

HAPPY FEET

First draft screenplay by
George Miller and John Collee

Feb 2000

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A few distant stars, with vast tracts of cold, empty darkness stretching between them.

MOVE IN ON: OUR SUN, larger than the other stars, yet dwarfed by the dark immensity of space.

PLANET EARTH is a spinning blue marble, occasionally catching the light.

NARRATOR

In the immensity of space of time, are we alone?

We see the FAMILIAR CONTINENTS revolving below us, as we spiral down onto Antarctica

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Is there such a thing as fate? Do our lives really have purpose?

On the Ross Ice shelf, a few small dots are moving.

NARRATOR

Is there good and bad, or a dark side to everyone?

MOVE CLOSER. The dots are penguins! Half white and half black.

FADE in a cacophony of singing

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And in all the souls in all the world. How do we find the one with whom we are in tune

Emperor penguins all over the place, serenading each other in a variety of different styles: Torch songs, Rock and Roll, Opera, Country and Western.

One stands out: an archetypal female stands before a small group of admiring males, swaying slightly as she sings.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

MARILYN

Some day he'll come along, the man I love.
He will be big and strong, the man I
love....

Over this, there rises a solo male voice.

ELVIS

Love me tender love me true, all my dreams
fulfill. For my darling, I love you, and I
always will

MARILYN stops singing and turns to see ELVIS standing on a slight elevation some distance away. He has Presley's rich, sexy voice, and a suggestion of the hip wiggle.

Marilyn resumes her song in the same key, like a reply.

MARILYN

....and when he looks my way. I'll do my
best to make him stay.

Then Elvis sings again, then Marilyn. Their songs overlap and merge in a loving duet as Marilyn wanders away from her other admirers and Elvis comes down the slight incline towards her

They meet, still singing, and bow to each other in a brief formal mating ritual, which ends as their necks intertwine.

NARRATOR

That's how it is with us: the Song becomes
Love and Love becomes the Egg.

4 **THE EMPEROR ROOKERY. TWILIGHT**

4

With infinite care, The EGG is passed from Marilyn to ELVIS, who conceals it under his brood pouch.

NARRATOR

Afterwards the females leave, like their
mothers before them, to harvest new
strength from the deep.

Females are tobogganing over the iceshelf, leaving the males behind. Elvis watches his mate recede.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

We alone remain...

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

As the sun drops under the horizon and a COLD WIND picks up

5 **THE HUDDLE. NIGHT**

5

SPINDRIFT swirls and eddies around the penguins, who stand huddled together for warmth. WINDWARD PENGUINS are peeling off and walking round the leeward side.

NARRATOR

Nurturing the warmth of fellowship.
Summoning the forefathers....

The penguins are chanting in Latin

6 **INSIDE THE HUDDLE. NIGHT.**

6

EGGS are balanced on feet. Above that, the adult males stand shoulder to shoulder in prayer.

7 **OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE**

7

Above the huddle, their exhaled breath forms the image of a benevolent, Godlike figure, with a dozen smaller figures beneath

NOAH

We invoke the great penguin.

An aberrant little thoughtbubble appears like a light bulb, off to one side: an image of Marilyn singing her heart song.

MARILYN

(Sings)

"And when he looks my way..."

ELVIS'S head goes up

ELVIS

(Responds, sotto)

I hear ya baby. Take care now wontcha.

A neighbouring head goes up alongside

CRANKY NEIGHBOUR

Elvis! You're letting the heat out.

Some jostling. Feathers rise on the warm currents of air. An egg rolls a little way out of the huddle.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

ELVIS

Careful! Now look what you've done!
That's my egg!

Elvis barges a couple of penguins aside in his haste to retrieve it.

ELDER

...Brothers, brothers!

The heads go down, Elvis retrieves his egg, muttering, then pushes back into the huddle, lending the full strength of his voice to the chant.

NARRATOR

And by his strength, the planet turns once more.

The volume keeps increasing, the penguins' massed male voices finally overcoming the sound of the gale, at which point an extraordinary thing happens:

8 **PLANET EARTH.**

8

The crescent of darkness which overshadows Antarctica begins to diminish in size.

We see it falling away from the curvature of the southern hemisphere, like a curtain rising, till the vast hidden icecontinent is brilliantly illuminated once more.

9 **THE ICE SHELF. DAWN**

9

FINGERS OF LIGHT creep over the iceshelf. The ice itself is moaning and groaning, like a living thing.

A SINGLE CRACK appears and widens, then forks and forks again.

PULL BACK to reveal that the whole expanse of fastice is disintegrating, a process which starts at the sea and advances towards the icecliffs, where the community of penguins are gathered Somewhere AN ICEBERG breaks free from the face of a glacier and smashes down into the frozen sea below.

Simultaneously, the first egg cracks open, then another, then all in a rush, like popcorn.

10 **THE ICESHELF. DAY.**

10

The huddle has broken. Males are calling out to each other as their fluffy chicks emerge to greet the daylight:

GERALDO

Elvis! What have you got? Boy or girl?

Neither. Elvis's egg has still not hatched yet. Elvis is bent over it, deeply worried

GERALDO (CONT'D)

Did it get chilled. Can you feel it moving?

ELVIS

No. I can hear it. Listen...

They bend close to the egg. Inside the chick seems to be tapping a rhythm.

ELVIS (CONT'D)

Is that normal?

Geraldo shrugs. Elvis bends close again, as he does...

There's a grunt from inside as A PAIR OF FEET force their way out through the hole.

Elvis recoils in surprise as the egg flips upright and runs off in a giddy, stumbling dance.

GERALDO

What the...

Finally it hits an outcrop and cracks, depositing Mumble on the ice.

MUMBLE

(shivering)

Ow! Freezy! Freezy!

Elvis hurries over to the chick.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Mummy?

ELVIS

No, son, I'm your pa.

(CONTINUED)

Shoveling Mumble off the ice and onto the backs of his feet.

ELVIS (CONT'D)

Just get under here. Oh my feet. You'll
be OK. You'll be OK.

But he's looking at Geraldo as he speaks and his voice is full
of doubt.

NARRATOR

So it was that Mumble son of Elvis came
amongst usand the Time of Troubles
began.

CAPTION 1

TEXT: "A bad start"

An army of males stand waiting for something. At their feet
NUMEROUS CHICKS are peering out from their brood pouches,
cheeping plaintively.

MUMBLE

Is this "soon" yet? I'm hungry

ELVIS

Yeah buddy. Won't be long now.

FEATURE Elvis and geraldo standing with the others, looking
towards the distant edge of the ice shelf, with their chicks on
their feet

He is interrupted by a distant shout:

LOOKOUT PENGUIN

Wivesho! They're coming!

Sure enough, a cluster of little BLACK DOTS are approaching
from the direction of the sea.

The penguins crane forwards, listening intently.

Faintly, borne on the wind, fragments of song.

One by one the penguins recognize their partners voices and move
forwards, breaking rank.

The dots on the horizon are multiplying, growing larger.

(CONTINUED)

More and more penguins are breaking rank, moving out to join the arriving females, singing their own songs now. 'Georgia Oh Georgia' 'Michelle ma belle!' 'Jolene. Jolene. Jolene. JOLENE !'

Then the wave of males meets the wave of females and joyful bedlam ensues.

Elvis and Geraldo are still lacking wives, trying to identify their own wives songs in the cacophony, as joyful couples stream past them.

The crowd is thinning. A few stragglers are still approaching. About a third of the males still lack partners.

MUMBLE

What's ours like again, dad.

ELVIS

Well. I guess you just gotta see her.
Little wiggle when she walks, a giggle when she talks..

GERALDO

Is that all that's coming? What happened to the others?

The last few males break rank to link up with their wives. The thinned-out army of males remains. Behind them a riot of family reunions. In front of them, the horizon.

Mumble peers through the shimmering blanket of cold air that hangs over the ice

MUMBLE

Its Mum dad, she's wiggling when she walks

GERALDO

(listninhg intently)
Kid could be right, there's somthing familiar about this one.

Her song reaches there ears

ELVIS

That's because its your Glenda.

Geraldo goes forwards to meet her. Elvis goes with him.

(CONTINUED)

GERALDO

Honey. You're so thin. Is this all that's coming

GLENDA

(panting)

Dunno...Just got so hard out there ...had to spread out for miles to find anything.

Elvis is still staring forlornly at the horizon. Mumble is looking at Geraldo's chivck bella who is now happily reunited with her own mother

BELLA

What happened. Your ma didn't make it?
Tough. She probably got eaten by a seal.
(accepting some food)
Yummy.

Mumble is close to tears. Then a shout draws his attention back to the front again

MALE PENGUIN

There's one more coming!

Sure enough a LONE FEMALE is trekking towards them, across the vast plain of ice.

PAN along the line of single males, each one hoping she's his.

ELVIS COSTELLO SOUNDALIKE

(whisper)
...Alison?

...Gloria?

Then, distant and soaring, Marilyn's song.

MARILYN

He will be big and strong. The man I love.

ELVIS

Its her!!

He hurries to meet her, almost forgetting mumble in his haste, raising his own voice in a joyful song of reunion.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

ELVIS (CONT'D)

Love me tender love me true all my dreams
fulfill. Hang on son. She's coming. Its
your Ma!

13 THE COLONY

13

The ICESHELF beyond has become a busy pedestrian mall. Males
and females are hurrying out to sea and back

NARRATOR

That spring, despite the disappeared ones,
life went on as normal. The parents
worked, the kids went to school.

14 THE CRECHE. DAY.

14

The class, a group of about thirty chicks, stand around
chattering to each other.

A female chick introduces herself to mumble.

BELLA

Remember me? I'm Bella. Guess you think
I'm horrible.

MUMBLE

Why. No
(smitten)
You're so...round and fluffy

BELLA

Oh you. I'm no rounder than the other
girls

Their teacher, whose name is Tina, calls for order.

TINA

Thank You! Class! I want to welcome you
to the most important lesson in penguin
school - singing. Know what the problem is
though. I can't teach you to do it.

This gets their attention

TINA (CONT'D)

Its something each of you is born with.
That little piece of music you can
sometimes hear inside of you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TINA (CONT'D)

That is what makes you unique.
So. Lets all be still now. And when you
think you hear the song that's inside you,
lets hear it. Not words yet. Keep it
simple. A single note will do.

The class enthusiast is waving a wing

JOHN-PAUL

I've got one. I've got one.

John-paul sings note-perfect, the melody to the Beatles "Love,
Love me Do"

JOHN-PAUL (CONT'D)

Da dadada. Da da dadada. A da dada da.

TINA.

Yes. Good start.

