

The Lorax

By Dr. Seuss

At the far end of town
where the Grickle-grass grows
and the wind smells slow-and-sour
when it blows
and no birds ever sing excepting old
crows...
is the Street of the Lifted Lorax.

And deep in the Grickle-grass, some
people say,
if you look deep enough you can still
see, today,
where the Lorax once stood
just as long as it could
before somebody lifted the Lorax
away.



What *was* the Lorax?
Any 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.
Ask him. *He* knows.
You won't see the Once-ler.
Don't knock at his door.
He stays in his Lerkim on top of his
store.
He stays in his Lerkim, cold under the
roof,
where he makes his own clothes

out of miff-muffered moof.
And on special dank midnights in
August,
he peeks
out of the shutters
and sometimes he speaks
and tells how the Lorax was lifted
away.
He'll tell you, perhaps...
if you're willing to pay.

On the end of a rope
he lets down a tin pail
and you have to toss in fifteen cents
and a nail
and the shell of a great-great-great-
grandfather snail.

Then he pulls up the pail,
makes a most careful count
to see if you've paid him
the proper amount.

Then he hides what you paid him
away in his Snuvv,
his secret strange hole
in his gruvvulous glove.
Then he grunts, I will call you by
Whisper-ma-Phone,
for the secrets I tell you are for your
ears alone.

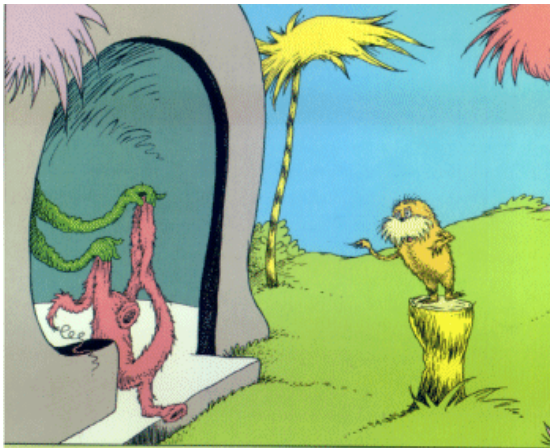
SLUPP

Down slupps the Whisper-ma-Phone to
your ear
and the old Once-ler's whispers are not
very clear,
since they have to come down
through a snergelly hose,
and he sounds
as if he had

smallish bees up his nose.
Now I'll tell you, he says, with his
teeth sounding gray,
how the Lorax got lifted and taken
away...
It all started way back...
such a long, long time back...
Way back in the days when the grass
was still green
and the pond was still wet
and the clouds were still clean,
and the song of the Swomee-Swans
rang out in space...
one morning, I came to this glorious
place.
And I first saw the trees!
The Truffula Trees!
The bright-colored tufts of the Truffula
Trees!
Mile after mile in the fresh morning
breeze.
And under the trees, I saw Brown
Bar-ba-loots
frisking about in their Bar-ba-loot suits
as they played in the shade and ate
Truffula Fruits.
From the rippulous pond
came the comfortable sound
of the Humming-Fish humming
while splashing around.
But those *trees!* Those *trees!*
Those Truffula Trees!
All my life I'd been searching
for trees such as these.
The touch of their tufts
was much softer than silk.
And they had the sweet smell
of fresh butterfly milk.
I felt a great leaping
of joy in my heart.
I knew just what I'd do!
I unloaded my cart.
In no time at all, I had built a small
shop.
Then I chopped down a Truffula Tree
with one chop.

And with great skillful skill and with
great speedy speed,
I took the soft tuft. And I knitted a
Thneed!
The instand I'd finished, I heard a
ga-Zump!
I looked.
I saw something pop out of the stump
of the tree I'd chopped down. It was
sort of a man.
Describe him?...That's hard. I don't
know if I can.
He was shortish. And oldish.
And brownish. And mossy.
And he spoke with a voice
that was sharpish and bossy.
Mister! he said with a sawdusty
sneeze,
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--
he was very upset as he shouted and
puffed--
*What's that THING you've made out of
my Truffula tuft?*
Look, Lorax, I said. 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.
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!
The Lorax said,
Sir! You are crazy with greed.

There is no one on earth
who would buy that fool Thneed!



But the very next minute I proved he
was wrong.
For, just at that minute, a chap came
along,
and he thought that the Thneed I had
knitted was great.
He happily bought it for three
ninety-eight.
I laughed at the Lorax, You poor stupid
guy!
You never can tell what some people
will buy.

