

Far Out

The outer-space musical which really is 'far-out'!

A musical play by Cenarth Fox
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Orchestrations and Backing CD

Far Out is scored for piano, guitar, bass, percussion, flutes, clarinets, saxophones, trumpets and trombones. These band parts are available for hire and will give your production a real boost. There's also a backing CD with instrumental teaching versions of all the songs and a second version with full orchestration, ideal for advanced rehearsals and performances.

Production Package

Groups staging a FOX PLAYS show receive lots of free support. There are production notes (*set-design, costumes, lighting, props, etc*) plus with musicals, a free set of lyrics for chorus members. These are a great help! Colour photos, videos of most shows and advice by phone, fax or letter are freely available. There are free activity sheets with artwork for your poster and tickets and project work related to the show.

First Performance

Far Out was first performed by Seaford Park PS [Melbourne Australia] in November 1989. It was a great success. *"Everyone was thrilled with our production. Dialogue and songs are spot on for primary or secondary schools."* [Seaford Park PS]

Reviews of this popular musical staged by primary and middle schools

The play was great fun, a terrific success. Dialogue and songs are spot on for primary and secondary schools

Seaford Park PS

Thank you for the opportunity to stage *Far Out*. The children really enjoyed performing it and the many parents and grandparents were very impressed

St Mary's School, Rushworth

We found your play to be very interesting. The children loved it and our school community supported it wholeheartedly

Wyrallah Road PS

It was a huge success as is usual with shows with Fox Plays

St Brendan's PS



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Synopsis

Our story is told on the planet Soil. It looks like Earth. It smells like Earth. Soil has people, trees and soil, just like Earth. But Soil is a few hundred years behind Earth. The people on Earth and the people on Soil do not know of each other's existence. Until now. The Soilites, are hard-working folk with superstitions, faults and beliefs just like their "cousins" on Earth. Life is often pretty boring until something totally unexpected happens. Is this the perfect U.F.O. nightmare?

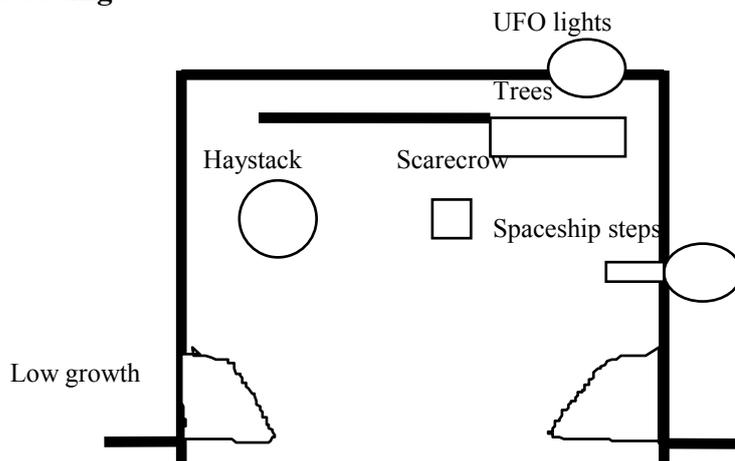
Set

A rural setting. The picturesque backdrop shows the hills behind the farms. Crops grow upstage ripe for harvest. The head of a cow/s can be seen behind/in the crops. There's a wood or forest UL and a haystack UR. An unseen ramp is upstage behind the haystack, crops and trees. The ramp leads one up to the mountains on the backdrop in the distance. Your set could look like this.

To the Director

All the characters can be either male or female. If necessary, simply change he and him to she and her. The sign *FX* means sound effects. Chookas!

Stage Setting



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Musical Items

1.	Overture	Orchestra
2.	Welcome to Soil	Villagers
3.	Gossip	Plimm & Villagers
4.	End of the World	Gumen & Gang [Fanatics]
5.	Adventure	Butwick, Jub & Company
6.	Spaceship to Earth	Astronauts
7.	Speaka Da Lingo	Company
8.	End of the World Reprise	Gumen & Gang
9.	Adventure Reprise	Butwick & Jub
10.	Opportunity	Rocko & Crackers
11.	Opportunity Reprise	Crackers & Gocklebred
12.	Martians	Martians
13.	Gossip Reprise	Plimm
14.	Stranger Than Fiction	Company
15.	Curtain Calls	Company
16.	Playout	Orchestra

Characters

Dazzleigh	<i>friendly farmer, older figure, leader, gives guidance and opinions</i>
Mocron	<i>young, happy-go-lucky farmer, friendly, inquisitive</i>
Butwick	<i>farmer, bitter, feels cheated, keen to move away, trouble-maker, stirrer</i>
Jub	<i>farmer, Butwick's backward partner, no friends, easily led, simpleton</i>
Gocklebred	<i>minor official, self-opinionated, pompous, ambitious, corrupt</i>
Plimm	<i>town gossip, busybody, sticky-beak, harmless, a nuisance, a bit crazy</i>
Gumen	<i>crazy, fanatic, believes the end of the world is nigh, bombastic</i>
Rocko	<i>astronaut, leader, sensible, helpful, courteous, interested/interesting</i>
Crackers	<i>astronaut, selfish, greedy, ambitious, lacks tact, an entrepreneur</i>
Tod	<i>astronaut, young, enthusiastic, inexperienced, keen to learn, friendly</i>
Sput	<i>Martian, leader, strong, brave, determined</i>
Nick	<i>Martian, faithful, subservient, brave</i>
Buckley	<i>Martian, angry, carries a grudge against the others, stupid</i>
Chorus	<i>three groups (a) Gumen's gang - a bunch of mindless fanatics all following their fanatical leader (b) the villagers, fellow farm workers (c) Martians - extras with Sput, Nick and Buckley. Note the number in each group depends on the size of your cast and your performing space. You don't have to have extra Martians.</i>

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No. 1 Overture

(The Overture is played. Pause for applause. Then begin No. 2 and once it has started, raise the curtain or bring up the lights. It is morning on a sunny day. The farming folk on the planet Soil are busy in their work. They cut and bind hay, pick, pack and cart produce and appear busy. The year is 1627 A.D. give or take a century. The farming folk are happy and blissfully ignorant of the existence of Earth or other planets)

No. 2 Welcome to Soil

Villagers

*Welcome to the planet of Soil
Welcome to the planet of Soil
We're not the same as you on Earth
But welcome to the planet of Soil.
We're hundreds of years behind you
We haven't any cars or trains
It's certain we never could find you
We've never heard of aeroplanes.
We're not the same as you on Earth
But welcome to the planet of Soil.
We're simple farmers
We got up this morning to harvest the hay
We'll knock off at sunset and call it a day.
We're simple peasants
We eat what we harvest, we barter and trade
Our lifestyle is simple, self taught and self made.
We're not the same as you on Earth
But welcome to the planet of Soil.*

Dazzleigh

(Spoken over music) Greetings. I don't know who you are or where you're from. You see here on Soil, we're dead set ignorant. *(To COMPANY)* Isn't that right?

