



BY ALLY HILL AND TIM HILL

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FLASH GORDON the PANTO

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cast of characters

Luminos – the good Alien

Ming – the Merciless

Flash Gordon – a sporting hero

Dale Arden – a reporter

Professor Zarkov – the Dame

Pip – her son

Prince Zarquon – ruler of the forests of Mong

Florin – his trusty friend

Bitmap and Browzer – the palace guards

Zoot – an Alien

Rebels

Flash Gordon The Panto

Act 1 Scene 1

Enter Luminos The Friendly Alien through tabs DSR.

Luminos: I am a being from a far away place,
The evil Emperor Ming has captured my race.
On our far away planet we struggled and fought,
But Ming was too strong and it all was for naught.
I managed to escape; I fled to the stars.
From there I have watched him capture Venus then Mars!
And now he has turned his attention to Earth
So I must find someone, a hero since birth
To defeat this cruel tyrant by travelling through space
To the home of the Emperor, a wild, scary place
But I must act quickly for the longer I stay
Away from my planet, my powers fade away!

SFX whilst tabs open to reveal the video screen showing Ming the Merciless. This is a live video link to enable Ming to respond to any boos with appropriate "Oh yes it is" type banter.

Ming: So you think you can stop me you pathetic pip-squeak!
You're no threat to me; you're just weedy and weak.
I, on the other hand, am clever and strong.
Any plan that you have is sure to go wrong.
And as for this planet and these stupid Earth folk,
I'll conquer them with ease; they're simply a joke!
I'll launch my secret weapon and knock them all flat.
This really is too easy, and that will be that!

Luminos: Now just wait one minute, you've not caught me yet;
And there are people down here who are aware of your threat:
A certain Professor who watches the stars
Has seen what you did to those creatures on Mars!
So don't be so certain that these people can't fight;
You might just find out, to your cost, that they might
Have the skill to defeat you; they're fearless and strong.
Now wouldn't that be good if your plan went all wrong!

Ming: Don't be ridiculous, you wimp-of-the-week.
You'll never find this hero you seek.
My forces are superior to this motley bunch.
I mean look at their faces; they're all out to lunch!
You never will stop me, my rule is supreme.

Oh how I do like the fact that I'm mean!
I'll show them no mercy, and I'll show none to you.
Thanks for the chat but it's all over for you!
Luminos you are finished, this time you are through
Now my dinner awaits me, where I'll savour such thoughts
Of the Earth on a platter with a meteorite sauce!

Evil laughter is heard as the tabs close.

Luminos: Don't you worry my friends, though he's frightening I know
That Professor I mentioned, she knows where to go.
And with luck on our side and some magic as well
I'll find us a hero with a story to tell.
Now remember my name, Luminos I am called
And I'm stronger than he thinks; I'm not ready to fall.
My kind can do things that no human can;
So with my assistance, he'll be defeated by man.
The Professor has waiting in her rocket shed
Just the ship we'll be needing when the sky turns all red.
So I'll take you to meet her, as well as her son
I'm sure that you'll like them, they're so full of fun.
Now the time has come that I really must go
And find us that hero, so long, cheerio!

*Luminos exits DSR through the tabs which then open to reveal Dame
Zarkov's rocket laboratory.*

Act 1 Scene 2

Enter Dame Zarkov SR reading a computer print out

Dame: Bills, bills, bills! (*Throwing the printouts over her shoulder*) I must get his E-mail redirected!
Oh, hello boys and girls, My name's Professor Zarkov but you can call me Zarky. Shall we try that if I shout out "Hello Boys and Girls" you shout out "Hello Zarky"?
On the count of three.
Ready, one, two, three – HELLO BOYS AND GIRLS!
No dear, that's Zarky not Barking . . . and its definitely not sarky, although I don't know you might be right!
Anyway I'm looking for my son. Have you seen him anywhere? His name is Pip. It's short for Pipette. Honestly he's such a little drip! I'm trying to get my rocket ready for launch but with the help I get from that boy we'll be lucky if its ready for Bonfire Night in the year 3000!
(*Calls*) Pip, where are you?
Honestly I sent him in to town to find a siphon duct for the rocket and what does he come back with? This! (*she picks up a large pokémon*) Apparently it's called a Psi-duck! I ask you! PIP!!

Enter Pip SR carrying a strangely shaped object

Pip: Hello Mummy. What part of the rocket is this?

Dame: That's not part of the rocket, that's my new hat! Every time I'm down in the dumps I buy myself a new hat.

Pip: I wondered where you got them from!

Dame: Cheeky boy! I'll have you know I'm the height of sartorial elegance. I've even had a pair of knickers specially made for me from a Union jack.

Pip: Aren't they uncomfortable?

Dame: Well they were until I took the flag pole out!
Have you met the nice girls and boys Pip? I was just telling them all about you.

Pip: Hello everyone my name's Pip.

Dame: They already know that you silly boy! As I just said I've been telling them all about you. (*To audience*) You see what I mean!
Come over here Pip. I want to show the boys and girls what your maths is like. What do you think of adding and subtraction?

Pip: Well I can take it or leave it.

Dame: *(to audience)* He thinks a SATs test is something you do sitting down. *(to Pip)* I mean are you any good at it? I'd better test you.

Pip: Oh very well then. Take it away.

Dame: If you've got two bars of chocolate, one in this pocket. *(She puts a bar in his jacket pocket.)* And one in this pocket. *(She puts a second bar in his other pocket.)* And then I take one away. *(She takes a bar out of one pocket.)* How many bars of chocolate have you got?

Pip: Two.

Dame: No. No. No. You're not listening. I'll say it again. Give me the chocolate back.

Pip: I knew there'd be a catch. *(He gives her the chocolate)*

Dame: If you've got two bars of chocolate, one in this pocket *(Puts it in.)* and one in this pocket *(Puts it in.)* Then I take one away. *(Takes one bar out of pocket.)* How many bars of chocolate have you got?

Pip: Two.

Dame: How can you have two?

Pip: I've got another bar in this pocket. *(Pulls a bar of chocolate out of his trouser pocket.)*

Dame: Oh you silly boy! All right then we'll try this. Can you tell me what is seven multiplied by thirteen?

Pip: Yes. *(pause)*

Dame: Well get on with it.

Pip: Oh! You actually want me to tell you? Seven times thirteen is twenty-eight.

Dame: Seven times thirteen is twenty-eight, how do you get that answer?

Pip: I'll show you.
(He goes over to the blackboard and writes:

$$\begin{array}{r} 13 \\ \times \\ 7 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

He then works out the sum explaining it as he does it.)
 Seven times three is ...

Audience: Twenty-one.

Pip: Seven times one is ...

Audience: Seven.

Pip: Twenty-one plus seven is twenty-eight.

Dame: That's not how you do it, you turnip.

Pip: OK. I'll do it a different way.

(He writes seven thirteens on the blackboard thus:

13

13

13

13

13

13

13

Then he adds them up getting the audience to call out the answers with him.)

Three plus three is . . .

Audience: Six.

Pip: Plus three is . . .

Audience: Nine.

Pip: Plus three is . . .

Audience: Twelve.

Pip: Plus three is . . .

Audience: Fifteen.

Pip: Plus three is . . .

Audience: Eighteen.

Pip: Plus three is . . .

Audience: Twenty-one.

Pip: *(Pointing to each **one** in turn.):* Twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four,

twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, twenty-eight. There you are. That proves that seven times thirteen is twenty-eight.

It starts to get dark

Dame: Oh I give up. If brains were gunpowder he wouldn't have enough to blow his hat off!

Pip: Oh yes I would!

Dame: Oh no you wouldn't!

(Encourage audience to join in)

(Looking round) Do you know? I think there's a storm coming.

The sounds of a storm are heard with what sound like hail stones.

Enter Dale Arden DSR sheltering from the storm.

Dale: Oh, I'm so sorry. I hope you don't mind but there is the most awful storm out there and I saw your lights on. Can I shelter here until it passes over?

Dame: Of course my dear come on in. Make yourself at home. This is my son Pip and I'm Professor Zarkov but everyone calls me Zarky. Watch this: HELLO BOYS AND GIRLS!

[**Audience:** Hello Zarky]

Dame: See, isn't that wonderful!

