

THE LORAX



THE CAST

Lorax
Once-ler
Young Once-ler
Ted

Audrey
Mum
Gran

Thing 1
Thing 2
Thing 3
Thing 4

Young Child
Young Child 2
Chap
Father
Mother
Child

O'Hare
Employee
Citizen 1
Citizen 2

Humming Fish 1
Humming Fish 2
Humming Fish 3

Swomee Swan 1
Swomee Swan 2
Swomee Swan 3
Swomee Swan 4

Bar-ba-loot 1
Bar-ba-loot 2
Bar-ba-loot 3
Bar-ba-loot 4

THE LORAX

Scene 1

Universal Theme Tune –

Lorax: (enter) Hello, everybody. Thanks for coming. I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees. And I'd like to say a few words, if you please. Regarding the story that you're about to see it actually happened. Just take it from me. But there's more to this story than what's on the page, so please pay attention while I set the stage. We open in Thneedville, a city they say that was plastic and fake, and they liked it that way! A town without nature, not one living tree. So, what happened to them? Cue the music! Let's see.

THNEEDVILLE – DANCE/SONG

Audrey: (enter) Oh, hi, Ted.

Ted: (enter, feeling awkward) Oh, hey, Audrey. Hi.

Audrey: Did your ball land in my backyard again?

Ted: What? No. A model aeroplane, this time.

Audrey: Hey, do you want to see something cool? Come on. *(She leads him to look at a painting of Truffula trees.)*

Ted: Whoa! Did you... Did you paint this?

Audrey: Do you like it?

Ted: What? Are you kidding? This is amazing! What are those?

Audrey: Those are trees. Real ones. They used to grow all around here. And people said that the touch of their tufts was softer than anything, even silk. And they smelled like butterfly milk!

Ted: Wow! What does that even mean?

Audrey: I know, right? What I want more than anything in the whole world is to see a real living tree growing in my backyard.

Ted: So if, say... I'm just thinking out loud here. If a guy somehow got you one...

Audrey: I'd probably marry him on the spot. I bet that sounds crazy. Does that sound crazy?

Ted: No! Not crazy. Not crazy at all.

Scene 2 (Inside Ted's house)

Ted: So, Mum, do you happen to know if there's any place where I could get a real tree?

Mum: Ted, we already have a tree. It's the latest model.

Ted: Yeah, but I mean a real one that grows out of the ground or whatever. You know, a real tree.

Mum: Really? You would rather have some dirty, messy lump of wood that just sticks out of the ground?
And it does what? I don't even know what it does. What's its purpose?
Look at what we've got. It's the Oak-omatic.
The only tree with its own remote.

Ted: So, anyway... Let's just say I need a tree. Where would I go? What do I do?

Gran: Then you know what? You need to find the Once-ler.

Ted: The what?

Mum: Mum, it's not really the time for one of your magical fables, okay?

Gran: That's right, I forgot. I'm too old to remember any stories, I can't even remember where I left my teeth!
Would you be a dear and go and fetch me another cushion?

Mum: (exits) Sure, Mum.

Gran: Okay, here's the deal. The Once-ler is the man who knows what happened to the trees. You want one, you need to find him.

Ted: The Once-ler? Mmm-hmm. Okay. *(He thinks)*
Granny, is this a real thing that we're talking about now?

Gran: Oh, he's real all right.

Ted: Well, where can I find him?

(Exit Granny and Ted)

Scene 3 (outside in the open air)

BE COOL – DANCE/SONG

Thing 1: At the far end of town, where the Grickle-grass grows.

Thing 2: And the wind smells, slow-and-sour when it blows.

Thing 3: And no birds ever sing, excepting old crows.

Thing 4: Is "The Street of the Lifted Lorax."

Thing 1: And deep in the Grickle-grass, some people say...

Thing 2: If you look deep enough you can still see today.

Thing 3: Where the Lorax once stood just as long as it could.

Thing 4: Before somebody lifted the Lorax away.

Young Child: What was the Lorax? And why was it there? And why was it lifted and taken somewhere, from the far end of town where the Grickle-grass grows? The old Once-ler still lives here. You ask him. He knows.

Thing 1: But you won't see the Once-ler. Don't knock at his door. He stays in his Lerkim on top of his store.

Thing 2: He lurks in his Lerkim, cold under the roof, where he makes his own clothes out of miff-muffered moof.

Thing 3: And on special dank midnights in November, he peeks out of the shutters and sometimes he speaks and tells how the Lorax was lifted away.

Thing 4: He'll tell you, perhaps if you're willing to pay.