Company

That's right.

Dazzleigh

Look, I'll prove it. *(To Soilite)* Hey, you. What's a television set?

Soilite 1

(Scratching chin) Ah. I think it's a type of cow.

Dazzleigh

(To audience) See what I mean? We don't know nothing.

Company

Anything!

Dazzleigh

That too. *(To another Soilite)* And you. What's a hamburger with the lot?

Soilite 2

Oh that's easy. That's a farm gate with horseshoes.

Dazzleigh

(To audience) Get the picture? Believe me, Soil is a backward, backwater. Ignorant? Yes. Unfriendly?

Company

(Calling. Defiant) Never!

(Chorus of song is repeated with everyone in fine spirits. The workers are full of happiness. The crops are bountiful, the weather fine)

Dazzleigh

(Addressing company) My friends, I have great, great news. This is our best harvest ever.

(Cheers from EVERYONE except BUTWICK & JUB. Much happiness/back-slapping)

Mocron

No more hunger. This winter our bellies will be full. *(More happiness)*

Butwick

Rubbish! *(Atmosphere quickly sombre)* What's the use of working like slaves? It's those selfish landowners who get all the grain.

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- Dazzleigh** (*Deathly hush. Some mutterings of agreement*)
(*Argues against BUTWICK*) Now don't listen to Butwick. We do a fair day's work, we get a fair day's pay.
- Jub** (*Scoffing*) Fair! Fair! You call robbery fair?!
- Mocron** Now don't anyone be silly. There's food for everyone. And we can't afford to upset our masters.
- Butwick** Oh yeah? Why must we cop this injustice? We want food and freedom.
- Dazzleigh** (*Moving to BUTWICK*) Be careful, Butwick. Your tongue can get you into trouble. Right now we are at peace.
- Jub** Not true. Right now we are at war! (*Tension*) We're fighting the rich! (*To EVERYONE*) I say let's keep the crops and kill the landowners! (*Hubbub*)
- Dazzleigh** (*Calling*) No! Don't listen! It's not true. This talk is evil.
- Butwick** But first we must remove those workers who speak against us.
(*Freeze, much tension. OTHERS fall back leaving DAZZLEIGH & MOCRON facing BUTWICK & JUB. All four shape to fight when PLIMM'S voice is heard*)
- Plimm** (*Offstage DL.*) Incredible! (*Potential fight is stopped*) Diabolical!(*PLIMM bursts in running. Stops DL.*) And fairly interesting too. (*PLIMM looks around. EVERYONE stares at him. He has some juicy gossip. Almost whispering, excited*) Wait'll you hear the latest gossip. (*PLIMM moves DC, beckons and EVERYONE gathers round. PLIMM speaks in hushed tones. EVERYONE hooked*) You know Missus Brown? (*"Brown" is drawn out. What is this juicy tale?*)
- Others** Yes. (*"Yes" is drawn out a little*)
- Plimm** Well have I got some juicy gossip for you. She's got ... (*"got" is milked*)
- Others** Yes? (*"Yes" is drawn out even more. Please tell us*)
- Plimm** (*Pause. PLIMM is thrilled with the gossip*) A new cow! (*PLIMM gives huge grin. EVERYONE groans and falls back. How boring*) Isn't that fantastic? Isn't that amazing? Oh, and wait, there's more. What about this?
- Dazzleigh** Hold it! How many bits of gossip have you told us?
- Plimm** Oh who cares? This gossip is juicy!
- Mocron** Only five hundred tales then that's it.
- Gocklebred** So far you've had four hundred and ninety-three. Seven more and you become a scarecrow!
- Plimm** (*Brushes threat aside*) Ah forget about that. You can't scare me. (*Intimate and beckons them in*) Listen. These are real doozeys.
(*OTHERS move in excited. They are quickly stopped by an angry JUB*)
- Jub** No! We've heard enough. (*Pushing distressed PLIMM*) Plimm, get lost!
(*PLIMM slips/falls down but quickly recovers and counter-attacks*)
- Plimm** Are you mad? I'm the only entertainment you've got. And just listen to this. I've just seen the baker. You know the baker?
- Company** Yes.
- Plimm** Well I've just seen the baker and his apron is ... (*Milk it, PLIMM*) is ... (*OTHERS [not BUTWICK & JUB who want to fight] are sucked in again*)
- Others** Yes? (*Draw out the "Yes?"*)
- Plimm** (*Gushing at the punchline*) On back-to-front!
(*PLIMM is overjoyed. The OTHERS groan and again fall back. What pathetic gossip!*)
- Dazzleigh** (*Angry*) That's enough! We don't need your idiotic gossip. (*MUSIC BEGINS*)

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Plimm *(Shocked)* Don't need gossip! My dear Dazzleigh, crops for our bellies maybe, but where would we be without gossip?!

No. 3 Gossip

Plimm *The world would be decidedly listless*
Villagers *Listless!*
Plimm *Without a bit of spice, a tale or two*
Villagers *A tale or two!*
Plimm *The mill would be decidedly gristless*
Villagers *Gristless*
Plimm *Without a rumour-monger's fat to chew*
Villagers *Some fat to chew!*
Plimm *Romance would be decidedly trystless*
Villagers *Trystless!*
Plimm *Without revealing who loves who*
Villagers *Who's who!?*
Plimm *And the plot would be decidedly twistless*
Villagers *Twistless!*
Plimm *Without the tattle chattel on view.*
Company *Love may make the world go round*
But gossip pays the rental.
Faith may move the mountain ground
But gossip's transcendental.
Hope may spring, from breast abound
Its presence pure and gentle
And love may make the world go round
But gossip pays the rental.
Plimm *Heard the one about the fishwife?*
Villagers *Caught it!*
Plimm *The monk who wore his outfit back to front?*
Villagers *A backward habit!*
Plimm *The horse that couldn't trot?*
Villagers *Neigh! (i.e "Nay")*
Plimm *The hunter who got shot?*
Villagers *Hey! (i.e. a cry of "Stop, you rotter!")*
Plimm *And every word is absolutely true.*
Villagers *We don't believe you!*
Plimm *What about the poor old butcher?*
Villagers *Chop, chop!*
Plimm *The milk maid's spilling tale of woe?*
Villagers *Slop, slop!*
Plimm *A story for you all, agreed it's somewhat small*
But tittle-tattle makes my day.