Dale: Amazing! I'm sorry I haven't introduced myself. My name's Dale, Dale Arden. I'm a reporter for a local newspaper. I work for the sports section and I was on my way to an interview when this storm hit. I just couldn't see where I was going. Oh dear, this is my first big assignment. I don't know what will happen if I fail to get the interview. What am I going to do? *(Dale is close to tears)*.

Dame: I'll tell you what your going to do, your coming to the kitchen with me so you can dry yourself off and I'll make you a nice cup of tea! Come on dear. Bye bye boys and girls see you later. *(Dame and Dale exit SL)*

Pip: Wow, she's lovely! I wish someone like that would be interested in me. *(sigh)* But it's just not going to happen is it? Oh well, never mind. Ooh! I know what I wanted to ask you. Could you look after my beanie toy for me? He's my favourite and I don't want to loose him. I'll tell you what. I'll put him down just here. *(Places toy down by the Pros. arch DSR)*. Now if anyone goes near him you shout out my name, alright? Tell you what, let's

have a little practice. I'll count to three and you shout "Pip". One, two, three. (*Audience shout "Pip"*) Wonderful, now I want you to call me back out here just like that. I'll go off and you shout out my name as loud as you can. Okay? (*exits SL waits for the audience to shout PIP and then re-enters*) Well go on then. What do you mean you did? I didn't hear a thing. You need to shout much louder. I'll go off again and you shout Pip as loud as you can. (*goes off SL waits for the audience to shout Pip then re-enters.*) Well I heard a little whisper, your going to have to be much, much louder. We'll try it one more time. (*Exits SL waits for the shout and re-enters*) That was brilliant, now I really feel my toy is safe.

(*Dame enters SL.*)

Dame: What was all that noise? I thought the house was on fire!

Pip: Oh nothing Mummy, I was just talking to the boys and girls. (*he notices Dale*)

Dame: Talking of fire, I don't like the look of this. Have you noticed the colour of the sky, it's very—ooh! What's this? (*Walks over towards toy. Audience, hopefully, react.*) Oh I'm sorry, does this belong to someone? What's that you're saying? Is it yours Pip?

Pip: Yes, Mummy. The boys and girls are looking after it for me.

Dame: Oh, I see. Why can't you keep it tidily in your room, like a normal child?

(*By this time Dale has entered SL with her mug of tea, taking a few sips*)

Pip: Normal children don't keep their things tidily in their rooms, do they, Mums and Dads?

Dame: Well you certainly don't and you're certainly not normal. Anyway, where was I? Oh yes, back to the plot. Have you noticed the colour of the sky, it's very—

Dale (*notices the toy*) Oooooohhhh! What's this?

(*Audience react.*)

Pip Thanks boys and girls. It's alright, Dale, it's mine.

Dame: We've done this bit, can we get on now? Right! Have you noticed the colour of the sky, it's very . . . (*looks around to check for another interruption*) . . . red. I think we'd better go and have a look through my telescope. I don't like the look of this at all and I have a nasty suspicion what, or rather who, might be the cause! Come on Pip. If I'm right we'll need to get the rocket ready for launch.

Dame & Pip: Bye bye boys and girls. (*exit*)

Dale: (*Sips her tea and wanders round the lab*) Oh dear boys and girls what am I going to do? I've missed my appointment, my Editor's going to be ever so angry with me and now I find myself here, in the laboratory of Professor Zarkov. Hang on a minute, I know that name. Zarkov, she's the nutty Professor who keeps saying that the Earth is going to be invaded by Aliens! Some people say she's quite mad. (*Pause*) But she seems friendly, quite kind really. And her son seems such a nice boy. Do you like them boys and girls? (*Audience shout "Yes" [we hope!!]*) Oh well in that case I'm sure I'll be alright. (*Looks out of the window*) I know what she means though, about the sky being a funny colour. I've never seen it that red before. Its not like the colour of a sunset and anyway its not that time of day. What if it's true? What if there are Aliens trying to conquer the Earth?

(*SFX flash, Dale freezes. Enter Luminos*)

Luminos: Hello boys and girls, I just dropped in to say:
It looks like some thing are going my way.
This sportsman she's meeting is just the right type,
A suitable hero to help with our fight.
He thinks that he's missed her, but he's walking this way.
I'll just use some magic and his footsteps will stray
Right up to the doorstep of Dame Zarkov's lab;
Then they can all get together and have a conflag.
I'll hide myself quickly and see what transpires.
If I'm not mistaken, we'll be off to the stars!

(*SFX flashes. Enter Flash Gordon. Dale unfreezes*)

Flash & Dale: What's happening? Where am I?

Flash: (*Sees Dale*) Hello, I'm not sure what just happened, One moment I was walking down the road trying to keep under the trees to avoid the storm and the next thing, there was this huge flash and I find myself here. You see my car broke down I was supposed to meet ... oh I'm sorry I haven't even told you my name it's

Dale: Flash Gordon.

Flash: You know me?

Dale: Yes, I'm Dale Arden. The reporter who was supposed to meet you? I got caught in the storm too.

Flash: Oh, right. (*offers his hand*) I'm pleased to meet you.

Dale: *(Takes his hand, they gaze into each others eyes. SFX “ting”)* I’m pleased to meet you to. *(To the audience)* He’s gorgeous!

Flash: *(To the audience)* She’s beautiful!

Dale & Flash: I think I’m in love!

(They break away from each other somewhat embarrassed.)

Flash: What is this place?

Dale: It’s Professor Zarkov’s laboratory.

Flash: You mean that nutty professor I’ve read about in the news? The one who keeps going on and on about an Alien invasion?

Dale: Yes, that’s the one. Only I’m not sure she’s all that nutty. She seems very kind and what with this weird storm, I’m beginning to think there might be something in what she says.

(Flash wanders round the lab examining things)

Flash: Do you really think so? Some of this stuff is a bit strange but then again you’ve met her and I haven’t. So I’ll give her the benefit of the doubt for now. Oh hello what do we have here? *(He approaches the beanie toy)*

[Audience: PIP!]

(Enter Pip with Dame not far behind.)

Pip: Thanks everyone. Right, who’s after my beanie!

Flash: I’m sorry I didn’t know it was yours. I was only looking at it.

Pip: Who are you anyway?

Dale: This is Flash Gordon, the sportsman I was supposed to interview. He had problems with the storm too and ended up here.

Dame: Well I’m delighted to meet you Flash. *(Aside)* I must say, he’s a bit of all right. *(to Flash)* I follow all your exploits on TV, all those gold medals! You must be ever so strong. *(feels his bicep)* You know I’ve been looking for a man who’ll pick me up, whirl me round and drain me dry!

Pip: You don’t want a man, you want a spin dryer!

Dame: I’ll have you know once upon a time I was all pink with dimples.

Pip: Now look at you, you're all drink and pimples.

Dame: I'm going to have my face lifted.

Pip: When they see what's underneath they'll drop it again.

Dame: (*Dripping sarcasm*) Thank you dear! This is my delightful son Pip (*gushes, all sexy*) and I am Professor Zarkov.

Flash: Pleased to meet both of you.

(*SFX The storm suddenly worsens*)

Dame: Quick, everyone to the rocket.

Flash: Rocket? I can't go anywhere in a rocket! I've got training this afternoon, I can't miss that.

Dame: There won't be any training this afternoon or ever if Ming the Merciless has his way.

Pip: This is no ordinary storm. It's Ming's first attack wave. Once he's battered down Earth's defences with his meteorite storm, the planet will be there for the taking when his forces arrive. His battle fleet won't be far behind this lot. We have to stop him. Come on.

Flash: Are you serious? Who is this Ming?

Dame: Ming is an evil Emperor from the planet Mong.

Pip: He is a cruel tyrant who likes nothing better than to conquer other planets and make the people his slaves. We've been watching his forces through our powerful telescope. All the while preparing the rocket in the hope of stopping him. Please help us, the future of the Earth depends on it. My Mum's telling the truth. Please believe us. We really need your help. (*He looks from Flash to Dale pleadingly.*)

(*Flash and Dale exchange a long look, then suddenly make up their minds.*)

Flash: O.K. were with you. Where is this rocket of yours.