Bella has her eyes closed as if listening to something else

TINA. (CONT'D)

Bella Witherspoon. You're hearing
something?

BELLA

I don't know. Its sort of...

She hums, hesitantly, the opening bars of "Funny valentine."

MUMBLE

(whispers)

Oh wow. That's beautiful.

TINA

And Mumble. As you're so keen to open that
beak of yours...

MUMBLE

Mine is more a sort of....

He hesitates, as if listening

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Ba dum ba dum da dum

TINA

That's your pulse.

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE

Oh. No wait. I've got it
(monotone)
Da da da da da

The class titter

TINA

What's that. That's not even a tune.

MUMBLE

Isn't it?

TINA

A tune is like this: (She sings) da da da
da da da da da

MUMBLE

That's what I'm doing.
(monotone)
Da da da da da da

The class laugh openly

TINA

No!
(sings)
Da da da da da!

MUMBLE

(monotone)
Da da da da da

The class fall about.

TINA

(rattled)
OK enough. That's enough!

Mumbles parents are talking to the teacher. Mumble watches from a distance.

HIS POV: Frequent worried glances.

THEIR POV: Mumble hopping from one foot to the other. There's definitely something weird about this kid.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

TINA

(sotto)

Its quite bizarre. Twelve years of teaching I've never seen anything like it. Did anything happen I mean around the birth or...

MARILYN

No. All fine

She looks at her husband, who nods, avoiding their eyes

TINA

Well I don't know its...

She looks at Mumble, at a loss.

MARILYN

Is there a specialist?

16 **MRS ASTRAKHAN'S PLACE. DAY**

16

Some distance from the creche, within earshot of the other children singing, Mumble stands with Mr Astrakhan, a Russian-accented remedial teacher.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Can't sink? Rubbeesh. Every little penguink has a sonk. When I have feenished, your singking will give them the goosepimple.

Mumble is distracted by Bella's distant singing .

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

So. Eyes front. Chin up. Deep breath here in the downbelow. Andremember a feelingk. A warm feelink. A sad feelingk. A lonely feelingk.

Mumble closes his eyes.

MUMBLE

Yes. I'm thinking

MRS ASTRAKHAN

(softly)

Don't think it, feel it.

(MORE)**(CONTINUED)**

MRS ASTRAKHAN (CONT'D)

Allow it to run through the whole body,
from the beak right down to the tippytoes.

Her voice is seductive, hypnotic.

MRS ASTRKHAN

And then, very slowly...

She hears a strange tapping sound and looks down

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Wait! Whats this!

MUMBLE

What?

MRS ASTRKHAN

The feet. The jigjog. That's not normal.
Don't do it. Just calm. And then. Bringk
back the feelingk. And then ...be
spontanuuous.

Once again Mumble prepares to sing. Once again his feet start
twitching

MRS ASTRAKHAN

No no no! What are you doink!

MUMBLE

I'm being spontanuuous.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Not like that. What's that?! With the
songk! You want to meet beautiful female.
You want to make an egg?!

MUMBLE

Yes.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Well singk! And no moving the flippers!
Anything. "Ba ba Blackship Twinkle Star"
(sings)
la la la la la

MUMBLE

(Totally unmusical)
La la la la la

(CONTINUED)

MRS ASTRKHAN

Alright. Stop. We start at the beginning.
We go back inside the body. We bring the
memory. No notes no song, just memory.
Somethingk happy. Somethink enormous.
Your happiness is so enormous it fills your
body. You are going to burst with
happiness. You have to let out this
happiness before something terrible
happens. You open your beak.

Mumble opens his beak, inspired

MRS ASTRKHAN (CONT'D)

Yes. You lift up the head. Yes like that.

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

MRS ASTRKHAN (CONT'D)

You take a big breath and...

He's off again, dancing like a fool. Wild. Exhuberant. He
stops, turns and sees Mrs Astrakhan banging her head against a
lump of ice.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

Its disaster! I never fail! Never!

JOHN-PAUL

Love love me do. You know I love you.

During Mumble's absence the other chicks have perfected their
melodies.

JOHN-PAUL

(Sings)

I'll always be true. So please love me do

TINA.

Hm. Bit more work on those lyrics.

(moving on)

Bella how's yours coming on?

BELLA

(Sings)

My funny valentine, Sweet little valentine,
you make me smile with my heart...

(CONTINUED)

Mumble wanders into class as if drawn towards her by some invisible force. As she sings he just stands there, lovestruck

TINA

And Mumble? Mumble!

MUMBLE

(Rousing himself)

Well. I don't have anything like that

TINA

That's the whole point. Your heartsong is yours alone. So....?

Everyone is looking at Mumble. His foot starts moving convulsively.

TINA (CONT'D)

Come on. I'm sure Mrs Astrakhan taught you something.

Trying desperately to control his foot, Mumble stiffens, pressing his flipper into his side.

TINA (CONT'D)

Don't be shy.

Everyone is waiting.

MUMBLE

(Whispers to bella)

I'm not moving, am I? Am I moving?

He begins to tilt

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

(Panicking)

Oh no! I'm moving. I'm moving!

The tilt increases and increases until finally he pitches forwards on his beak and the class totally dissolves in GALES OF HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER.

TINA

No. Come on. Its not funny. Who wants to be next?

18 **EXT. THE COLONY.**

18

Mumble is with his parents again, head down, disconsolate.

MARILYN

Of course you'll find a song. You just have to work harder.

MUMBLE

I do try. Its my feet. They just seem to...

ELVIS

No. There's nothing wrong with your feet.

MARILYN

Ssh darling.

ELVIS

Well there's nothing wrong with your feet. Your feet are fine.

MARILYN

Elvis. Let me do this.

(to Mumble)

You're big enough to get on your own for a bit. Your father and I need to go and find some fish. When we're away I want you to just try and ...control, whatever it is. Just be normal. Just for us.

CLOSE on MUMBLE

NARRATOR

So he resolved, never to do happy feet again. Except when the urge became unbearable. And then he would retire outside the colony, where no-one could see them. Where even the adults were reluctant to stray

19 **EXT. EDGE OF THE COLONY.**

19

Beyond the colony of penguins: a wasteland of greenstained ice covered with debris: broken eggs, bits of feather.

The only penguins here a sorry assortment of deranged looking specimens, walking around in circles, muttering to themselves.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

And Mumble, dancing to his hearts content.

SKUA

Hey what are you doing.

A Skua lands nearby.

MUMBLE

(guilty)

Nothing. What are you doing?

SKUA

Oh we Just dropped in for lunch. Har har.

Three more skuas descend, separating Mumble from the colony

MUMBLE

Lunch?

(Hopefully)

You got food here?

The skua birds laugh. Mumble laughs with them

ALPHA SKUA

(to the others)

Leg or wing?

They're all looking at Mumble, He backs away

MUMBLE

No! I'm a penguin!

ALPHA SKUA

Dats right! De flipperbirds eat de fish.

De flyingbird eat de flipperbird!

(to the others)

We'll start wid da juicy bits

MUMBLE

(Desperately)

No! I don't have juicy bits! I'm
starving! Its all bone and feather! Ahh!

They all jump on him at once, fighting among themselves

SKUAS

...Gerroff! Smyturn ta pullim apart ya
kinky shitsquinter.

(CONTINUED)

...lastime ya pullimpart ya take every best bit!

MUMBLE

Hey. Anyone seen this

He dances in a vain attempt to distract them. The Alpha skua knocks him down and places his huge claw on Mumble's chest

ALPHA SKUA

(to the others)

Right. We gonna do this civilized for once. So...

MUMBLE

Wait!!

Craning upwards, he has noticed a yellow plastic ring on the alpha skuas leg

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

What's that on your leg?

The other skuas groan, but The Alpha skua closes his beak, cocks his head and fixes Mumble with a crazy bloodshot eye.

ALPHA SKUA

Good question flipperbird.

SECOND SKUA

No! No! Don't startim talkin'!

The alpha skua whacks them away, addresses Mumble

ALPHA SKUA

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

The other Skuas groan and mutter bitterly among themselves

ALPHA SKUA (CONT'D)

(to the others)

Quiet ya morons.

(to Mumble)

Alotta folk don't believe this. But Dere's something out dere. Bigger dan us. Fiercer dan us. Smarter dan us too.

Mumble takes a few steps back, looking for an escape, but the skua keeps advancing on him

(CONTINUED)

SKUA

Ask me how I know?

MUMBLE

H-how do you...?

ALPHA SKUA

Cos I bin capturebydem!

Mumble keeps backing off, nervously feigning interest, the skua still towering over him

MUMBLE

Unbelievable.

ALPHA SKUA

Whaddayamean unbelievable! Its true! It was blizzardin' hard. Couldn't see nothing. Suddenly dere onta me wid dere frontways eyes and big fat useless wings, like giant flipperbirds. Dey catched me, den probed me. Dey tiemeup an' strapped me. Tooka big flubbery something and stick it inta me! Den Blackout!

MUMBLE

Were you hurt?

ALPHA SKUA

Worse! I was marked for life! Woke up wid id friggin thing on me! Every featherbird laughing at me: 'whats that on your foot "yellow leg"'.
"

As the skua spits out this word, Mumble takes a final step back and falls into a dirty crack in the ice.

ALPHA SKUA (CONT'D)

Ever since then I bin....

Then he breaks off, realising his quarry is no longer in front of him

ALPHA SKUA (CONT'D)

Hey! Where are you going? Getcher damnsel outta dere!

Attracted by his squawking the other skuas come over to see what's happening

(CONTINUED)

SKUAS

...Watcher done now?

...ya lostim ya shonky dunderhead!

Assume MUMBLES POV as he cowers in the crack and the Skuas try to spear him with their beaks.

SKUAS (CONT'D)

...Come on!

Out wid ya!

Ya creepy flipperbird!

Friggin Yellowleg! Whatcher go and do that for!

Eventually they give up and go off, squabbling and hitting each other. Mumble watches them through the crack as they start arguing over an unhatched egg.

Little clumps of penguindown blow downwind, like tumbleweed.

NOAH

When you leave here, you will meet species who despise us

MUMBLE

(sotto)

Tell me about it

We follow the clumps of feather upwind to find Mumbles classmates, in various stages of moulting.

NOAH

Flying birds who mock us for giving up the air for the sea.

The class are receiving their valedictory address from Noah, a respected elder of the colony

NOAH (CONT'D)

That's because they don't know. They've never explored the deep,. They have never experienced the miracle of waterflight, which is granted to you alone. Beyond the ice you will experience great joy. You will suffer both danger and hardship. Many who leave will never return with it.