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(Song ends. PLIMM loves being the centre of attention. OTHERS no longer interested and resume their farming activities. PLIMM has more gossip and wishes to speak)

Plimm Now don't go away. Gather round, gather round. Wait'll you hear this. *(Two workers grab PLIMM'S arms from behind and drag him away UR.)* Hey! Wait! *(PLIMM struggles and calls. OTHERS laugh)* I've got some real gossip. Stop! Listen! I saw a U.F.O.!

(EVERYONE freezes. Silence. Those holding PLIMM let go and PLIMM, who is off balance, falls to the ground. "Ow" goes PLIMM who gets up dusting himself and muttering about being mistreated. "That hurt" etc. EVERYONE is fascinated)

Dazzleigh What did you say?

Plimm *(Snooty, moving DC)* Oh, so you're interested now. A minute ago you ...

Mocron *(Serious, going after PLIMM)* What did you say? Something about a U.F.O.?

Plimm *(Tells them to cool it)* Okay, okay. Take it easy.

Dazzleigh *(Commands)* Speak. Now.

Plimm *(Pause)* Last night I saw a U.F.O. *(Gasps all round. DAZZLEIGH & MOCRON confer. PLIMM sees OTHERS are interested and swells with pride. PLIMM strides DL)*

Dazzleigh *(Anxious, wants to know)* Okay. Details? Come on. Where was the U.F.O.?

Plimm It was ... *(Casual gesture DR)* over there. *(OTHERS gasp and look DR)*

Mocron *(Fascinated, hooked)* And what did it look like?

Plimm *(Cool, enjoying the attention)* Oh, nothing special. Just your usual U.F.O.

Jub *(Impressed)* Wow! Weren't you scared?

Plimm *(Scoffs)* Scared!?! Me? Me? Ha! Seen one U.F.O. you've seen 'em all. *(Big gasp from OTHERS. Hubbub. PLIMM on the crest of a self-adulation wave)*

Butwick *(Impressed)* You're extremely brave, Plimm. Tell me, would you fight this U.F.O.?

Plimm *(Strolls C)* Fight it! I'd kill it like that. *(Snaps fingers. OTHERS very impressed)* In fact, I'm eating one tonight. *(OTHERS stunned)*

Mocron *(Greatly impressed)* You're eating a U.F.O.?!?

Plimm *(Licking lips and rubbing stomach)* Hmmm, yummy. Delicious.

Dazzleigh *(Suspicious)* Hold it. Just a sundial. What does this U.F.O. look like?

Plimm Well it's small, it's got big ears, a white tail and it lives in a burrow. *(Buzz from EVERYONE. Mutterings all round. Confusion reigns)*

Jub Big ears?

Mocron Lives in a burrow!?

Plimm Oh come on. What's the big deal? You've all seen a rabbit!

Others *(Shocked, loud reply)* A rabbit!

Plimm That's right. A U.F.O. *(Don't rush)* Underground Furry Object.

(Many emotions including groans. PLIMM delighted to be centre of attention. DAZZLEIGH & OTHERS are fuming because they've been taken in. Some are confused and others who are not are either laughing or explaining to the ignorant. PLIMM doesn't realise his genuine mistake)

Dazzleigh *(Furious)* A rabbit! Why you blithering idiot. Don't you know anything?

(DAZZLEIGH & MOCRON [maybe others] grab PLIMM who once again goes from joy to despair in a split second. PLIMM yells. Just then, GUMEN & GANG enter DR [maybe just GUMEN to start with] and cause OTHERS to freeze. PLIMM is saved yet again)

Gumen *(Big voice)* Repent! The end of the world is nigh!

Gang *(Enter upstage mimicking GUMEN)* Repent! The end of the world is nigh!

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(MUSIC BEGINS. Big groan from OTHERS. Not these fanatics again. GUMEN & GANG move C. PLIMM is released and creeps UC to safety)

Dazzleigh *(Angry at GUMEN)* Gumen, you promised no preaching for a year.

Mocron *(Also angry at GUMEN)* You promised to get lost.

Gumen We promised the truth. *(To EVERYONE)* Hear ye! Hear ye!

(Much groaning and despair as GUMEN & GANG get going. VILLAGERS pack up)

Gang *(Chant, mimicking GUMEN)* Hear ye! Hear ye!

No. 4 End Of The World

Gumen *Don't bother to pack or go out for a snack cos*

Tomorrow's the end of the world.

You'd better start prayin' and heed what I'm sayin'

Tomorrow's the end of the world.

You'll see in the morning how true is my warning

The flag of foreboding's unfurled.

My bunions are hurtin' and that means for certain

Tomorrow's the end of the world.

(Dialogue during song)

Gumen *(Shouting at the VILLAGERS who collect their tools, hats, etc and start to exit)* This time it's real. Really real! *(GUMEN is boring)* Proof! Okay, here's proof! Look! *(Indicates foot)* My bunions are killing me! That's proof! *(VILLAGERS mutter "baloney" and continue to exit. Remember it's a gradual exodus UR. GUMEN darts from one disinterested farmer to another.*

(He finally gives up and addresses those remaining - the slow-to-leave ones) You'll be sorry!

(Emphatic) You have been told!

(GANG stiffly support GUMEN and sing. GUMEN continues darting from one VILLAGER to another, gesticulating until re-joining the singing at bar 32)

Gang *The end of the world, the end of the world*

The end of the world, the end of the world!

(Time the exit of VILLAGERS so that the last few depart just as the song ends. EVERYONE is bored with GUMEN. He's a fanatic. He's been making these prophecies for years and he's never correct. The song finishes to an "empty house". GUMEN is unaware of this and launches into another speech to the world i.e. the audience)

Gumen Beware all people of Soil. In one day at twelve minutes past the noon, a great plague of lime-green locusts will sweep down from on high.