Dame: This way. Quickly!

(*They all exit SL. Luminos appears from her hiding place and walks DSC. SFX the lights dim and the storm effects reach they're height as the laboratory set is struck to reveal the rocket for the launch scene*)

Luminos: Excellent work, it went just as I planned
Now people from Earth will at last make a stand.
With Pip, Dale and Zarky and a hero like Flash
They'll be off through the cosmos, I just hope they don't crash!
Ming should beware of our intrepid band
For they will wrench victory out of his hand.
Now watch as we show you just how this is done,
We're leaving this planet, won't that be fun!

(Luminos exits SR)

Act 1 Scene 3

(SFX UV lights and dry ice are used to help create the effect of the rocket taking off, the rocket is surrounded by a miniature set. Tabs close.)

Act 1 Scene 4

(Tabs open to reveal a wooded almost jungle type backdrop. On stage are Prince Zarquon, Florin and two “rebels”)

Zarquon: You two. *(points to two “rebels”)* I want you to find whatever that was. I have my suspicions that Ming has sent some of his forces in a space ship to spy on us. It is important that we find them before they find us. Our plan to overthrow the Emperor must not be discovered or all is lost!

Rebels: Yes Prince Zarquon. *(They exit SL)*

Florin: You know, Zarquon, that ship didn't look like anything Ming has used before.

Zarquon: I know Florin, in a way that is what worries me most. It could be some secret weapon that we know nothing about. All our plans to get rid of Ming could be worthless. But somehow we must get rid of that tyrant. His wicked treatment of my people has gone on long enough. He must be stopped!

Florin: We will succeed. Our fleet of space ships is nearly ready. They are far superior to Ming's fleet. We're going to beat him, I'm sure.

Zarquon: My trusty friend, what would I do without your wonderful optimism? Without your constant encouragement I'm sure I would have given up hope long ago

Florin: You know that's not true but its nice to feel needed.

(Enter SL the two rebels escorting Dame Zarkov, Pip, Flash and Dale.)

Zarquon: Well, well, well, what have we here. Ming is certainly recruiting some odd people these days.

Rebel 1: We found them in the forest beside a very odd looking craft. They say they are from Earth.

Zarquon: Earth? What kind of a place is that? Named after dirt and producing creatures like this!

Dame: Creatures indeed. I've never been so insulted!

Florin: I find that hard to believe!

Dame: Oh, you cheeky girl.

Flash: Who are you anyway?

Zarquon: I am Prince Zarquon of the Tree People. We live here in the Forests of Mong. And you are?

Flash: I am Flash Gordon, this is Professor Zarkov, her son Pip and this is Dale Arden. We've come here from Earth in the hope of stopping Ming's attack on the Earth.

Zarquon: Then we are well met. My people are also tired of the way Ming the Merciless treats us and we are plotting to get rid of him. Any help is more than welcome.

Pip: Mummy, I know this is not the best time to mention it but I'm really hungry after that long journey.

Dame: Well it just so happens I brought a picnic with me. Why don't we share it with our new friends? *(Turns to the two rebels)* Would you two gorgeous hunks go and get the picnic hamper from our ship? Oh, thanks ever so!

(The two rebels go off SL and come back on dragging a huge hamper. Zarquon and Florin look on bemused by the following sequence.)

Pip: Looks like she's packed half of Tesco's!

Dame: I didn't pack it, dear, I had it delivered. Instead of wasting an hour driving to the shop, walking around, paying for my things and coming home; I spent two hours online and waited a week for to be delivered. No, that can't be right. Anyway, it's only a few sandwiches.

Pip: A few sandwiches, in a dirty great basket like that!

Dame: Yes, well, I asked for thick sliced bread.

Flash: I'm on a special diet, its part of my fitness training. I eat lots of olive oil, vegetable oil and sunflower oil!

Dale: Does it keep you fit?

Dame: *(Looks Flash up and down.)* By the look of him it clearly has interesting effects and I'll bet he doesn't squeak!

Pip: Come on, I'm hungry and I want a sandwich. What sort have you packed?

Dame: I was going to do Turkey.

Pip: Oh good, I like Turkey.

Dame: But I forgot. I've bought the Turkey, and I've already plucked it and stuffed it. All I've got to do now is kill it and cook it.

Pip: She's a terrible cook you know. You've heard of Cordon Bleu cooking? Well, her cooking should be cordoned off!

Dale: She can't be that bad.

Pip: She baked a cake once and Rentokil bought the recipe off her.

Dame: Don't be cheeky.

Pip: When she serves custard she asks if you want one lump or two.

Dame: I'll thump you in a minute.

Pip: We used to have ice in our cold drinks but that stopped when she lost the recipe.

Dame: Pip, that's enough!

I've put a nice bottle of wine in for us. (She pulls out a giant bottle.)

Flash: What kind is it?

Dame: It's a cross between Muscatel and Hock.

Flash: What's it called?

Dame: Muck.

Rebel 1: Can I have a sandwich? (*She hands him a very large sandwich which is attached to a fishing line which goes offstage.*) What's in it?

Dame: Fish paste. (*As he goes to bite into the sandwich the line is pulled from off stage and the sandwich flies off.*)

Pip: Blimey, it must be flying fish paste.

Rebel 2: May I try one?

Dame: Here you are. (*Hands him a sandwich with another trick line.*) That one's lamb.

(As he goes to take a bite the sandwich flies off stage.)

Flash: I bet that was leg of lamb.

Dame: How did you know?

Flash: Well it just legged it.

Dame: *(To Pip)* Would you like some asparagus tips?

Pip: No thanks I don't smoke.

Dame: Oh you are ignorant. You'd live on baked beans if I'd let you.

Pip: I know a poem about baked beans, would you like to hear it?

Dame: Oh if we must.

Pip: We have baked beans for breakfast.
We have baked beans for tea.
We eat loads and loads of baked beans,
My brother Billy and me.
We eat loads of baked beans,
Enough to fill a cart.
And when you've had as many baked beans
As me,
There's no room for apple tart.

Dame: Behave yourself. *(To Flash)* Here, have a meat pie. *(She hands him a large pie.)*

Flash: There's a worm in this pie.

Dame: Where?

Flash: There, look. *(As the Dame looks a giant worm appears to run out of the pie and all round the proscenium arch.)*

Dame: Boy that was a big worm.

Flash: So it should be, it's eaten all the meat.

Dame: Never mind, I've made a lovely sherry trifle. *(She hands the trifle to Rebel 2)* Look out! That worm's coming back. I'll get it. *(She swings wildly at the worm and in doing so pushes the trifle into the Rebels face.)* Oh dear, I'm awfully sorry. I think you'd better go and clean yourself up.

(Rebell helps Rebel 2 off SL)

Pip: We're not doing a very good job of impressing our new friends are we?

Dame: I'm so sorry, I was only trying to share. Oooh, look! I don't remember ordering this. *(Holds up cake)*

Dale: What is it?

Pip: It looks like a cake

Dame: That's because it is a cake, you silly boy. Look. There is something written on it.

Dale: What does it say?

Dame: It says: 'Happy Birthday' *(reads list and asks 'where are you')*.

Flash: Perhaps we should sing 'Happy Birthday' then.

Dame: Of course we will. Are you new here, or something? Is everybody ready? One, two, buckle my shoe . . .

Everybody sings Happy Birthday.

Dame: Now then, where were we? Ah yes, Zarquon. Sorry about that, but we did need a snack.

Zarquon: Don't worry. I find your Earth customs.....intriguing! Now then down to business. We need your help. If we work together I'm sure we can defeat Ming. But it will be dangerous work. Do you think you can handle it?

Flash: We'll be fine. What do we have to do?

Zarquon: We need you to neutralize Ming's secret weapon. You need to go to his palace and find the laboratory. I'll give you a map. There you will find the flasks that contain the fuel that powers his meteor storm. Pour some of this *(he hands a bottle of liquid to Flash)* into the fuel and the meteors will blow up in the launchers.

Flash: Right, we just add this to the meteor fuel and they will blow up on launch. Got it.

Florin: Look out there are Ming guards approaching. They must have seen your rocket land too and come to investigate.

