

HAPPY FEET

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(Early Draft)

SPACE

Distant STARS, with vast tracts of darkness stretching between them. Move in on OUR SUN, dwarfed in the immense cosmic ocean.

MUMBLE (VO)

You ever feel small?

Moving in on....

PLANET EARTH

The spinning blue marble.

FADE IN: A strange cacophony of MUSIC, growing louder as the familiar CONTINENTS revolve below us and we spiral down onto **ANTARCTICA**

THE ICE SHELF

Vast, pristine, stupendous. Washed with dawn light. A few small BLACK-SUITED FIGURES are moving towards us.

MUMBLE (VO)

Like you're no-one, cos the world is full of us, and everyone's the same

Wait a minute. These aren't humans... they are PENGUINS!

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

How do you stand out from the crowd?
How do you find someone special?

A GREAT COMMUNITY

EMPEROR PENGUINS all over the place, Its chaos - Grand central station - with everyone SINGING to each other.

MUMBLE (VO)

I know. I know. "You sing your heart out." That's how mum found dad in the first place

Follow a female penguin as she waddles through the massive crowd past an assortment of crooning males

(CONTINUED)

2.

CONTINUED:

KEEN MALE

(trying to connect)
"Babe...I got you Babe..."

She ignores him

NEXT MALE

(giving it his all)
"When a man loves a woman..."

She keeps moving, until she sees the male of her dreams:

WISHFUL

"Love me tender love me true, all my dreams fulfil.

He stands a bit apart from the rest. And what a voice. What a hip movement. She sings along.

NORMA J. AND WISHFUL

...for my darling I love you and I always will.

MUMBLE (VO)

With them it was love at first song.

Close up on the two penguins as their necks intertwine.

MUMBLE (VO) (CONT'D)

But with me everything was a different,
right from the moment I was born

THE ICE SHELF

With infinite care, THE EGG is passed from Norma J's feet
onto WISHFUL's.

MUMBLE

First rule of survival: get yourself laid
before winter.

WISHFUL covers the egg, glancing up at the darkening sky

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Apparently I only just made it.

Women are leaving and heading off over the ice. The community
resounds with sad songs of parting.

(CONTINUED)

3.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Afterwards Mum went off to the sea to
keep warm. Dad stayed home like dad's do,
incubating.

Norma J is having difficulty tearing herself away. Finally
she pads off after the others.

WISHFUL

Safe home baby....

As he watches her dwindle into the distance, where huge STORM
CLOUDS are building.

WISHFUL (CONT'D)

I'll miss you.

THE DARKNESS

Wind comes shrieking across the ice shelf to where THOUSANDS
OF MALES are huddled, ice crusting on their feathers.

MUMBLE (VO)

Tell me what it is about the cold and the
dark. Soon as the sun goes away, everyone
gets religious

The huddled penguins are engaged in ritual chanting

LEAD VOICE

When all others leave...

CHORUS

We Remain.

LEAD VOICE

When the Sun vanishes...

CHORUS

We Remain.

INSIDE THE HUDDLE

The adult males are packed shoulder to shoulder, looking downwards at the eggs balanced on their feet.

CU on the Lead male, a CARUSO

(CONTINUED)

4.

CONTINUED:

CARUSO

Deny the pangs of hunger.
Seal the gaps. Share the warmth....

MUMBLE (VO)

Caruso's the leader because he's so
incredibly old. Some say more than 40,
but you know how penguins exaggerate.

OUTSIDE

WINDWARD PENGUINS peel off and walk around to the leeward
side. WISHFUL is among them

CARUSO

....Each one taking his turn to defy the
wind.

WIDE SHOT

The MASSED VOICES rise above the gale, the frosty plumes of
their breath forming a shared `thought bubble'...a benevolent
ÜBERPENGUIN.

CARUSO.

...As we invoke the Great One, Penguin of Penguins

WISHFUL

(pushing back inside)
OK. Invoke. But keep moving

MUMBLE (VO)

My dad was never that devout. Often his mind was on other stuff.

As the chanting builds, a little thought-bubble appears next to the communal imagination: An image of Norma J

NORMA J.

(Sings)
"I wanna be loved by you, alone and nobody else by you boo boo pee doo"

WISHFUL raises his head, breaking the seal. A little puff of steam escapes

WISHFUL

Amen to that honey

(CONTINUED)

5.

CONTINUED:

VARIOUS PENGUINS

Whoa-whoa-whoa-whoa, pal!
Ya lettin' out the heat!

Penguins around him start jostling to close the gap

PENGUINS

...Quit shovin'!
...Hey watch where you're putting your feet

CARUSO

Brothers, BROTHERS! The Devotions!

An egg rolls out of the HUDDLE and onto the ICE.

WISHFUL

Oh no! I dropped it! Where's my egg!

WISHFUL barges out of the huddle, retrieves the egg and

waddles back into the warmth again.

WISHFUL (CONT'D)

S'okay. S'okay. No harm done.

MUMBLE (VO)

I guess he was wrong about a lot of things.

Pulling back, till the powerful rhythmic chanting is drowned out by the HOWLING GALE.

WISHFUL

But I did learnt this from him: the power of positive thinking

We are moving in again, towards the huddle, the voices of the Great Male Gathering begin to cut through the wind blasts.

Louder and louder, until...

ELDER

By the power of our Devotions...

ALL PENGUINS

We turn the world once more.

ELDER

By our devotion to the Wisdoms

(CONTINUED)

6.

CONTINUED: (2)

ALL PENGUINS

We bring back the sun.

The CHANTING crescendos, awe-inspiring, as it rises above the sound of the gale, and, as if in response

THE EARTH TURNS!

The CURTAIN OF DARKNESS which overshadows Antarctica begins to LIFT from the curvature of the southern hemisphere. The vast ice-continent is BRILLIANTLY ILLUMINATED once more.

ON THE ICE SHELF

The ICE itself is moaning and groaning, like a living thing.

A SINGLE CRACK appears and widens, then forks and forks

again.

The whole expanse of fast-ice is DISINTEGRATING, starting at the sea-ice and progressing towards the ice-cliffs.

Somewhere an ICEBERG breaks free from the face of a glacier and smashes down into the frozen sea below. At the same time...

THE EMPEROR COMMUNITY

An EGG cracks open, then another, then all in a rush, like **POPCORN**.

Fathers are calling out to each other as their fluffy CHICKS emerge to greet the daylight.

EXCITED FATHERS

...It's a boy!
...It's a girl!
...What a peach!
...What a bruiser!

Amongst the excited crowd of males and hatchlings we find WISHFUL staring down at his egg still balanced on his feet.

FRIENDLY PENGUIN

Late opener, huh? You thinks its alive?

WISHFUL

I'll say. Listen...

(CONTINUED)

7.

CONTINUED:

He taps the egg with his beak. Bending close they hear a TAPPING SOUND in REPLY.

FRIENDLY PENGUIN

Well, how about that?

WISHFUL taps again. The tapping comes back louder. A TINY FOOT pops out of the egg. Then ANOTHER. The Egg flips and lurches off in a giddy DANCE.

WISHFUL

Whoa li'l buddy, slow down!

THE FRIENDLY PENGUIN'S chick giggles at the DANCING EGG,

which finally trips and cracks, depositing baby MUMBLE.

MUMBLE

(hopping from one foot to the other)
Ow! Freezy, Fuh-Fuh-Freeezy! All Freezy!

OTHER PENGUINS

...Jees!
...You ever see a chick move like that before?
...is he damaged?
...is he deranged?

They gather round staring down at this strange little jiggling ball of fluff

WISHFUL

What? Come on. He'll grow out of it.

Shovelling MUMBLE off the ice and into his BROOD POUCH.

WISHFUL (CONT'D)

Come here, li'l Mumble. Let's get you warm and toasty.

Mumble SNUGGLES contentedly between his father's legs, surveying his new world. The friend's chick, ELLA is staring at him fascinated

ELLA

Get him to do it again Daddy

FRIENDLY PENGUIN

Shh. Quiet

(CONTINUED)

8.

CONTINUED: (2)

She disappears under his brood pouch

MUMBLE

(looks up)
So What happens now, Dad?

WISHFUL

We Wait

THE ICE

A LONG LINE of male penguins, thousands of them, all with their chicks, stand staring expectantly across the ice shelf.

At the front, we find WISHFUL and MUMBLE, who is jiggling with anticipation, hopping from one foot to the other.

MUMBLE

Is she coming soon?

WISHFUL

Any day now.

MUMBLE

Tell me again what she's like

WISHFUL

(sings)

a wiggle when she walks, a giggle when she talks, makes my world go round....

MUMBLE does a little SOFT SHOE SHUFFLE.

WISHFUL (CONT'D)

(sharply)

Hey. Thought I told you not to do that

MUMBLE

Sorry. When I get happy my feet get happy too.

WISHFUL

Well tell em don't.

MUMBLE

But Why Dad?

(CONTINUED)

9.

CONTINUED:

Caruso waddles past: A stern glance down at little Mumble as he carries on along the line

WISHFUL

`Cos it ain't penguin.

LATER

MIST rises off the ice shelf. The males are still waiting with their chicks. Over this: The sound of Chicks crying.

MUMBLE between his father's feet, follows his father's concentrated gaze.

MUMBLE

Gee I'm hungry

WISHFUL

Everyone's hungry son. The mommas are bringing fish soon.

Long pause

MUMBLE

What's fish look like.

WISHFUL

You'll see it when she brings one

STILL LATER

The baby penguins are HOWLING now.

Anxious fathers lean forward, peering into the distance.

Out of the thickening mist, a cluster of little BLACK DOTS materialises.

PENGUIN LOOKOUTS

...Wives-ho! Wives-ho!
...Hubba-hubba! Wives-ho!
...Better late than never.

The distant females look exhausted as they totter unsteadily across the ice towards their partners. The MALES break ranks and rush towards the distressed females.

MALE PENGUINS

...Barbra-Ann!
...Peggy Sue!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10.

CONTINUED:

MALE PENGUINS (CONT'D)

...Hey Paula!
...Roxanne!!

A tumult of re-unions as partners find each other. But no luck for WISHFUL.

WISHFUL

NORMA J.?!

Weaving anxiously through the throng, overhearing:

MALE#1

You're not as fat as I thought you'd be.

FEMALE#1

It was pretty slim pickings. Something's happened I tell you

FEMALE#2

Even the squid were hard to get
We had to swim forever

FEMALE#3

Everyone split up. A lot of the gals
never made it back.

MALE #2

...Delilah?

MALE #3

...Gloria?! Gloria??!

WISHFUL, is running frantically through the crowd, singing
all the time in the hope of being recogniosed

WISHFUL

Since my baby left me. I found a new
place to dwell.
Down the bottom of lonely street at
heartbreak hotel

MUMBLE hippity-hops after his father, trying to keep up...

WISHFUL (CONT'D)

Woah I'm so lonely baby. I'm so lonely
baby. I'm so lonely I could...

Moving beyond the crowd, WISHFUL sees a last few stragglers.
Amongst them...

(CONTINUED)

11.

CONTINUED: (2)

NORMA J.

WISHFUL?

WISHFUL

(overcome)

O Honey. O Baby. You made it!

She staggers into his waiting flippers.

WISHFUL (CONT'D)

You hurt?

NORMA J.

(breathless)

Just tired and hungry is all.

It was dreadful out there....

Over WISHFUL' shoulder, she sees the infant Mumble HIPPIITY-HOPPING towards them.

