, from on top of hill at far right) Beware!

FX: steps running back from right to center

**MISS PRYSBY:** The bush is talking!

**DONNY:** (right) Gosh, no, Miss Prysby. It's that astronaut up on top of the hill. (running from right to center) Gosh, there's two of them, and they're coming this way.

**PHYSICIST:** (approaching from far right) Stand back from that bush. Return to the water. This area is contaminated. Radioactive material.

**MISS MORGAN:** What's wrong? Did somebody drop a bomb or something?


FX: steps continue into the water, until they're all up to their waists in it

FX: heavy steps of astronauts getting closer

**PHYSICIST:** (coming closer, lowering the amplification and hence the distortion) No, miss, it's a natural phenomenon. Alpha and omega particles. It's long been a mystery, but we're very close to a breakthrough. Research has been going on here for quite some time. They named the land Ohm because they thought the

phenomenon was electrical, and ohm is a measure of electrical resistance. But just last week we successfully separated and identified the two major forms of radiation: the alpha particle and a new particle we've christened the ohm-ega particle. It's an event of cosmic significance.

FX: seaside sounds continue



**MISS PRYSBY:** Now, class, that means it's very important.

**PHYSICIST:** Well, not really. you see, alpha and omega particles are cosmic rays. But nobody's sure how significant cosmic rays are in elementary particle physics.

**MISS PRYSBY:** (to the class) Elementary beans basic. The most important things, the building blocks you need for further study. Our school is an elementary school.

**PHYSICIST:** Well, it's rather different in physics. You see, elementary particles are really very advanced. Not that we've advanced that far in our knowledge of them, but that only advanced students ever study them. Actually, very few people study them; and we know very little about them and how, if at all, they relate to the world of ordinary experience.

**MISS PRYSBY:** You mean they don't matter?

FX: seaside sounds continue

**PHYSICIST:** Brilliant, my dear, brilliant! Particles "matter." The very word I've been looking for. It's so difficult to talk about matter and energy at the subatomic level. Sometimes it only makes sense to talk of matter, and other times it only makes sense to talk of energy. Neither concept alone is sufficient, and yet the concepts of energy and matter seem mutually exclusive. When we try to put them together, we wind up with strange sounding things like "matter waves." It all makes perfectly good sense in terms of equations, but when we try to tell people what we're doing, language keeps leading us into the most perplexing difficulties, meaning more than we mean it to mean.

We have to be very careful with our words, for they can imply whole systems of thought, and no single system of thought is adequate for describing the world around us. We are faced with the difficult task of using several contradictory sets of ideas, now using one and now another, according to the needs of the moment. It's a complicated business. It has to be learned by experience. There are no signposts to tell us when to use



which.

**DONNY:** Gosh, Winthrop's just like that.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Hush, Donny, the man's still talking.

**DONNY:** But it is like that. There aren't any signs, and it's awful easy to get lost unless you've got a magic coin.

FX: seaside sounds continue

... Particles "matter." It's beautiful. A simple pun might make it so much easier to talk about these things. That matter is a verb as well as a noun, and on the subatomic level it makes more sense to use the word as a verb. Light isn't matter as a noun, but it is matter as a verb. Language for all its pitfalls is capable of unexpected beauties. Its very imprecision can be the source of the greatest clarity. Light matters. Electrons matter. Elementary particles matter. Perhaps even matter matters.

**MISS PRYSBY:** I certainly hope so. I'd hate to think that people spend their lives studying things that don't matter.

**PHYSICIST:** (laughs)  
There it does it again. The words keep meaning more than we mean them to mean. And if we aren't careful, we might find ourselves talking about values and morals and other things that



have nothing to do with physics.

FX: seaside sounds continue

**MISS MORGAN:** All these theories are quite fine, I'm sure. But are these children in danger here? What's wrong? Why all this radiation?

**PHYSICIST:** As far as we know, miss, it's a natural phenomenon. Cosmic rays. The sun is believed to be our major source of them. It's quite puzzling to find such a strong source here.

**MISS MORGAN:** Oh, then it is perfectly natural. You see, the Dragon of Ome, sometimes called the Lizard of Oz, swallowed the sun. It's in his belly.

**PHYSICIST:** Dragon? I must admit that I don't know anything about dragons. They weren't in the curriculum. You mean to say there are dragons around here?

**MISS MORGAN:** Why, yes, there is one dragon. a very big one. We haven't seen him ourselves, but we heard about him from a very reliable person. If you've been studying the source of these cosmic rays, surely you must have seen the dragon.