(Enter two palace guards - Bitmap & Browzer - SL)

Zarquon: Meet us back here in two hours. Now, you haven't got much time. Quick run!

(A chase then ensues with the guards after Flash, Dale, Pip and Zarkov. Zarquon, Florin run interference. The bottle is thrown from one person to the next in an attempt to keep it away from the guards. They should however get hold of it at one point but pass it on "hot potato" style. Eventually Flash, Dale, Pip and Zarkov escape with the bottle. The guards collapse on stage in an exhausted heap.)

Zarquon: This is a stroke of luck. I do hope they make it.

Florin: Yes, so do I. Right we have a battle fleet to prepare.

(They start to exit as the tabs close.)

Act 1 Scene 5

Tabs open on the laboratory in Ming's palace. There is a large bench on which there is an elaborate "chemistry set". Dry ice spills from several conical vials and strange bubbling noises are heard.

Dale: *(In a stage whisper)* In here. This must be it.

(They all creep in, looking round. There is lots of Shshshing and bumping into one another.)

Flash: Where do you think we add this? *(Holds up the bottle Zarquon gave them.)*

(Pip goes over to the bench and starts to pick thing up and peer into various bottles and vials.)

Pip: Hey! Look what I've found. It's Ming's sweets.

Dame: I know, let's eat them all. It will serve him right.

Pip: There's too many. We'll never eat all these before the interval.

Dale: Why don't we share them with the boys and girls?

Dame: What a good idea.

(ad lib all throwing sweets to audience)

(to Flash) Now, young man, weren't you trying to say something?

Flash: Where do you think we add this? *(Holds up the bottle Zarquon gave them.)*

Dame: Ooh, I've no idea. I've never seen anything like this set up before. Pip, stop messing about with that stuff, you'll break something. *(Pip does not hear her, so she shouts)* PIP!

(The shout causes him to drop whatever he is holding. This spills onto another substance causing a puff of smoke and a bang.)

Dame: Now look what you've done you stupid boy. Here let me wipe that up. *(She picks up a conveniently placed cloth, which has one end caught underneath more of the apparatus. This promptly crashes to the floor. There is lots more shshshing.)*

This is all your fault. Go and find me a broom.

(Pip goes off SL and returns with a broom. Meanwhile Dame crouches down

behind the bench to pick up something. Pip arrives back at the bench but can't see her.)

Pip: Where's she gone?

Dame: *(Bobbing up from behind the bench.)* I'm here you nit-wit.

(Pip swings round in surprise, narrowly missing Flash, who ducks, sending more stuff crashing to the floor.)

Flash: Watch out.

(Pip swings back again, narrowly missing Dale.)

Pip: Oh, sorry.

Dale: You nearly hit me that time.

(Pip swings back again. Everybody ducks.)

Dame: Give it here and stop messing about.

(Pip pulls a face at his mother.)

Dame: Did you pull a face at me?

Pip: No I didn't. *(To audience)* Did I boys and girls?

Dame: Oh yes he did. *(Audience shout back etc.)*

Let me tell you something my boy. When it comes to pulling faces I can pull a worse face than you.

Pip: Yes but you've got a head start.

Dame: Don't be cheeky to me or I'll stop your pocket money.

Pip: You don't give me any pocket money.

Dame: Then I'll start just so I can stop. Now come here and help me tidy up this mess.

(During this last conversation a small alien creeps onto the stage watches the main characters for a moment then notices the beanie toy, which it the goes to take.)

Audience: PIP!

Pip: Oy! what do you thing your doing?

(The small Alien cowers in fright, whimpering.)

Dale: Oh look, you've scared it. Come on don't be afraid. We won't hurt you. *(The small Alien slowly makes its way to Dale.)* There, that's not so bad is it? *(The small Alien makes happy noises.)* So where did you come from?

Zoot: *(Activates a device attached to its costume, which is some sort of translator.)* Guards caught me in forest, keep me here as pet. I just want go home.

Dale: Oh dear, that's terrible. We'll help you. We're going back to the forest, you can come with us.

Zoot: Thank you. Thank you. I is ever so grateful.

Dale: Do you have a name?

Zoot: Zoot.

Dame: Did it say Zoot?

Dale: I think so. *(To alien)* You did didn't you?

Zoot: Yes. Me Zoot.

Pip: I'm sorry Zoot, I didn't mean to scare you.

Dame: Ah, it's quite sweet really. Flash, why don't you pour the bottle of stuff in that flask over there. I'm sure that should do the trick.

(Flash pours the contents of the bottle into the flask which bubbles over and with another loud bang.)

Dale: Quick everyone: hide. I think I can hear someone coming.

(They all start to run around looking for somewhere to hide.)

Dame: It's hardly surprising with all the noise you were making.

Pip: It wasn't just me, you were making just as much noise.

(They start to slap at each other as Bitmap and Browzer burst in, Bitmap has a ray gun. They all back up to the bench with their hands up in an attempt to mask the bubbling flask from Ming's guards. The small Alien hides behind the bench.)

Dale: Oh Flash, what are we going to do? Zarquon said to meet him back in the forest and we've only got an hour left to save the Earth.

Flash: Don't worry I've been in tighter spots than this, I'll think of something.

Bitmap: Caught you at last. The Emperor will be pleased. He's been looking forward to meeting you. Browzer, seize 'em.

Browzer: Of course I sees 'em, they're over there.

Bitmap: No, get them, you idiot.

Browzer: What can I get you?

Dame: Well, I could really do with a cup of tea about now.

Bitmap: Silence! No you idiot. Activate the force field. (*Browzer presses a button on a computer console. There is a flash and a low hum starts. The Dame, Pip, Flash and Dale mime a force field barrier around them.*) Right, I'll go and inform the Emperor that we have the prisoners. You clean up this mess. (*Exits SR*).

Browzer: Why do I get to do all the dirty work? It's not fair!

Dame: I must say you are looking very pale and red eyed, have you been on the tiles all night?

Browzer: No I haven't. I'm just not sleeping very well. The road outside the barracks is so noisy I can't get to sleep at night.

Dame: I've got something that'll help you to sleep all night without a break.

Browzer: I'd give anything to have a full night's sleep. What is it?

Dame: A magic hat.

Browzer: A magic hat? How can a magic hat stop the noise outside my window?

Dame: If you listen I'll explain. This hat was given to me by an old Fakir from Egypt, a place back on Earth. He said when ever you wear it you wont be able to hear a thing anybody says to you. So if you were to wear it in bed you wouldn't hear any noise and you would get a good night's sleep, wouldn't you?

Browzer: That sounds amazing. Do you think it'll work?

Dame: Of course it will work, I can guarantee it.

Browzer: Can I try it? I've got to get a good night's sleep somehow.

Dame: Certainly you can try it. Now put it on and let's see if you can hear anything I say to you.

Browzer: I'm all ears.

Dame: I had noticed that.

Browzer: Well come on, where is this hat?

Dame: Excuse me a moment. *(She turns away and pulls a comedy hat out of her voluminous underwear.)* Here it is.

Browzer: That old thing is magic?

Dame: It's ever so magic I'll show you. Here you ...oh, I can't get it through the force field. You'll have to turn it off.

Browzer: Oh, all right. *(Goes to turn off the field but hesitates just as he's about to press the button.)* How do I know you won't try to escape?

Dame: Oh we wouldn't do that, you'd get in to trouble and we really like you. *(Everyone nods in agreement)*

Browzer: Awh, that's nice but just to be on the safe side. *(He pulls out a ray gun. Everyone groans in defeat. He turns off the force field, takes the hat then turns the field back on.)*

Dame: Right, now there was this lady...*(Browzer puts hat on. Dame mimes words for a few seconds then B. takes off the hat.)* ...and there she was with this bag ... *(Hat on. Mime for a few seconds. Hat off.)* ...a yellow one and a red one ...*(Hat on. mime for a few seconds. Hat off.)* ... twenty five credits ... *(Hat on. Mime. Hat off.)* ... and the policemen fainted. Now did you hear anything I said when you had the hat on?

Browzer: Not a word. It's wonderful. If I were to wear this hat in bed I'd hear none of the noise outside. Can I buy it?

Dame: Yes if you want.

Browzer: How much do you want for it?