Scene 4 (Outside the home of the Once-ler)

Ted: Hello? Mr. Once-ler? What was the Lorax? And why was it there? And why was it lifted and taken somewhere?

Once-ler: (*not pleased at being disturbed*) Whoa! All right. Okay. What the...
Whoa! Who are you?
Who are you and what are you doing here?

Ted: I'm Ted. Are you the Once-ler?

Once-ler: Oh, man. Didn't you read the signs?
No one is supposed to come here.
Get out of here and leave me alone!

Ted: Listen! People say that if someone brings you this special stuff that you will tell them about trees.

Once-ler: No, no, no! Trees?

Ted: Yeah, real ones. You know, that grow out of the ground?
Hello?

Once-ler: Sorry, it's just... Well, I didn't think anyone still cared about trees.

Ted: Well, that's me. The guy who still cares. I'm here.

Once-ler: Do you want to know about trees? About what happened to them?
Why they're all gone? It's because of me.

Ted: Wait, what?

Once-ler: It's because of me! And my invention, the Thneed. *(He shows Ted what a thneed is)*
It was an amazing product that could do the job of a thousand.

Ted: All right. Sounds ridiculous, but I mean, that's cool.

Once-ler: You're so right it was cool!
It all started a long time ago.

Ted: *(wanting to speed things along)* Can we start not so long ago, maybe?

Once-ler: Do you want a tree?

Ted: Yes, yes.

Once-ler: Then it all started a long, *long* time ago.

Scene 5 (The countryside back when things were beautiful)

Once-ler: I was a young man leaving home.
I had nothing in the world save for an irrational sense of optimism.
I was searching the globe, obsessed with finding the perfect material for my Thneed.
But I'd had absolutely no success. Until one day, I found paradise.

Whoa! This is the most beautiful place I have ever seen.

THIS IS THE PLACE – DANCE/SONG

Young Once-ler: Hey, would you look at those tufts on the top of those trees?
I am sure I have never seen such colourful trees such as these.
These trees, these trees, mile after mile in the fresh morning breeze.
All my life I've been searching for trees such as these.
The touch of their tufts is much softer than silk.

And they have the sweet smell of fresh butterfly milk!

Swomee-Swans: La-la-la-la-la-la-la-la!

Young Once-ler: What is that comfortable sound, coming from the rippulous pond? Why it's cute little Humming-Fish humming while splashing around.

Humming-Fish: Humm—Humm—Humm—Hmmmmmmmm!

Young Once-ler: And look over there, under those trees.
I've never seen such creatures as these!
Look at them frisking about in their little brown suits,
eating so many of those little purple tree-fruits.

Bar-ba-loots: Hee-hee-haha! Hee-hee-haha! Hee-hee-haha!

Young Once-ler: Their songs and laughter have made a great leaping of joy in my heart.
I know just what I'll do. I'll unload my cart.
In no time at all I'll build a small shop
and I'll make the one thing that everyone will be talking about.

Thing 1: Indeed the Once-ler did build and build till he came to a stop.

Thing 2: Then the Once-ler carried an axe from his new little shop.

Thing 3: He picked out a tree with a most beautiful top,
then he chopped down a Truffula Tree with one chop.

Thing 4: And with great skillful skill and with great speedy speed,
he took the soft tuft and knitted...

Young Once-ler: A Thneed! A Thneed, a Thneed!
It's what everyone will need!
A thing of beauty is a joy forever.

Thing 1: The instant he'd finished, he heard a ga-zump!

Young Once-ler: What was that sound?

Thing 2: He looked. He saw something pop out of the stump. *(The Lorax slowly appears)*

Thing 3: The stump of the tree he'd chopped down.

Ted: Describe him.

Once-ler: Describe him? That's hard. I don't know if I can.

Ted: Please just try.

Once-ler: Well, he was shortish. And oldish. And fattish. And mossy.
And he spoke with a voice that was sharpish and bossy.

Young-Child: Sounds like our teacher, he's kinda tough!

Young-Child 2: Just cut that out! You've said enough!

LORAX DON'T ALLOW – DANCE/SONG

Lorax: Mister! I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees.
I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.
And I'm asking you, sir, at the top of my lungs.
That thing, that horrible thing I see.
What's that thing you've made out of my Truffula tree?

Young Once-ler: Look, Lorax, there's no cause for alarm. I chopped just one tree.
I am doing no harm. I'm being quite useful. This thing is a "Thneed."

Lorax: A Thneed?

Young Once-ler: Indeed! A Thneed's a fine-something-that-all-people-need.
It's a shirt. It's a sock. It's a glove. It's a hat.
But it has other uses. Yes, far beyond that.
You can use it for carpets. For pillows! For sheets!
Or curtains! Or covers for bicycle seats!