**PHYSICIST:** Can't say that I have. But that doesn't rule out the possibility that there is such a beast. You see, I might have stood



right next to it, even touched it, without recognizing that it was a dragon. It's this protective suit, you see. I get everything second-hand, like hearsay. I don't see directly anymore than I hear or speak directly. The sense data are translated into electrical impulses that are then retranslated inside the suit into recognizable stimuli. The equipment reports what it has been programmed to report. "Dragon" simply doesn't compute. The way I get the message, there's a powerful source of alpha and ohm-ega particles dif-fused through a shield of organic material. Come to think of it, it's perfectly possible that the organic material could be a dragon's belly.

**MISS MORGAN:** Is it really dangerous, sir? You see, we've come a long way to find this dragon and to bring back some of this fire that doesn't burn. But now you tell us it's dangerous radiation; and when I tried to light my torch on that bush over there, it didn't catch. It just flowed for a short while and went out.

**PHYSICIST:** We've noticed such things ourselves. It seems to be some sort of induced effect. The bush radiates because it has long been near the

FX: seaside sounds continue

**MARK:** What's he saying, Miss Prysby?

**MISS PRYSBY:** He's saying that he's never been properly introduced to the Dragon.

**MARK:** Well, why didn't he say so? Why does he use such big words?



source of radiation. Somewhat like induced magnetism. If such a bush is separated from the source, its radiant properties diminish.

As for the dangers, I think you'd better consult my colleague here, an expert on the psychophysiological effects of this unique variety of radiation.

**PSYCHOLOGIST:** (same kind of artificially distorted voice as Physicist) It's a source of psychic attraction. The most powerful source of psychic attraction known to man. To the human mind and emotions, it's a sort of magnetic North Pole. It's incredibly attractive. If you don't wear protective equipment, why even from this distance it's practically irresistible.

**KATHY:** Is it really that attractive? Does it use a special perfume? or a love potion?

**PSYCHOLOGIST:** I really couldn't say. The science of behavior doesn't concern itself with the physical form of stimuli. It could be a dragon or a man or a pile of stones. What matters is what it does to people.

As I was saying, the closer you get to the source, the greater the danger. You see the way that bush seems to be on fire? Well, this source can do the same thing to a person that it has done to that

FX: seaside sounds continue





bush. It can change a man so that he can in turn endanger others. Just take a look at that patient over there on the stretcher. No, don't get too close to him without protective equipment. We're waiting for a rescue team to carry him away.


Noise the strange glow around the head. Somewhat like that bush. We call it the "halo effect." It's possibly the origin of the myths about haloes.

This source, whatever it may be, destroys the will and the sense of self. The more extreme cases can no longer distinguish between themselves and the world, seem to lose the power of human speech. They go into a sort of coma, mumbling meaningless syllables. Then physiological changes begin to appear: abnormally low breathing rates, a slowing of the heartbeat, a slowing of all bodily processes.

I'm here to conduct tests and to do what I can for the relief of the victims. It's rather difficult because they evince no desire to be cured and early lose the will to coherently communicate. But perhaps one day we will be able to cure these poor unfortunates and make them productive members of society.

**MARK:** What's he talking about, Miss Prysby?

FX: seaside sounds continue



**MISS PRYSBY:** He wants to cure that sick man with the halo, wants to make it so he can hold down a job and lead a normal life.

**MARK:** You mean that guy won't have his halo anymore?

**MISS PRYSBY:** No, I suppose he won't.

**MARK:** That's a shame. He looks neat with that halo.

**NARRATOR:** The water was cold, and it had been so comfortable lying on the beach that even while the Psychologist was explaining the danger, the kids started straggling ashore. And Kevin, Eugene and Paul Newman even started wandering up the hill.

Miss Prysby called to them and started running after them to bring them back. But as she ran up the hill, she started forgetting what she was running for, and she just wanted to get to the top, and everybody was running there.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Hey! Come back here. Don't you understand it's dangerous? (running ashore, splashing)

FX:     seaside     sounds  
continue



Scene 32: hilltop in Ome

**NARRATOR:** From the very top of the hill, off in the distance, across the green green fields of Ome, they saw the huge shape of the Great Dragon of Ome, the Lizard of Oz, the Leaping Lizard himself.

They were all rather uncomfortable seeing that they were so close to such a huge beast, with no barriers in between. But somebody started singing "Puff the Magic Dragon," and soon everybody was singing it, and they were all laughing and playing and rolling in the green green grass of Ome.