NORMA J

But who's this.

WISHFUL

I called him Mumble.

Mumbles feet start to tap involuntarily, Then he catches his dad's warning look.

MUMBLE

Did she get one. Did she bring one back.

NORMA J

Just a little krill that's all

MUMBLE

Can I see it?

WISHFUL

Later, bud. Give your ma time to regurgitate

NORMA J

Aw. But isn't he just a darling?

MUMBLE

(yells ecstatically)

I got one! I got a mum everyone. I got a
MUM!!

The ICE-SHELF is as busy as a freeway at peak hour with males and females are hurrying BACK AND FORTH from the sea.

MUMBLE (VO)

After that, with food being so scarce everyone was busy busy busy. Mom and dad were working so hard I didn't see much of them. Besides I had school to go to.

THE CRECHE

An efficient, caring TEACHER is giving a lesson to a class of about thirty young chicks grouped in front of her.

TEACHER

Settle class. Settle. We will begin with the most important lesson you will ever learn. Now does anyone know what that is?

MANY flippers go up.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Michael?

MICK

Don't eat yellow snow?

TEACHER

True but, that's not it. Mumble?

MUMBLE

Swimming? Catching Food?

TEACHER

Anyone else?

Mumble looks astonished. What's more important than that

ELLA

It's our Heartsong, Miss.

TEACHER

Your Heartsong. Yes. The melody you hear inside, the thing that makes you different from every other penguin. So. Let's all be very still now and listen. And when you hear your song, let it come out. Who's first.

(CONTINUED)

13.

CONTINUED:

A few flippers go up

MICK

Me! Me! I've got one!

(sings)

"I can't get no...satisfaction.... I can't
get no...girly action..."

TEACHER

Well Michael, if you think that's really
you. What have you got for us, Ella?

ELLA

(sings)

Voulez-vous coucher avec moi...ce soir?

MUMBLE

(laughs)

That doesn't make any sense.

TEACHER

Well Mumble...perhaps you can do better

MUMBLE

Mine is more sort of a...

He hesitates, as if listening to something in his head. Then,
he sings UTTERLY TUNELESS, like a drum solo.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Bim bam-a-loolah a bim bam bom

TEACHER

You heard that in there?

Mumble is still going. TITTERS and SNIGGERS from the class.

MUMBLE

You like it?

TEACHER

Dear, that's not even a tune.

MUMBLE

It's not?

TEACHER

No, a tune is like...

(she sings a scale)

La la la la la la la la.

CONTINUED: (2)

MUMBLE

Oh, La la la la la

A croaky monotone. The class LAUGHS OPENLY.

TEACHER

(getting worried)

Listen carefully, Mumble. La la la la la
la la la!!

MUMBLE

La la la la la la la la!!

TEACHER

(emphatically)

La La La La La La La La!

MUMBLE

But that's what I'm doing,

The class fall about in HYSTERICIS.

MUMBLE (VO) (CONT'D)

Whats funny?

(genuinely perplexed)

What's funny?

LATER

MUMBLE's PARENTS are talking to the TEACHER.

TEACHER

(sotto)

It's bizarre. I don't understand it. Did
anything happen - you know...- during early
development?

NORMA J.

No. All fine. Normal incubation, wasn't
it honey?

Wishful shuffles guiltily.

WISHFUL

Well Yeah, it was a kinda...a tough winter
I guess, and he did hatch a little late,
but...

(at a loss.)

Is there really nothing we can do?

(CONTINUED)

15.

CONTINUED:

TEACHER

Of course there is. That's why we have Mrs Astrakhan.

MRS ASTRAKHAN'S

Some distance from the creche, MUMBLE stands with MRS ASTRAKHAN, a Russian-accented remedial teacher.

MRS ASTRKHAN

CAN'T SINK? Rubbeesh. Every little penguin has a sonk. When I have feenished, your singink will be givink everyone the goosepeempel.

CU on MUMBLE looking up.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

So. Closink the eyes. Liftink chin. Deep breathe here in the downbelow. Now...most important part, find a feelink. Happy feelink, sad feelink, maybe lonely feelink.

MUMBLE closes his eyes.

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

So?...So?...

MUMBLE

I'm thinking.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Don't think EET!! Feel eet! Through the whole body, from the beak right down to tippy-toes.

Her voice is seductive, hypnotic.

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

And then slowly, very slowly...

She hears a strange TAPPING sound and looks down.

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

What? What is this?

MUMBLE

What?

(CONTINUED)
16.

CONTINUED:

MRS ASTRAKHAN

The feet. The jiggy-jog. Don't do eet. Do not move muscle.

Rigid like plank, like board. NO

MOVINK!!!

Now...calm. Remember the feelink.

MUMBLE

Feelink...ok.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

And be spontaneous.

Once again his feet start twitching uncontrollably.

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

No! Stop! No jiggy-jog!

MUMBLE

I'm being spontaneous.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Not with the feet, with the sonk!

You want to meet beautiful girl?

You want to make the Egg?

MUMBLE

Oh yes.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Well singk! "Ba Ba Bleckship,
tvinklestar...La la la la la la, la".

MUMBLE

(totally unmusical)

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star. How I..."

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Hokay. Enough. Stop. Hokay! Ve go back to the top. Forget the body, look inside the soul. No notes, no sonk, only feelink.

Happy feelink. Sad feelink. Enormous

feelink, so enormous it fills the whole body. It must escape or you explode! Now, open your leetle beak...

Mumble opens his beak, inspired.

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

Yes, yes, lift up the head! That's it!

(CONTINUED)

17.

CONTINUED: (2)

Mumble inhales, his eyes are shining, his body is shaking.

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

You take a big breath, good and...now! Now!

He's off again, DANCING LIKE A FOOL...wild, exuberant, totally uninhibited and unselfconscious.

After some time, he remembers himself, stops and turns to the Mrs Astrakhan who is BANGING HER HEAD against a lump of ice.

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

Disaster! Catastroff! I never fail!
Never!

THE ICE SHELF

Follow Mumble as he wanders alone, back towards his class.

He stops some distance away, listening to the other kids who are now performing with increasing virtuosity.

Ella is among them, her clear high voice borne to him on the wind.

Mumble sighs and his little shoulders sink, no way he'll ever be able to sing like that.

MUMBLE

Its tough when you realise you'll never fit in. Plus I was beginning to moult

A piece of downy fluff is peeling off one wing

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

I couldn't face the class in this mood So
I just kept going.

Music over: Walk on By as he wanders through the vast colony

head down against the wind, little feet padding over the ice,
Gradually the colony begins to thin.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Looking for what? I don't know? A
different type of penguin?

The noise of the colony has faded behind him. He stops and
looks up.

(CONTINUED)

18.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

And that's exactly what I found.

THE EDGE

Before him, a wasteland of discoloured ice covered with
broken eggs and bits of feather. There are very few penguins
here and the ones he can see are all, frankly, weird.

A Penguin walks in an endless figure of eight muttering to
himself. Another has his flippers wrapped tightly around
himself like a straightjacket. A troubled Penguin sings
angrily..."There's no business like show business.

CU on Mumble. As he looks back to the sanctuary of the colony
and then back out over the wasteland

MUMBLE

Not the nicest place in the world but at
least you could do what you liked here.

Fade in Music: (I'm Free by the Who) and Mumble is off,
skittering over the rubbish strewn ice, little feet dancing
to his hearts content until....

a shadow passes over him and

Whump! a huge SKUA BIRD, twice Mumbles size, with a cruel
flesh-eating beak, lands on the ice right on front of him.

SKUA

Hey, whacha doin' dere flipperbird?

MUMBLE

Me? Oh, nothing. What are you doing?

THREE MORE SKUAS descend. MUMBLE is surrounded.

SKUA#1

Oh we just dropped in for a spota lunch.
Hey hey hey...

MUMBLE

(hopefully)
Lunch?...There's food? Here?

(CONTINUED)

19.

CONTINUED:

SKUA#1

(to others)
Leg or wing?

Their dark eyes fix on Mumble. He is starting to feel uneasy and backs away.

MUMBLE

But ...but. I'm a penguin.

SKUA#1

Exackly! De flipperbirds - dat's you -
eat de fish. De flyinbirds - dat's me -
eat de flipperbird an' de fish.
Right now D'ain't no fish -- so...you do the
math.

The FIRST SKUA moves in on MUMBLE.

FIRST SKUA

And dis time I'm getting the juicy bits.

MUMBLE

I don't have juicy bits! Look...
all bone and feather! Feel for yourself.

They fall over each other, fighting to take up Mumble's invitation.

SKUAS

...Hey, break me off a piec'a dat!
...'Smyturn ta pullim apart ya skanky shit-
squirter.

...You! Lastime ya pullimapat ya took
all the choice stuff!

MUMBLE

Wait! WAIT!

The Skuas stop momentarily.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Every seen anything like this?

He does a wild little TAPDANCE hoping to distract them.

FIRST SKUA

(unimpressed)

Nope.

(CONTINUED)

20.

CONTINUED: (2)

He knocks Mumble down and places his HUGE CLAW on his chest.

FIRST SKUA (CONT'D)

Ok boys, for once we gonna do dis
civilised. Now...

The FIRST SKUA opens his beak to strike. Mumble has noticed a
YELLOW PLASTIC BAND around the Skua's leg.

MUMBLE

Hey! What's that on your leg?

The FIRST SKUA halts his attack.

FIRST SKUA

Interesting you should ask?

OTHER SKUAS

No! No! Don't startim on that!

He turns and whacks the other SKUAS over the head with his
wing.

FIRST SKUA

Shaddap! The flipperbird aksed me a
question.

(fixing Mumble with a crazy
bloodshot eye.)

I got two words for ya: "Alien
Abduction".

OTHER SKUAS

(groaning)
... Now of all times
... Always before we eat

FIRST SKUA

Quiet ya ignorant morons!
(to Mumble)
...a lotta folks don't believe this but
...dere's somet'in out dere. Creatures. Not
like us. Bigger...Fiercer...smarter, too.

MUMBLE takes a few steps back, looking for an escape. The
FIRST SKUA towering over him...

FIRST SKUA (CONT'D)

Aks me how I know.

(CONTINUED)

21.

CONTINUED: (3)

MUMBLE

How...?

FIRST SKUA

`Cos I bin capturebyem that's how! I seen
`em!

Mumble keeps backing off, feigning interest...

MUMBLE

Unbelievable.

FIRST SKUA

Whaddayamean unbelievable?! It's true!
I'm sittin' on a rock, mindin' my own
business when suddenly...
dere onta me. Dese bein's...like big ugly
penguins, fat flabby faces
with frontways eyes, no feathers, no
beaks...an' dese, dese appendages!
Dey probe me, dey tiemeup and
strapmedown...dey take dis pointy t'ing
and stick it inta me! Den...blackout!

MUMBLE

You don't say

FIRST SKUA

Gets worse! I woke up and there's dis
thing on me!

(the leg band)

Go home and every flyinbird starts
dissin' me: `Hey Yellaleg' `What's
happenin' Whats that on your leg,
Yellaleg?'

It was humiliatin'!!

MUMBLE

At least those aliens didn't eat you.

FIRST SKUA

True. I guess my cries for mercy appealed
to their better nature.

MUMBLE

So - You think I could appeal to your
better nature?

FIRST SKUA

Nice try kid. But No...

(CONTINUED)

22.