(CONTINUED)

As they listen, wind tugs away their juvenile plumage, revealing the shiny adult suits underneath

NOAH (CONT'D)

Yet, on those few that survive, depends the very future of our nation. You go armed with the wisdoms and the prayers of our colony. May the great penguin watch over you. May you return, all of you, each with his heart song, to you own Great Gathering.

CLASS

Amen

The class disband, each racing off to find his or her parents for a final farewell

CLASS (CONT'D)

...Dad!
 ...Mum!
 ...Over here!
 (etc)

MUMBLE FINDS ELVIS AND MARILYN

MUMBLE

Dad. Mum. Can I go. Am I ready. Am I?

He still has A CLUMP OF JUVENILE FLUFF sticking to the top of his head like a mowhawk hairdo.

MARILYN

Lets see you. Not quite

Elvis checks noone is looking then leans over and pulls off the tuft with his beak.

ELVIS

Get out there, big fellow.

MUMBLE

Thanks Dad. See ya!

Mumble races off to catch up with the others.

(CONTINUED)

MARILYN

(Shouts after him)

Look after yourself. Stay with the others.
And keep away from the leopard seals!

22 **THE ICE SHELF**

22

A HIGH SHOT reveals the miles of frozen ice Mumble has to cover, with his classmates already a fair way ahead EDGE OF THE ICE SHELF. DAY.

The classmates are grouped at the edge, nervously looking for somewhere to go in.

JUVENILE PENGUINS

...What do you think?
... Dunno. Looks a bit deep.
... That's what you said about the last place.
... How about over here then?

They bunch up, look in the water, then head off and look at another place.

JUVENILE PENGUINS (CONT'D)

... See anything moving?
... No pushing!
... Lets get an adult?
... We are adults.
... I still say that last place looked better.

They're turning back towards the previous spot when Mumble barrels through them, yelling in skuataalk as he launches himself over the edge

MUMBLE

C'mon ya shonky flipperbirds

For a brief moment he's airborne. Then he hits the water with a strangled squawrk! And disappears.

JUVENILE PENGUINS

...Who was that?
...Three guesses.

They are all craning over the edge. No sign of him.

(CONTINUED)

JUVENILE PENGUINS (CONT'D)

... We should go in after him.
... Yeah. You first.

BELLA

(calls anxiously)
Mumble? Mumble!

The others have given him up for lost, most of them are turning from the edge

JUVENILE PENGUINS

...He's Nuts. Its suicide.
...See any blood?

They crane forwards. Then Mumble shoots out of the water like a surfacetoair missile.

MUMBLE

Watcha waiting for. Its
fantast....(splosh)..ook!

A beat, then the other penguins follow him en masse, leaping into the water, yelling and hollering as they flounder about, learning to swim.

Pretty soon they are all experts, flying through the water in sparkling trails of bubbles, instantly transformed from the gauche awkward creatures we have seen on land to swimmers of fabulous grace and elegance.

BEACH BOYS

(music over)

Suntanned bodies and the waves of sunshine.
Those California girls and the beautiful
coastline. In the warmed up weather. Lets
get together. And do it again etc

Penguins swoop and dive, up near the smooth mirrored surface where sun sparkles through the ice and snow floats like fluffy clouds Then down again into the blue black depths, where bright red starfish stipple the ocean floor and strange luminous creatures hang like exotic lanterns.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

ICEFLOE. DAY

Two penguins leap onto an icefloe one behind the other, They collide and tumble over each other, ending up in a breathless heap.

MUMBLE

Bella!

BELLA

Mumble!

They get up and launch themselves into the water again.

24 **THE SURFACE/ UNDERWATER.**

24

MUSIC CONTINUES OVER: as Mumble and Bella gambol together in a jubilant dance sequence, their bubbletrails intertwining, fish scattering before them.

25 **THE ICE FLOW. NIGHT**

25

The Aurora Australis hangs a CHOIR OF PENGUINS singing.

A tuneless improvisation joins the melody. The singing stops.

JOHN-PAUL

Mumble? Can you stop that, please

26 **MUMBLE.**

26

Sorry.

27 **THE ICE FLOW. LATER**

27

The choir are singing again, this time with Bella's fabulous soprano soaring above it.

Mumble adds a little flourish of his own. The singing stops once again. Bella pads over .

BELLA

Mumble. Really. Its better if you just...

MUMBLE

Yep. Couldn't help it. Sorry.

She pads back again. The singing resumes. Mumble begins to tap dance.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

PENGUINS
 (In unison)
 ...MUMBLE!

28 THE ICE FLOE. LATER

28

Under the fabulous Aurora, The choral music soars REVEAL:
 Mumble, standing on his own little ice floe, listening at a
 distance as they drift apart his feet doing the gentlest soft
 shoe shuffle on the ice

CAPTION 2
 TEXT: "Togetherness". Music:"I get by with
 a little help from my friends"

29 MUMBLES ICEFLOE (NEW VISTA). DAWN.

29

A misty dawn creeps over the horizon, painting the sea gold, the
 floes and icebergs silver.

JOE COCKER
 What would you say if I sang out of tune,
 would you stand up and walk out on me.
 Lend me your ears and I'll sing you a song,
 and I'll try not to sing out to key

Mumble wakes on his feet. He stays there, standing quite still,
 mesmerized by the beauty of the scene.

JOE COCKER (CONT'D)
 Oh I get my with a little help from my
 friends.
 Yeah, gonna try with a little help from my
 friends

MUMBLE
 Incredible.

Silence. He looks around for someone to share it with.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)
 Bella? Anyone!

There's no reply except for the echo off the icecliffs. Then
 something nudges his ice floe.

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Ha ha. I'm terrified

He walks over to the side of the floe, looks over into the sea, seeing nothing but slowly spreading ripples.

As he's bent over, something nudges the other side of the floe, almost causing Mumble to lose his balance.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Good try fellas. Almost but not quite
Laughing, he retreats to the centre of the
floe and waits.

Nothing. So he edges cautiously to the edge, careful not to reveal his position.

He looks down just as a dark shape moves out of site

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Bella? Game's up. C'mon guys get up here
The dark shape shoots to the surface, much
faster than he expected.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Wha...?

A pair of gaping jaws snap shut, missing his head by an inch.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

...aaargH!

Mumble recoils, slips and tumbles into the water.

Mumble choking, thrashing, gulping air, shoots for the surface, yelling at the top of his voice.

MUMBLE

Everyone out!! LEOPARD SEAL!!

He's disorientated. The ice floe he was standing on has disappeared in a confusion of foam and ice and bubbles.

Through the corner of his eye he sees the leopard seal turning quick as a whip and racing back at him. Its mouth is two feet wide and lined with vicious teeth.

Mumble swims for his life, darting here and there, trying to shake the monster off.

The seal is unstoppable, barging through the smaller flows, powering round the larger ones.

Above him, Mumble sees ice approaching. He shoots out of the water and tries to land, but there's nothing here but little mushy slabs of pancake ice which can't support his weight.

As he flops back into the water he sees the main ice shelf fifty yards away, the Leopard seal closing fast

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

HEEEELP!!

He darts for safety, heading for the ice like a bullet. It's ten yards, then five yards away when Mumble...

...shoots to the surface again, launches himself at the ice shelf and ...misses by a beak

He has overshot and is under the ice shelf now. Flat, solid ice above him, bottomless black water below, absolutely nowhere to escape

MUMBLE

(Thought voice)

Oh no. This is bad.

Powering onwards, scanning desperately for some way out. The ice above growing thicker, the angled ceiling forcing him down, down, deeper into the blackness The leopard seal is opening its vast gaping mouth to engulf him when...

A little speck of light appears in the ceiling.

Mumble does a highspeed rightangled turn and shoots upwards.

32 **THE FUNNEL. CONTINUOUS.**

32

They're in a funnel of ice. Getting narrower and narrower as it rises to the surface. The leopard seal is still hard behind him.

Ten yards behind, now five, now one yard and closing as....

33 **THE ICESHELF. CONTINUOUS**

33

Mumble shoots out of a hole in the ice.

A small group of Adelies watch him fly though the air.

ADELIES

Incoming!

Mumble lands hard on his belly. WHAM!

34 **THE FIRST ADELIE WINCES**

34

ENRICO

Vaya por Dios! That hurt.

ADELIES

(counting down)

Tres, dos, uno... Impulso!

The pursuing leopard seal flops onto the ice just behind Mumble.

The Adelies laugh their heads off, running up to the leopard seal and goading him in Hispanic

ADELIES (CONT'D)

Hey Pesado! Doncha hate it when that happens?

The leopard seal snaps and snarls at them. The Adelies run away delightedly.

ENRICO

Ha! Who are ya kidding. You're hopeless on land!

Mumble copies them, insulting the seal and running off

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE

Yeah, go and chase someone else ya big
...elephant

He does a little tap dance in his excitement, his feet batting out an involuntary rhythm on the ice.

ENRICO

Hey. Amigo. Do that thing again!

MUMBLE

Do what?

ENRICO

That thing you did. The feet.

MUMBLE

(embarrassed)

Oh that. It's just something that happens when I...

ENRICO

(excited)

Ola muchachos! Look at this!

(to Mumble)

Show them.

MUMBLE

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

ADELIES

...Oye! Ritmo Cubana!

...Riba Riba! Menear las caderas!

...Then mebbe something like this!

They're copying him, improvising little riffs on his dance step.

ENRICO

...No. I got it. Like this!

Adding an acrobatic variation of his own The leopard seal reverses into the water still glowering at Mumble.

LEOPARD SEAL

(growls)

I know where you live.

(CONTINUED)

THE ADELIES CALL OUT TO IT:

ADELIES

...Sure. Adios pesado!
 ...Don't be a stranger now!
 ...Yeah. You can teach us the lambada!

They all hoot with laughter at this, then clap Mumble on the back, bidding him farewell

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Nos vemos!
 ...Catch you later.
 ...Know what, gringo? You're really something!

Mumble turns back towards the sea, decides against it then hurries off after his new friends

Music over: (Santana: Oye Como Va) as...

The four Adelies plus Mumble crest a rise, to see, laid out before them, a vast community of Adelie penguins, thousands of them jostling, arguing, singing and partying

MUMBLE

There's so many of you!

ADELIES

...This is nothing.
 ...Used to be twice this much.
 ...Yeah, back when you could still catch a fish.

MUMBLE

You mean there's not enough food. That's the same where I come from!

He has noticed that many Adelies are returning from the shore with pebbles in their beaks

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

What's he doing? Eating pebbles?

The Adelies find this hysterical

(CONTINUED)

ADELIES

...Ha! That's a good one.
...Eating them. You hear what he said!

ENRICO

Its an obsession. He who has the most
pebbles wins. Nestbuilding pah!
(breaks off)
Hey baby! Over here!