Nong *(One of the GANG)* Gumen. They've gone.

Gumen Not now. I'm foreboding. *(From the verb to make a fool of yourself)* Beware!

Nong But everyone's shot through.

Gumen *(Swings round)* What?! *(Realises)* Oh. Right. *(Fanatical again)* To the next village! *(GUMEN heads UL chanting. GANG follow like sheep)* Repent! The end of the world is nigh! *(GUMEN waits as GANG exit first upstage of the trees)*

Gang Repent! The end of the world is pie!

Gumen *(Furious, they always get it wrong)* Not pie, nigh!

Gang *(Ignorant mimic)* Not pie, nigh!

Gumen *(Furious)* Will you get it right?
Gang *(Another dead-set imitation)* Will you get it right?
Gumen *(Despairs)* Ohhh!
Gang *(Innocent, ignorant mimic)* Ohhh!
(Shaking head, GUMEN exits after GANG. Sounds of GANG fade. BUTWICK darts on UR and hides behind haystack. He pokes out head checking to see if the coast is clear. It is. BUTWICK beckons and JUB tippy-toes in from UR and joins BUTWICK who moves DC looking around. It's safe)
Butwick Okay. We're alone. *(JUB moves downstage)*
Jub Oh Butwick. I don't like sneakin' 'round in daylight.
Butwick So? Do you think I'm stupid? Of course we wait till it's dark.
(BUTWICK is calm, looking around. JUB is nervous, impatient. Pause)
Jub Yes but how long before it's dark?
Butwick Soon.
Jub *(Nervousness increasing)* How soon?
Butwick *(Annoyed)* In about three seconds. Okay? Two, three! *(Snaps fingers)*
(BUTWICK gives a finger-snap in time with his counting. Instantly the lights change from sunny day to moonlit night. Obviously this must be a total light change and absolutely spot-on in timing. We have instantaneous night and JUB is relieved and impressed)
Jub *(Thrilled)* Oh Butwick, I love it when you take control.
Butwick *(Such power is nothing to BUTWICK)* Sure. Now get the machine.
Jub Aye, aye Butwick.
(JUB races upstage, behind haystack and drags/pushes machine DC. BUTWICK helps a little. The machine is a small, [easy to move] ridiculous mish-mash of junk)
Jub *(Fussing)* Here it is. It's beautiful. Beautiful. *(Is slapped. Mimed)* Ow!
Butwick Don't touch. If one piece of string, one tiny feather is moved, we die!
Jub *(Begs forgiveness)* Oh Butwick, I'm sorry. You know I want us to soar like birds in our flying machine.
Butwick And soar we will. Beyond the hills. Beyond the horizon. *(Dramatic gesture)*
Beyond the universe!
Jub *(Overcome)* Wow! Does that mean beyond the next village?
Butwick *(Lost in a dream. Points above audience)* See those twinkling stars.
Jub *(Trembling with excitement)* Yes. Yes.
Butwick *(Emotional, that's where we'll soar)* Well beyond those stars!
(JUB stares at the stars. BUTWICK returns to the machine)
Jub *(In awe)* Ohhhhhhhh that's beautiful.
Butwick *(Hand extended)* Now, gimme the feathers.
Jub Oh yeah, the feathers. *(JUB produces a few small feathers from his jacket/shirt and hands them to BUTWICK who attaches them to the machine)* Gee, Butwick, will they make our flying machine fly?
Butwick Fly? They'll make it soar! *(JUB impressed. BUTWICK stops work and turns to JUB)* In this machine, my friend, we will swim with the stars. *(MUSIC BEGINS)* Out there is danger, excitement and ...
Both *(Full of determination and excitement)* Adventure!

No. 5 Adventure

Butwick & Jub *Life's too short for sitting around, life's too short to waste
Climb aboard life's merry-go-round, come on now make haste
Life's too short for lying about, you will not succeed
Life's too short, there isn't a doubt
Adventure's what you need.
Adventure, there's nothing better
Adventure, you won't regret an
Adventure, be a jet-setter
With the action so thick you'll give boredom the flick
Adventure, come on and shake it
Adventure, it's there so stake it
Adventure, you're sure to make it
If you reach out and take it today!*

(During the song in an instrumental section, suddenly several brigands [VILLAGERS with masks and large cardboard swords] burst on from various directions. They enter with fierce cries intent on doing harm and form half-circle upstage)

Jub *(Panics, moving back-to-back with BUTWICK) Brigands! What'll we do?*

Butwick *(He's the brave one) Now Jub! It's time for adventure!*

(A carefully choreographed fight takes place. BUTWICK & JUB remain C ducking and weaving. They punch [mimed of course] and push [be careful] the brigands who bump into one another, cry in anguish and finish on the ground in awkward positions. Timing listed in the score)

Butwick *(Gloating over defeated enemy) Now that's what I call an adventure!*

(BRIGANDS groan, nurse bruises. JUB looks DL and points in panic)

Jub *Oh no, Butwick! Look! A dragon! (Or whatever)*

(Enter a DRAGON DL, not too large but comical-looking. It need only be one company member [unless you can find a real dragon!] in a fierce yet comical costume. The DRAGON could be a bunyip or dinosaur or any other mythical or extinct creature. Remember Soil is a fair bit behind Earth. JUB says the correct name of whatever it is who enters. So this DRAGON [or whatever] enters DL breathing smoke and looking terrible. The BRIGANDS huddle together in fear UC. JUB hides behind BUTWICK who now looks and sounds decidedly like Don Quixote!)