CONTINUED: (4)

He opens his beak wide as MUMBLE stumbles backwards and falls
into a narrow CREVICE in the ice.

FIRST SKUA (CONT'D)

Hey! Whatcha think ya doin' down dere
flipperbird? Get back up here dis minute!

The other Skuas move in to help. MUMBLE cowers in the CRACK
as they spear at him with their beaks.

SKUAS

...Come on, out witcha!
...Ya sneaky-ass flipperbird!

They can't get hold of him. Frustrated, they turn on the
FIRST SKUA, squabbling and whacking each other with their
wings.

SKUAS (CONT'D)

...Great, Yellaleg.
...What did we tell ya
...ya leddim gedaway, dincha with ya
screwy alientalk.

FIRST SKUA

Hey, Don't peck me or I'll peck you and
when I peck you know you've been
pecked... (fade)

MUMBLE watches from the safety of the crack as they fight and
argue viciously among themselves

MUMBLE (VO)

Compared with that, school almost seemed
like fun

THE CRECHE

MUMBLE stands some distance back from where the other young
penguins are taking school lessons.

MUMBLE (V.O.)

Most days I hid at the back, dreaming
about the world beyond

MUMBLE looks up at a cloud that resolves itself into the
unmistakable shape of a FISH. As he watches, the cloud morphs
into something that resembles a WHALE. Then morphs again
into...a SEAL. Then into the shape of an upright CREATURE with
bulging eyes and tentacled hands.

(CONTINUED)
23.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE

Time passed. We all grew up

TIME LAPSE

As the class transforms into moulting adolescents

MUMBLE (V.O.)

But right up to graduation I never did
find my heartsong

LATER. THE GRADUATION CEREMONY

Dozens of MATURE ADOLESCENTS...their coats almost fully moulted
to reveal the sleek, shiny black and white feathers
underneath.

They stand in a group talking excitedly until the lead
penguin, Caruso, walks up and everyone falls silent

CARUSO

Graduates, today you leave the safety of our community for the first time, forsaking the trusted solid ice for the terrible magic of the deep.

MUMBLE (VO)

Caruso. He couldn't help himself.

CARUSO.

Things are not as they were. For five years now we have known nothing but famine. But you are our hope. Upon your survival depends the very future of the entire Penguin Nation. Dive deep, swim far. May the Great Penguinus go with you. And remember...

With solemn gravity, CARUSO throws his flippers into the air and shouts.

CARUSO

Excelsi-yah! Yah yah yah!

MASSED GRADUATES

Excelsi-yah ! Yah yah yah!

24.

AWAY FROM THE CRECHE

Follow Mumble as he returns to his parents. In his adult plumage he's distinguishable by a small birthmark, like a bowtie on his chest and a small tuft of down on his head which has not yet moulted off.

Music Over: Schools Out by Alice Cooper

MUMBLE

Dad, Ma, can I go with the others

NORMA J. puts a protective flipper around her son.

NORMA-J

I don't know Wishful. I still don't think he's ready.

MUMBLE

Dad? I'll learn to sing later. I'll find my voice out there. In the deep. Truly.

Glancing round he sees the class moves off en masse across

the ice...heading for the sea.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Dad. Pul-eeeze.

Wishful leans forwards, pulls off Mumbles tuft with his beak.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Yeooow!!

WISTFUL

On you go then, buddy

MUMBLE

Thanks Pop. See ya Ma.

He races off, Norma J calling after him:

NORMA J

(calling after)

Remember `Stranger Danger'! Never talk to
a seal!

Mumble turns to wave, falls over, gets up and races on after
the others with his strange hippity-hop little gait.

(CONTINUED)

25.

CONTINUED:

Watching from a distance, Norma J wipes away tears

NORMA J (CONT'D)

Oh my. Stupid. I'm sorry...

Wishful pats her comfortingly

NORMA J.

(quietly to WISHFUL)

...You think we'll ever see him again

WISHFUL

(Shrugs)

Its out of our flippers

THE HIGHWAY TO THE SEA

A high shot reveals the miles of frozen ice that the
GRADUATES have to cover to get to the sea.

Some are shuffling along on their feet; others are tobogganing.

A long way behind them we see the lone figure of MUMBLE racing to catch up.

AT THE EDGE OF THE ICE

The juvenile penguins stand in a bunch, peering down looking for somewhere to dive in.

GRADUATE PENGUINS

...What do you think, here?
...Are you kidding?
...How about over here then?

They shuffle off in a group to a nearby spot.

GRADUATE

...That last place looked better.

OTHERS

..I agree.
..Much better.

They all shuffle back to the previous spot and stand there, frozen by indecision

GRADUATE

...then again....

(CONTINUED)

26.

CONTINUED:

Suddenly the little dark figure of MUMBLE barrels through the pack, yelling

MUMBLE

Outta my way flipperbirds! Coming through!!

For a long moment he's airborne.

Then...he hits the water with a strangled squawk!...and disappears.

GRADUATES

...What was that?

ELLA

Mumble?

They tentatively crane over the edge. No sign of him. They peer into the water.

GRADUATE

...Lunatic!
...where did he go?
...See any blood?

Then...MUMBLE shoots out of the water like a missile...

MUMBLE

Whatcha waiting for? It's
fantast...(splosh)

... as he falls back under water again.

ELLA

Go Mumble!

Without hesitation ELLA follows him.

The others follow ELLA. A few at first, then all of them en masse leap yelling and hollering.

SURFACE/ UNDERWATER

The penguins flounder around, flapping, laughing, and choking

MUMBLE

I had an instinct I'd be good at this.
Actually we all were. We were the best.

27.

UNDERWATER

Transformed into creatures of grace and exuberance, they swoop and dive trailing plumes of bubbles.

Over this: the music of THE BEACH BOYS.

BEACH BOYS

"Suntanned bodies and the waves of
sunshine.
Those California girls and the beautiful
coastline.
In the warmed up weather, let's get
together and do it again..."

Two PENGUINS shoot up through HOLES IN THE ICE...

THE SURFACE

Skidding out of control, they COLLIDE, ending up in a breathless heap on top of each other.

ELLA

Mumble?

MUMBLE

Ella?

They scramble to their feet...but the ice is slippery.They clutch together, slipping and sliding.

ELLA

Woah!

MUMBLE

I've got you! No I don't.

Leaning against each other, they manage to stand up, close now, eyes meeting.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Yes I do.

A brief moment then.

MALE PENGUIN

Hi Ella.

(CONTINUED)
28.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE (V.O.)

The only bad thing about being with Ella.
It was always so darned crowded.

As others pop up all around

MALE PENGUINS

...Ella!
...Where da get to?
...there you are!

Laughing, she dives into the water. The young males follow her. MUMBLE hippity-hops to the edge and tumbles in after her.

UNDERWATER

A half dozen of them gambolling together, their bubble trails intertwining...

BEACH BOYS

"In the warmed up weather, let's get together and do it again."

Then everyone freezes as a few silvery FISH swim past.

MUMBLE

...FISH!!

They all zero in.

Collisions, barging, a bit like water polo when the ball is first thrown in. In an instant...all the fish are taken.

ON THE SURFACE

MUMBLE surfaces with a fish in his beak

MUMBLE

(muffled)
Ella? You get one?

ELLA

Not this time.

MUMBLE

(muffled)
Here, have it.

(CONTINUED)

29.

CONTINUED:

ELLA

Thank you Mumble, but it's yours.

MUMBLE

(muffled)
I want you to have it.

MALE PENGUIN

Why don't I have it

Suddenly, A SKUA BIRD swoops down and grabs it.

ELLA

Hey! That's a felony! Mumble, let go!

Mumble hangs on. Neither he nor the Skua will let go. The SKUA soars higher, taking MUMBLE with him.

ELLA (CONT'D)

(yells)
Mumble!

MUMBLE is carried...higher and higher. The SKUA tries hard to shake him off, but finally gives up.

SKUA

(derisive)
So fly flipperbird. Fly.

He lets go the fish and MUMBLE plummets downwards, landing Splat! on an ice floe.

ON THE ICE.

Mumble lies still

Ella and the others gather around. MUMBLE still has the FISH firmly in his beak.

PENGUINS

...Is he breathing?
...he's certainly not eating

Leaning forward to take the fish

PENGUIN

...Maybe I should just...

Mumble regains consciousness

(CONTINUED)

30.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE

Hey. The fish is for Ella
(to Ella)
Take it. Really. Its for you

ELLA leans forward, takes the fish, and daintily gulps it down.

ELLA

(gently)
Mumble, the thing is...

MUMBLE

I know. I know

ELLA

....It's better if you just listen.

She returns to the choir. The singing resumes...a perfect harmonic MUMBLE can't help himself. He begins to TAP DANCE.

ELLA AND THE OTHERS

MUMBLE!!!

MUMBLE

(retreating)
OK! I'll quit. OK!

AN ICE-FLOE

We find MUMBLE on his own small ice-floe separate from the others on their iceberg.

As their singing drifts across to him, MUMBLE does an exquisite little SOFT-SHOE SHUFFLE.

TIME LAPSE

As night slowly pales to a misty dawn and Mumbles lonely floe drifts off, turning slowly in the current

Music Over: "The tracks of my tears"

MORNING

He is woken by A NUDGE at his little raft of ice.

MUMBLE

(sleepily)
Woah. Whose there.

Another nudge.

(CONTINUED)

32.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

OK. I'm awake now. You got me

He looks around - an unfamiliar landscape of ice - then over the side, seeing nothing but slowly spreading ripples.

A more VIOLENT NUDGE from behind almost makes him lose his balance. A DARK SHAPE passes swiftly through the water.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Saw you. Richard? Eddie? Ella....

The dark shape SHOOTs out of the water. Its GAPING JAWS missing Mumble by an inch.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

.....aaarghH!

As he recoils, slips and tumbles into the WATER.

UNDERWATER/ SURFACE

Choking, thrashing and gulping air, Mumble SCRAMBLES to get back onto the ice.

MUMBLE

Everybody out!! LEOPARD SEAL!! (glub)

The murderous creature comes at him, jaws open, baring rows of sharp TEETH and MUMBLE swims for his life.

The LEOPARD SEAL is relentless, barging through smaller floes, powering around larger ones.

Mumble just CAN'T SHAKE HIM OFF. Desperate, he shoots up into the air, landing on a THIN PANCAKE OF ICE that cannot support his weight.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

HEEEELP!!

Mumble scrambles to gain purchase but FALLS BACK INTO THE WATER. Now he is ...

UNDER THE ICE SHELF

...caught between the SOLID ICE above him and the bottomless black WATER below.

(CONTINUED)

33.

CONTINUED:

Mumble POWERS ahead, the ice above growing thicker, the angled ceiling forcing him down, deeper into the BLACKNESS.

The Leopard Seal opens its mouth. Its GAPING JAWS are about to engulf Mumble when...

a little SPECK OF LIGHT appears in the ceiling of ice. Mumble makes a speedy sharp turn, climbing steeply.

He is in a FUNNEL OF ICE...getting narrower and narrower as it rises to the surface. The Leopard Seal is CLOSING fast. MUMBLE shoots THROUGH the hole in the ice and into the air...

THE ICE-SHELF

A small group of ADELIE PENGUINS recoil as MUMBLE explodes out of the hole, closely followed by the LEOPARD SEAL.

WHAM! THUMP! They belly-flop on the ice .

THE ADELIES

(wincing)

...Ouch!

...That's gotta hurt!