A pair of females hurry out of the way, giggling.

MUMBLE

But. Shouldn't you be nest building to

ADELIES

...What we need nests for?
...We got personality

Hailing another group of females

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Ola Conchita!
...Muy Estar enamorado!
...See something you like?

They pose, ruffling up their crests into various styles: the pompadour, the mowhawk, the flattop.

ENRICO

Wanna see our new dance.

The females are intrigued. The Adelies and Mumble form a line.

ENRICO (CONT'D)

Uno, dos, uno dos tres....

Enrico does a little riff from Mumbles dance. The Adelle standing next to him does another little bit, and so its goes on down the line, to Mumble who finishes the routine. The females laugh

FEMALE

...Cool.
...Where d'you learn that?

ENRICO

The big guy made it up.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

FEMALE

Do it again.

ADELIES

...Next time, maybe ...We gotta conserve
our energy.

36 **THEY MOVE OFF**

36

ADELIES

...See that. They love us. You've either
got it or you don't.
...And you know what: This little penguin
got more than any of you.
...You! Ha! That's a big laugh

They punch and kick each other playfully.

MUMBLE

Do you think I could get it?

ENRICO

Amigo, you've got so much you're
dangerous.

He touches Mumble and recoils as if burnt.

ENRICO (CONT'D)

Yow!

ADELIES

...you got the biggest personality of any
of us.
...Except for me, maybe.
...Ramon. Put that ego away, you're gonna
hurt someone with it.

They're dancing around Mumble as they talk, leading him off
further and further into Adelie land. The pulsing carnival
music is all around.

37 **THE ICEBERG**

37

The Adelies climb a massive iceberg. Scrambling up its glassy,
blue green slopes. One of the gang pauses for breath

ENRICO

Ok. That's high enough of me

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

MUMBLE

Not ducking out are you.

They continue for a bit. Enrico cranes his neck see how much higher they have to go

ENRICO

Who you calling a duck?

ADELIES

...Man. This is beginning to feel like work ...Alright. This little penguin stops here.

They all stop. Above them Mumble is still forging ahead

MUMBLE

The very top!

38 THE SUMMIT

38

They finally arrive, out of breath, at the very crest of the iceberg a narrow ridge on which Mumble is precariously balanced.

ENRICO

Wow! Check the view!

ADELIES

...Let's go. I'll get a vertigo!
 ...Move along eh?
 ...Room for one more?
 ...No.
 ...No.
 ...No!

The fourth Adelie climbs up anyway. Everyone budes along except for Mumble who has nowhere to move. With a despairing shriek the second Adelie falls off the back of the berg.

FOURTH ADELIE

Oh. Sorry.

ENRICO

(calls down)
 You there, Jose?

A silence.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

ENRICO (CONT'D)

Mierda, I guess we better go look.

And he pushes the others off as well.

39 **BACK OF THE ICEBERG. DAY.**

39

The back of the iceberg has been carved by the elements into weird curves and hollows, down which the adielies scoot at lightning speed.

Its like a bobsleigh run. The four of them plus Mumble, are yelling at the top of their voices, more in fear than in pleasure, never knowing what they are going to find round the next corner.

There's a sharp left hand curve, then a right hand curve then a steep chute which fires them into the sea at the base of a glacier.

40 **UNDERWATER. DAY**

40

One by one the Adelies shoot into the depths, in a shower of ice fragments and bubbles.

One by one they swim back up through the sunbeams, heading for the slot of light between the iceberg and the face of the glacier.

FOLLOW MUMBLE as he rises through the water, past something that makes him stop and stare in wonder:

He's never seen anything like this: The crushed and rusting remains of an ancient YELLOW TRACTOR are projecting from the face of the glacier.

41 **THE SURFACE. DAY.**

41

In the space between the glacier and the iceberg the penguins surface, gasping with astonishment

MUMBLE

Did you see that? What is it.

ADELIES

...Man you think I was stopping?

...Es un diabololo!

...Right. I'm out of here.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

The Adelies head for shore. Mumble stays where he is.

ENRICO

Mumble?

MUMBLE

I'm going to have another look.

He ducks under the surface again.

ADELIES

Crazy gringo.

ENRICO follows Mumble down again.

42 **THE YELLOW THING. UNDERWATER. DAY.**

42

Mumble swims back down to the yellow thing.

He arrives opposite it and hangs there, suspended in a shaft of light, just contemplating it.

The yellow thing doesn't move, Mumble moves closer and closer, finally sticking his head right through the rusted radiator grille which gapes like a pair of massive jaws.

He taps the metal and listens to the sound it makes. He's considering the weird organic intricacy of the engine block when something that looks like a black claw enters frame and brushes his shoulder.

Mumble turns in a panic but its just Enrico, gesturing with his beak that he wants to talk, up on the surface.

43 **THE ICE SHELF. DAY.**

43

They're heading back to the colony. Mumble is full of excitement about their discovery

MUMBLE

You think it fell into the glacier? You think the ice brought it here? Cos I heard this stuff about other beings. These big strong things with fat wings and frontways eyes. Smart too. Smarter than any of us.

ENRICO

Well. The smartest fellow we know is Pizarro MUMBLE.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

Who's Pizarro.

ENRICO (CONT'D)
First we need a pebble.

44 MUMBLE.

44

What for? Enrico! Wait for me.

45 PIZARRO'S NICHE. DAY

45

They round a little outcrop of rock.

ADELIES
Hey, Pizarro, someone here with a question
for you!

PIZARRO
Aqui!

Their guru, Pizarro stands in a little recess in the rock,
wearing a plastic sixpack holder round his neck.

He looks at the gang of Adelies, then at Mumble who stands a
full head taller than the others with a pebble in his beak.

PIZARRO (CONT'D)
Don't tell me. You are the questing one

ADELIES
...incredible, eh?
...He looks in your eyes and just knows.

MUMBLE
Mmmgph.

PIZARRO
Make the devotion. Then speak.

Mumble notices a huge pile of pebbles and adds his own pebble to
it.

MUMBLE
What's that round your neck?'

ENRICO
(turning)
Wait. No!

(CONTINUED)

PIZARRO

It's my sacred talisman. Next!

ENRICO

Senor please. That wasn't his question.
We don't got another pebble. He's new
here.

PIZARRO

I know my son. I sense that.
(to mumble)
Come closer.

Mumble plucks at the six pack holder. Pizarro recoils

PIZARRO (CONT'D)

That's close enough.

He's distracted by a crowd of females who have gathered nearby
and are calling for his attention.

FEMALE ADELIES

...Yoohoo!
...Pi zarro!
...We're ready!

PIZARRO

(Shouts, aside)
Momento!
(Focusing his mind on Mumble)
Don't talk. I'm getting something. Two
words.

MUMBLE

"Alien abduction."

ENRICO

What are you talking about Ask him what we
agreed. About the yellow thing!

PIZARRO

Alien what?

MUMBLE

I met this skua once with something like
that round his ankle, and he said...

(CONTINUED)

ENRICO

Mumble, We don't got the pebbles!

(To Pizarro)

Don't listen to him, senior. You don't have to answer that

PIZARRO

(offended)

Well I want to answer. Skua stuff. You think I'm some sort of freak. This is my sacred talisman,

FEMALES

Ooo!

PIZARRO

Given by the mystic beings during my famous journey...

FEMALES

Ahh!

ENRICO

Yes. We know that. We know PIZARRO.
...my famous Journey to the Forbidden Shore.

The females are really turned on by this kind of talk

FEMALES

...Yes! Yes!
...Pizarro!
...Choose me. Me.

PIZARRO

(calls back irritably)

Ya se! Una momento!

MUMBLE

So these "Mystic beings". Did they speak to you?

PIZARRO

Of course they spoke. To me. Through me. I'm the vessel. I'm the vehicle. I'm the....

(CONTINUED)

ENRICO

Senor Pizarro. Everyone knows all that.
That's not the question.

PIZARRO

(of Mumble)

Well he doesn't know it. You bring some
big lunk to the holy shrine and let him
compare me to a skua bird!

ENRICO

I know I'm sorry. But its important. We
found this big yellow thing under the ice.
A Big dead animal with ...

MUMBLE

No. Not an animal. Its just a thing, as
if someone made it. But that's even more
amazing isn't it? The fact that whoever
did it could make something as complicated
as an animal. So...

ENRICO

(to Pizarro)

Don't listen to him, listen to me

FEMALES

Pizarro, Pizarro!

What with the females calling for his attention and Mumble
arguing with Enrico, Pizarro coming to the end of his patience

PIZARRO

Chicos! Muchachos! You're giving me a
dolor de cabeza. How'm I supposed to hear
the mystic voices with all this RACKET
GOING ON!!

EVERYONE FALLS SILENT

PIZARRO (CONT'D)

(To Mumble)

Now you. You wanna stay here, then fit in.
Learn some history. And show a bit of
respect. Comprende?

(To the other Adelies)

You other guys. This thing you thought you
saw. Forget it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PIZARRO (CONT'D)

You know what the mystic voices are
telling me right now: "Its nesting season.
So wake up, smell the seaweed and get
nesting before winter sets in! That's what
I'm doing

(to the girls)

All right, who's first!

The Adelies are knocked flat in the stampede of females. They
get up, bruised and confused

ADELIES

...Mamma mia! They really all for him?

...He's right, what have we been thinking of? We should be
getting some of this.

They start posturing for the females at the back of the crowd

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Hey. Baby.

...This way.

...Volverse!

...WHAT ABOUT US

A few of the clamouring females turn to see Enrico and the
others striking their poses, fluffing up their crests.

SASSY FEMALE

...OK show us your lovestones.

HERE FRIEND STEERS HER AWAY

DISAFFECTED FEMALE

...Forget it. They had one between four of
them, and they just spent it.

ENRICO

Yeah but we do a great dance. Look!

They start dancing, but they're getting desperate and the effect
is hurried and uncoordinated

ENRICO (CONT'D)

(dancing madly)

Te gusta? Arriba riba! Whats so great
about pebbles!

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (5)

45

DISAFFECTED GIRL

(turns back)

You try lying on bare ice for a month.

Then you'll know the answer.

(To her friend)

Bunch of losers. Pizarro! Pizarro!

Rejected, the Adelies stop dancing

ENRICO

OK. Leave em. Its their loss. I say we
just walk away and....

46 HE LOOKS UP

46

ENRICO

Hey! Where you all going?

The Adelies have scattered, searching frantically for pebbles of
the right size.

ADELIES

...To big. Too small. Mierda.

...Whose idea was this hairstyles thing anyway?

...Gotta be some left somewhere.