**MARK:** Miss Prysby, what's that sound? That "Ome, Ome, Ome?"

**MISS PRYSBY:** It must be a football game or something. They're chanting the name of the home team. But it's funny. If I shut my eyes, I could imagine I was in the Far East in some Buddhist monastery.

**MARK:** Where is the Far East? Is it in Maine somewhere?

**MISS PRYSBY:** No, it's on the other side of the world. You see, the world's a very big place. The sun shines here half the time, and there in the East the other half. When it's day here, it's night there. And when it's

Note: on a hillside, with the sea shore in the background, a couple hundred yards behind them; in front they can see the Lizard himself

**MISS PRYSBY:** Oh, my goodness.

**GAYNELL:** Gee, it's scary, Miss Prysby.

**TIMMY:** I want to go home.

**MARK:** Me, too.

**KATHY:** Me, too.

**GAYNELL:** (starts singing to herself) Puff the Magic Dragon, lived by the sea...

**EVERYBODY JOINS IN:** ... and frolicked in the magic brooks in a land called...

FX: chanting of many people, "Ome, Ome, Ome..." over and over again (in the distance)

FX: kids laughing and palying and rolling around in the grass on the hillside



night here, it's day there. There's no real difference between their side of the world and ours. But by some strange coincidence, all the major religions of the world have originated in in the East.

**DONNY:** (right) Come quick, Miss Prysby. Somebody over here's all tied up in chains.

**MAN IN CHAINS:** Don't free me. Please don't free me. I don't trust myself. I can't trust myself. I know it'll destroy me, but I'm drawn to it. Please don't free me...

**MISS MORGAN:** Everyone back on top of the hill. We shouldn't expose the children to this. I'll run ahead and get what we came for. If I go fast, I think it'll be all right.

**NARRATOR:** So Miss Morgan went running down the hillside with the stick in her hand. At first she was scared, but soon she started to feel that she didn't need anyone bigger than herself, that she had nothing to be afraid of; she could handle anything that might happen. Then she realized that there was someone bigger. She couldn't say who, but she felt there was someone and felt he was with her.

As she ran, her clothes suddenly changed color.

**DONNY:** (right) Miss Prysby, Miss Prysby...

FX: steps to the right (microphone moves to the right with the steps)

**MAN PRAYING:** (left) Oh, radiant being, light of lights, very God of very Gods...

FX: chanting continues  
FX: laughing and playing continue

**GIRL:** (right) Stop! Please. I don't think I can stop myself. It feels too good...

FX: steps running down hillside, microphone keeping pace with the runner (steps soon drowned out by chanting)  
FX: as Miss Morgan approaches dragon, the chanting keeps getting louder

FX: sparklers

**DONNY:** Gosh, look a all the pretty colors.

**MISS PRYSBY:** That's the strange intense light. It plays tricks on your eyes. It can make a perfectly ordinary dress look like it's fit for a queen.

**KATHY:** Fit for an empress. That's moral fiber.

**MISS PRYSBY:** What a beautiful idea. Children say the sweetest things.

**MR. NEWMAN:** Man, she can't fight that dragon all by herself.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Stop! Paul, come back. No, children, you stay put.

**NARRATOR:** When Paul Newman started out, he was a bit scared. But the closer he got to the dragon, the better he felt. He could feel his muscles growing with every step. It would be child's play to kick that little dragon for a field goal. The empty corners of his mind filled with new strength and confidence. It was no mystery to him now how people turned themselves into fish and fish turned to frogs and frogs to people. He felt the life force surging within him, the force that in an acorn can crack huge boulders, the power to change the world and to change oneself.

All around him other

FX: chanting returns to hilltop intensity

**MISS PRYSBY:** Stop!

**MARK:** Go get him, Mr. Newman!

**TIMMY:** Give him one for me, Miss Morgan!

**GAYNELL:** Give him an upper cut and a back-stroke and a breast-stroke ...

**KATHY:** And a stroke of luck.

**DONNY:** And a stroke of genius.

FX: kids cheering  
FX: As Paul approaches the dragon, the chanting gets louder and louder

men rushed forward, then crawled back, fighting themselves and fighting this force that drew them onwards. Hundreds shouted that they were Caesar or Napoleon. One shouted that he was an atom bomb.

Paul Newman passed Miss Morgan. He had forgotten that he was running to rescue her and fight the dragon. Now he was running to that source of strength, and all around him he heard "Ome, Ome, Ome..." And he had to fight his way through masses of immobile humanity, who were chanting over and over "Ome, Ome, Ome..."