Butwick *Come, Sancho! On to adventure!*

(BUTWICK grabs a discarded paper sword and charges DRAGON. Choreograph another spiffing struggle which sees the following: 1. BUTWICK lunges at DRAGON. 2. BUTWICK is grabbed by DRAGON. 3. BUTWICK calls for help. Again timing is listed in the score)

Butwick *(Calling to JUB) Sancho! Help! I am in danger!*

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- Jub** *(Overcomes fear and impersonates Sancho) Coming, Master!*
(4. JUB overcomes fear and tackles DRAGON, tickling or poking from behind. 5. DRAGON releases BUTWICK, turns to JUB who almost dies. 6. BUTWICK "gongs" DRAGON who submits meekly and is herded towards the BRIGANDS. 7. Triumphantly, BUTWICK & JUB link arms and move DC just as the song is ready to be repeated)
- Butwick** *(Excited) Bravo, young warrior!*
- Jub** *(Now delighted, calls loudly) Yes master! Adventure!*
(The song is repeated using the BRIGANDS & DRAGON as backing group. What a number! It should be a musical highlight - it's a dream sequence, a fantasy. The two simple farmers [turned adventurers] live out their hopes and dreams. Use lots of colour, lighting, effects, etc. Once the song ends there is a brief BLACKOUT [during applause]. In this blackout, the baddies exit so that when the lights return to normal, 3.8 seconds later, we see BUTWICK and JUB alone and congratulating one another. The dream has vanished. But as soon as "normality" has returned, we hear a huge roar. Use sound effects [F.X.] of a jet plane or similar. The noise continues. BUTWICK & JUB are paralysed with fear. They scream above the din)
- Jub** That noise. What's that noise?
(ALL LIGHTS ON [perhaps even the auditorium] for four seconds. When normal lighting resumes, we're back to daylight, bright sunlight as before, i.e. as it was before BUTWICK'S finger-snap. The loud sound-effects continue. BUTWICK & JUB cower in fear. They recover. BUTWICK points upwards [roofwards] to LC.)
- Butwick** There! Up there! Look!

(BUTWICK & JUB cling to one another. They are petrified. The sound continues. Suddenly BUTWICK starts pushing the machine back behind the haystack. JUB realises and helps. The machine is hidden and the pair dive into the crop UC and hide. Slowly, BUTWICK first, their heads appear. They stare LC. The loud engine F.X. fade and stop followed by a brief hissing sound.

Some smoke [dry ice] spurts onto stage from LC causing BUTWICK & JUB to duck. Slowly heads re-appear. Suddenly some folding steps clunk down LC facing RC. Only two or three steps need be seen. Our heroes duck again. Pause. ASTRONAUTS appear. ROCKO, TOD then CRACKERS. Each wears a space-suit and helmet but their speech is not stifled. [Motor-cycle helmets without see-through guard] ASTRONAUTS are very nervous. They move C looking around. ROCKO points to haystack and TOD cautiously moves UR to investigate. All is quiet on the Western Corn Front. ROCKO points UL and CRACKERS moves cautiously towards trees to investigate. ROCKO moves DR to investigate. Nobody speaks. After this brief inspection, in which nothing of importance is found, ROCKO moves C and beckons to the others. All three move DC. MUSIC BEGINS. Each ASTRONAUT produces a cordless microphone [they could operate] and reports back to Earth. If a microphone on a pole could rise up out of the ground DC, that would be great. Perhaps an old 1940s radio mic)

No. 6 Spaceship To Earth

- Trio** *Spaceship to Earth will you answer somehow?
Tell us exactly just where we are now
Nobody said they'd be crops and a cow
Spaceship to Earth, where the hell are we now?
Spaceship to Earth, this won't take very long
Each of us feels like a bit of a nong
Behind that haystack's a big billabong
Spaceship to earth, something's terribly wrong!
Please answer, give us some clues
All of your views, up-to-date news*

*Please answer, we've had a fright
We think we turned left instead of right.
Spaceship to Earth, will you please come in, base?
Don't have us listed as that weirdo case
Here on this planet we're far out in space
Spaceship to Earth, are we in the right place?*

(Dialogue during song. Each ASTRONAUT, thinking he's doomed, wants to send a last message back to Earth. You could spot-light each one as they step to the mic to deliver their "final message". They ignore one another. These are private thoughts)

Rocko *(Emotional)* Earth, Rocko. Tell my family I miss them. I'm proud of them and ...
(Chokes then recovers) I'll always love them.

Tod *(Emotional)* Earth, Tod. Thanks for the chance to be an astronaut. I've loved every minute and ... *(Chokes then recovers)* I'd do it all again.

Crackers *(Very emotional, almost crying)* Earth, Crackers. Please, please tell me. I have to know. I don't want to die not knowing. Please, *(Pause, speaks clearly)* ... did Collingwood* win today? [** use name of well-known local football team*]
(TRIO snap out of their private thoughts, put on a brave if frightened face and sing their plea once more back to Earth)

Trio *Spaceship to Earth, help, we're under duress
Take this as being a straight S.O.S.
Just where we've landed is anyone's guess
Spaceship to Earth, it's one heck of a mess!
Spaceship, spaceship to Earth!*

(During the song, BUTWICK & JUB poke out their heads. BUTWICK gestures to JUB who is reluctant at first but eventually is seen scurrying off UR to the village. Soon the VILLAGERS [not PLIMM or GUMEN & GANG] enter UR. They're in awe, creep in and hide behind the haystack, in the crops upstage and DR. We see only their heads. They watch the ASTRONAUTS. Who are these strange creatures? JUB rejoins BUTWICK. Song over, the VILLAGERS duck out of sight)

Rocko Okay, you lot, spread out. See if there's any sign of life.
(ROCKO looks DL, TOD DR and CRACKERS UL. A few seconds elapse. Will those hiding be found? JUB pokes out his head and nearly dies when CRACKERS looks across and sees him. CRACKERS goes berserk. JUB ducks instantly. CRACKERS falls back C. ROCKO & TOD rush to him)

Crackers *(Spluttering, pointing)* Oh no! I don't believe it! It can't be! Help! *(Continues)*

Rocko *(Rushing to CRACKERS)* What is it?

Crackers A Martian!

Tod A Martian!? Where!? Are you sure?

Crackers *(Pointing UC)* Over there! Look! *(Continues gibberish)*

Rocko I can't see anyone.

Tod Crackers, cool it. Just tell us what you saw.

Crackers *(Still agitated)* It was a big, hairy monster from outer space!

Tod What!? You're mad. You're crackers!

Rocko *(Taking control)* Okay, spread out. And wait for my signal.

FAR OUT 14

(ASTRONAUTS draw exotic looking hand-held weapons and spread out, TOD RC, ROCKO LC and CRACKERS remains C still muttering. A tense moment. Pause)

Crackers *(Points upstage)* In there. *(Slowly JUB'S petrified face appears)* Look!
(CRACKERS points. All guns focus on the shaking JUB. Suddenly BUTWICK'S petrified face appears from within the crop. TOD sees BUTWICK)

Tod There's another one!
(ASTRONAUTS point their weapons at BUTWICK. The tension builds)

Rocko Don't shoot. There's only two.
(DAZZLEIGH'S face appears, petrified, from behind haystack. ASTRONAUTS are worried)

Crackers *(Panics)* No! There's three!

