

NEWT IS A BRIGHT BUOYANT CHARACTER WITH EXTREMELY MOBILE
FACE AND EXPRESSIVE GESTURES REMINISCENT OF A MAGICIAN. NEWT
IS DRESSED CASUALLY IN BLACK.

AN EMPTY GOLDFISH BOWL FILLED WITH WATER (WITH AN ENORMOUS
PACKET OF FISHFOOD STANDING BESIDE IT) DOMINATES A SMALL TABLE
FRONT STAGE.

ENTER: NEWT, WALKING BACKWARDS IN ORDER TO REMAIN FACING AN
UNSEEN OLDER SISTER (SIS IS SEATED OFF STAGE IN THE WINGS).

NEWT: (Sighing loudly)
All right! All right!
Keep your hair on, Sis.
So I forgot.
I'll feed it now.
(Louder exaggerated sigh)
I'm **not** neglecting my fish;
I fed Walter last night
before I went to bed.

NEWT LISTENS ATTENTIVELY TO UNHEARD COMMENT

(Quickly)
And what gives **you** the right
to boss me about all the time
just because you're older, anyway?

PAUSE FOR A FURTHER SCATHING UNHEARD COMMENT

(Muttering through clenched teeth)
Big deal.

PAUSE FOR AN UNHEARD RETORT

I'm on my way.....

NEWT SAUNTERS OVER TO THE TABLE AND SPRINKLES FISHFOOD
LIBERALLY WITH HARDLY A GLANCE AT THE GOLDFISH BOWL
BEFORE TURNING AWAY: NEWT HESITATES – THEN FREEZES AND
TURNS AROUND PAINFULLY SLOWLY STARING OPEN MOUTHED
AT THE GOLDFISH BOWL

(With quavering voice)
Ssiss!
(A sharp intake of breath)
Sis!

NEWT TURNS TO ADDRESS SIS DIRECTLY

SIS!

NEWT IS PERPLEXED AND LOOKS BACK TOWARDS THE TABLE
NEWT CONCENTRATES HARD ON THE GOLDFISH BOWL AND
PEERS THROUGH THE CURVED GLASS CLOSELY WITH GREAT
SUSPICION BEFORE MOVING ROUND AND PEERING INSIDE FROM
DIRECTLY ABOVE

NEWT:

(Quietly)
It's not there.

NEWT'S WORST FEARS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED

(Shouting)
Sis! It's not there.

NEWT STEPS BACKWARDS LOOKING MYSTIFIED

It's GONE!

NEWT SLIDES A HAND INTO THE WATER AND VIEWS WRIGGLING
MAGNIFIED FINGERS FROM THE OUTSIDE
NEWT STEPS BACK SHAKING HEAD AND WET HAND

(Shouting)
My fish is missing.

PAUSE FOR UNHEARD RETORT

My fish has gone missing
I tell you.

(Defensively)
I'm NOT telling porky pies!
I'm NOT making it up!

NEWT RUSHES OVER TO CONFRONT SIS

What do you mean,
it can't've gone far!

PAUSE FOR AN UNHEARD EXPLANATION

(Shrugging shoulders)

I'll look...

(Pulling a face on turning)
...but I don't think so!

NEWT RETURNS TO THE TABLE AND PRESCRIBES A WIDE ARC
FROM THE CENTRE OF THE GOLDFISH BOWL BEFORE PROCEEDING
TO SEARCH THE SURROUNDING FLOOR AREA

(Addressing Sis loudly over one shoulder)

No!

Walter hasn't jumped out.

(Defeated)

NEWT:

NEWT:

Yes! It would be equally true to say
that Walter is no longer inside.

*NEWT SCOWLS IN RESPONSE TO UNHEARD JIBE AND RACES OVER
TO CONFRONT SIS*

(Adopting a hands-on-hip stance)
I don't need to be reminded
that I am in the habit of losing things!
But I have NOT lost Walter.

(Dramatically)
The goldfish has ... vanished;
...not the same thing at all.

NEWT STIFFENS AND STANDS VERY TALL

Don't be ridiculous,
we haven't got a cat, have we?

(Pause)
It's no laughing matter.
Act your age, please!

*NEWT SHAKES HEAD IN NEGATIVE RESPONSE TO AN UNHEARD
SUGGESTION*

(Sarcastically)

Yes!
Yes, makes for a brill trick, doesn't it!

(Pause)
If I only knew how to magic Walter back.

NEWT MOVES PENSIVELY TOWARDS THE TABLE

Perhaps I'll never know
what happened to Walter.

(Sighing loudly)
He might've been an average-looking
sort of goldfish

but he always had time for me;
he always had time to listen.

NEWT SPINS AROUND

What are you laughing at, Sis?

(Pause)
You're at the bottom of this, aren't you?

You've set me up!
You're laughing at me,
I know you are.

You know something that you're
not telling me about.

NEWT POINTS AN ACCUSING FINGER

NEWT:

(Shouting)

You've taken my fish, haven't you?

(Pause)

ADMIT IT!

You've hidden Walter somewhere!

Where?

Tell me! Where?

NEWT IS SUFFICIENTLY CALM TO LISTEN TO THE UNHEARD EXPLANATION

Yes.....

...Yes, I knew Mum wanted Walter
to have a bigger home...

.....Well?

NEWT RACES PAST THE TABLE GRABBING THE FISHFOOD

(Joyfully)

Mum, Sis says you've a surprise for me!

EXIT NEWT