Lorax: Sir! You are crazy with greed.
Why, there is no one on earth who would buy that fool Thneed!

Chap: *(with a terribly posh and old-fashioned accent)* Excuse me, I couldn't help but notice that strange and interesting thing in your window. What is it?

Young Once-ler: Why, it's a Thneed.

Chap: A Thneed? I have never seen anything like it before.

Young Once-ler: Indeed! It's a fine something that all people need.

Chap: It's just brilliant and great. How much do you charge?

Young Once-ler: Umm...it's just...well...three-nighty-eight!

Chap: Three-nighty-eight? That's quite a steal!
I'll take one, my friend, do we have a deal?

Young Once-ler: Deal! And goodbye.

Lorax: *(lets out a sigh)*

Young Once-ler: (*referring to the chap*) You poor stupid guy. You never can tell what some people will buy.

Lorax: Please, I object, in the name of the trees.

Young Once-ler: All complaints will be filed in this box, if you please.

Young-Child: What happened next, Mr. Once-ler sir?

Once-ler: I'd reached the stage where potential was known.
Too big for one Once-ler alone.
I called my brothers, my uncles, my aunts and said...

Young Once-ler: Listen here! Here's a wonderful chance.
For the whole Once-ler Family to get mighty rich!
Get over here fast. Take the road to North Nitch.
Turn left at Weehawken. Sharp right at South Stitch.

Scene 6

(The scene transitions to the ONCE-LER FAMILY home. FATHER, MOTHER and CHILD are on the phones.)

Father: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Mighty rich you say?
Well, son, you've just made my day!

Mother: Who was that, Pa?

Father: My brother says he's got this deal that we just can't let pass!

Child: Opportunity is a knockin' there'll be no more squakin'!

Father: We're going to get rich. Filthy rich! Why are we still here talking?

Mother: Wait, wait, wait. Don't you think this decision is just too fast?

Father: Of course not. Are you kidding? This one will make us rich!

Mother: Well, okay then. Find the map. Let's head to South Stitch.

Child: Mummy, is there swimming and hiking and fun things to do there?

Mother: I'm sure there'll be lots, in the fresh outdoor air.

Child: Whoopee!

Scene 7

(The scene transitions back to the polluted scene where Once-ler talks to Young-Child through the Whisper-Ma-Phone)

Once-ler: And, in no time at all, in the factory I built,
the whole Once-ler Family was working full tilt.
We were knitting Thneeds just as busy as bees,
to the sound of the chopping of Truffula Trees.
Oh, that whole time went by in such a blur.

REACH OUT – SONG

Young-Child: What happened next, Mr. Once-ler, sir?

Once-ler: Then oh, baby, oh how my business did grow!
Now, chopping one tree at a time was too slow.

Thing 4: The Once-ler quickly invented a Super-Axe-Hacker
which whacked off four Truffula Trees at one smacker.

(Lorax enters and speaks to the Things)

Lorax: They say I'm old-fashioned and live in the past.
But sometimes I think progress progresses too fast!
They say I'm a fool to oppose things like these,
but I'm going to continue to speak for the trees!

(Lorax exits)

Thing 2: Now here are some facts to cogitate and ruminare.

Thing 1: It takes 10 months for a Truffula seed to germinate.

Thing 3: And it takes 10 long years for before the seed turns into a sapling.

HOPE FOR A BETTER TOMORROW – SONG

Scene 8

(The scene transitions back to the Truffula Forest, where the Once-ler's factory has grown enormous. The Family continues to work on the Thneeds.)

Father: Good job, my boy. Making Thneeds one at a time was such a chore,
but with your Super-Axe-Hacker we're making Thneeds four times as fast as before!

Mother: We're answering humanity's each and every need
with each and every one of your fantabulous Thneeds.

Child: It isn't just a tanning vest, you can use it for a hammock when you need rest.

Father: Today we're here to celebrate our love of the good ol' Once-ler, founding father of the Thneed.
Three cheers for the good ol' Once-ler; he's 'the man' of the Thneed!

Once-ler Family: Hip-hip, hooray! Hip-hip, hooray! Hip-hip, hip hooray!

Thing 3: Looks like the Once-ler family has no plans to let those trees grow.
They have no intention of listening, don't you know?

Lorax: I speak for the trees, I'll yell and I'll shout
for the fine things that are on their way out.

Scene 9

(LORAX exits. The scene transitions back to Old Once-ler and Ted and Young-Child.)

Young-Child: The Lorax? Did he ever come back?

Once-ler: Funny you should mention that? He did come back once more.
He knocked right on my new office door.