ENRICO

What is this. Watcha doing!

ADELIES

(To Mumble)

How stony is it over your way?

MUMBLE

We don't collect pebbles. We have to have
a heartsong.

47 THE ADELIES STOP SEARCHING

47

ADELIES

...And that's how you get laid?

...You're kidding me!

...So get your backside over there!

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE

My problem is I can't sing.

To him its a big confession. The Adelies are nonplussed

ADELIES

.. Cant sing. Why didn't you say.

...We can fix that.

MUMBLE

You think so?

ADELIES

Easy!

Emperor penguins are trekking across the seaice in single file, We follow them to the Great gathering which we saw at the start of the film. Penguins crooning to their mates One song stands out from all the others.

BELLA

(Sings)

Some day he'll come along. The man I love
And he'll be big and strong the man I
love.

Where Marilyn once stood, there is Bella. Half a dozen males stand around her in a semi circle, crooning adoringly.

BELLA (CONT'D)

And when he comes my way I'll do my best to
make him stay.

Suddenly she breaks off, aware of another male voice overlapping. Rich and mellifluous, with a bossa nova rhythm.

MUMBLE

(Sings)

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

Bella stops singing and turns towards the sun. She sees a male penguin standing on a slight elevation, just as Elvis stood in the opening sequence.

(CONTINUED)

Bella recognizes that profile, and those tapping feet. She moves forwards and as she does so, Mumble's song becomes more flamboyant, the accent more recognizably spanish

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

BELLA

Mumble?

MUMBLE

Tall and tanned...

Hi....

Oddly, he speaks before he stops singing

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

...You like?

BELLA

(becoming suspicious)

I'd love it. If it was really you.

She's trying to see what's behind him. Mumble shifts to block her view.

MUMBLE

Well it was me. Is me.

BELLA

Mumble...

She has spotted Enrico, standing hidden behind his back. He decides to brazen it out, fluffing up his crest.

ENRICO

Hey beautiful?

She turns and heads off. Enrico starts after her

ENRICO (CONT'D)

Wanna make sweet music cos maybe you and me
could ...ow!

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (2)

Mumble smacks him with the back of a flipper, and goes off after Bella himself

MUMBLE

Wait. Bella.

He's hurrying through the colony, trying to keep up with her.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

What are you so angry about.

BELLA

(Rounds on him)

That was cheap, Mumble. You tried to trick me.

MUMBLE

I was trying to impress you. You think I wouldn't love to be able to sing like that for real. That I don't dream about it every single day of my life.

BELLA

(tearful)

Its just ...disappointing. That's all.

She walks past him.

MUMBLE

Bella. Bella She turns

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Just do one thing for me. Sing something to this.

He beats out an uptempo, syncopated rhythm on the ice

BELLA

What's the point

MUMBLE

Just for me. Everything'll be alright. Honestly She begins to sing, ironically and without conviction:

BELLA

Everything's going to be all right,
Everything's going to be alright...

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE

That's good. Keep doing that.

He shouts over to one of his contemporaries

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Marley! Help Me. "Bella don't cry" or something.

MARLEY

No woman no cry. No woman no cry etc

MUMBLE

Horatio: Fill in like this: Ba ba da da ba
ba da Horatio adds the bass riff with his
big deep voice. Things are cooking.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

That's good. Great
(calls)
Enrico!

He runs up onto a little elevation, almost falling over himself
in his haste

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

(Yells)
Enrico!! I need you!!

Right on cue, the four dancing Adelies appear, two on each side
of him, and go into their dance routine.

ADELIES

...Yay!

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

As Bella improvises a verse.

BELLA

I remember, when we used to sit, on the
Government bay in Trenchtown

A dozen different strands of music and lyric overlapping. Its
wild. Its brilliant. Its the invention of reggae Feet are
beginning to tap, couples are beginning to dance. The carnival
atmosphere spreads like wildfire Mumble is dancing like no
penguin has ever moved before.

(CONTINUED)

The Adelies are behind him, moving as one. Penguins are flocking to the new attraction, improvising around the song and the accompaniment. Still bopping, Mumble yells across to Bella

MUMBLE

You get it? This is what I do. This is me!

She's about to run over and embrace him when suddenly a figure steps between them, a voice yells.

NOAH

What is this depravity The music peters out, falters and dies.

Mumble misses a beat, loses his footing, falls and goes sliding across the ice.

He collides with a solid phalanx of Elders, in the centre of which stands Noah.

MUMBLE

Its my heartsong.

NOAH

You call this outrage a song bringing these foreigners to our sacred ritual. As if you haven't done enough damage already.

MUMBLE

Me. What did I do?

NOAH

Everything! You have broken every law we hold sacred. You failed to sing. You truanted from school. You abandoned your classmates beyond the ice....

MUMBLE

Abandoned? What?

NOAH

And ever since the year of your birth the great ocean has starved us of nourishment!

MUMBLE

(incredulous)
You think its my fault?

(CONTINUED)

He appeals to his friends, but the crowd of youngsters who danced and sang with Mumble are falling back, being replaced by old hardliners

ELDERS

...Its obvious!

...If you didn't cause it what did!

MUMBLE

I don't know. I wasn't the only one that hatched back then. That's so unfair its ridiculous.

NOAH

Don't talk back to your elders

MUMBLE

But listen to them. I mean sure there's a problem with food but how can it have been me. I was just a chick.

ELDERS

...He's marked ...He can't sing ...he's the devil chick

MUMBLE

Listen to you. Ya squinky shitkickers

ELDERS

And He speaks like a skua!! Banish him!

MUMBLE

I'm one of you. Mum dad. Tell them.

But even Elvis shakes his head. Mumble has gone too far

ELVIS

You've done wrong son. You have to repent.

MUMBLE

Repent for what. For showing you something different. Maybe that's what we need round here

ELDERS

...Vanity!

...Heresy !

(CONTINUED)

...banish him!

MUMBLE

You think you're so damn wize but there's stuff out there you don't even know about. There's aliens there mystic beings. Maybe they know where the fish has gone.

ELDERS

...He's mad ...He's evil ...He's broken the law.

MUMBLE

Then the laws deserve to be broken

NOAH

Enough. Be Gone! I banish you.

A silence falls. The awful thing has been done

MUMBLE

OK. But You can't banish the truth. Its out there. And I'm going to find it.

Then he turns his back on the colony and heads off alone.

Bella makes a move to follow but is blocked by the crossed wings of two larger penguins.

The Adelies hurry after Mumble.

NOAH

Together we stand.

ONLOOKERS

In the wisdoms we trust.

CAPTION 3

Text: Into the Unknown. MUSIC over:
"Revolution"

Mumble and the Adelies come over the shoulder of the mountain then head down into the noise and chaos of Adelie land.

BEATLES

You say you want a revolution, well you know, we don't wanna rule the world.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BEATLES (CONT'D)

Talking bout an institution. Well you know. We don't wanna rule the world A friend hurries by

ADELIES

Hey Gomez! How ya doing?

GOMEZ

Can't stop guys. The wife's incubating. Ain't you got nests to go to?

He heads off to the sea. Everyone else seems to be doing the same.

ENRICO

Parenthood, eh? Tell ya. Pizarro's going to be one busy guy

50 **EXT. PIZARRO'S NICHE**

50

They arrive at Pizarro's niche, which is deserted.

ADELIES

...Pizarro?

Pizarro croaks feebly. They turn to see him, slumped against the pile of stones.

ADELIES (CONT'D)

(laughing)

...man you look completely reventado!
...what happened. You overdid it

Pizarro shakes his head. Its not a laughing matter Coming closer they see that his wing is held at an odd angle, his head slightly cocked to one side, tethered by the Sixpack holder which has stretched and twisted.

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...You alright?
...You in pain?
...What's with that thing, your capa.

MUMBLE

It got too tight.

ADELIES

...OK We take it off you.

...You pull that side, I'll pull this side

Pizarro croaks, winces, shaking his head

MUMBLE

No. Stop. It hurts to much The Adelies
back off

ADELIES

...Oh ...That's too bad ...Is there nothing
we can do for him.

Pizarro drops his head, breathing hard. He knows he's doomed

MUMBLE

We came to ask you about the mystic beings.
So we can make contact with them. So we
can find out what's happening with the
fish Pizarro is shaking his head

ADELIES

...Her says "No".

...No fish?

...No contact. Don't contact them

MUMBLE

...No mystic beings.

Pizarro nods. The Adelies cant accept this

ADELIES

...Whaddaya mean no mystic beings!

...On your legendary journey ...To the
forbidden shore ...Yes. What you shaking
your head for?

Pizarro mimes swimming with his flippers

MUMBLE

You swam. Yes. To the forbidden shore.
Yes. And...?

52 PIZARRO STRETCHES HIS NECK

52

ADELIES

You looked up and ...

MUMBLE

It just went round your neck.

ADELES

No. That's not right. They gave it to
you. Didn't they?

Pizarro shakes his head. A tear forms and runs down his beak.
The Adelies are dumbstruck, Horrified.

MUMBLE

But... Someone must still have made it.
And if they made it, maybe they can take it
off. We find who they are and we solve
both our problems.

The Adelies are doubtful, but Pizarro looks up, a glimmer of
hope in his eye

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

...We just need to know where to look?

PIZARRO

(nods)

53 OI OI OI

53

ADELIES

...He can't breathe!

...He's choking!

Pizarro starts flapping his flippers

PIZARRO

Oi oi oi!!

ADELIES

...Sit him up ...Hold his head ...Lie him
down ...Don't move him!!

PIZARRO

(insistent)

Oi oi oi oi oi!!!

(CONTINUED)

ADELES

Its an emergency!
Its a seizure!

MUMBLE

Its a seal! He's making a sound like a
seal

Pizarro nods wildly, stretches his flippers wide

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

A big seal!! An Elephant seal!!

PIZARRO NODS AND POINTS

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

We walk to the place of the elephant seals!

ADELIES

...Huh? How you figure that out?

ENRICO

So what are we waiting for!

MUSIC: Talking heads. The Road to Nowhere

54 **THE ICE FIELD. DAY**

54

WIDE SHOT: As Mumble, Pizarro and the Adele Gang, trek in single
file across a GREAT FIELD OF ICE.

55 **THE RIDGE. NIGHT**

55

Pizarro is lagging. He stops, breathing noisily.

ADELES

...Pizarro?
...He can't go any further.
...Its gotta be somewhere near here In the
distance, faintly: "Oi oi oi"

MUMBLE

Listen. You hear that!

The bay is literally heaving with Elephant seals. One of them raises his head lugubriously as the little expedition approaches. He ruminates slowly, like chewing tobacco. His accent is a deep southern states drawl

ELEPHANT SEAL

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

ENRICO

We're on a mission. Over those mountains.