Meanwhile, Donny slipped away when Miss Prysby wasn't looking. He hadn't meant to go far; but with every step he took, he saw clearer and brighter and sharper. Soon he was seeing through things with x-ray vision, like Superman. Then he knew what it must be like to be one of those judges in **The Oddest Sea** who could tell at a glance who was a goodie and who a bad-die: he felt he could literally see what was right and wrong.

Kathy, too, slipped away, unintentionally. She was daydreaming about the love potion in **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. Then she saw a robin with a hurt wing. She bent down and picked the robin up and petted it. She just loved the little robin, and it looked so much like it

FX: chanting keeps getting louder



FX: chanting returns to hilltop intensity, then gets louder again as Donny approaches dragon



FX: chanting returns to hilltop intensity, then gets louder as Kathy approaches dragon

FX: song of a hurt robin



wanted to fly toward the dragon. It had probably hurt itself from trying so hard. So she ran forward with the robin in her hand, and it seemed to gain strength with every step she took, and it sang for joy and flew off toward the dragon. And Kathy felt good all over.

Without realizing it, Miss Prysby, too, was slowly moving forward, and the rest of the class with her. And she felt she'd never known so much in all her life. She felt she didn't even know who much she knew. But she nearly tripped over a fleeing man.

**FLEEING MAN:** (frantic) I have to tell someone. I have to put it into words. You see, I went to Ome singing, and I returned from Ome singing, and the light was in my words, and the light shone through my words. My beloved heard the song and came running to see what I had seen. But while I had put it into words, she was speechless, and it filled her, and she was spell-bound.

I can see from her face that she's happy. But all she sees is that light. That cursed light. That blessed light. (running off) And I'll go mad if I can't tell someone, keep telling someone.

**MISS PRYSBY:** (frightened, becoming frantic) We have to do something.

FX: chanting gets louder as Kathy approaches dragon

FX: song of happy robin

FX: robin flies away

FX: chanting returns to hilltop intensity

FX: steps running off

This dragon business is dangerous. I thought so before, but now I know it. And we ought to put it into words. I know we ought to. Our only protection is to put it into words. But I don't know how.

**NARRATOR:** Everybody piled into the little green VW, and Miss Prysby drove as fast as she could toward the Great Dragon of Ome, the Lizard of Oz.

They picked up Kathy and Donny along the way. Then they slowed to push their way through the mob, and they had to sing really loud to hear themselves over the great roaring chant of "Ome, Ome, Ome..." But it was a bit of a challenge, and the kids loved to sing loud anyway.

They picked up Paul Newman and Miss Morgan near some huge giant stretched out at the feet of the dragon. Then the kids piled out of the car and started climbing all over the dragon. Gaynell put wilted forgetmenots between his toes. Kathy stuck petalless daises under his scales.

Eugene and Kevin and Joey kept hitting him with upper cuts and back strokes and breast strokes, just like St. George had taught them.

The dragon really didn't know what to make of it all.

**CLASS:** (starts singing Joshua at the Battle of Jericho, first Gaynell alone, then the others quickly join in and sing as loud as they can)  
FX: singing gets louder as the chanting gets louder as they get closer to the Lizard

FX: VW door opens  
FX: kids pile in (still singing)  
FX: engine turns on  
FX: car starts  
FX: chanting gets louder as VW approaches the Lizard



FX: singing reaches its peak, then continues at that intensity



FX: chanting reaches its peak, then continues at that intensity  
FX: kids unloading and running about





LIZARD OF OZ/radio - 142 - Seltzer

Then Cindy, who had climbed all the way up the dragon's back, carefully, very carefully crawled to the top of his head and stroked him very gently behind his left ear. It was a stroke of genius. He yawned and lay down and looked incredibly happy. And soon he was sound asleep.

Paul Newman and Eugene and Kevin and Mark and Joey and Donny and Peter and Timmy all held the dragon's mouth open, and Miss Morgan reached with the stick way, way down the dragon's throat. When her arm came out, the torch was glowing bright and clear with the fire that doesn't burn.

FX: peak singing continues

FX: loud yawn

FX: singing turns to cheers, then more singing, jubilant

FX: peak chanting continues



Scene 33: the way back to Winthrop

FX: car running along highway

**NARRATOR:** They had no trouble at all finding their way home. Everything was incredibly familiar, as if they'd always lived in Ome, and Home was the place next-door.