(MOCRON appears then GOCKLEBRED. ASTRONAUTS shift their aim from one to another. Slowly the rest of the VILLAGERS rise up or peer out from behind trees, crops, haystack. ASTRONAUTS keep aim on the Soilites but creep, hunched over, towards DC. Soon all three are side by side facing upstage. VILLAGERS stare back. Some raise pitchforks, sticks, etc and a ridiculous but tense situation develops. VILLAGERS move in on visitors - slowly - forcing ASTRONAUTS to back DC facing upstage. Will a battle take place? Will the sticks be a match for the deadly weapons? Just as we're about to find out, GOCKLEBRED raises his hand. Is this the signal to attack? Pause. VILLAGERS freeze. GOCKLEBRED snaps his fingers or claps his hands. MOCRON runs to GOCKLEBRED with some fruit or loaf of bread. MOCRON carries produce behind GOCKLEBRED who walks to ASTRONAUTS.

They are turned and backed DL. GOCKLEBRED stops DC. Slowly he kneels. Pause. On another unseen signal from GOCKLEBRED, VILLAGERS kneel. GOCKLEBRED extends his hands in front. MOCRON places produce in GOCKLEBRED'S hands. MOCRON steps back and kneels. GOCKLEBRED offers produce to ASTRONAUTS. Pause. TOD moves to accept but is stopped by ROCKO)

Rocko Wait! It might be a trap.

Crackers *(Peering at produce)* On the other hand it might be apples.
(Or bread or whatever. Pause. Stalemate. GOCKLEBRED places produce on ground and bows low from his kneeling position. GOCKLEBRED signals again [not obvious to audience] and VILLAGERS bow low. They remain in this position. Pause. ASTRONAUTS are very impressed)

Tod *(Impressed)* Look, they're worshipping us. They ... they think we're gods.

Crackers *(Vain)* All right! That's me - a god!
(GOCKLEBRED rises and stands. VILLAGERS do likewise. Tension again. What will happen? Suddenly MOCRON removes his hat and approaches TOD. MOCRON holds out his hat. TOD is undecided then accepts the hat. MOCRON indicates TOD'S helmet)

Rocko Your helmet. He wants a swap.

Tod What'll I do?

Rocko It's okay. They have oxygen. Swap but keep your weapons handy.
(TOD removes helmet. VILLAGERS gasp. What is this? A person under a strange looking hat. The headgear is exchanged. MOCRON places helmet on his head. VILLAGERS laugh. So far so good but what next? ROCKO and CRACKERS remove helmets. Big buzz)

Crackers Leave it to me. *(Addresses everyone and speaks slowly as if they don't understand English)* Hell - o. Me, Earth person. You, Martian. *(VILLAGERS buzz)* Parlez vous Deutsch?
(Hubbub. ROCKO & TOD embarrassed) Sprechen sie Francais? *(Quizzical titters. CRACKERS emphatic)* Do you speak English? *(Pause. Huge grins from VILLAGERS. GOCKLEBRED turns to VILLAGERS)*

Gocklebred Well?

Villagers *(As one - strongly)* Yes!

(MUSIC BEGINS. ASTRONAUTS stunned/fall back. VILLAGERS move forward and sing. The hat and helmet are returned to their rightful owners and fruit is removed. At first the ASTRONAUTS are frightened then amazed as the locals' knowledge is revealed)

No. 7 Speaka Da Lingo

- Villagers** *Speaka da lingo, savvy your slang
Understand jingo, your heartfelt harangue
Pidgin is perfect, dialects true
Gobbledegook? Well, we speak that one too.
We can swear like troopers.*
- Solo 1** [spoken] *Gosh!*
- Villagers** *And baby-talk all through the night.*
- Solo 2** [screams] *Wah!*
- Villagers** *Lots of bloopers.*
- Solo 3** [spoken] *Oh!*
- Villagers** *Our rhyming slang is always reet! [sic]
[correcting themselves] Right!
Parlare politely, sometimes give cheek
We speaka da lingo, da lingo we speak!*
- Gocklebred** *Every word that you have spoken we can understand.*
- Dazzleigh** *Every vowel and consonant is spoken in this land.*
- Mocron** *Patter, natter, idle chatter, some can take shorthand.*
- Trio** *We speak a lot like you!*
- Villagers** *Technical argot, colloquial cant
No speech embargo, we rave and we rant
Grammar is ghastly, is nothing taboo?
The language we utter's the same one as you!
We know what you're saying!*
- (Song ends with VILLAGERS having one hand raised, the other directed towards ASTRONAUTS who are stunned. Both groups now desperately curious. Who are YOU?)*
- Gocklebred** *(Offers peace)* Please, we mean no harm.
- Rocko** *(Amazed but happy)* I can't believe you speak English.
- Mocron** *(Doesn't understand)* We don't understand. What is English?
- Tod** Your language. The words you use. What you're saying.
(VILLAGERS confused. They speak Soilish. What's going on?)
- Gocklebred** We can't speak English. We speak Soilish. *(ASTRONAUTS confused)*
- Crackers** Yeah, well how come you speak English here on Mars?
- Gocklebred** *(VILLAGERS shocked)* Mars! This isn't Mars. This is Soil.
- Astronauts** Soil!
- Crackers** The computer's gone mad. We're not supposed to be here!
- Rocko** *(Softer)* But we are and we've discovered something fantastic.
- Butwick** *(Defiantly)* Right time's up. We demand to know where you're from?
- Jub** *(Drooling, pointing LC to rocket)* Wow! Is that a flying machine?
- Rocko** *(Addresses everyone)* People of Soil. My name is Rocko. We have made a long, long journey through the sky from the planet Earth. *(SOILITES buzz)*
- Gocklebred** *(Fascinated)* And is the planet Earth like the planet Soil?

Rocko From what we've seen, it's exactly the same. (*VILLAGERS buzz*)

Dazzleigh But you wear strange clothes. You have unusual weapons.

Crackers (*Threatens*) They're guns pal and they kill! (*SOILITES recoil in horror*)

Rocko (*Calming*) Please, we mean no harm. (*To CRACKERS*) Put it away, you idiot! (*CRACKERS is confused. He's uncertain and inclined to shoot from the lip!*)

Tod Do you know about rockets and spaceships? (*SOILITES confused. What?*) How about radio and TV? (*More murmurs and head shaking*)

Jub (*Boasting*) We know about flying machines. (*BUTWICK grabs/jabs JUB. What's he saying!?! OTHERS very interested*)

Rocko (*Extends hand to JUB*) Flying machines? Hey, you must be the Wright brothers.