Dame: Twenty pou ... er credits.

Browzer: Well it's my last twenty credits but I'm sure it'll be well worth it. Here you are. Oh, huh, the force field.

Dame: You'll need to turn it off again. *(Hoping he's been distracted enough to forget about the gun.)*

Browzer: O.K. (*Goes to turn off the field but turns back with the gun pointed at the prisoners. They all groan in disappointment. Hands over the money and turns the field back on. He then puts the hat back on.*)

Dame: Thank you very much. I'm sure you'll be very satisfied. You'll get a good night's sleep if ... (*She realizes that she has spoken whilst Browzer is wearing the hat.*) Oh heck ...

Browzer: I heard every word you said. This isn't a magic hat at all. I've been conned. I want my money back. This is a fake.

Dame: Well I did say I got it from a Fakir!

Browzer: I want my money back. That was my last twenty credits. Give it back to me.

Dame: I can't give you your money back but I'll help you to sell the hat and make a profit on it.

Browzer: Who'd be daft enough to fall for a trick like this?

Pip: Well you did.

Browzer: You're right, I did , so we've got to find someone as daft as me.

Dame: That's right.

Pip: Do you think we'll find anyone as daft as that?

Dame: It'll be difficult but we'll try.

(*Enter Bitmap.*)

Bitmap: Oy, I thought I told you to clean up this mess.

Browzer: I'm sorry Bitmap but I'm tired. Aren't you tired?

Bitmap: No I'm not tired at all. I've had a good night's sleep.

Browzer: You look tired.

Bitmap: Do you think so?

Dame: Yes you do. Are you sleeping well?

Bitmap: Well I did last night.

Browzer: Ah, but do you sleep well every night?

Bitmap: No, not every night, sometimes I can't get to sleep.

Dame: That'll be the noise.

Bitmap: What noise?

Dame: The noise outside that keeps you awake at night.

Browzer: We have something here that'll help you to sleep.

Bitmap: What is that?

Browzer: It's a magic hat.

Dame: When you put it on your head you can't hear any noise at all and you get a good night's sleep.

Browzer: And we'll sell it to you for forty credits.

Bitmap: Well, I'd need to see it working first.

Dame: That's no problem, we will give you a demonstration.

(They go into a long garbled story as before, miming when the hat is on his head and speaking when it is off. They both take it in turns at putting the hat on and off and the whole thing gets very frantic. The story must not make any sense.)

Dame: Right, now there was this man...*(Bitmap puts hat on. Dame mimes words for a few seconds then B. takes off the hat.)*

Browzer: ...and there he was with this bag ... *(Hat on. Mime for a few seconds. Hat off.)*

Dame: ...a yellow one and a red one ...*(Hat on. mime for a few seconds. Hat off.)*

Browzer: ... twenty five credits... *(Hat on. Mime. Hat off.)*

Dame: ... and the policemen fainted. Now did you hear anything we said when you had the hat on?

Browzer: What did you think of that?

Bitmap: I thought it was marvellous but before I hand over my forty credits could I have just one more demonstration?

Dame: Of course you can and this time we'll do something very unusual.

Bitmap: I hope we don't get thrown out of the palace.

Dame: Yes. This time we're going to sing.

Bitmap: We will get thrown out of the palace.

Browzer: We're going to sing a song entitled, "If we had to do it all again, we'd do it all over you."

Bitmap: My all time favourite.

(They sing and mime the chorus of a song. Any song will do. They alternately sing and mime the lines of the song but this time Bitmap is putting the hat on and taking it off himself thereby catching the two of them out as they sing or mime.)

Browzer: What do you think?

Bitmap: It's great I'll take it. *(He starts to leave with the hat.)*

Browzer: Hey where's my forty credits?

Bitmap: I can't hear a thing with this hat on.

Browzer: Oy, that's not fair.

Bitmap: *(Turns back.)* So you thought you could fool me did you? No chance. Now clear up this mess. *(To the Dame, Pip, Flash and Dale)* And by the way the Emperor is looking forward to meeting you four. He says as soon as the final assault on Earth is complete, he wants to execute you on national television, as an example to all other Earthlings. You shouldn't have long to wait.

(Music. Everyone strikes a horrified pose. A voice-over makes the following announcement which is interposed with a few dramatic chords of music. Each time this happens everyone changes position and then freezes again.)

Voice-over: What is to become of our intrepid heroes? *(Music)* Will they escape from the evil emperor Ming? *(Music)* Will it be in time to save the Earth? *(Music)* Will Dame Zarkov ever find a man? *(Music)* How many sweets will you eat during the interval? *(Music)* Come back and find out the answer to these and other gripping questions in twenty minutes' time. *(Music, tabs close.)*

INTERVAL

Act 2 Scene 1

(Enter Luminos through tabs DSR)

Luminos: Welcome back children and parents as well,
For we have some more of this story to tell.
Our heroes are trapped in the palace it's true
But with Flash on their side, I'm sure they'll win through.
They've met up with Zarquon, the prince in the wood
And by working together, surely Ming's done for good.
He doesn't suspect what they've done to the potion
And that will soon put his big rocks out of motion.
But time's running short, they must set themselves free
For Ming's fleet will be ready, imminently.

(SFX music and smoke as the tabs open to reveal the video screen.)

Ming: Are you still here you fool, with these humans as well
There isn't that much of this tale left to tell.
Just the news of my victory and Earth's certain defeat
With them caught in my empire, my collection's complete.
And as for those sad individuals you sent
Did you think that they'd beat me? Your mind must be bent.
Your powers are weakening, I'll capture you soon
Then I'll lock you up, all alone, on the moon.

Luminos: You know of that saying about pride and a fall
You're boasting'll be over, once and for all.
Your mean handed treatment of people you meet
Will be the root cause of your final defeat.
You cannot go on in this hard hearted way
And expect, on your side, all your minions to stay.

Ming: Enough of your whining, my plans won't go wrong
I know you don't like it but I'm much too strong.
And as for these humans, they'll soon be mine too
They'll look just great when displayed in my zoo.
(Oh yes you will etc...)
Now I really must leave you, I've a battle to win
This is just too much fun, it must be a sin!
(Cruel laughter)
(More SFX as the tabs close and the screen is raised)

Luminos: Now don't worry friends, as I said we'll be fine
But we really must hope that our friends are in time.
And talking of whom, we should really go 'n' see
Just how they're faring, in their attempts to get free. *(exit)*

Act 2 Scene2

(The tabs open on the laboratory in Ming's palace. Zarkov, Pip, Flash and Dale are still held within the force field but the mess has all been cleared away.)

Dame: Oh dear, boys and girls what are we going to do? Here we are trapped inside this wretched force field and the guards will be coming for us any minute.

Flash: At least they didn't notice what we did to the fuel for the meteors.

Pip: That's true but how are we going to get away in time to meet Prince Zarquon?

Dale: I've got an idea why don't we just—

Flash: Shsh, the guards are coming back!

(The guard enter SL. They sit down. Bitmap is looking very fed up.)

Dame: Hello. You look fed up. What's the matter?

Bitmap: I'm depressed. That rotten Ming he's just as horrid to us as he is to you. I don't want anything bad to happen to you but orders is orders.

Dame: Tell you what. Whenever I get depressed I go out and treat myself. Why don't you go out and buy yourself something?

Bitmap: What a good idea. I'll go down to Mark's and Spender's and buy myself a new bicycle. *(Starts to get up but then slumps back down.)* Oh I've just remembered , I haven't got any money.

Browzer: That's all right I've got fifteen pou. . .er, credits You can borrow that. Here you are, three fivers, one, two, three. *(Counts the money into his hand.)*

Bitmap: Thank you very much. That's fifteen pou. . .er, credits I owe you. *(Both guards start to exit, this raises the hopes of our heroes but these are soon dashed.)*

Browzer: Oh. Hold on. Now I've lent you all my money I've none left for myself.

Dame: That's all right why don't you *(indicating Bitmap)* lend her a fiver?

Bitmap: Yeah O.K., there you are.

Browzer: Thanks very much.

Dame: So that's ten credits he owes you (*indicating Bitmap owes Browzer*) and five credits you owe her (*indicating Browzer owes Bitmap*).

Browzer: (*Doubtfully*) Right.