...Who ordered seal?

Mumble is quickly on his feet and out of the Leopard Seal's reach. The ADELIES TAUNT the bulky creature like matadors

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Over here

...No over here. Too slow!

...have to lose some weight pesado

The frustrated Leopard Seal snaps and snarls impotently.

MUMBLE

Yeah go chase someone your own size, ya big.....blubberhead.

Taunting it with a cheeky little TAP DANCE. The Adelies love it.

AN ADELIE

Hey, amigo. Do that again!

MUMBLE

Do what?

(defensive)

I didn't do anything.

CONTINUED:

AN ADELIE

That thing with The feet.
(to the others)
;Hola muchachos!
(to Mumble)
Show them!

MUMBLE

Well...I just kind of go ...like this...and
then this...

Bolder now, he does a few neat steps.

THE ADELIES

...;Oye! Ritmo Cubana!
...;Riba Riba! Shake those hips!
...Yo penguino, bust a move!

They COPY HIM, improvising little riffs on his dance step.
The LEOPARD SEAL inches up behind them.

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Then mebbe something like...
...No. I got it. Watch me!

An Adelie adds an ACROBATIC variation of his own. The LEOPARD
SEAL is almost upon them.

MUMBLE

Or how about ...

MUMBLE adds a neatly executed slide just as the LEOPARD SEAL
strikes. MUMBLE avoids the lunge and the creature's face
comes down hard on the ice

THE ADELIES

(to the winded Seal)
...Eat my ice, lardface.
...Kiss my frozen toosh, rubber butt

They fall about laughing. The Leopard Seal returns to the
water.

LEOPARD SEAL

I know where you live.

THE ADELIES

...Yeah, it's called The Land, tubby.

...Flop back anytime!

(CONTINUED)

35.

CONTINUED: (2)

Laughing hysterically at their own jokes they strut off.
MUMBLE watches them go.

ADELIES

...Hey, ain't you coming, tallboy?
...Or you got something better to do?

MUMBLE looks out at the endless sea of floating ice-pancakes,
all the way to the horizon. Nothing...

He shrugs and hurries off after his new friends.

FURTHER ON

A strange cacophony building as The four ADELIE AMIGOS and
MUMBLE crest the rise, to see...

ADELIE LAND

A vast, boisterous ADELIE PENGUIN COMMUNITY. Thousands of
them, stretching as far as the eye can see. Its very Rio,
very samba, worlds away from the sedate Emperor colony.

MUMBLE

Wow, there are so many of you!

THE ADELIES

...Hey, this is nothin'.
...Used to be twice as many of us.
...Yeah, back when you could still catch a
fish.

MUMBLE

The shortage has affected you too?!

AN ADELIE

...Who you calling shortish?
...All I know is a lot of us
ain't comin' back.
...And Some folks so hungry they eating
rocks

Sure enough An ADELIE walks by, a PEBBLE in his beak.

THE ADELIES

(laughing)
...Eating rocks!!?
...That is major funny.

(CONTINUED)
36.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE

Why funny? That's terrible

ADELIES

...Just kidding the rocks are for nest-
building
...That's how its works here. The one with
the most rocks gets the chicas.
..Chica boom chica boom chica boom boom
BOOM!

MUMBLE

So why aren't you guys collecting them

THE ADELIES

..Cos we got personality!.
...Without us the chicas got no boom boom.
...Without us the fiesta will be a siesta..
...Watch and learn tallboy.

One of the Adelies calls to a pair of YOUNG FEMALES he sees walking by.

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Hola Conchita!

The Adelies pose, RUFFLING UP THEIR CRESTS into various styles: the MOHAWK, the FLAT-TOP...

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...See something you like?

...trying to top each other, they add HIPPIITY-HOPS they've just learned from Mumble. The females are intrigued.

A FEMALE

Hey. Cool. Where'd you learn that?

THE ADELIES

...The big guy.
...He from out of town.
...He with us.

FEMALE

Do it again.

THE ADELIES

...Sorry Show's over.

(To mumble as they walk off)

...Treat em mean and keep em keen

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

37.

CONTINUED: (2)

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...hold back `til the season, when they
begging for it.

A FEMALE

(calls after them)

Yeah guys, in your dreams

THE ADELIES

...You see. Some penguins got it, some
don't And the Amigos, (in unison) WE GOT
IT!

They punch and bump each other playfully.

MUMBLE

....you think I could get some of it?

AN ADELIE

Hombre, you got so much already, you
dangerous.

He touches Mumble and recoils as if burnt

ADELIE

Yow!

MUMBLE

You really think so?

THE ADELIES

...You got the biggest personality of any
of us.

...Except for me, maybe.

...Put that ego away, Ramon, you gonna hurt
someone.

THE CONGA LINE

Music over: Carlos Santana's "Oyé Como Va".

MUMBLE (V.O.)

So for a while I forgot about finding a
song altogether.

The Adelies and Mumble form a conga, weaving in and out of
the nest builders, aiming a kick here and there at their
industrious brethren

38.

UNDERWATER

MUMBLE

...We were a team

the Adelies swoop and dive, corralling a FEW SMALL FISH into
a CREVICE.

The fish, darting to and fro are suddenly confronted by
Mumble's OPEN BEAK.

ON THE ICE AGAIN

Mumble shares out the catch

AN ICEBERG

MUMBLE

...there was so much to do, so much to
see

Mumble and the adeles come shooting down a long curving
Slippery dip

THE ADELIES

...¡Arriba!
..Addidas amigos!

As they shoot off the slippery-dip and into the sea mumble
whacks his head on the edge of the ice

UNDERWATER

The Adelies shoot back up to the surface. Mumble sinks,
slightly dazed, watching the kalaeidescope patters of the
surface recede.

Music Over: "Ground Control to major Tom"

ON THE SURFACE

ADELIES

...Where's the tall-boy
...I thought he was with you.

They jump back in to look for him

39.

UNDERWATER

Mumble keeps sinking, down down down into a great cathedral-like space, lit by eerie shards of underwater light.

MUMBLE

....stuff down there beyond my wildest
imagining.

Imbedded in the base of the glacier, the rusting remains of, An OLD YELLOW EXCAVATOR projecting out of the glacier.

It hangs there, inscrutable, like a great yellow totem.

Mumble, dwarfed by it, contemplates it for a while, then ventures inside, into the body of the BEAST.

INSIDE THE BULLDOZER

A rusting steering column, a perforated dashboard.

He pecks at the metal, trying to taste it, listening to the sound it makes.

OUTSIDE THE BULLDOZER

In the shimmering space outside the bulldozer, the ADELIES congregate.

THE ADELIES

... You sure he went in there?
...Mumble!
...Done go near it, looks like it can
bite

One of them swims closer to the great jaws

ADELIES

Ramos!

Mumble pops his head out from between the jaws

MUMBLE

Oh! There you are

Terrified the Adelies scatter and shoot to the surface like missiles.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Guys! I want to speak to you.

40.

THE ICE SHELF

The Adelies are heading back to their colony as fast as their little legs will carry them. Mumble Hippity hops after them

ADELIES

...Forget it
...We're not going back there
...Never

MUMBLE

But its dead. It can't hurt you

ADELIES

...Maybe its got a brother still alive.

MUMBLE

But that's what we have to find out.
Don't you see. Things like that could be eating the fish.

The idea is so stunningly original it stops them in their tracks.

ADELIES

Okay. Okay. Here's the plan: we go and ask the revered one.

MUMBLE

The who?

THE ADELIES

...Reverend Loveday.
...The One who Knows
...First we gonna need stones though

MUMBLE

Why stones? Wait for me

LOVEDAY'S MOUND

MUMBLE and the ADELIE AMIGOS are bunched together, near the

head of a LONG QUEUE of Adelies each with a stone or in their beak.

At the head of this queue stands LOVEDAY - guardian of a huge pile of pebbles. His head pokes through one of the rings a PLASTIC SIX-PACK CAN HOLDER festooned with seaweed like a **HOLY MANTLE**.

(CONTINUED)

41.

CONTINUED:

A group of Soul singers, mainly female, sway in the background, singing a soulful song of adoration as the Penguin ahead of Mumble steps forward.

LOVEDAY

First, the devotion...

The PENGUIN adds his pebble to the pile.

LOVEDAY holds up a flipper for silence and a hush falls over the gospel choir

LOVEDAY (CONT'D)

A moment...

(composing himself)

... and your question?

FIRST IN QUEUE

Señor Loveday, My wife is one of the Disappeared ones Tell me is she alive?

Loveday hyperventillates, his eyes roll up in his head

LOVEDAY

The Mystic Beings are speaking to me.
Yes! She is alive and happy and you are in her thoughts...

FIRST IN QUEUE

But is she with another male?

LOVEDAY

One pebble, one question. Next!

The AMIGOS push MUMBLE forward. He is at least a head taller than the others.

LOVEDAY (CONT'D)

I sense...you are the one with the question.

ADELIE

...How does he do it?
...He just one look and he know.

Mumble places the pebble on the pile. A long Pause

LOVEDAY

A little nervous? That's normal. Take
your time.

(CONTINUED)

42.

CONTINUED: (2)

In fact Mumble is mesmerised by the luight catching LOVEDAY's
six pack holder. He bends forwards to study it more closely

MUMBLE

I was wondering. Have You ever been
abducted by Aliens?

LOVEDAY

No time wasters. Next!

THE ADELIES

...Señor! That's not his question. He's new
here.

(prompting Mumble)

...The yellow thing
...Ask him what's taking the fish?

MUMBLE

(ignoring them)
...you see I met a Skua once, with
something like that on his legs....

LOVEDAY

...Skua? Leg? What's he talking about?

MUMBLE

... and he said he was abducted by
Aliens.

LOVEDAY

(starts to wheeze and cough)
Listen friend, this is my Sacred
Talisman, bestowed upon me by the Mystic
Beings...

MUMBLE

Looks like they bestowed it very tight.

LOVEDAY

...during my Epic Journey of
Enlightenment to the Forbidden Shore!

MUMBLE

So these Mystic Beings, did you see them?

LOVEDAY

I hear them. They talk to me all the time
I am their instrument. They chose me
to.....

(CONTINUED)

43.

CONTINUED: (3)

MUMBLE

Did they have frontways eyes? No
feathers? Fat flabby faces? Did they
probe you and stick a pointy thing into
you?

LOVEDAY

Enough! How many questions is that? You
don't have enough pebbles.

ADELIES IN QUEUE

...Yeah, one pebble, one question.
...We've all got stuff to ask, pal!

MUMBLE

But I haven't had any answers yet!

LOVEDAY

SILENCIO!! The Mystic Beings are
speaking. They say show some respect
stranger. Especially to the One who
Knows.

A hush falls over the gathering.

LOVEDAY (CONT'D)

The reason there are not enough fish is
simple: There is not enough love in the
world. Love is the answer!

One cue the gospel choir start singing: All you need is Love

LOVEDAY (CONT'D)

(over this)

Okay, everybody, turn around to the penguin next to you and give them a great big hug. Come on, everybody...hug! This is a safe place.

The gathering hug awkwardly. Mumble, because of his towering height, has trouble embracing the Adelie next to him.

LOVEDAY (CONT'D)

Now. The Mating Season starts today so here's what everybody should do: go forth and multiply! If you'll excuse I myself must retire for a moment to the couch of indulgence... okay ladies, who's gonna be first

(CONTINUED)

44.