Scene 10

(Scene transitions back to the Truffula forest. The Lorax enters, and walks to the Once-ler's office. He is accompanied by the Bar-ba-loots. A new sign labelled, "The Once-ler in Chief Private" hangs above the door. The Lorax knocks loudly.)

Young Once-ler: What now? *(Young Once-ler opens the door)*

Lorax: I'm the Lorax who speaks for the trees,
which you seem to be chopping as fast as you please.
But I'm also in charge of the Brown Bar-ba-loots
who played in the shade in their Bar-ba-loot suits.
And happily lived, eating Truffula Fruits.

Young Once-ler: I see your point, yes, I do see your point.
But what has this got to do with me.
I'm a very busy person,
busy making lots and lots of money, you see.

Lorax: NOW...thanks to your hacking my trees to the ground,
there's not enough Truffula Fruit to go 'round.
And my poor Bar-ba-loots are all getting the crummies
because they have no food in their tummies!

Bar-ba-loot 1: My baby is hungry, sir, can't you tell?

Bar-ba-loot 2: My tummy hurts and I don't feel too well.

Bar-ba-loot 3: The crummies in his tummy won't go away.

Bar-ba-loot 4: This is why our family can't stay.

Bar-ba-loot 1: Because there isn't enough food to go around we are all going to have to leave and find a new town.

Bar-ba-loot 2: I hope that our new home has a fun place to play.

Bar-ba-loot 3: I just hope that the new home is a place we can stay.

Lorax: They loved living here. Didn't you my friends?

Bar-ba-loots: Yes.

Lorax: You see! But I can't let them stay.
They'll have to find food. And I hope that they may.
Go off friends, into the great unknown,
I hope you all find a brand new home.

(Lorax and the Bar-ba-loots exit. Father joins Young Once-ler at the door)

Young-Once-ler: I'm watching them and I feel sad as they go.

Father: But business is business, son, and business must grow!

Thing 3: The Once-ler meant no harm. He most truly did not.

Thing 4: But he had to grow bigger. So bigger he got.

Thing 1: He biggered his factory. He biggered his roads. He biggered his wagons.
He biggered his loads of the Thneeds he shipped out.

Thing 2: He was shipping them forth to the south. To the east. To the west. To the north.

Thing 3: He went right on biggering, selling more Thneeds.

Thing 4: He biggered his money. Which everyone needs.

I'M ON TOP OF THE WORLD – SONG

(Lorax enters with the Swomee-Swans. Lorax walks up to Thing 1, coughing and wheezing, whiffing and snuffling.)

Lorax: Excuse me, do you know where I can find the man named Once-ler?
I have come back with more gripes.

Thing 1: I believe he is in there fixing some pipes.

(Lorax and the Swomee-Swans find the Once-ler. They are trying to sing, but only cough and sneeze.)

Lorax: I am the Lorax. Once-ler! Once-ler, you're making such smogulous smoke.
My poor Swomee-Swans, why, they can't sing a note!
No one can sing who has smog in his throat.

Swomee-Swan 1: My throat is so sore. I just can't seem to bare it.

Swomee-Swan 2: Swallowing hurts and my cough. Can you hear it?

Swomee-Swan 3: That smogulous smoke, I don't want to be near it.

Swomee-Swan 4: And the clouds have all changed into darkness, I fear it.

Swomee-Swan 1: *(Sings terribly)* My singing voice is no better than an old crow.

Swomee-Swan 2: We'll have to fly off. But where will we go?

Swomee-Swan 3: A less smoggy place come far or come near.

Swomee-Swan 4: I hear (wherever you live) is nice this time of year.

Lorax: And so, please pardon my cough, they cannot live here.
So I'm sending them off. Where will they go, I don't hopefully know.
They may fly for a month or a year to escape the smog
you've smogged-up around here.

(Swomee-Swans and Lorax exit, coughing and wheezing as they walk. Lorax enters and grabs Young Once-ler and takes him to the now polluted pond.)

Young Once-ler: *(Slightly confused by one Lorax exiting as same time as Lorax entering)*
Please, Mr. Lorax I really must...

Lorax: What's more, let me say a few words about gluppity-glupp.
Your machinery chugs on, day and night without stop making gluppity-glupp.
Also schloppity-schlopp. And what do you do with this leftover goo?
I'll show you. You dirty old Once-ler, you!

Young Once-ler: I don't want to come.

Lorax: You're glumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed.
No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed.

Humming-Fish 1: My fins are so sticky

Humming-Fish 2: My gills are gummed shut.

Humming-Fish 3: Our crystal clear lake is a horrible muck.