MUMBLE

We're looking for the mystic beings. You know, The forbidden shore.

ELEPHANT SEAL

(snorts)

Nope. Never heard of it

MUMBLE

...the ones who made this

ELEPHANT SEAL

You mean the hurricane walkers

MUMBLE

What are hurricane walkers?

ELEPHANT SEAL

Only the most vicious violent goddang badtothebone creatures that ever lived.

MUMBLE

What do they look like? You seen one.

ELEPHANT SEAL

No. And I thank the Lord I ain't. You know what they could do to you. They'd take a penguin, pull its skin off and turn it into mush. Beat hundreds of seals to death the exact same way, cut off their fur and then leave their carcasses laying on the shore. My grandpappy saw this hisself. Saw it right over there, where you fellers are headed.

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE

You hear how clever they were. Or the things they made

ELEPHANT SEAL

Son I don't think you're listenin to me. Those hurricane walkers is meaner than winter and twice as cruel. That's why noone goes past these mountains. Specially not this time of year. If the big freeze don't get you the hurricane walkers sure will. Don't say noone warned you He turns and lollops off down the beach. They watch him go. A long silence

ENRICO

So. We go back. Yeah?

MUMBLE

(stubbornly)

I want to see for myself

ENRICO

Mumble, You want to be beaten to death, and turned into a mush

ADELIES

...Yeah and that other stuff he said!
...Not me!

MUMBLE

His grandfather saw them. It was years ago.

ENRICO

And I betcha they're still doing it!

MUMBLE

Yes. Maybe they are. Maybe its as bad as he says. I just know I'd rather risk being killed than live all my life on my own. Thinking maybe I could have changed things if I'd just been a little bit braver

ENRICO

OK. See ya. Have a good time.

Mumble heads off. The Adelies let him go. Pizarro plods on after Mumble.

(CONTINUED)

ADELIES

...Hey Pizarro!
 ...Though you were staying with us?
 ...What you wanna go there for. You wanna
 be mushed up too!?

Pizarro look back at them and shrugs. Then turns and plods
 after mumble.

ADELES

Good riddance he's dying anything.

They Watch as Pizarro and mumble grow distant

ADELES (CONT'D)

...I liked that thing he said about being a
 little bit braver.
 ...Yeah that was good. He was a good guy.
 ...What do you mean was. He is a good guy.
 ...The best ...Pizarro was a good guy too.

Still watching the pair of them receding into the distance

The going is tough as they forge on up the mountains. Suddenly
 a call from behind:

ADELIES

(Shout)

Hey!

Mumble turns. The others are following. He waits for them to
 catch up

ENRICO

OK. We'll come over the mountains. But
 first sight of a hurricane walker we're
 off.

ADELIES

...Or a mystic being.
 ...aliens, mush, anything like that.

PULLING BACK TO

THE COAST

A vast panorama, looking from the sea
 towards land.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

In the foreground, THE SEA itself is freezing. MOVING ICEBERGS are suddenly locked fast in its grip

58 THE SNOWCOVERED MOUNTAINS

58

A very long shot shows a huge mountain range running inland from the sea Mumble and the adelies are a handful of tiny specks, struggling over the last of many great ridges.

Behind the tiny expedition, HUGE SNOW CLOUDS are building.

THE BLIZZARD

Pizarro struggling on, a horrible rasp to his breathing as...

THE STORM finally breaks over them. Screaming wind, total whiteout. The party have to shout to make themselves heard

ADELIES

...Oh man! This is too bad.

...Winter! We should be migrating by now.

MUMBLE

We have to huddle! Form a circle Like this.

He turns his own back to the wind. The Adeles form a line downwind from him.

ADELIES

...Oh yeah That's a bit better ...Good plan Amigo

MUMBLE

In a circle!

They form a little circle, but none of the adelies wants to be upwind.

ADELIES

...No. Its no good!

...It was better the other way They end up in a line again, with Mumble receiving the full blast of the gale. Exasperated, he gives up and heads off into the driving snow

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Hey!

(CONTINUED)

...What happened to the huddle! ...Where are you going!

MUMBLE

(shouts back)

Keep moving, its the best way The adelies
chase after him, complaining

ADELIES

...Best way to what?

...Best way to freeze your ass! Hey wait!

The four of them plus Pizarro are following in Mumble's
slipstream Finally they come into the lee of a rocky outcrop,
the wind drops and mumble stops dead.

The adelies all collide with him.

MUMBLE

Wow. Look at that.

Five little heads poke out from behind his back, looking down
the slope

ADELIES

...Vaya por Dios!

...What are they? Rocks?

Through drifting cloud and mist he can see a weird collection of
dark rectangular shapes planted on the edge of the sea.

The abandoned whaling station is an eerie place, cloaked in snow
and ice, shrouded in fog.

All around there is junk and rusting metal, festooned with
icicles or half concealed by snow The penguins walk through it,
dwarfed by the old flensingsheds, the chimneys and boilingvats.

ADELIES

...Know what this smells of.

...Yeah but don't say it

...Blood.

...Death

...I'm wasting my breath here.

Their POV: Around and above them, there are hooks, chains,
rusting twisted metalwork.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

ADELIES (CONT'D)
 ...shh. Listen!

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

ADELIES (CONT'D)
 ...Let's vamoose

When they look around again, two of their number have gone.

ADELIES (CONT'D)
 ...Where's Mumble?
 ...Where's Pizarro?
 ...Aw shit!
 ...Hello!

60 THE SLIPWAY. DAY

60

On the old concrete slipway, Pizarro stands with his back to us, looking at something near his feet

MUMBLE
 Pizarro? What have you found.

Imbedded in the ice at pizarro's feet there are various pieces of flotsam: a flip flop, a piece of nylon rope, a coke can.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)
 This is where you were. This is the forbidden shore Pizarro nods.

ADELIES
 Mumble! Pizarro!

MUMBLE
 (shouts back)
 Over here!

61 THE ICESHELF. DAY

61

Beyond the whaling station, the ice projects in a long tongue which extends half a mile out to sea.

In gathering mist, the Adelies head out over the icesheet.

They stop, where the shelf gives way to gently rocking pack ice. The fog is impenetrable.

ADELIES

...So. End of the World. Tick. We've seen it. Lets go.
...What about Pizarro?
...We'll go back there. Find something sharp we can cut it on.

Still looking fixedly ahead, Mumble shouts into the mist.

MUMBLE

Hello!

ADELIES

...There's nothing out there

MUMBLE

Anyone there!!

ADELIES

...Cos if there is I don't wanna see it.

...Actually what's that

A wave has appeared on the glassy surface of the sea, coming closer. They all peer at it

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...A whale?

...Just as long as its a blue whale and not that other kind.

Noone speaks The wave is coming closer. Smooth and convex, like the bow wave of some immense underwater creature.

ADELIES (CONT'D)

Just thinking out loud here.

The penguins stand there, transfixed and fascinated by the sight

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...what other kind ?

Twenty yards behind the wave, an immense huge dorsal fin breaks the surface.

(CONTINUED)

ADELIES (CONT'D)
 ...THAT KIND! RUN!!

The penguins are off and running, scooting as fast as they can towards firmer ice.

The wave crashes into the ice shelf. The Dorsal fin cuts straight through it, pursuing the penguins like the blade of a demonic carving knife, then dwindling in size as it advances and the whale goes deeper under the ice.

Finally its vanished completely. The Penguins stop, panting, believing themselves safe.

ADELIES (CONT'D)
 Whew. Talk about close Then. Kaboom!
 Twenty yards further on, the killer whale breaches the ice shelf, cutting off their retreat.

It comes down again. KERSPLASH! Leaving them stranded and soaking on a wildly unstable halfsubmerged floe ten meters in diameter.

ENRICO
 Jump! Swim

MUMBLE
 No! Back! Back!

The floe is tilting, threatening to tip them all into the water. The penguins scramble back to its centre

ADELIES
 ...Where is he. Where did he go? ...Over there. That way.
 ...No. Wait. He's gone
 ...He's underneath us.

Silence. The floe stops rocking. The penguins stand there in breathless anticipation

ADELIES (CONT'D)
 ...Maybe should split up.
 ...You split up. I'm happy right here.
 Well not happy but...

(CONTINUED)

The killer whale breaches again, rising like a tower block out of the ocean mere yards away from where they stand, spray and foam streaming down its sides Then it leans, topples and falls into their ice floe.

ADELIES (CONT'D)

Wooooaaahhh!!

The penguins are running for the far side when the killer whale hits, flipping them into the water like a handful of peanuts.

They hit the sea and start swimming for the safety of the ice. With his crippled wing, Pizarro is unable to keep up.

MUMBLE

Swim Pizarro! Swim!

The killer whale opens its mouth to take both of them. Mumble darts out of the way. The cavernous mouth just misses him, but catches Pizarro by the plastic ring of his six pack Mumble dives to see Pizarro being dragged off into the depths, tethered to the whale like captain ahab.

Mumble surfaces to see the others who have safely gained the ice shelf. His own path is blocked by...

A leopard seal.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Please. No.

Mumble swims downwards. The leopard seal follows.

Deeper and deeper he goes, lungs bursting, but he's just not fast enough. The leopard seal is opening her mouth to seize him when the even vaster mouth of the killer whale appears out of the gloom Mumble swerves just in time The killer whale's jaws chomp down on the leopard seal.

Mumble stops, turns, stunned by the speed of events as the killer whale's body thunders past him like a train.

Then Mumble kicks for the surface

He surfaces, gasping, and flops onto the Iceshelf.

MUMBLE

Guys?

ADELIES

...Over here!
 ...You OK?
 ...Where's pizarro?

MUMBLE

(panting)

Whale got him. He didn't make it.

ADELIES

...No! After coming all this way.
 ...Well. I guess its better to die quickly
 than slowly
 ...Although the best thing is not to die
 at all.

They agree, heading away from the edge of the ice. Behind them, sun peeps through the mist, forming a rainbow at their backs

PIZARRO

Hey Muchachos. Wait for me!

Then the figure of a penguin comes hurrying out of the mist

ALL

...PIZARRO?

They race back towards him, bombarding him with questions.

ADELIES

...You're speaking ...What happened to your
 capa.

PIZARRO

Whale ate it! Miraculo, eh?! Show me that
 dance you do!

His brief celebration is cut short by an unholy bellowing sound from somewhere in the mist.

ENRICO

Oh no. Now what?

(CONTINUED)

The bellowing a foghorn comes again. Simultaneously, a vast black shape a hundred feet high appears through the fog, entirely blotting out the sun.