CONTINUED: (4)

MUMBLE and the ADELIES are jostled aside in the STAMPEDE of FEMALES as the gospel group break ranks and mob him

FEMALE ADELIES

..Me Loveday.
..Me!
..No Me !

LOVEDAY

One at a time! And don't touch the Talisman!

ADELIES

....I liked him better when he was just plain Pedro.
...Did he say it starts today
...why didn't someone tell us.
...We gotta get to work guys!!

They start posturing for the any FEMALES they can attract

THE ADELIES

...¡Hola Baby! Get your chica boom-boom here.
... Turn round, look at us!.

A couple of females look up from the scrum

FEMALE

...How many rocks you got.

HER FRIEND

...Forget `em honey. They only one
between the six of them...and they just
spent it.

AN ADELIE

(getting desperate)
Wait. Look.

The Adelies all start DANCING MADLY, but it is too frenetic,
too desperate.

ADELIES

...You like it
...Arriba!
...What do you need stones for

(CONTINUED)

45.

CONTINUED: (5)

FEMALE FRIEND

Try sitting on the ice for a month. It
might come to you Salsa Boy. Come on,
Consuela.

Rejected, the Amigos stop dancing.

THE ADELIES

...Their loss, guys.
...Ramon, where you going?

Ramon is SEARCHING frantically for PEBBLES.

RAMON

Gotta be some rocks left here somewhere!
(to Mumble)
Hey big guy, got any love stones over
where you come from?

MUMBLE

We don't collect them. All we have to do
is , well... We sing

AN ADELIE

...Easy as that?
...So why aren't you over there?

Mumble looks at them. Then opens his beak and demonstrates:

MUMBLE

La la la la la la la la laaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!

THE ADELIES

(to each other)

...What's he doing?
...Its a distress call
...Its world music
...Get out of here!

MUMBLE

See. That's how I ended up with you guys.
And emperor who can't sing isn't an
emperor at all.

AN ADELIE

Man. You're an emperor all right, You're
a king among emperors. The singing we can
fix.

(CONTINUED)

46.

CONTINUED: (6)

MUMBLE

You can?!

AN ADELIE

No problem. Which way's this colony of
yours?

Leading off.

ADELIES

...We'll all come.
...Yeah I like em tall.
...You jus' gotta do exac'ly as I say.

THE EMPEROR COLONY

It is autumn, the EMPEROR PENGUINS for the mating season.

It is just like the GREAT GATHERING we saw at the beginning
of our story. Males and females sing their Heartsongs. And
ONE SONG stands out from all the others.

Where NORMA J. once sang, stands ELLA, now sleek and fully
mature. Gathered around her in a semi-circle, a half a dozen
adoring MALES.

ELLA

Voulez-vous coucher avec moi ce soir?
Voulez-vous coucher avec moi?

Suddenly she becomes aware of a MELLIFLUOUS MALE VOICE overlapping hers. It has a curious bossa nova rhythm.

MUMBLE

Tall and tanned and young and lovely
The Girl from Ipanema goes walking
And when she passes each guy she passes
goes 'Aaaah'

Ella turns to see: a PENGUIN backlit by the sun, standing HEROICALLY on a little rise, just as WISHFUL did.

Ella recognizes those TAPPING FEET. Could this be MUMBLE?She moves closer to investigate.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Oh, and I want her so badly
How can I tell her I love her?
Yes I would give my heart gladly

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

47.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

But each day when she walks to the sea,
She looks straight ahead not at me...."

ELLA

Mumble?

SINGING VOICE

Tall and tanned and young and lovely..

MUMBLE

(overlapping)
Hi Ella, what do you think?

Ella, suspicious moves to one side. Mumble moves to block her view. She moves further tound and sees:

THE ADELIE

;Hola bonita!

Obviously he's been singing while Mumble mimes

ELLA

Mumble, that's just cheap

She turns and heads off. The Adelie starts after her.

THE ADELIE

Wait up! You and me baby, we can make
sweet music. I may be short but I'm a
love god...Ooww!

Mumble smacks him with the back of a flipper and goes off
after Ella himself.

MUMBLE

Ella. Wait!

She stops. He takes her by the shoulders Shes upset.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

ELLA

(shakes her head, tearful)
When you left without saying goodbye I
thought something had happened, then I
thought he just doesn't care.

(CONTINUED)
48.

CONTINUED: (2)

MUMBLE

Don't care? I never stopped thinking
about you.

ELLA

And then when I saw you singing, for a
second I thought...

MUMBLE

I can't sing.

ELLA

I know. I know. Its impossible.

She walks off.

MUMBLE

But I'll show you something better

He TAPS an up-tempo, syncopated rhythm on the ice.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Sing something to this!

ELLA

(her back to him)

What's the point. It's embarrassing

MUMBLE

Just try it. This once.

Ella begins to hum Never Can Say Goodbye ironically and without conviction.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Okay, that'll work. Just keep it going.

The singing ADELIE joins in...acapella, very rhythmic

THE ADELIE

"...turn around you fool

You know I love you more and more..."

Right on cue, the rest of the AMIGOS appear on either side of him, singing back-up.

(CONTINUED)

49.

CONTINUED: (3)

THE ADELIES

"Tell me why is it so

Don't wanna let you go

I never can say goodbye, no...no no no..."

Curious, ELLA TURNS.

Framed between the Adelies, Mumble strikes a pose, holds it for a moment... then lets rip.

He TAP DANCES...UNINHIBITED, WILD, JOYOUS. The ADELIES accompany him. They know all the moves and it is INFECTIOUS

FEET are beginning to tap, couples are beginning to improvise... singing along, trying out the dance steps.

Now ELLA is caught up in it. AND MUMBLE IS DANCING LIKE NO

PENGUIN HAS EVER DONE BEFORE!

MUMBLE

This is it Ella! This is the song inside me!

ELLA is ecstatic. Just when we think the WHOLE COLONY will be swept up into the abandon. A DARK FIGURE steps forward

CARUSO

(bellows)

STOP...THIS...DEPRAVITY!!!

ELLA STOPS DANCING. MUMBLE misses a beat, loses his footing, trips and goes sliding across the ice to the feet of CARUSO and the ELDERS.

CARUSO (CONT'D)

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS ABOMINATION?!!

MUMBLE

I'm just showing them Happy Feet

CARUSO

Happy WHAT?! This is an OUTRAGE!

The ADELIES shuffle uncomfortably. Caruso turns to the rest of the emperors

(CONTINUED)

50.

CONTINUED: (4)

CARUSO.

It is exactly this kind of disrespectful, heretic behaviour that has brought the Scarcity upon us! Don't you see...we are being brought to account by the Forefathers!

THE ELDERS

... The kid was never quite the full Penguin.

... It all began the year he hatched.

... That's right! He's the one who brought the blight!

MUMBLE

(astonished)
Wait. Wait. You think it's my fault that
there are no fish?!! Doing Happy Feet
can't cause a food shortage.

AN ELDER

...then what did?!

MUMBLE

My own opinion? I think living beyond
the ice there are creatures we've never
met before Aliens. Mystic Beings. Big,
flabby.....

ELDERS

(pushing in)

...He has abandoned the faith.
...He has driven the fish away.

THE ADELIES

(protecting Mumble)

...Come on hombre, loosen up,
...the tall guy was just trying to....

AN ELDER

Don't touch me! Heathen!!

He BATS the ADELIES aside like skittles. Mumble intervenes

MUMBLE

BACK OFF, YA SCREWY-ASS FLIPPERBIRD!

THE ELDERS

(enraged)

...Skua talk!! He's talking Skua talk!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

51.

CONTINUED: (5)

THE ELDERS (CONT'D)

...He's the spawn of evil!!
...The devil penguin!!!

MUMBLE

This is craziness

A VOICE

No, Son they're right.

Wishful emerges from the crowd

MUMBLE

You too pa?!

WISHFUL

Truth is, I'm the cause of it. I dropped the egg. I made you how you are. If only you'd come back to us, relinquish the dark side

MUMBLE

No. Dad. No. What have they done to you. You're talking like Caruso.

WISHFUL

Just do it. Pray to the Forefathers for forgiveness.

MUMBLE

No. You're nuts. All of you. I'm outa here.

MUMBLE walks away. The community part to let him go. Ella chases after him.

ELLA

Wait! Mumble!

Catching up with him

MUMBLE

Its no use Ella. I can't live with that.

ELLA

Can you live without it?

He stops.

(CONTINUED)

52.

CONTINUED: (6)

ELLA (CONT'D)

I believe in you, Mumble. But without the huddle we can't make an egg. Without the egg, what are we here for?

ADELIES

...True

...That's a big question

MUMBLE

Guys. Can Me and Ella be alone for a bit

The Adelies give them space

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

OK. Here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to talk an alien. I'm going to find what's causing the shortage

ELLA

But what about?...

MUMBLE

Its the only way. You're right. Unless we have food theres no future for any of us - you, me the adelies, anyone

ELLA

But...

MUMBLE

Give me a year, just until the next great gathering. If I don't make it backat least I tried

ELLA

But...

MUMBLE

Now go back. I love you. Go.

Ella returns to the community. As she does so, CARUSO begins to CHANT the Gathering answers.

CARUSO

"Together we stand"

ALL

"Divided we freeze."

(CONTINUED)

53.

CONTINUED: (7)

ALL (CONT'D)

Recite the Wisdoms!

ALL (CONT'D)

"In the Wisdoms we trust."

CARUSO

"When all others leave..."

ALL

"We Remain."

CARUSO

Louder. More fervent bretheren.
"When the Sun vanishes..."

ALL

"We Remain."

ELLAS watches through tears as the tiny figures of Mumble and the Adelies dwindle to specks and disappear into the mist.

THE ICE SHELF

Mumble and the Adelies have put the colony far behind,
trekking homewards

ADELIES

Tell me again where we're going.

MUMBLE

To find the mystic beings.

ADELIES

How do we know where they live.

MUMBLE

We'll ask Loveday. He's been there.

ADELIELAND

Most of the Adelies are sitting on nests. The Adeleies and Mumble trek past them a protective mother takes a peck at them.

MOTHER

...Not so close. We got babies on board

ADELIES

...Wow. Does nesting make em touchy

(CONTINUED)

54.

CONTINUED:

They find LOVEDAY at the back of what is left of his PEBBLE PILE. He sits leaning against it...exhausted.

THE ADELIES

...LOVEDAY, you okay??
...what happened
...Too much boom-boom for one penguin?

MUMBLE kicks a bunch of pebbles at him.

MUMBLE

Just one question! And I want a straight answer! Where do I find the Mystic Beings?

LOVEDAY tries to raise himself up. A tight low gurgling rumbles from his throat.

AN ADELIE

Why don't he speak?

LOVEDAY gurgles and points wildly to the SIX-PACK PLASTIC round his neck.

AN ADELIE (CONT'D)

Talisman...sounds like Talisman!!

LOVEDAY coughs. His eyes bulge.

ADELIES

...He's possessed!
...It's a seizure!

MUMBLE

No. He's choking! The Talisman's gotten way too tight.

THE ADELIES

...Why din' you say so?
...Hold on we gonna take it off.
...You pull that side, I pull this side.

They tug at the SIX-PACK PLASTIC. LOVEDAY GASPS AND WINCES.

MUMBLE

Stop. You're hurting him.

The Adelies back off.

(CONTINUED)

55.

CONTINUED: (2)

AN ADELIE

Any better?