Humming-Fish 1: But where shall we go?

Humming-Fish 2: I don't rightfully know.

Humming-Fish 3: This gluppity-glup is a gross gloppity goo.

Humming-Fish 1: And this schloppity-schlopp smells like an old shoe.

Humming-Fish *P! U!*

Lorax: So I'm sending them off too. Oh, their future is dreary.
They'll walk on their fins and get woefully weary
in search of some water that isn't so smeary.

Humming-Fish 2: I hear things are just as bad up in Lake Erie.

(Humming-Fish exit)

Scene 11

Young Once-ler: *(To Lorax)*
Now listen here, Dad! All you do is yap-yap-yap and say,
"Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad!" Well, I have my rights, sir, and I'm telling you
I intend to go on doing just what I do!
And, for your information, you Lorax,
I'm figgering on biggering and biggering and biggering and BIGGERING!
Turning MORE Truffula Trees into Thneeds which everyone, EVERYONE,
EVERYONE needs.

Thing 2: And at that very moment, we heard a loud *whack*.

Thing 3: From outside in the fields came a sickening smack of an axe on a tree.

Thing 4: Then we heard the tree fall...

(The very last Truffula tree enters)

Truffula tree: The very last Truffula Tree of them all! Oh, woe is me,
the very last lonely Truffula tree.
How in the world did this all come to be?
Can someone please kindly explain this to me?
I remember when we were all so happy.
Farewell, goodbye, adios amigos and c'est la vie!

Scene 12

(The scene transitions back to Once-ler, Ted and Young-Child. Young Once-ler and Lorax continue to stay visible on stage. Alone together, watching everyone leave.)

Once-ler: No more trees. No more Thneeds.
No more work to be done.
So, in no time, my uncles and aunts, every one, all waved me goodbye.
They jumped into my cars and drove away under the smoke-smuggered stars.
Now all that was left 'neath the bad-smelling sky was my big empty factory,
the Lorax and I.

Young-Child: Did the Lorax say anything?

Once-ler: The Lorax said nothing. Just gave me a glance. Just gave me a very sad,
sad backward glance as he lifted himself by the seat of his pants.
And I'll never forget the grim look on his face.
When he packed himself up and took leave of this place.
Through a hole in the smog without leaving a trace.

(Lorax exits, followed by Young Once-ler)

Young-Child: That is sad.

Ted: It truly is.

Once-ler: There's more. All that the Lorax left there in this mess was a small pile
of rocks, with one word...

CAST: *UNLESS.*

Once-ler: Whatever that meant, well, I just couldn't guess.
That was long, long ago. But each day since that day
I've sat here and worried and worried away.
Through the years, while my buildings have fallen apart,
I've worried about it with all of my heart.
But now, now that you're here,
the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear.

Ted: It does? What does it mean?

CAST: UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not.

FEEL THE LIGHT – SONG

(Once-ler tosses down a single seed to Young-Child)

Once-ler: So catch!

Ted: Wow thanks! What is it?

Once-ler: It's a Truffula Seed. It's the last one of all.
You're in charge of the last of the Truffula seeds.
And Truffula trees are what everyone needs.
Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.
Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.
Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.
Then the Lorax and all of his friends may come back.

(Once-ler retreats back into his Lerkim. Ted watches him disappear, before holding the seed to his heart. He then exits.)

Scene 13

Ted: Unless someone like ME cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not.

O'Hare: What do you think you're doing, kid?

Ted: Um, I'm looking for a place to plant a tree. A real one.

O'Hare: Why would we need a tree?

Employee: Exactly. Oh, man.

O'Hare: Folks... The last thing you want around here is trees. They're filthy!
Spewing that sticky, nasty sap all over the place.
They bring poisonous ants and stinging bees. Ouch!
Think about that kids.
And, I just thought, you know, they make leaves!
You know that, right? Then these leaves, they just fall.
They just fall wherever they want!

Citizen 1: Come on! We know why you're really against trees.
Because they produce fresh air.

Citizen 2: For free!

O'Hare: Oh! I am wounded! You have lied!

Audrey: It is not a lie! It's called photosynthesis.

O'Hare: Come on. She's making that up! That's a made-up word, people!
Thneedville is perfect just the way it is. We don't need trees!
Who is this guy?

Ted:

I am Ted Wiggins. And I speak for the trees. And the fact is, things aren't perfect here in Thneedville. And they're only going to get worse, unless we do something about it, unless we change our ways. And we can start by planting this!

LET IT GROW – DANCE/SONG

Lorax:

You done good, Beanpole.
You done good.

BE COOL – SONG

BOWS