I repeat, cried the Lorax,
I speak for the trees!
I'm busy, I told him.
Shut up, if you please.
I rushed 'cross the room, and in no
time at all,
built a radio-phone. I put in a quick
call.
I called all my brothers and uncles and
aunts
and I said, 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 Stich.

And, in no time at all,
in the factory I built,
the whole Once-ler Family

was working full tilt.
We were all knitting Thneeds
just as busy as bees,
to the sound of the chopping
of Truffula Trees.

Then...
Oh! Baby! Oh!
How my business did grow!
Now, chopping one tree
at a time
was too slow.



So I quickly invented my
Super-Axe-Hacker
which whacked off four Truffula Trees
at one smacker.
We were making Thneeds
four times as fast as before!
And that Lorax?... *He* didn't show up
any more.

But the next week
he knocked
on my new office door.
He snapped, 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.
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 gas, and no food, in
their tummies!

They loved living here. But I can't let
them stay.
They'll have to find food. And I hope
that they may.
Good luck, boys, he cried. And he sent
them away.

I, the Once-ler, felt sad
as I watched them all go.

BUT...
business is business!
And business must grow
regardless of crummies in tummies,
you know.

I meant no harm. I most truly did not.
But I had to grow bigger. So bigger I
got.

I biggered my factory. I biggered my
roads.

I biggered my wagons. I biggered the
loads
of the Thneeds I shipped out. I was
shipping them forth
to the South! To the East! To the West!
To the North!

I went right on biggering...selling more
Thneeds.

And I biggered my money, which
everyone needs.

Then *again* he came back! I was fixing
some pipes

when that old nuisance Lorax came
back with *more* gripes.

I am the Lorax, he coughed and he
whiffed.

He sneezed and he snuffled. He
snarggled. He sniffed.

Once-ler! he cried with a cruffulous
croak.

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.

And so, said the Lorax,
--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 have to fly for a month...or a
year...

To escape from the smog you've
smogged-up around here.

What's *more*, snapped the Lorax. (His
dander was up.)

Let me say a few words about
Gluppity-Glupp.

Your machinery chugs on, day and
night without stop
making Gluppity-Glup. Also
Schloppity-Schlopp.

And what do you do with this leftover
goo?...

I'll show you. You dirty old Once-ler
man, you!

You're glumping the pond where the
Humming-Fish hummed!

No more can they hum, for their gills
are all gummed.

So I'm sending them off. 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.

And then I got mad.

I got terribly mad.

I yelled at the Lorax, Now listen here,
Dad!

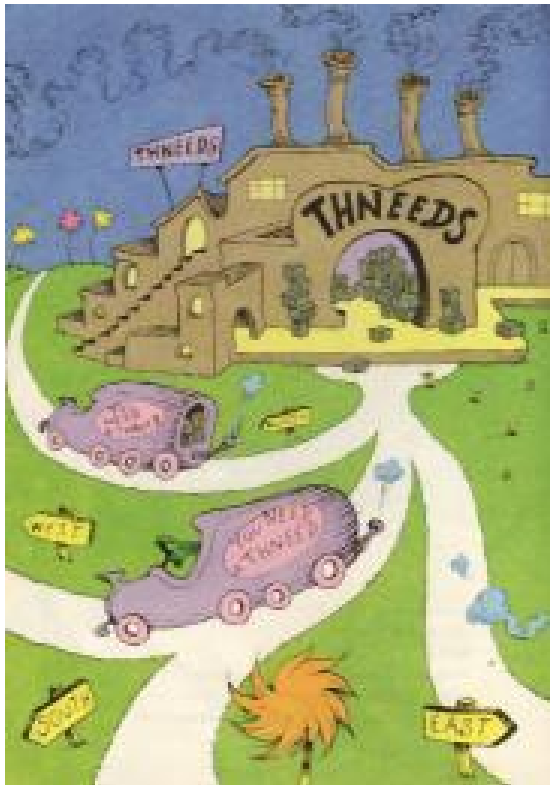
All you do is yap-yap and say, Bad!
Bad! Bad! Bad!

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!

And at that very moment, we heard a
loud whack!
From outside in the fields came a
sickening smack
of an axe on a tree. Then we heard the
tree fall.
The very last Truffula Tree of them all!



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 good-bye. 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.

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 heisted himself and took leave
of this place,
through a hole in the smog, without
leaving a trace.
And all that the Lorax left here in this
mess
was a small pile of rocks, with one
word...
UNLESS.
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*, says the Once-ler,
Now that *you're* here,
the word of the Lorax seems perfectly
clear.
UNLESS someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,

nothing is going to get better.

It's not.

SO...

Catch! calls the Once-ler.

He lets something fall.

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.