LOVEDAY gives a little 'so-so' gesture with his flipper.

THE ADELIES

...It not gonna come off.
...Of course it's not! It's sacred!

MUMBLE

LOVEDAY, where did you get it?

THE ADELIES

...It was bestowed on him.
...By the Mystic Beings!

LOVEDAY shakes his head sadly.

MUMBLE

They didn't bestow it on you?

THE ADELIES

...Poor Guy.
...He don't know what he's saying.

MUMBLE

If it wasn't bestowed, what happened?

LOVEDAY mimes swimming.

THE ADELIES

...Oh, this one's easy.
...He swam....
...On his Hectic Journey of Delightenment...
...To the Forbidding Shore.

MUMBLE

And then....?

LOVEDAY mimes the talisman going over his head.

AN ADELIE

...Well to me that's gotta be bestowing.

LOVEDAY shakes his head, 'no'. He stretches his neck.

MUMBLE

You looked up and..... It just got caught
around your neck?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ADELIES

...No way. No. He's the revered one
...He speaking symbolically.

LOVEDAY hangs his head. A TEAR slides down his beak.

MUMBLE

(gently)
Loveday, did you ever meet a Mystic
Being? Really?

Beaten, LOVEDAY shakes his head `No' The Adelies are stunned
into silence.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

But this thing was made by someone. And
if we find them, they could take it off.

LOVEDAY looks up, a glimmer of hope in his eye.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

So where do we Go, Loveday

Loveday Then he makes a strange "Oi, Oi, Oi" sound.

AN ADELIE

Oh my! Now he thinks he's an Elephant
Seal

LOVEDAY nods and points towards the mountains.

AN ADELIE (CONT'D)

He wants to go to the top of the
mountain.

LOVEDAY shakes his head.

MUMBLE

The forbidden place is over the
mountains...

LOVEDAY nods.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

...In the land of the Elephant Seals!!?

LOVEDAY gestures wildly with his flippers!

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

...Beyond the land of the Elephant Seals!!?

(CONTINUED)

57.

CONTINUED: (4)

LOVEDAY nods `YES!!' and falls back in exhaustion.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

So who's coming

LOVEDAY

Oi

A MOUNTAIN RIDGE

The Adelies labour uphill into the wind. LOVEDAY is lagging behind, breathing hard.

Even MUMBLE and the AMIGOS are puffing with the effort of the climb.

Music Over: He aint heavy he's my brother.

ADELIES

...Stop. Enough. We must've gone past it
...Past? Don't kid me. We're not even
close.

Then on the wind comes a faint `Oi, Oi, Oi'.

MUMBLE

Hear that?!

As they crest the peak, sure enough, down below: the LAND of the ELEPHANT SEALS. Thousands of them.

THE ADELIES

...Refresh my memory do elephant seals eat
penguin?
...No, no...jus' krill and fish.
...Sure of your facts are you?

Not waiting, Mumble launches himself over the other side, slip-sliding down the mountain. One by one the ADELIES follow.

ADELIES

Well I guess we're about to find out

THE LAND OF THE ELEPHANT SEALS

The beach is literally heaving.

MUMBLE and the ADELIES come tumbling and sliding right up to two HUGE SEALS.

(CONTINUED)

58.

CONTINUED:

ELEPHANT SEAL 1

(big-bellied, booming southern voice)

Well roll me over and call me a dugong.
What the heck have we got here

The Adelies bunch up behind Mumble

MUMBLE

Excuse me, we need directions...to the Forbidden Shore.

ELEPHANT SEAL 2

Sure. Just git yourselves over them there hills I'd come with you myself but...

ELEPHANT SEAL 1

Woah Woah. You aint told em half of it: over them hills, beyond the great glacier, `n' through the blizzard country.

The Good Ole Boys are into ONE-UPMANSHIP.

ELEPHANT SEAL 1 (CONT'D)

Anyhow. Its its forbidden to go there.

ELEPHANT SEAL 2

I heard its forbidden to ask how to get there!

MUMBLE

We're looking for the Mystic Beings

ELEPHANT SEAL 2

Mystic Who?

MUMBLE

Aliens, the ones who made this.

He indicates the SIX-PACK PLASTIC around LOVEDAY'S neck.

SEAL 1 lowers it's massive head down to face LOVEDAY.

Wheezing he examines the plastic with first with one eye, then the other, before announcing his verdict.

ELEPHANT SEAL 1

Blizzard Walkers!
Cut you up soon as look at you.

(CONTINUED)
59.

CONTINUED: (2)

ELEPHANT SEAL 2

Cut you up before they look at you.

MUMBLE

Could they be taking our fish?

ELEPHANT SEAL 1

Could be!?! I heard they'd take a whole penguin, rip its skin right off and turn it into mush.

ELEPHANT SEAL 2

Huh! That's a Picnic! I hear tell they'd take a baby seal and club it to death. With their bare clubs.

ELEPHANT SEAL 1

Huh! Clubbing's a Clambake! My Granpappy says they been known to skin a seal from snout to tail in a hot second.

ELEPHANT SEAL 2

Your Granpappy don't know squat! What I hear they take your sorry carcass, melt you down, burn you up, take your fur `n' fat and turn you into a wide variety of useful items!

ELEPHANT SEAL 1

The hell with "useful" Those critters'd y turn you into a food item! Little popsicle things! Ya hear me? One day you're a big ole whale and the next minute, FUNFOOD!!

MUMBLE

But If your grandpappys saw them and they survived, maybe they're not so fierce.

SEAL #1

You calling me a liar son?

SEAL #2

He's calling your grandpappy a liar. And you know what, Maybe he's right.

SEAL#1

Why you. Flop over here and say that!

They start fighting, lunging and flopping on each other

(CONTINUED)

60.

CONTINUED: (3)

MUMBLE

Come on Loveday, lets go

ADELIES

(running to catch up)

...Go where?

...didn't you hear what he said

...Its Forbidden

MUMBLE

They don't know. They've never been there

AN ADELIE

Stop! I'm hearing voices. The mystical guys. They say:

"Your life is perfectly good as it is...forget this stupid mission".

MUMBLE and LOVEDAY keep trekking.

ANOTHER ADELIE

Ramon. That was embarrassing, man.

And reluctantly, he trails after them. As do...

THE OTHER ADELIES

...Oh no, don' do this to us.

...I'm a lover not a fighter

...The first sign of Popsicles or funfood of any kind, I turn round and go back

THE BLIZZARD COUNTRY

MUMBLE, LOVEDAY and the ADELIES are tiny specks, struggling over a series of great ridges.

MUMBLE

So we walked ... and walked .. and kept walking. Over the hills and into Blizzard country

A SNOW STORM breakes over them. A screaming wind brings total WHITE-OUT. The Penguins have to shout to make themselves heard.

THE ADELIES

...Oh man! This is no place for a penguin!
...We should be migrating out to sea by now!

(CONTINUED)

61.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE

We need to huddle!

THE ADELIES

Huddle??!

MUMBLE

Form a moving circle! Share the cold, share the warmth!

He turns his back to the wind. Immediately the Adelies form a STRAIGHT LINE down-wind from him.

THE ADELIES

...Oh yeah, nice.
...That's definitely better.
...Good call big guy.

MUMBLE

I said a circle!

They form a little huddle, but as soon as Mumble moves from the upwind position, the Adelies complain.

AN ADELIE

...No, no. This can't be right!
...It was better the other way.

They scurry back into a straight line behind Mumble who cops the FULL BLAST of the GALE.

He gives up and marches off into the driving snow.

THE ADELIES

...Hey!
...What happened to the Huddle?!

MUMBLE

(shouts back)
Just keep moving! Toboggan, if you have
to!!

The others lie down, propelling themselves forwards on their
fronts

THE ADELIES

...Oh no, now I got chest pain
...tell you, this is a good way to get
snow blind

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

62.

CONTINUED: (2)

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...just keep moving or you'll get my beak
up your butt

FLARE OUT TO WHITE

The blizzard has passed. An eerie stillness.

One by one the Adelies get to their feet and waddle forwards
to where Mumble and Loveday stand, gazing into the distance.

They have finally reached the sea again

MUMBLE

You think this is it? The Forbidden
Shore?

LOVEDAY chokes out a `yes'.

ADELIES

....The way I feel": the "frostbitten"
shore
....So what are those black things?.

Close to the waters edge, the outline of several buildings

AN ABANDONED WHALING STATION

The PENGUINS venture through it, dwarfed by the old flensing-
sheds, the chimneys and boiling-vats. Its all now abandoned,
and half concealed by snow.

Around and above them, there are HOOKS, CHAINS, rusting twisted METALWORK.

MUMBLE

Hello?! Is there anyone out there?

An ominous GROANING as some rusting metal plate moves in the wind.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Hello!!

THE ADELIES

...No need to shout.

...Yeah, somebody might hear you.

...I think we seen all there is to see round here.

LOVEDAY is looking at something at his feet.

(CONTINUED)

63.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE

What is it?

There, imbedded in the ice: another six pack holder.

THE SEA ICE

Mumble and the Adelies venture out onto the weak ice beyond the whaling station, finding more and more of the strange artefacts: a piece of nylon rope, a soda can, a boot.

MUMBLE

They must be here somewhere.

They wouldn't leave all this stuff lying around.

AN ADELIE

Maybe they invisible.

FURTHER ON

They've reached the edge of the sea-ice. LOVEDAY croaks a warning. He points out to sea.

AN ADELIE

What is that?

A WAVE has appeared on the glassy surface of the sea. It is

coming towards them, FAST like the bow wave of an IMMENSE UNDERWATER CREATURE.

MUMBLE

A whale?

AN ADELIE

As long as it's a good whale, not the other kind.

The wave is coming CLOSER.

ANOTHER ADELIE

What other kind?!!

A massive BLACK DORSAL FIN breaks the surface.

MUMBLE

The ones with teeth!!

The PENGUINS are off and running...

(CONTINUED)

64.

CONTINUED:

The DORSAL FIN keeps coming like the blade of a demonic carving knife.

Then the monstrous fin disappears and KABOOM! The killer whale breaches the ice AHEAD of them, cutting off their retreat.

They are left stranded on a free-floating ICE FLOE

THE ADELIES

...Jump!
...Swim for it!

MUMBLE

No!! Stay on the ice pad where its safe

The little floe is wobbling crazily

THE ADELIES

...You call this safe amigo?
...Maybe we should split up.
...You split up I'm staying right here.

The KILLER WHALE breaches again, rising like a tower block out of the ocean.

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

Wooooaaahhh!!

The ICE PAD flips, flinging them into the water like a handful of peanuts.

IN THE SEA

The PENGUINS head for shore , swimming for their lives. LOVEDAY, thrashing and wheezing, is unable to keep up.

MUMBLE

(stops)

LOVEDAY! LOVEDAY!!

He swims back. The KILLER WHALE is about to take them both in one bite. MUMBLE pulls LOVEDAY aside, but he's not quite quick enough: one of the Whale's outer teeth catches LOVEDAY by the SIX-PACK PLASTIC and he is DRAGGED AWAY, tethered to the KILLER WHALE like Captain Ahab.

The WHALE thrashes around wildly trying to dislodge the hapless little penguin until...

(CONTINUED)

65.

CONTINUED:

LOVEDAY is FLUNG high, high into the air and...SPLASHES DOWN some distance away.

The KILLER WHALE is left with the SIX-PACK PLASTIC lodged in its teeth.