Butwick (*Pulls JUB away*) No. No. We're the Wrong Brothers. We know nothing. (*Awkward pause. BUTWICK & JUB saved when DAZZLEIGH questions ASTRONAUTS*)

Dazzleigh Tell us about life on Earth. What's it like? Are there people and animals and trees?

Rocko It's got everything you've got. Earth is exactly like Soil. (*SOILITES buzz*)

Crackers (*Aside*) Just five hundred years behind. (*SOILITES buzz again*)

Rocko (*Snaps at CRACKERS*) Will you shut up!

Gocklebred But how do you travel? Where's your wagon? Where are your horses?

Tod (*Laughs*) Horses can't fly. We use a flying machine, there. (*Points LC. OTHERS look.*) It's called a spaceship.

Villagers (*In wonder*) A spaceship! Wow! (*etc*)

Mocron (*Stunned*) You mean you can fly? You can fly like the birds?

Rocko No, we can't fly. But our machine can. And anyone who climbs inside is carried along. (*SOILITES amazed*)

Gocklebred This is amazing! We've seen bright things in the sky and wondered what they were. Now one has actually landed on Soil.

Mocron We thought you were gods. We thought it was the end of the world. (*GUMEN calls offstage DR. EVERYONE turns*)

Gumen (*Fanatical as always*) It is the end of the world! (*ASTRONAUTS fall back DL drawing their weapons. GUMEN & GANG enter and gather DR. VILLAGERS despair. The local crazies must be kept from the visitors*)

Gocklebred (*Goes to GUMEN DR*) Yes, all right, thank you, Gumen. We're right for prophecies today.

Gumen Did I not warn you? Did I not foretell this diabolical disaster?

Dazzleigh (*To ASTRONAUTS*) It's okay, they're harmless. (*ASTRONAUTS start to relax, replace their weapons but GUMEN stirs them again*)

Gumen (*Moving C, pointing at ASTRONAUTS*) Behold the spliff-ed Conk-a-dins!

Crackers (*Threatens*) Hey, watch your lip, Sunshine! (*ROCKO grabs CRACKERS*)

Gocklebred (*Hasty public announcement*) Ah, on behalf of the people of Soil, I officially welcome our guests from Earth and invite them to drink cider in our village. (*GOCKLEBRED indicates UR. ASTRONAUTS pause, smile [CRACKERS scowls and mimes threats to the seething GUMEN] then start to exit UR*)

Rocko Thank you. That's very kind. (*To TOD & CRACKERS*) Come on. (*VILLAGERS surround ASTRONAUTS and exit with them chatting excitedly*)

Gumen (*Raising hand and declaiming out front*) Freeze! Hold ye fast and listen! (*VILLAGERS ignore GUMEN and exit. EVERYONE stops when the next cry is heard*)

Plimm (*Calls excitedly from offstage DL*) Hold everything!

- (Oh no! EVERYONE freezes, VILLAGERS despair, even GUMEN is quiet)*
- Gocklebred** *(To ASTRONAUTS)* Sorry about this. Just a minor delay.
- Plimm** *(Bursts in excited)* Listen everyone. Listen! Have I got news for you!
(Pause. EVERYONE frozen. PLIMM excited. A serious MOCRON moves to PLIMM)
- Mocron** *(Mimics PLIMM)* Yes, and we've got news for you! *(VILLAGERS laugh)*
- Plimm** *(Gushing)* You won't believe what I've got. *(Sudden despair)* News for me!? That's impossible. *I'm the gossip!*
- Dazzleigh** Did you hear about the people from Earth who landed on Soil?
- Plimm** *(Scoffs)* People from Earth. What people? Look, my news is true!
- Mocron** So's ours. *(Indicating)* Meet three Earthlings.
(VILLAGERS open up and ASTRONAUTS come down. PLIMM is scared stiff, gives a startled scream or yell and hides behind someone for protection. OTHERS laugh)
- Plimm** *(Hiding)* W W Who are you?
- Gumen** *(Suddenly fanatical again, points at ASTRONAUTS)* Spliffed Conkadins! It's the end of the world!
- Gang** *(Mimic GUMEN)* It's the end of the world!
- Gocklebred** Ah, put a sock in it! *(To ASTRONAUTS)* Come on, our village awaits.
(GOCKLEBRED indicates UR and the party exits. MOCRON & TOD chat, ROCKO with GOCKLEBRED, CRACKERS alone. CRACKERS is still unsure and pulls away from anyone who comes near. As the group exit, PLIMM moves C watching those disappearing. GUMEN sidles to one side and downstage of the luckless PLIMM)
- Plimm** *(Looking upstage)* Oh my goodness. *(GUMEN lets fly)*
- Gumen** *(Near and pointing at PLIMM)* The end of the world! *(PLIMM jumps in fright)*
- Gang** The end of the world! *(GANG'S echo almost knocks over PLIMM)*
- Plimm** *(Scared)* Hey! *(Now angry)* Don't do that! You frightened me. *(Settles)* Say, who are those strangers?
- Gumen** *(Still preaching)* Forsooth and verily, ...
- Plimm** *(Thinks that's their names)* Forsooth and Verily! What funny names.
- Gumen** *(Still fanatical)* The end of the world!
- Gang** *(Usual mimic)* The end of the world! *(MUSIC BEGINS)*
- Plimm** *(Exiting UR)* Ah, not today. Must meet Forsooth. *(Calling)* Oh Forsooth! Verily!
(PLIMM vanishes and GUMEN & GANG sing reprise of their song.)

No. 8 End of the World Reprise

- Gumen**
- Don't bother to pack or go out for a snack
Cos tomorrow's the end of the world.
You'd better start prayin' and heed what I'm sayin'
Tomorrow's the end of the world.
You'll see in the morning how true is my warning
The flag of foreboding's unfurled.
My bunions are hurtin' and that means for certain
Tomorrow's the end of the world.*
- Gang**
- The end of the world, the end of the world
The end of the world, the end of the world!*

(Song ends, GUMEN & GANG exit UL in front of the trees. GUMEN steps aside and allows the GANG to exit first)

Gumen *(Exhorts his charges)* Right then. *(Issues command)* Gird up your loins!