Dame: So if he gives you the ten he owes you (*indicating Bitmap to give the money to Browzer, which he does*) and you give her the five he owes you (*indicating Browzer to give the money to Bitmap, which he does*) Then you all straight, right?

Bitmap: Yeah. (*He starts to leave.*)

Browzer: Just a minute.

Bitmap: What's the matter?

Browzer: That's not right.

Dame: You don't understand do you? Swap over for a moment. (*They swap sides and Browzer gives Bitmap all the money.*) Now then, ask him to lend you fifteen credits.

Browzer: Please will you lend me fifteen credits.

Bitmap: Certainly. Five, ten, fifteen. (*Counts the notes into his hand.*)

Dame: Now that's fifteen credits he owes you.

Browzer: Thank you.

Bitmap: Just a minute. Now that I've lent you all my money I've none left for myself.

Browzer: That's all right I'll lend you a fiver. (*Gives him a fiver.*)

Bitmap: Thank you. So now I owe you a fiver and you owe me ten credits, right?

Browzer: (*Doubtfully*) Right.

Dame: So you give him the fiver you owe him (*indicating that Bitmap give a fiver to Browzer, which he does*) and you give him the ten credits you owe him (*indicating that Browzer give ten credits to Bitmap, which he does*).

Bitmap: Now we're straight.

Browzer: No we're not.

Dame: You know what's the matter don't you? You're on the wrong side. (*Bitmap and Browzer change places and Bitmap takes all the money.*) Now ask him to lend you fifteen credits.

Browzer: Please will you lend me fifteen credits.

Bitmap: Certainly, five, ten, fifteen.

Dame: Now that's fifteen credits you owe him. Right?

Browzer: Right.

Dame: Are you sure?

Browzer: Yes, I'm sure.

Bitmap: Right then I'll take it all at once. (*Snatches the money and runs off SL.*)

Browzer: Hey, that's not right! (*She chases after him.*)

Flash: Brilliant, that's got rid of those two. Now then Dale what were you going to say?

Dale: Zoot is still around here somewhere. We could ask Zoot to release the force field.

Flash: Of course.

All: Zoot, Zoot.

(*Zoot appears from her hiding place.*)

Dale: Zoot, please will you help us? We need you to press the button on that console over there. (*Zoot looks doubtful*) We promise to take you with us if you let us go.

(*Zoot nods eagerly and goes over to press the button. SFX of force field shutting down.*)

Flash: Great, thanks Zoot. Now we must hurry and meet up with Prince Zarquon.

(*All start to exit SR. Tabs close.*)

Act 2 Scene 3

(Tabs open to reveal Zarquon and Florin in the forest)

Zarquon: Where can they be? I hope they're alright.

Florin: We can't wait much longer, we need to get to the spaceships. I'm sure Ming is nearly ready to launch his final attack on the Earth.

Zarquon: We'll give them a few more minutes. I just hope they haven't been caught.

Florin: Yes, it is worrying. I wonder if they managed to sabotage the meteor fuel. If they're not out of action this is going to be one very short trip!

Zarquon: At least our ships are ready. Oh come on, where are they?

Florin: Maybe we should check that they haven't gone straight to the launch site.

Zarquon: But I told them to meet us back here. Oh alright I suppose we could go and check.

(They exit SL. Dame, Pip, Flash, Dale and Zoot enter SR)

Dale: This is the place isn't it?

Flash: Yes I'm sure Zarquon said to meet him here.

Pip: Well at least we managed to get away from those silly guards.

Dame: Oh I don't know, they were quite cute really.

All: Cute!

Dame: Yes, in a very silly kind of way.

Pip: She's cracked, it's finally happened!

Dame: Oh it's alright for you. there are plenty more fish in the sea. Me? I'm just an old has-been.

Pip: Don't you mean an old haddock!

Dale: Its odd that Zarquon and Florin aren't here to meet us. What do you think can have happened?

Flash: Perhaps they've had problems with their space fleet or maybe Ming's guards got them too.

Dale: Now I'm really worried. What are we going to do?

Dame: I know we'll ask the boys and girls. Have you seen Zarquon and Florin? (*audience shout*) Which way did they go? That way? (*indicating the wrong direction - SR*) Oh, that way. (*indicating SL*) No they wouldn't have gone that way. It must be this way. (*indicating SR again*) What, you're sure? It's definitely this way? Well, if your absolutely sure? O.K. come on gang, see you later boys and girls. (*They all exit SL*)

(*Bitmap and Browzer enter SR running. They skid to a halt, out of breath.*)

Browzer: Hang on a minute. I'm exhausted. I can't go any further.

Bitmap: But they're getting away!

Browzer: They've already got away! Or didn't you notice that the laboratory was empty?

Bitmap: Of course I noticed. Its all your fault. You and your high finance, indeed.

Browzer: My fault! You're the one who went off to buy a bicycle and with my money!

Bitmap: Yes but you did agree to lend it to me.

Browzer: Yes, I suppose I did, didn't I? Anyway, you don't buy a bicycle from Marks and Spencers, they sell *smalls*. You want to go to Halfords.

Bitmap: Why, do they sell *biggs*? (*totally confused*)

Bitmap: Never mind that now. The important thing is to get the prisoners back before Ming notices, or we'll be the ones getting executed on national television.

Browzer: Yes, you're right as usual but I can't go on any further just yet. I need to catch my breath.

Bitmap: O.K. but not for long. Anyway, I wonder which way they went?

Browzer: Why don't we ask this lot? (*Indicating the audience.*)

Bitmap: What lot? Aaah, where did they come from.

Browzer: I don't know. Perhaps they're waiting for something?

Bitmap: Well what are they waiting for? Christmas?

Browzer: Well they wont have long to wait/They've got a long wait then. (*Depending*

on which side of Christmas the performance is taking place.)

Bitmap: Can you help us? We're looking for some people. They're escaped prisoners. A pretty girl, a hero type, a weedy bloke and very attractive woman.

Browzer: Attractive!

Bitmap: Well striking anyway.

Browzer: If she truck you, you'd certainly know about it!

Bitmap: I don't suppose you've seen them have you?

(Now this could go either way depending on whose side the audience is on!)

Bitmap: You have? Which way did they go? That way? *(Pointing off SL)*

Browzer: That way? *(pointing off SR)*

(This should continue for a bit. With both actors indicating opposite directions simultaneously, so that the audience are made to call out at cross purposes.)

Bitmap: I think we'll try this way. Thanks everyone. *(They exit SR)*

(SFX lighting dims to a gloomy state. Dame, Pip, Flash, Dale and Zoot enter SL)

Dame: Well I don't know where they could have gone to? We've looked everywhere.

Pip: Oh dear, this isn't going to well is it?

Flash: Don't worry I'm sure something will turn up.

Dale: The question is what? I don't like the look of this part of the forest.

Dame: Nor do I.

Flash: It feels creepy.

Dame: I bet its haunted.

Pip: I want to go.

Dame: You should have gone before you came out.

Pip: No. I want to go home.

Dame: Well you can't, so there.

Dale: I hope we don't see any ghosties and ghoulies.

Pip: Yes, I'd hate to be caught by the ghosties.

Flash: I'd hate to be caught by the gh.....

Dame: *(Interrupting)* Yes, we all would. Although in your case dear, it could prove a neat trick!

Pip: Well if a ghost does appear perhaps the boys and girls will shout out and warn us.

Dame: Will you do that boys and girls? If you see the slightest sign of a ghost shout out loud so we'll know.

Flash: What are they going to shout?

Dame: They can shout 'zim'.

Dale: Why do they want to shout zim?

Dame: Because then we'll know it's im.

Pip: I've heard that if we sing it will keep the ghost away.

Dame: Your singing would keep anything away.

Dale: What shall we sing?

Dame: I know, let's sing "Fly me to the Moon"

(They all start to sing. The GHOST enter SR and walks straight across the stage behind the actors and off SL. The audience shout.)

Dame: *(To audience)* Did you say something?

Pip:	}	{	What?
Dale:	}	{	A ghost?
Flash:	}	{	Where?
Zoot:	}	{	Over there?

Dame: We'll go and have a look then.

(They walk round to look for the GHOST who has, by now, gone.)