Silhouetted On top of it, a group of tiny figures

ADELIES

...The Hurricane walkers!
...The Mystic beings!
...Whatever. Lets get out of here

The Adelies take to their heels. Mumble stands hypnotized before the massive juggernaut

MUMBLE

Who are you?

The dark shape hits the ice shelf and just keeps coming. The packice ahead of it buckling and exploding apart.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Stop! Where are you from!?

The Adelies stop and turn in horrified amazement.

THEIR POV: MUMBLE STANDING HIS GROUND, SHOUTING UP AT THE SHIP AS IT ADVANCES RELENTLESSLY TOWARDS HIM

ADELIES

...Mumble!
...Run. You crazy?
...What are you doing? Get away from there.

MUMBLE

(slowly, to the ship)
WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH US!?

The ship just keeps coming. Splintered ice is raining on his head. The very ice below his feet is disintegrating: great chasms opening up right where he stands

ADELIES

...Run!

Then the ice opens, Mumble topples into the gap, and the ship passes over him.

(CONTINUED)

The adelies stand to one side, watching in horror as the huge ship crashes past them, leaving a new channel, thirty yards wide.

Silence. Horror. The splash of waves on ice Then Mumble pops out of the sea and goes chasing off after the ship, still shouting

MUMBLE

(shouts)

I said Stop! Don't you understand? I want to speak to you!

ADELIES

(Shouts)

...Vaya por Dios. !

...Come back!

...Let it go!

Mumble keeps chasing the ship. The Adelies chase after Mumble.

The pursuit continues over broken seaice, Mumble hopping from floe to floe with the Adelies a hundred yards behind, hurrying to catch up.

Already the ship is half a mile away. Mumble is desperate. With every passing second the distance keeps widening.

THE ICEBERG

Beyond the last of the floes, there's a huge iceberg. Mumble hurls himself onto it, somehow gets a purchase, and starts scrambling up its precipitous sides The adelies follow. Some make it, some bounce off into the sea When they reach the top, the ship is a mile offshore. Mumble stands there, breathless, eyes fixed on the horizon

MUMBLE

You see the size of it. And all the little aliens on top waving their flippers?

ADELIES

...Yeah. Incredible.

(CONTINUED)

ENRICO

Now you satisfied? Now we go back. Tell them you made contact Mumbles eyes are still fixed on the distant ship

MUMBLE

But we didn't. Did we.

ADELIES

Whaddaya mean! They ran right over you. I call that contact!

Mumble's eyes have never left the ship

MUMBLE

They're stopping.

ADELIES

...Mumble. No.

...Me neither. I'm not going after them.

ENRICO

Noone's going after them. Tell him Pizarro

PIZARRO

(hoarse, sincere)

Mumble. Look at me.

(mumble turns)

I owe you everything. You're our brother.

Come home now.

MUMBLE

I need to ask them where the fish are going.

PIZARRO

Whats to say they know.

MUMBLE

If they don't who else can tell us.

Noone has an answer to this. They know he's unstoppable

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

So long Pizarro. Enrico, Ramon.

(CONTINUED)

ENRICO

You're a bonehead. But I'll never forget you.

ADELIES

...We'll build a pile of pebbles to you.
... "Mumble king of the emperors".

Mumble smiles at this, raises a flipper in farewell, then turns, runs, and launches himself into space.

WIDE SHOT. As the tiny figure of a penguin soars through the air.

The adelies rush to the edge as, far below, Mumble hits the water

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Can you believe he did that ...Where is he?
...Over there!

Mumble has resurfaced, swimming strongly in pursuit of it the ship.

The Adelies cheer and shout after him.

ADELIES (CONT'D)

...Tell those aliens hello from us, hey?
...Yeah and ask if they got any pebbles!
...Yahoo!

High on the top of the iceberg they break into Mumbles dance.

CAPTION

Text: The End of the World (Well Almost)
Music: U2's I still haven't found what I'm looking for.

Mumble forges on, through rolling green sea which now almost obscures the distant landmass of Antarctica Ahead, between waves he can see the ominous bulk of the ship standing stationary, as if waiting for him Mumble ducks underwater and sees

UNDERWATER

Something rising from below: a huge net, teeming with fish.

(CONTINUED)

Mumble swims to one side, narrowly avoiding capture, then surfaces, just as....

THE TRAWLER

The great net full of fish breaks the surface of the water and is winched on board ship, sea water streaming off it.

MUMBLE YELLS AT THE ALIENS

MUMBLE

(shouts)

What are you doing. Those are our fish!
We need them to live off!

The ships engines start up again and the sea around him erupts in churning foam.

Swamped by the wake, Mumble goes under, into a noisy a turmoil of foam and propellers. When he resurfaces the ship is already a hundred yards away.

NOAH

If Mumble valued his life, that was when he should have turned back. But now he was more than just curious he was angry.

MUMBLE RESUMES HIS PURSUIT.

No sign of the ship now, nor of land. The seas are truly mountainous.

Mumble swims up the side of each wave, over its frothing crest and down into the deep dark valley beyond

A POV SHOT from above, of Mumble swimming.

A POV SHOT from below.

CLOSE SHOT OF MUMBLE, fighting panic as he swims. He ducks under the water and seesnothing.

68 UNDERWATER. DAY

68

Mumble powers through the ocean, trying to escape the unseen threat.

Something moves at the periphery of his vision and he turns with a start to see: A MASSIVE EYE Mumble yells and shoots off at a tangent, then turns and looks back.

A BLUE WHALE entirely fills his field of vision. It speaks and the unintelligible booming of its voice is almost deafening.

THE HIGH SEAS. DAY. Mumble surfaces. Spluttering.

MUMBLE

Too loud!

69 HIGH VOICE SHOUTS FROM ABOVE

69

ALBATROSS

He's trying to talk to you!

Mumble looks up. Hovering above the tiny penguin and the giant whale, an albatross wheels into shot, riding the updraught from the waves.

MUMBLE

Well tell him to go further away.

The whale's voice continues. Two syllables repeated. The albatross translates

ALBATROSS

He says: Turn back. You're approaching the convergence

MUMBLE

(Shouts)

What's the convergence?

The answer comes back in fragments as the albatross's words are snatched away by the wind.

ALBATROSS

...cold water meets warm... big northern currents ...go past it you'll never get back.

MUMBLE GASPS, EXHAUSTED:

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE

Beyond that.... Is that where the aliens live.

ALBATROSS

The who?

MUMBLE

The ones who are stealing our fish The whale speaks again and the albatross translates, like an oboe soaring above the sonorous melody of a cello.

ALBATROSS

He says be thankful fish is all they're taking. Before the Great Slaughter there were tens of thousands of whales living out here. Now you can swim for weeks and never hear a single song.

MUMBLE

(astounded)

They killed the whales?!

ALBATROSS

They kill everything they see. I've flown over the places where they live. Used to be blue and green there, now its nothing but rock and smoke

MUMBLE

Well they need to stop. Someone needs to tell them to change!

At this the whales great ironic laugh goes booming through the ocean

ALBATROSS

Meaning you? Don't be ridiculous! They slaughtered the biggest animal that's ever lived on this planet. Why on earth would they listen to a penguin.

Mumble considers this, breathing heavily from the effort of trying to make himself heard

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: (2)

MUMBLE

Well... can you ask the whale ...to maybe
give me a lift ... just 'til I ...catch up
with them.

The whale responds with a long mournful noooo, which the
albatross translates

ALBATROSS

You've got to be mad to go there. Or
suicidal. Don't do it.

The albatross wheels away.

70 **THE CONVERGENCE**

70

We see, from above, the whale turning as well, changing course
to avoid a subtle change in the texture and colour of the water.
This BOUNDARY extends in a straight line in either direction, as
far as the eye can see.

Mumble swims right through this line.

Beyond it the great sinuous currents capture him and sweep him
away, as we PULL BACK to a VERY HIGH SHOT. Mumble is a mere dot
in the ocean now.

HIGHER STILL: We are so high that, to the north, the very
curvature of the earth is now visible: a smooth blue horizon
with no land in sight.

FADE TO BLACK

71 **A BEACH. DAY.**

71

A small polluted beach.

On the highwater mark A POV shot approaches what looks a damp
fur coat, or maybe a dead animal of some sort. Its Mumble.

Through his one good eye, Mumble sees: a childs red wellington
boots. Then a small hand. A Plastic magic wand catches the sun
light.

The magic wand pokes at him. He moans. The boots run away,
shouting

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

GIRL

Ymmum! Yddad! Emoc dna kool! S'ereht a
ydrib! S'ti evila!

With great difficulty, Mumble raises his head to try and see more.

Sunlight flares, bleaching to white, as he loses consciousness

72 LAB. DAY.

72

A white room.

Mumble is lying on a stainless steel table. His eyes are closed. There is movement around him. Voices whispering in an alien tongue.

Mumble opens his eyes and is immediately dazzled by the brilliant glare of an examination lamp. A figure in white bends over him. He yells

NOAH

The alien was truly horrible, just as the skua described: a pale fleshy face with staring frontwards eyes. Teeth like a leopard seal and featherless stumps for flippers.

MUMBLE'S POV: AN ATTRACTIVE FEMALE SCIENTIST WITH BRIGHT RED LIPSTICK. OTHERS JOIN HER. MUMBLE IS PANTING IN TERROR, SURROUNDED BY ALIENS IN WHITE COATS WITH GLEAMING SPECTACLES AND FLESHY, PROBING FINGERS

NOAH (CONT'D)

But despite their horrific appearance, Mumble still found the courage to talk

MUMBLE

(croaks)

Where are you taking the fish. This is very important to us. We Cannot Live without them.

A scientist grabs his head, shines a little pen torch in one eye then the other.

The straightjacket immobilizes Mumble's wings but at the far end of the table his feet are paddling away frantically.

(CONTINUED)

FEMALE SCIENTIST

T'nod eb deracs

MUMBLE

Speak Adelie? Speakadeskuatalk?

Blank response. Now they're putting stethoscopes on his chest

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

If we can't eat we can't return to the gathering. If we don't return to the gathering then...

SCIENTIST

Enif sduos.

(to Mumble)

Evitaklat elttil wollef t'nera uoy?

MALE SCIENTISTS

Uoy kniht s'eh llew hguone ot refsnart?

FEMALE SCIENTIST

Haey, s'eh elbats won.

Suddenly they are removing the monitor leads and unstrapping him from the table.

MUMBLE

Thanks, that's better, now if you could....

They lower him, still with his wings strapped to his sides, into a padded plastic box on the floor.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

No...Wait...What are you doing?!

They close the lid, which has airholes drilled in it, over his head and secure it with clips.