As they got away from the dragon, the supernatural effects gradually wore off. They went back to feeling human; but it felt good, really good to be human and enchanted.

Along the way, Miss Prysby told Paul Newman what to expect and how to behave, because he'd always had a flowerpot instead of a head before, so he'd never really seen the world before.

**MISS PRYSBY:** Now Paul, you're going out into the world now, the real world. It's so wonderful, and I'm going to be with you when you see it all for the first time, brand-new and full of surprises. Oh, brave new world!

**NARRATOR:** Miss Prysby had learned all the street names when Mr. Shermin had told her back at the beginning of the trip. So when they arrived in Winthrop, she told Miss Morgan which way to go, and soon they were back at school.

The kids piled out of the little green VW, and Miss Morgan started

FX: traffic noise

FX: car stops, engine too

FX: sound of an airplane passing overhead, followed by another airplane

walking up the front steps with the torch in her hand.

... But she lost her balance. She tripped on the top step of the school, and she fell. The torch hit the door, and the door was ablaze, and the building was ablaze, and all Winthrop was ablaze with the fire that doesn't burn.

**MR. NEWMAN:** Out of sight, man. Out of sight.

**DONNY:** Gosh, everything's beautiful.

**MARK:** Miss Morgan, why wasn't it always this way?

**MISS MORGAN:** I don't know, Mark. I just don't know.

**MR. NEWMAN:** You mean it wasn't always this way?

**KATHY:** Anybody want to dance?

**MR. NEWMAN:** Man, that Humbug's turned into one humdinger of a drummer.

**NARRATOR:** Miss Morgan looked up toward the sound, but all she saw was clouds, light fluffy little clouds. She won-

**FX:** kids unloading, running all over, laughing, playing

**MARK:** Hey, what's that noise?

**KATHY:** Sounds like an airplane.

**DONNY:** Gosh, it's the Humbug!

**MISS MORGAN:** (falling)  
Help!

**FX:** sound of her falling

**FX:** stick hitting door

**FX:** sparklers, then more sparklers and more sparklers

**FX:** airplane sounds fade into 'Humdrum humbug beating on his humdrum; humdrum humbug, beating on his humdrum; humdrum humbug, beating on his humdrum...'

**FX:** Humbug chant turns o drumbeats, becoming louder, becoming more wild, sounding rather like the drummer in the Indian head-band, playing a wild dance beat

**FX:** laughing, playing, dancing in the streets



dered if maybe one of them was Cloud Nine. She wondered if Mr. Carroll was still there.

The sun came out. Maybe, as Plato said, it wasn't the real sun; but it shone brightly.

Miss Morgan stood up, brushed herself off, and picked up the torch. It was hard to say if it had lost anything in the fall. She opened the blazing door of the school and walked in.

Just then, Mr. Shermin came running and stumbling and dancing toward the school.

**MR. SHERMIN:** Marvelous. (approaching fast) It's simply marvelous. I never really believed it could be this way. (stops, pants; he has reached the car) I came rushing back, (heavy breathing) thinking you'd all be depressed and run down (heavy breathing) after going through all that for nothing. I hoped that what I had learned would console you a bit, maybe give you some hope.

And I'm greeted with this. It makes my head swim, like when I changed myself into a fish.

**MISS PRYSBY:** And what did you learn, Mr. Shermin?

**MR. SHERMIN:** All I can say is what I thought I

FX: laughing, playing, dancing continues



FX: sound of someone running, stumbling and dancing toward the school

**DONNY:** Gosh, it's Mr. Shermin.

**GAYNELL:** Mr. Shermin?

**DONNY:** Yeah, really. Over there, coming fast.

FX: sparkling continues  
FX: wild drum beat continues



learned. I really don't know what to make of this. You see, Mr. Plato didn't tell the whole story, or rather the story didn't have all the answers. No story could hope to have all the answers.

You see, it suddenly struck me that just a few days ago this very class was enchanted. Regardless of what was going on in the world around them, regardless of what had developed through the centuries, these children were enchanted.

And then I saw that Plato's explanation, or at least the way I took it at first, was too heavily weighted on the side of environment.

Enchantment is in you. It's a spark in you that glows and fades, and maybe it never totally goes out. Lord, I hope it never totally goes out.

But it's in you. That's what I came to tell you: the fire is in you. You don't have to go chasing to the ends of the earth: it's in you.

But now I see this...

FX: laughing, playing,  
dancing continues

FX: sparkling continues  
FX: wild drum beat continues