Dame: There's nothing there.

Pip: We'll sing again.

(They start to sing again and the GHOST walks across the stage again and off the other side, SR to SL)

Pip: *(To audience)* Did you say something?

Dame:	}	{	What?
Flash:	}	together {	A ghost?
Dale:	}	{	Where?
Zoot:	}	{	Over there?

Pip: We'll go and have a look then.

(They all walk round but still don't see the GHOST.)

Dame: There's nothing there.

Pip: We'll sing again.

(They start to sing and this time the ghost enters and joins the line, at a given point in the song the Ghost frightens Zoot off the stage. The rest carry on singing, ignoring the shouts of the audience. The ghost then scares of Dale, Flash and then Pip in turn. Leaving just the Dame. When it comes to scaring the Dame off stage. The ghost takes one look at her screams and runs off.)

Dame: Well, that's charming I must say. *(Starts sniffing, as if going to cry)* Oh dear, now I've lost everybody. *(Sob)* I'm all alone. *(Sob)* Well come on then lets have a bit of sympathy then! *(Audience - aaah!)* That's better.

(Enter Bitmap and Browzer SL)

Uh oh, it's tweedledum and tweedledee!*(To Bitmap and Browzer)* Hello you two, fancy seeing you here.

Bitmap: Got you!

Dame: *(Aside)* I should be so lucky.

Browzer: What did you say?

Dame: Isn't this place yukky.

Bitmap: Yeah, this is a funny old place, isn't it.

Dame: Hang on a minute, look what's here.

Browzer: What's where?

Dame: Here, (*crosses to a tree set just in front of the forest cloth*) I've heard all about these. This is a Tiddley Tree.

Bitmap: A whattley tree?

Dame: A Tiddley Tree. It's a magic tree. All you have to do is stand in front of the tree and say, "Tiddley Tree, Tiddley Tree, have you a nice little drink for me?" And it gives you a drink.

Bitmap: I don't know about that, I've been caught out before. You try it first.

Dame: Oh very well, here goes. "Tiddley Tree, Tiddley Tree, have you a nice little drink for me?" (*A branch of the tree reaches out and hands her a bottle of drink.*) Thank you. There you are, I told you so.

Browzer: That's brilliant. Get out of the way, I want a go. (*pushes her out of the way*) "Tiddley Tree, Tiddley Tree, Have you a nice little drink for me?" (*The tree squirts him with water.*) That's not fair.

Dame: You must have said it wrong. I'll show you again. "Tiddley Tree, Tiddley Tree, have you a nice little drink for me" (*The tree hands her another bottle of drink.*) Thank you.

Browzer: Right, it's working properly now. I'll have another go. "Tiddley Tree, Tiddley Tree, have you a nice little drink for me?" (*The Tree squirts him with water again.*) Oh it's all going wrong. Bitmap, you have a go. (*Drags Bitmap to stand where he was standing.*)

Bitmap: Oh all right. "Tiddley Tree, Tiddley Tree, have you a nice little drink for me?" (*He ducks to one side but the tree hand him a bottle of drink.*) You see? Nothing to it.

Browzer: Oh, let me have another go. "Tiddley Tree, Tiddley Tree, have you a nice little drink for me?" (*Again she gets squirted with water.*)

Bitmap: Maybe your standing in the wrong place. Why don't you stand over here. (*He positions Browzer on the other side of the tree.*) Now try it.

Browzer: Yes that's it. I'm sure it will work now. "Tiddley tree, Tiddley tree, have you a nice little drink for me?" (*Yet again she is squirted with water from a different branch of the tree.*)

Browzer: Oh! this isn't fair at all!

Dame: I'll tell you what. You go and stand by that tree over there. (*Indicates another tree on the other side of the stage.*) And I'll say the rhyme for you.

Browzer: O.K. (*He goes to stand by the other tree.*)

Dame: "Tiddley tree, Tiddley tree," oh dear, I've forgotten the rest.

Browzer: "Have you a nice little drink for me?" (*He get squirted with water by the other tree. The Dame laughs and runs off*)

Bitmap: You really are a twit aren't you. You can't get anything right.

Browzer: Aw! it's not fair. Look at me I'm soaked.

Bitmap: (*Looks round and stops laughing at his friend.*) Hang on she's getting away again. Come on. (*They exit SR chasing after the Dame.*)

(*Flash and Dale enter SL*)

Dale: Oh dear, that was scary. I wonder what happen to the others?

Flash: I assumed they were right behind us but I can't see them anywhere.

Dale: Oh Flash, what are we going to do? We can't find Zarquon and Florin. Ming's guards are after us and now we've lost Professor Zarkov, Pip and little Zoot.

Flash: Don't worry. They must be around here, somewhere and anyway you're quite safe 'cos I'm here. (*He takes her hands.*)

SONG:

(*Pip and Zoot enter SL*)

Pip: There you are we've been looking everywhere. Have you seen anyone else? (*Notices the way they are standing.*) Ah, looks like you only have eyes for each other.

(*Zarquon and Florin enter SL*)

Zarquon: Found you at last. Did you get lost?

Florin: More importantly, did you manage to get to the meteor fuel in the palace laboratory?

Flash: Yes, we managed to mix the contents of that bottle with the meteor fuel. They caught us but we managed to get away. I'm sure they haven't discovered what we've done.

Zarquon: Excellent news. You'll have to tell me all about your escape later. Now we need to hurry to our rockets. Ming will launch his fleet at any moment and we must stop them.

Pip: Wait a minute. Where's Mum?

Dame: (*Enters SR*) Don't worry I'm here. I had a bit of trouble with those guards. But I've managed to give them the slip.

Pip: What did they want with your petticoat?

Dame: No, you daft boy. I deftly evaded capture!

All: oooh!

Florin: Your Highness, we really must be going.

Zarquon: Yes, you're right Florin, thank you. Right, Flash, you come with us. Professor, you take the others and wait for us at the palace. Once we've disabled Ming's battle fleet, we can capture the tyrant himself.

(All start to exit SL. Tabs close.)

Act 2 Scene 4

(Battle Scene: this is done in blackout with UV light highlighting the various spaceships, many sound effects and the following voice over . .)

Ming: The rebels are within range. Control of the battle fleet is transferred to your command, Squadron Leader. I will accept nothing less than complete victory: I want none of the rebels left alive.

Squadron Leader: Yes, my Lord Emperor.

Zarquon: All rebel ships this is Prince Zarquon. Look out here they come, everyone keep in formation.

(SFX)

Flash: Lookout Florin, you've picked one up.

Florin: Where is it, I can't see it?

Flash: Above and behind you. Hang on I'm coming.

(SFX)

Flash: Got him!

Florin: Thanks Flash I owe you.

Zarquon: All rebel ships, attack formation Delta. Repeat, attack formation Delta.

(SFX, Sounds of people cheering)

Zarquon: We did it, we did it. Well done everyone. That was some fancy flying Flash!

Flash: No problem Zarquon, just glad I could be of some assistance.

Zarquon: Come on everyone, back to the palace. We have an Emperor to catch!

Act 2 Scene 5

(Inside the Throne room in Ming's Palace.)

(Flash, Zarquon, Florin and some Rebels creep in DSR to the Throne Room which appears to be deserted).

Flash: Come on, there's no one here.

Zarquon: *(Looking around)* So this is the centre of Ming's universe. Where is everyone?

Florin: Probably gone to hide after the thrashing we just gave their battle fleet.

Flash: Maybe, but somehow it's just too quiet, could be a trap.

Zarquon: You two search the corridors, see what you can find.

(The two rebels exit DSL.)

Florin: I don't like this. Where are the Professor and the others? Didn't you tell them to meet us here?

Zarquon: Yes, I did.

(The throne revolves to reveal Ming holding Dale prisoner.)

Ming: Indeed you did, and here they are.

(Enter Bitmap and Browzer USL escorting Dame Zarkov and Pip under guard and holding the Rebels by the scruff of the neck. They push the Rebels across the stage towards Flash and the others.)

Flash: Dale!

Dale: Don't Flash, he's got a weapon and he's not afraid to use it.

Ming: So, we meet at last. You're the one who has caused me all this trouble. But I have you now. You've walked right into my little trap, how kind of you to be so obliging.