THE BOX

Mumble's protests are muffled and indistinct. He batters on the inside of the box with his feet, but to no avail.

Someone stencils "SeaWorld" on top of it, then one by one the scientists leave the room.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

72

Last to depart is the pretty female scientist. She hesitates in the doorway, listening to the sound made by mumble's feet on the inside of the box.

The frantic beating has become a kind of rhythm. Like an urgent, coded, message.

She hesitates.

OTHER SCIENTIST
Gnihtemos gnorw?

LADY SCIENTIST.
On. Gnihton.
(Calls off)
K.O! S'eh ydaer rof gnidaol!

Then she switches off the light.

73 **SKY. DAY**

73

Endless sky.

A 747 drones across the screen, eastwards into the rising sun.

CAPTION
Text: The end of the world. Music Over:
Sting: Shadows in the Rain

74 **A TUNNEL**

74

As if in a dream, Mumble ambles down a long dark tunnel to the light at its far end.

STING
Woke up in my clothes again this morning
Don't know exactly who I am I should have
heard my doctors warning He does the best
for me he can....

75 **THE PENGUIN ENCLOSURE. DAY.**

75

He emerges, blinking, from the mouth of the tunnel to see:

Blue sky. White cliffs of ice.

MUMBLE
Hello!!?

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

An odd, sharp echo comes back at him and his cheerful mood falters.

Mumble walks forwards a bit, noticing now that the "ice" below his feet is scuffed and scratched a painted cement floor.

On second viewing that arctic vista looks kind of weird l also.

Mumble is about to investigate closer when he hears voices. He rounds a corner to see: Penguins of every species moving towards the water. Rockhoppers, Adeles, Fairie penguins.

MUMBLE (CONT'D)

Hey. Hi. How are you doing? What is this place?

But the other penguins ignore him, repeating like automatons

PENGUINS

...Feeding time.

...Feeding time.

...Out of the way its feeding time.

A keeper is throwing fish into the pond. MUMBLE is caught in the headlong rush to feed.

76 UNDERWATER.

76

Mumble dives into the water, sees a fish falling through shot. He chases after it and bangs up against:

A glass underwater viewing panel against which dozens of aliens are pressed, watching the penguins.

77 EXT. THE PENGUIN ENCLOSURE

77

Shocked, Mumble leaps out of the water, to be met with a gale of laughter and applause from somewhere above him.

MUMBLE LOOKS UP TO SEE:

Another great crowd of aliens looking down into the enclosure. Their mouths are open, showing their teeth.

Terrified, Mumble runs off, straight into the painted horizon. The aliens laughter echoes all around him. Mumble picks himself up, bruised and confused, as the awful truth hits home: he's trapped.

78 INT. SEAWORLD. LATE AFTERNOON

78

Its closing time. Sweet wrapper blow around in the wind. As the light fades, spectators start to drift away.

Mumble stands in the same place, lonely and withdrawn.

NOAH

So this was to be his fate: Forever a prisoner, never to be understood, his only refuge in sleep Mumble closes his eyes and tries to sleep.

NOAH (CONT'D)

His dreams were of home. Of ice and water, family and feathership Above him, the faint image of Bella, singing.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Thus, in the very depths of his despair, a small, joyful memory was granted.

PAN down to MUMBLE'S Feet, as, almost of their own volition, they begin a shuffling tapdance on the ice Behind the balustrade, a LITTLE GIRL, the last spectator to leave, calls out to her mother.

LITTLE AMERICAN GIRL

Kool mum. Eno fo s'meht gnicnad!

The mother comes back in to retrieve her daughter

LITTLE AMERICAN GIRL (CONT'D)

Revo ereht mum. Eh yllaer is!

MOTHER

Emoc. Emit ot og.

LITTLE AMERICAN GIRL

Tub s'eh Gnicnad! Revo Ereht!

The mother finally looks.

MOTHER

(shouts, echo)

Ho ym dog!

MUMBLE, woken from his reverie, glances up to find the pair of them looking at him.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

Nervousness makes his feet begin to tap even harder. The mother calls the attention of a zookeeper

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Olleh! Reepek!

FADE TO BLACK

79 EXT. THE COLONY.

79

On the iceshelf some penguins stand alone sheltering their chicks.

Others group together, as though in conference. One of them looks up and squints into the distance. Something is approaching them from inland.

ONLOOKERS
...Who's this?

Others follow his line of sight

ONLOOKERS (CONT'D)
...Is it an emperor?
...Is it a penguin?

BELLA
Its Mumble!

NEIGHBOURING PENGUINS
Who?

Bella breaks away from the others, walks out to greet Mumble.

80 A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY

80

They recognize each other and are instantly tonguetied

MUMBLE
Bella? How are you.

BELLA
Fine. Sort of.

Mumble looks to the fluffy chicks nearby

MUMBLE
Is one of them yours?

(CONTINUED)

BELLA

No. Still single. Just never heard the right song I guess.

Then the other adults surround them, babbling excitedly

OTHER PENGUINS

...Mumble! We thought you were dead.
...What's that blue stuff on you?
...Where did you get to?

On Mumble's chest, someone has spray-painted a number

MUMBLE

I don't know exactly. But Listen. I found who was taking our fish. I think they're coming behind me.

OTHER PENGUINS

...Who?

MUMBLE

The aliens. I mean it. I followed them beyond the convergence then went down a long dark tunnel with this brilliant light at the end and woke up in this well it was strange it looked a bit like home but you couldn't get out and there were aliens wherever you went and they kept throwing you dead fish and.

MEDIC PENGUINS

Ice! Water! We got a heat exhaustion!

MUMBLE

No! Seriously! They exist! You've got to believe me because they're going to be here very soon. And I think they can learn to be kind. In fact I'm sure of it, but they don't understand language, all they understand is the thing with the feet. Like this Noah breaks through the group of penguins who encircle Mumble

NOAH

You! What is this?

(CONTINUED)

PENGUINS

...He says he found the aliens.
...And they're stealing our fish.
...He says we have to do this!

NOAH

There are no aliens! He's filling your heads with lies again.

BELLA

So... what's this on his back.

The penguins shuffle round to look at Mumble from the back. There's a little radio transmitter stuck to his feathers, with an aerial, and winking red lights.

NOAH

Destroy it!

MUMBLE

No! That's how they'll find us!

NOAH

And you want that.

MUMBLE

Yes. Maybe. I mean if they're so clever we must be able to I don't know appeal to their better natures.

NOAH

Fool! How do you know they won't murder us!

(to the others)

Recite the wisdoms.

MUMBLE

No! Listen! They're coming!

From far away a low distant rumbling, like an avalanche approaching

NOAH

In the beginning was the song. The song became love. Love became The egg.... In fear, many of the penguins start copying Noah

(CONTINUED)

MUMBLE

It is them! Look!

A tiny flashing light appears on the horizon. The throbbing grows louder. The light becomes three one red, one green one white.

NOAH

We stand fast in the long darkness.
Sharing the cold. Sealing the gaps through
which....

The throbbing and rumbling almost drown his voice. The red light is becoming larger and larger. Most penguins are chanting now

MUMBLE

(yells)

Dance!!

NOAH

Chant!!!

Some are dancing, some are chanting, most are panicking

CHANTERS

All praise to the forefathers. All praise
the FaaarK!! As a massive Chinook
helicopter roars over their heads, mashing
the air with its rotors.

That does it. Suddenly everyone is dancing like their lives depended on it.

MUMBLE

That's right! Then some of that
babbadeboo! And some woo woo woo!!

The rhythm section starts up, then the horns as the Chinook circles the ice shelf and comes to land some distance away.

MUSIC OVER: The faint sounds of a massive dance party as:

Figures disembark. Kit is stacked. Snowmobiles are kicked into life. Scientists glove up and head out over the ice

MUSIC (LOUDER) OVER:

A TRAVELING SHOT as we head across the iceshelf to.

THE COLONY

A hundred yards from the colony the scientists stop, switch off the engines and gaze in amazement.

SCIENTIST

Thaw eht kcu...?!!

One of the scientists pushes back his hood, takes off his sunglasses and fumbles for a video camera.

His POV: The whole community of penguins are dancing in step.

CLOSER: Its wild. Its magnificent. Everyone is bopping away from the oldest adult penguin to the youngest chick.

BELLA

(dancing)

Come on Noah! You can do it!

In the centre of the line up, Mumble dances ecstatically, with his community on around him and the little electronic pack on his back.

Even old Noah manages a few reluctant steps.

MRS ASTRAKHAN

(dancing)

That's good, Noah! Be spontaneous! Like Mumble!

ELVIS

(dancing)

You know him? That's my boy!

MRS ASTRAHAN

(dancing)

Know him? He's my star pupil! I taught him everythingk!

83 CONFERENCE ROOM. DAY

83

Suited figures are seated round a conference table, watching as images of the dancing penguin colony play on a video screen. Without the music its less obviously a dance.

CHAIRMAN

...So what do you reckon? Its not really dancing as such?

EXPERT

(shrugs)

Maybe some kind of neurological disorder?
Could be toxic. Could be nutritional

CHAIRMAN

But we agree its enough to get a ban placed on fishing these waters.

EVERYONE NODS

DELEGATE#1

So if your government ask our government to approach their government...

DELEGATE#2

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

CHAIRMAN

To hell with it. I'm going to write to everybody's government.

At which point the tape of dancing comes to an end and the video screen goes blank.

FADE TO BLACK

VOICE#1

What. Is there a rights problem?

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:

(CONTINUED)

VOICE#2

No. We can exploit the whole galaxy, if we want to. A light comes on somewhere, like a projector beam, conjuring in midair a three dimensional image of our galaxy

VOICE#2 (CONT'D)

Its just, this little star we were going to harvest here....

A 3D image of our sun comes up

VOICE#1

...don't tell me. Some new species its harboring. Jump to A 3D image of our solar system

VOICE#2

...The main one is pretty unsophisticated. Carbon based. Sexual replication...

A rather abstract, aerial shot of Times square in winter with tiny people milling around in black coats

VOICE#1

So...?

VOICE#2

Well. Apparently. There's also there things here.

An image of the dancing penguins appears.

VOICE#2 (CONT'D)

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

The shadowy figure laughs, enjoying the image.

VOICE#1

Hmm. Charming. Scrolling back to the image of planet earth, rotating

VOICE#2

So. We go ahead. Or...?

VOICE#1

No. Better to comply don't you think. Let's leave them be.

(CONTINUED)

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

The projector beam catches them, briefly, throwing up the giant shadows of aliens They look very like huge penguins, walking solemnly out of shot with their hands behind their backs.

One of them breaks step to do a little jig.

THE END