ICE SHELF

MUMBLE and LOVEDAY scramble onto the ice exhausted.

Wondering where the next attack will come from, the AMIGOS huddle nearby.

Suddenly the ICE SHELF CRACKS OPEN and the KILLER WHALE soars right over the top of them

It hits the water but does not stop, just keeps going right on out to sea. The Penguins have no time to reflect on their good fortune.

Theres an EARTH SHATTERING NOISE behind them . Turning they see a vast BLACK SHAPE, a hundred feet high, coming at them

through the fog.

The ADELIES flee across the ice. MUMBLE stands transfixed by the BIG BLACK SHIP towering above him. On the deck he sees **HUMAN FIGURES...**

MUMBLE

Aliens?!

The pack-ice is BUCKLING AND EXPLODING ahead of the GREAT **JUGGERNAUT.**

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Stop! Please!....

From a safe distance the ADELIES stop and look on in amazement as Mumble stands his ground, shouting up at THE SHIP as it advances towards him.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

...It's very important!

The ICE beneath his feet OPENS UP, Mumble topples into the gap and The SHIP PASSES OVER HIM, huge propellers churning, leaving a channel ninety feet wide.

MUMBLE resurfaces.

(CONTINUED)

66.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

WE...HAVE...TO...TALK!

He chases after the ship. THE ADELIES chase after Mumble...

THE ADELIES

...AMIGO-O-O-O! ...LET IT GO-O-O-O-O!!

Already the ship is half a mile away.

THE ICEBERG

Beyond the last of the ice floes is THE WORLD'S TALLEST ICEBERG. MUMBLE hurls himself onto it and starts scrambling up its precipitous sides. THE ADELIES follow, struggling to keep up.

THE SUMMIT

MUMBLE's POV: THE BIG BLACK SHIP has joined TWO OTHERS about a mile away. The Adelies join him.

THE ADELIES

...You found them, you found Aliens!
...Now we go back tell everybody who's taking the fish.

Mumble's eyes remain fixed on the horizon.

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Don't feel bad Tall Guy.
...They were just too fast. Too big.
...Too everything.

MUMBLE

They've stopped!

LOVEDAY

Mumble. I owe you my life amigo. And I say this because I admire and deeply respect you. If you are thinking what I think you are thinking. You are out of your crazy head

MUMBLE

Say Hi to Ella for me

(CONTINUED)

67.

CONTINUED:

ADELIES

You say Hi. Come back and say Hi to her yourself

Mumble turns, takes a few paces back.

MUMBLE

Oh. One other thing. You guys

ADELIES

What?

Suddenly, MUMBLE turns to the precipice and runs as fast as he can...

MUMBLE

Excelsi yah!!!

As he launches himself into space...

WIDE SHOT

The tiny penguin soaring off the top of the ICEBERG.

THE ADELIES rush to the edge as, far below Mumble HITS THE WATER. And vanishes.

THE ADELIES

...can you believe that
...brought us all this way and killed
himself
...no he didn't! look!

Far out he has surfaced and is swimming strongly in direction of the BIG BLACK SHIP.

THE ADELIES (CONT'D)

...A dive like that, and still he lives!
... Yeah like when he did his Happy Feet,
his feet had wings.
...A normal penguin could never have done
it.

LOVEDAY

You don't think we should go with him

ADELIES

...Don't sweat it Revered One. Many are
called, few are chosen.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

68.

CONTINUED:

ADELIES (CONT'D)

..Hey, how tall you think the Tall Guy
was?
...Who could say? Four times my height at
least...

Loveday follows behind

LOVEDAY

About this Revered One stuff, you guys

AN ADELIE

Yeah

LOVEDAY

Maybe just call me Pedro

THE OPEN SEA

MUMBLE PLOUGHS THROUGH a rolling sea: towering waves block everything from view but on the crests he catches sight of...

THREE BLACK SHIPS, far ahead, but stationary, as if waiting for him.

LATER

He's getting closer. The ships are only half a mile away when Something rises from the deep, threatening to engulf him: a **HUGE NET, TEEMING WITH FISH.**

Mumble shoots out of the way, just avoiding being caught as.

UP AHEAD The great NET FULL OF FISH breaks the surface of the water and is winched on board.

MUMBLE

(yells)

HEY! YOU CAN'T DO THAT!

WHAT ABOUT US?!

THE SCARCITY! THE SCARCITY!!

As if in response the ship's ENGINES START UP again and the sea around him erupts in churning foam.

Swamped by the wake, Mumble goes under. When he resurfaces, THE SHIP is already on its way.

(CONTINUED)

69.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

HEY YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA GET AWAY WITH THIS?!! NOT IF I CAN HELP IT YOU SHIT-SQUIRTER ALIEN CREEPS.

He takes a deep breath and resumes his pursuit.

OPEN OCEAN

The SEAS are MOUNTAINOUS. There is no sign of the ship now, nor of land.

MUMBLE swims up the side of each wave, over its foaming crest and down into the deep dark valley below.

LATER

The air is full of spray. Choking, MUMBLE ducks under the water.

UNDERWATER

Its peaceful here. Then something moves beside him and turns with a start to see: A MASSIVE EYE!!

A BLUE WHALE entirely fills his field of vision. It sings a few booming Wagnerian notes. Its voice is almost deafening.

MUMBLE

Too loud.

He surfaces, spluttering.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Too loud!

A VOICE calls to him from above. Mumble looks up. An ALBATROSS hovers overhead.

ALBATROSS

He's looking for a mate, mate. And these days, I tell you they're few and far between

From the ALBATROSS' aerial view, Mumble looks tiny next to the MASSIVE BULK of the Blue Whale.

(CONTINUED)

70.

CONTINUED:

ALBATROSS (CONT'D)

Talking of which, I never seen a penguin this far out. Watch you don't hit The Convergence mate.

MUMBLE

The Convergence?

ALBATROSS

Where the cold water meets the warm, mate. Once you cross it, there's no getting' back. What you tryinmg to prove anyway?

MUMBLE

I'm trying to talk to the Aliens!

ALBATROSS

The who?

MUMBLE

On the black iceberg. The ones taking all the fish!

ALBATROSS

Them. Fish is just the start of it Mate. Them aliens is the ones who took out the whales.

MUMBLE

They kill whales! That's impossible

ALBATROSS

Straight up mate. Biggest creatures ever lived. Decimated, mate.

MUMBLE

So if I wanted to talk to them, where would I go

ALBATROSS

Anywhere and everywhere. Over the sea, under the sea, Jees, I've even seen them fly. The great southland's swarming with em

MUMBLE

Where's that. Do you think the Whale would take me there?

(CONTINUED)

71.

CONTINUED: (2)

The Blue Whale responds with a long mournful "NO-O-O-O" which the Albatross does not need to translate.

ALBATROSS

No way mate, he won't go anywhere near `em. And neither should you.

Mumble hesitates, bobbing on the water, weighing the warnings.

He makes up his mind and strikes out again swimming towards the convergence.

The Albatross, hovering on the wing, watches.

ALBATROSS (CONT'D)

Don't say I didn't warn you

The ALBATROSS wheels away.

As MUMBLE fights on through the huge choppy waves, the Whale's Wagnerian song booms out, EERIE and FORLORN.

THE CONVERGENCE

We see from above, the BLUE WHALE turning as well, changing course to avoid a change in the texture and colour of the water stretching in a line, as far as the eye can see. MUMBLE swims RIGHT ACROSS THE LINE.

A VAST OCEAN

MUMBLE is a mere DOT now as the GREAT CURRENTS capture him and sweep him away.

We pull back through the clouds until the very CURVATURE OF THE EARTH is visible: a blue horizon with no land in sight.

SMALL POLLUTED BEACH

On the HIGH-WATER MARK, amongst the rubbish and the oil slick, we see what looks like a dead animal. It is MUMBLE.

A creature in RED GUMBOOTS approaches. Its small hand reaches down and nudges him with a stick. MUMBLE moans and the gumboots RUN AWAY, shouting something unintelligible.

With great difficulty, Mumble raises his head to try to see more. Sunlight flares, bleaching to white, as he LOSES CONSCIOUSNESS.

72.

A WHITE ROOM

Scientific books and specimens of birds in large bottles on shelves line the walls.

MUMBLE, eyes closed, is lying on a stainless steel table. He opens his eyes to the brilliant glare of an examination lamp.

There is movement around him. Voices whispering in an alien tongue. A FIGURE IN WHITE bends over him cleaning the oil from his feathers with detergent. MUMBLE squawks.

MUMBLE (VO)

When I finally saw one, the Alien was
even more hideous than I'd imagined

A very pretty FEMALE SCIENTIST is smiling down at him.

MUMBLE (VO) (CONT'D)

... frontways eyes, no feathers. Big teeth
with blood around them. Strange fleshy
beak. A meat eater

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

(terrified)

The - fish - are - ours. Understand?

But all the SCIENTIST sees is a squawking penguin.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

We can't live without them!

The SCIENTIST produces a syringe and squirts some of it's contents in the air.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Speak Adelie? Skua-talk?

Another SCIENTIST holds him still while the needle is administered.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Oh no! Not the pointy thing!

Drowsy now, he is eased into a PADDED CAGE. The SCIENTISTS close the lid, and secure it with straps.

IN THE CARGO HOLD

We hear a feeble thumping from inside.

(CONTINUED)

73.

CONTINUED:

Pull back to reveal Mumble's box on a shelf among crates and luggage. Fade in engine noise over as....

ENDLESS SKY

A 747 drones across the screen, eastwards into the night.

DARKNESS

MUMBLE

I woke in darkness. Unable to move. Was I
dead? And if I was dead, where was that
light coming from

Like the light at the end of a tunnel. As if in a dream,
MUMBLE ambles towards it. Emerging into

PENGUIN HEAVEN

Bright BLUE SKY, sparkling WHITE CLIFFS OF ICE.

MUMBLE

Wow. They brought me home

His voice ECHOES back at him, with a mocking edge. There is
something unusual about this place. A plump penguin waddles
by

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Excuse me, where are we.

PENGUIN

Heaven. Where d'you think?

MUMBLE

Oh. So we're dead. Right

PENGUIN

Dunno. Don't care. We got food. We got
water. You hear a seal now and then, but
you never meet one. Perfect.

Mumble is looking around, trying to figure it out

PENGUIN (CONT'D)

Fish!

MUMBLE

Where?

(CONTINUED)

74.

CONTINUED:

A fish hits him on the head.

A moment later he's knocked flat by a sudden rush of
PENGUINS: Chinstraps, Rock-hoppers, Adelies, King penguins,
emerging from holes in the rock face

PENGUINS

Fish time. Fish time!

Lying on his back he sees fish tumble from the sky. It's
RAINING FISH!

MUMBLE (VO)

Every day after that, it rained fish in
the afternoon.

His POV, Load after load of fish tumbling out of a clear sky

UNDERWATER

Fish hit the surface and sink

MUMBLE (V.O.)

Fish on land and fish underwater.

Mumble pursues one of them.

MUMBLE

Sometime you got a live one but there was
nowhere really to chase it

He swims SLAP BANG into a sheet of thick glass. ALIEN FACES
are pressed against it. Mumble yells and shoots to the
surface.

THE PENGUIN ENCLOSURE

High up he sees the viewing gallery. A great CROWD of ALIENS
staring and chattering

MUMBLE (V.O.)