Zarquon: You won't get away with this Ming.

Ming: And who's going to stop me? *(derisively)* You? I don't think so.

(Zarquon goes to attack Ming, Flash restrains him.)

Ming: Oh no you don't. One more move like that and you can say goodbye to your friend here. *(He indicates Dale)*

Flash: *(To Zarquon)* Steady my friend, we'll find a way.

Dame: He reminds me of the sea.

Pip: Do you mean rough on top but smooth and calm underneath?

Dame: No. He makes me sick.

Ming: Silence, you pathetic old hag.

(Bitmap looks very unhappy with the way Ming is talking to Zarkov.)

Dame: Oh, I've never been so insulted.

Ming: I find that hard to believe.

(During this conversation Zoot creeps onto the stage and is noticed by Flash)

Dame: Oo, look who's talking.

Ming: When I was young I was second to none, well groomed and handsome.

Dame: Now look at you. You're second-hand, not to well and gruesome.

Ming: If you don't shut up you'll be burnt at the stake or have your head chopped off.

Dame: Now which shall I have? Steak or chop?

Ming: Enough of this rubbish. Bitmap, Browzer take these fools away and...

(Flash has been trying to communicate silently with Zoot who at this point nods vigorously, produces a small flute and starts to play.)

...what's that noise?

(Luminos enters DSR)

Luminos: *(to Zoot)* Well done my friend, you have acted well.
It is time for me to cast my spell.

(To Flash) I've followed your progress, your ups and your downs
Your fight in the heavens will be quite renowned.

(To Ming) And now my dear Emperor, your reign shall be ended
All thanks to the help of these folks I befriended.

(Luminos raises her wand to cast her spell but is too weak and collapses. She is caught by Flash)

Ming: *(Cruel laugh)* You pathetic creature. So you really thought you could defeat me. I knew you wouldn't last long this far away from your home. I will dispose of you along with the rest of this riff-raff. Oh, just one thing before I have you taken away to meet your unpleasant fate, how did you manage to defeat my Meteors?

Zarquon: Why should we tell you that?

Ming: You never know I might be lenient and let you go.

(They exchange looks and decide to tell him)

Zarquon: We make this potion by boiling the leaves of the Gantha trees that grow in my forests. When exposed to the vacuum of space it explodes. Makes a very effective bomb but down here on the planet it's harmless.

(Florin produces a vial and holds it up for Ming to see. Luminos sniffs the air and recognises the scent of the potion. She indicates to Flash that the potion should be given to her.)

Ming: How ingenious. I must have my people analyse it. Now, guards take them away and kill them.

Bitmap: But you said if they told you about the meteors you'd let them go!

Ming: I lied. Now do as you're told.

Bitmap: No. We won't. Why should we do anything for you? You lie, you cheat and you're just plain horrid to everyone. Especially us. Right Browzer?

Browzer: Right Bitmap.

Ming: *(He lets go of Dale and starts towards Bitmap and Browzer)* How dare you disobey me I'll...

Flash: Quick, Florin give the potion to me.

(Flash takes the vial from Florin and gives it to Luminos, who drinks it. SFX)

Luminos: The perfect solution to the weakness I feel
The juice from your trees has restored all my zeal.
And now my dear Ming your reign's really over
You'll soon feel as gentle as a kitten in clover.

Ming: *(Runs DS, trying to escape. He crouches down as the wand goes off) No...*
(Luminos fires her wand, which showers confetti everywhere. Ming sits up with a happy smile on his face.)

Florin: What did you do.

Luminos: My magic is special, unique, I'll confess
The thing I do best is spread happiness!
His evil is banished, his cruelty gone
His only desire is to see good deeds done.
My thanks go to all of you, my Planets now free
And who would have thought, its all down to a tree?!

Dale: Oh Flash you were wonderful. So calm in a crisis. I was so frightened.

Flash: Don't worry Dale. I'll never let anything bad happen to you. Will you marry me?

Dale: Oh yes, Flash. Yes

Zarquon: Well, this calls for a celebration.

Dame: Oh I do like a happy ending. *(To Bitmap and Browzer)* And thanks to you two for standing up to that bully.

Bitmap: Well I would never let anything bad happen to you. I think you're lovely. Will you marry me?

Dame: Oh, I do like a happy ending.

Bitmap: May I kiss your hand?

Dame: Why, is my face dirty?
(Bitmap gives the Dame a big smacker on the cheek)

Florin: This calls for a double celebration!

Zarquon: Why not make it a triple. There's been something I've been meaning to ask you. Florin will you marry me?

Florin: Oh yes Zarquon of course I will.

Zarquon: Come on everybody, let's get ready for a really big party.
(Tabs close as lights fade to black)

Act 2 Scene 6

(Pip enter through the tabs DSR)

Pip: Hello boys and girls. Well what an exciting time we've had. Ming is defeated, you should see him, he's as gentle as a puppy. Flash is going to marry Dale, Zarquon's going to marry Florin, and Mum is going to marry Bitmap! I'm so happy I could sing.

Sings.

Dame: What on earth, or should I say, what on Mong is going on here?

Pip: I'm so happy I'm singing to the boys and girls.

Dame: If that's the noise you make when you're happy, I hate to think what sound you'd make if you were sad!

Pip: Oh don't be mean. Come on why don't we all sing together. I'm sure that will sound better.

Dame: Tell you what why don't we have a little competition. We usually do about now. I'll take this half of the audience and you take that half and we'll see who's best.

Pip: All right. You're on. We'll go first. Oh, but you may not know the words.

Dame: It just so happens that if I clap my hands the words will appear. *(Claps hands, Tabs open to reveal song sheet.)* You see it's not just that Luminos who can do magic! All right then off you go.

(Pip and his half of the audience sing the song. Dame and her half barrack.)

Dame: Ooo, what a dreadful row. We can do better than that, can't we boys and girls.

Pip: Oh no you can't.

Dame: Oh yes we can.

(...etc.)

Right we'll show you. One, two, two-and-a half...

(Dame and her half of the audience sing. Pip and his half try to shout them down)

Dame: You see. We're much better than you.

Pip: Oh no you weren't.

Dame: Oh yes we were.

(...etc.)

I'll tell you what, let's call it a draw and sing it all together, just to show we're all friends.

(Everyone sings. Browzer enters DSL)

Browzer: What's going on here?

Dame: Oh we were just having a bit of a sing-song, to celebrate.

Browzer: Hadn't you better go and get ready?

Dame: Ooo, is that the time. See you later boys and girls.

(Dame exits DSL through tabs)

Pip: What have you got there, Browzer?

Browzer: Well you know the competition to guess I've got the name of today's winner. *(Name)* was the closest. Well done, come on up and receive your prize. Let's give him/her a nice round of applause.

(Winner comes up on stage)

Now then you can choose your prize, you can either have this lovely signed photo of me or Pip's Beanie.

(Pip and Browzer should gently tease the child. Pip should be all "no it's alright, you can have my beanie if you really want it" or "what's wrong with my beanie" and Browzer should be all hurt if the child doesn't want her photo or you're sure you wouldn't rather have the beanie. The child should of course go away with both!)

Browzer: Come on Pip, it's time we went to the party.

Pip & Browzer: Bye Bye boys and girls.

(Both exit DSL through the tabs.)

Act 2 Scene 7

(All cast enter for walkdown)

- Luminos:** Our story is finished, our Panto is done.
- Rebels:** We're sad it's all over but wasn't it fun.
- Zoot:** Thanks to our friends here, I have been set free.
- Pip:** And we'll have a new home, my Mummy and me.
- Browzer:** My pal here's in love, of the Dame he won't tire.
- Bitmap:** I think I've just jumped from the pan to the fire!
- Florin:** Ming is defeated, the battle is won.
- Zarquon:** Peace will be certain, no need for the gun.
- Ming:** I'm sorry for past deeds, reformed I will stay.
- Dame:** That will just last till the end of this play!
- Dale:** And I've found true love in this far away place.
- Flash:** You never can tell what will happen in space.
- All:** So good wins again, of that there's no doubt
We thank you for coming and helping us out!
- Happy Christmas / New Year.

FINAL CURTAIN CALL