Aliens everywhere, watching you eat,
watching you sleep

Mumble backs away and knocks into the PAINTED HORIZON. He
puts out a wing to steady himself and notices a metal tag on
it. This place is beginning to upset him.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE

(yells at the aliens)
What have you done to my wing! This is
not my home! I want to get out of here!

The other penguins stand around, immobile, chomping fish.

OLD TIMER PENGUIN

Guess he's new here

THE PENGUIN ENCLOSURE

Caption: A year later

Spectators POV: Mumble stands around, like the others,
ignoring the aliens, chomping fish

His POV: Day after day, the view constantly the same, except
for the groupings of spectators high in the viewing Gallery

MUMBLE (V.O.)

After a while, you learn to stop fighting
it. Stop protesting, take the knocks.

CU Mumble: A camera flashes. A fish hits him, he doesn't
flinch

MUMBLE (V.O.)

...just take what comes and live inside
your mind

THE SAME/ PASSAGE OF TIME

Another day and another. Night follows day follows night.
Spectators come and go. The penguins stand like statues.

Though bubbles begin to appear above Mumbles head, snapshots
of his past experiences

MUMBLE (V.O.)

Sometimes I thought about dad and mum.
Sometimes the Amigos, and others I'd met
along the way. But mostly I thought about
Ella, wondering who she ended up with.
Whether she had enough food to eat.
whether she still remembered our song.

In the though bubble, Ella has appeared singing never can say

goodbye. Mumbles feet begin shuffling to the rythm

76.

SPECTATORS GALLERY

Most of the specators are leaving but one young girls stops and stares

YOUNG GIRL

Look Mommy! It's dancing!

She bangs on the glass in her excitement.

PENGUIN ENCLOSURE

Mumble, woken from his reverie, looks up and sees her looking at him.

MUMBLE

What? What did I do?

The little girl who is pointing at mumbles feet. Mumble looks down, realizes what his feet are doing, looks up again.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

You like that? Well how about this.

He does a more elaborate step. The Mother shouts in disbelief. Various other specators come back and join her.

Mumbles fellow captives are unimpressed.

PENGUIN #1

Oh-Oh, another one gone troppo

PENGUIN #2

You think its infectious

PENGUIN #3

I sure hope not

They shuffle away

IN THE SPECTATORS GALLERY.

The aliens, in contrast, are loving it. Already a crowd has gathered, laughing and clapping.

NEXT DAY

The Gallery is packed. Mumble keeps dancing

NEXT DAY

Theres a riot going on up there. People fighting to get a view. Newspaper reporters, TV cameras.

The other penguins in the enclosure have moved back, giving Mumble more space. Every specattor is focussed on him. Mumble is focussed on the spectators.

MUMBLE (VO

Yes. Yes. At last something was happening. I was finally getting through to them!

THE TRANSPORTER BOX

A squawking Mumble is thrust inside and the lid slams shut on him. Kerchunk.

THE EMPEROR COLONY

Silence, then across the vast expanse a TINY FIGURE appears on the horizon.

PENGUIN V/O'S

...What's that?
...Where?
...Coming from the Inland!

A couple of Penguins watch the approaching figure.

PENGUINS

...Is it a Penguin?
...Is it one of ours?

LATER

Mumble approaches the two sentries. The colony is much diminished: only small groups scattered here and there.

MUMBLE

Hi, where is everybody!?

PENGUINS

Who wants to know?

MUMBLE

I used to live here. When's the Great Gathering?

CONTINUED:

PENGUINS

This is it. I guess

MUMBLE

This is all that's left?

Other penguins are gathering to scrutinise the stranger.

PENGUINS

... So Who's this?

...Kinda small for an emperor.

...(suspicious) Where did you say you were from?

Then a female penguin bursts out of the crowd.

ELLA

Mumble?! Its Mumble!!

MUMBLE

Ella! Is it you. You haven't changed a bit.

As he speaks, his eyes are drawn to the huge number of FLUFFY CHICKS following behind her

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Are these all yours?

ELLA

They're my singing students.

MUMBLE

So. You never....

ELLA

Of course not. I was waiting for you.

MUMBLE

But that's fantastic. I've got so much to tell you - to tell everyone.

(To the gathering crowd)

I found out who's been causing the Scarcity!

ELLA

Huh?

(CONTINUED)

79.

CONTINUED: (2)

MUMBLE

I know who's been taking our fish!
I made contact with Aliens!
They're coming here. Right behind me.
Listen.

They listen. Above the wind faint electronic BEEPING SOUND.

PENGUINS

...Who's doing all the shouting
...Its Mumble. He's worse than before.

MUMBLE

No, honestly Aliens will be here soon!
You have to believe me. We came in a big
hollow bird and they landed on the ice
and....

CARUSO bursts through the crowd.

CARUSO.

You again! And still full of the same old
nonsense.

MUMBLE

But its true!!

The BEEP is quite audible now - a little faster and louder.
Curious, Ella ambles round behind mumble tro see what's
making the noise

CARUSO.

Move along everyone. Pay no attention.
There's no such thing as aliens

ELLA

So who fixed him up with this.

She turns him around to reveal some kind of circuit board
glued to his back: a small aerial, winking red lights. A
TRANSMITTER.

A gasp of fear and astonishment from the penguins. Caruso is

momentarily speechless.

PENGUINS

...Does it hurt?
....Its not made of feathers thats for
sure
...what's it gonna do

(CONTINUED)

80.

CONTINUED: (3)

MUMBLE

It's so they can find me.
(cocks an ear)
That's them now. Listen.

A distant rumbling, like some monstrous cataclysm is
approaching

CARUSO

You led them here. Are you crazy!!

MUMBLE

You said they didn't exist.

CARUSO

They'll slaughter us. Head for the sea!

MUMBLE

No. Do this. Do Happy feet.

He starts tap dancing. The penguins are torn, between
Caruso's instructions and Mumbles.

MUMBLES

Its what they understand. They can't
talk, they can't sing. They speak with
their feet. Do it.

A few adventurous souls begin to copy him, out of fear if
nothing else.

As they do so, the sky begins to darken. A strange whirling
wind starts whipping the snow around them. The very earth
seems to be shaking under them.

CARUSO.

Now look what you've done!

PENGUINS

...its the end of the world.

....Its all Mumbles fault. I told you
Wishful rounds on them angrily.

WISHFUL

Just do what the kid says.

They start dancing.

(CONTINUED)

81.

CONTINUED: (4)

Caruso has climbed a small hillock and is ranting like an old
testament prophet

CARUSO

Recite the wisdoms!
"Together we stand".
"Divided We Freeze".

Mumble and Ella are dancing through the community

MUMBLE

Come on, everyone! Happy Feet! It's our
only chance!

CARUSO

"When all others leave, we Remain

MUMBLE

FEET!!

CARUSO

CHANT!!

MUMBLE

FEET! FEET!! HAPPY FEET!!

The tide is beginning to turn in his favour

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

That's it! Excellent! ;Riba Riba,
penguins!
Shake those hips. Come on, bust a move!!

CARUSO.

Adhere to the wisdoms!! The Ancients will
protect us

As he shouts his he is blown off his feet by a tremendous gust of wind

Caruso tumbles head over heels as a massive Chinook helicopter rises over the horizon, its massive rotors mashing the air.

It swoops down over the penguin nation and lands a little distance away.

Music Over: Wanna Dance with Somebody.

(CONTINUED)

82.

CONTINUED: (5)

Now the entire emperor community are dancing for all they are worth.

PENGUINS

....Aliens.

... I never doubted it for a moment

Mrs Astrakhan dances past

MRS ASTRAKHAN

More feelink. BE SPONTANUOUS!!

Wishful dances over to her, his eyes on Mumble and Ella

WISHFUL

(dancing)

You know who that is? That's my boy!

MRS ASTRAKHAN

(dancing)

Know him? He ees my star pupol!

I TEACH HIM EVERYTHINGK!

BY THE CHINOOK

HUMAN scientists disembark. Skidoos are kicked into life.

We TRAVEL WITH THE SKIDOOS across the ICE-SHELF to the colony

Scientists POV: As they stop, lower their hoods and gaze in astonishment. One of them lifts a video cam to record

THOUSANDS OF EMPEROR PENGUIN DANCING WITH PURE, ABANDONED JOY.

MUMBLE (VO)

From that day on, No one quite knows how it happened, but the black icebergs began to disappear and the fish became abundant once more.

A CONFERENCE ROOM

Suited figures are seated round a large table, watching as IMAGES of the DANCING PENGUIN COLONY play on a video screen.

Without the music it's less obviously a dance.

CHAIRMAN

...So what do you reckon?

(CONTINUED)

83.

CONTINUED:

EXPERT

Yes, quite extraordinary. (stares at the screen) some kind of neurological disorder? a nutritional deficiency perhaps. We'd certainly back the long-term study.

CHAIRMAN

And the international treaty?

DELEGATE#1

Yes. This is exactly the leverage we need for an embargo. No fishing whatsoever...legal, illegal, sanctioned, whatever.

DELEGATE#2

So we all step up policing of the pirate factory ships. And we pressure that country to stop their so-called 'experimental' fishing.

DELEGATE#3

Yes, if our government asks your government to approach their government to call off their fleet...

DELEGATE#2

Better if their government hear it from our government via your government...

CHAIRMAN

What the heck. The amount of publicity this is generating, they'd have world war three if they didn't stop.

THE COLONY

In the confusion of penguins we find MUMBLE, ELLA and their chick

MUMBLE (V.O.)

Ella's gave up teaching to look after our chick. We take turns looking after her and going to get the fish.

As we watch, Ella moves off, joining the great to and fro of penguins along the highway to the sea.

(CONTINUED)

84.

CONTINUED:

MUMBLE covers his chick protectively, watrching his wife walk away.

MUMBLE (V.O.)

I worry about her, sure. Theres so much big stuff out there it can be kind of frightening.

We are pulling back now, back from the colony, back from Antarctica.

MUMBLE (V.O)

But the way I see it. Theres so much out there we don't understand...,

SPACE

Still pulling back

....the stuff you think is small stuff could actually be the big stuff.

Keep pulling back from the world, the solar system, the galaxy.

MUMBLE (V.0

Or am I not making sense here?

Further back. Our galaxy is framed in something like a bomb-sight.

VOICE#1

Is there a problem? I thought this one was barren.

IN THE DOME

We're somewhere otherworldly, inside a clear dome the size of a stadium, with a view of the heavens. In the centre of this space, always just out of shot, two illdefined figures are talking, subtitled:

VOICE#2

More or less. But one of the stars we're harvesting supports these things here.

Projected somehow in mid-air A 3-D image of Times square in winter with tiny people milling around in black coats

(CONTINUED)
85.

CONTINUED:

VOICE#1

So...?

VOICE#2

Well. Exactly. But what we didn't know about before was these things here

An image of the dancing penguins appears.

VOICE#2 (CONT'D)

Just thought you'd want to see them before...you know.

The shadowy figure laughs, enjoying the image.

VOICE#1

Hmm. Charming

VOICE#2

So. We go ahead. Or...?

VOICE#1

No. Better leave them be. See what sector twelves got to offer instead.

The bomb sight moves away from our galaxy to another part of the universe

With that the two figures head off across the great shadowy interior.

The projector beam catches them, briefly, throwing up the giant shadows of these aliens They look very like huge penguins.

As they walking solemnly out of shot with their hands behind their backs one of them breaks step to do a little jig.

RUN TITLES

THE END