Gang *(Mindless mimic)* Gird up your coins!

Gumen *(Furious)* Not coins, loins!

Gang *(Unwittingly mimic GUMEN'S wrath)* Not coins, loins!

Gumen *(Enraged)* Will you get it right?

Gang *(Equally enraged - copying)* Will you get it right?

Gumen *(Groans with frustration)* Ohhh.

Gang *(Groan mimicking GUMEN)* Ohhh. *(Despairing, GUMEN exits)*
(Pause. Empty stage. BUTWICK sneaks in to C, beckons to JUB who tippy-toes in and joins him)

Jub Can you believe it? There's *another* flying machine!

Butwick Be quiet. I'm thinking.

Jub *(Moving LC looking at spaceship)* Blimey! It's much bigger than ours.

Butwick Oh yeah? So what!? The bigger they are, the harder they fall.

Jub *(Panics)* Oh Butwick. You don't mean it's going to crash?

Butwick Of course it'll crash. How can a huge heavy thing fly? Our machine is light. Just string and feathers. Ours is much better.

Jub *(Suddenly excited)* Oh Butwick, I'm excited. Please make it dark again. Please. Please. *(Continues pleading. BUTWICK shakes his head in dismay)*

Butwick *(Snaps at grovelling JUB)* Oh all right! *(Pause)* A one, two, three, four!
(This is a count in for the song. MUSIC BEGINS. Simultaneously, day turns to night. Like previous lighting change, it's dramatic, sudden and spot on re timing. JUB is thrilled and hugs BUTWICK. They sing)

No. 9 Adventure Reprise

Butwick & Jub *Life's too short for sitting around, life's too short to waste*
Climb aboard life's merry-go-round. come on now make haste
Life's too short for lying about, you will not succeed
Life's too short there isn't a doubt, adventure's what you need.
Adventure, there's nothing better
Adventure, you won't regret an
Adventure, be a jet-setter
With the action so thick you'll give boredom the flick
Adventure, come on and shake it
Adventure, it's there so stake it
Adventure, you're sure to make it
If you reach out and take it today!

(Reprise is not quite so flashy as before although you could use some simple lighting and special effects. Immediately the song ends, crowd noises are heard. VILLAGERS chat audibly offstage UR.. Lights return [not quickly but gradually] to sunny daylight. ASTRONAUTS enter UL with some VILLAGERS. GOCKLEBRED leads and CRACKERS is more settled. BUTWICK & JUB move upstage and pretend to be working. Principals speak as soon as they enter. They move towards C)

- Rocko** Believe me, Gocklebred, I've never tasted better cider. You must have perfect apples.
- Gocklebred** Perfect apples, pears, apricots - only the best here on Soil. *(They stop C)*
- Rocko** *(Extends hand to GOCKLEBRED)* Well thanks again for your marvellous hospitality. But now we must contact Earth and get some instructions.
- Gocklebred** Of course. But don't forget you're dining with us tonight.
- Rocko** We won't. *(VILLAGERS start to exit UR)* Bye. And thanks to everyone. *(VILLAGERS wave, call goodbye and exit UR/RC chatting excitedly. BUTWICK & JUB join VILLAGERS. ROCKO issues order to TOD)*
- Rocko** Tod, bring me a print-out of our position and all messages from Earth.
- Tod** *(Salutes and exits to spaceship)* Roger, skipper. Will do.
- Crackers** *(Alone with ROCKO. Amazed, looking around)* Can you believe this place? I mean how come it hasn't been discovered?
- Rocko** Shhh. *(ROCKO goes UR to see if VILLAGERS have gone. Satisfied, he comes back DC)* It's okay, they've gone.
- Crackers** The planet Soil. Undiscovered Unknown. And a carbon copy of Earth.
- Rocko** What's our fuel situation? Can we make a quick get-a-way?
- Crackers** The fuel's okay. *(Fascinated, CRACKERS moves DL)* Can you believe this place? I mean, it's incredible.

(The next speeches are not directed at each actor. Both ASTRONAUTS are lost in their own thoughts about Soil and what can be done about it. ROCKO wanders DR)

- Rocko** They're hundreds of years behind us.
- Crackers** No gas, power, phones, cars, telly - no nothin'!
(CRACKERS is drooling. He doesn't listen to ROCKO who's keen for other reasons)
- Rocko** We can bring them centuries of literature, science, technology, music, art - everything!
- Crackers** We can bring 'em McDonalds, graffiti and long-life custard!
- Rocko** *(Out front - to the world)* This is fantastic!
- Crackers** *(Out front - to the world)* This is fantastic!
(MUSIC BEGINS. ASTRONAUTS face each other for the first time)
- Both** What an opportunity! *(They ignore one another in the verses)*

No. 10 Opportunity

- Rocko & Crackers** *Top opportunity has come to us today
Top opportunity, we won't let it slip away.
We'll make the most of what we have got
Strike together while the iron's hot, oh
Top opportunity has come to us today.*
- Crackers** *There's a chance to make a million
Or perhaps an even billion
If I play my cards correctly.*

*All the fruit is ripe for picking
Pretty soon I'll start some nicking
And I'll make my move directly.
There's a chance for education
Even better cultivation
There's so much that they can savour.
All around is great potential
I could be so influential
But I first must win their favour.*

Rocko

*A chance supreme, an opening I can't resist
Perchance to scheme, the occasion that cannot be missed. Oh!
Top opportunity has come to us today!*

Duet

(This soft-shoe duet sees Flanagan and Allen shuffle around in delight. Both ASTRONAUTS are over the moon - in more ways than one. GOCKLEBRED enters UR as song finishes. He carries three suits)

Gocklebred My friends, a small gift. Three suits from our finest tailor.

Rocko *(Examining the clothes)* Oh these are beautiful.

Crackers *(Taking clothes)* I hope they're handmade.

Gocklebred Pardon?

Rocko *(Rebukes CRACKERS)* Crackers.

Gocklebred You mean there are other ways to make clothes? With your feet?

Rocko *(Laughing)* No, Gocklebred. With machines.

Gocklebred *(Confused)* Machines!? What are machines?

Rocko I'll explain later. Let me take these beautiful clothes to our space ship. *(Takes all the clothing and moves off)* I must contact Earth. *(EXITS up steps)*

Gocklebred *(To CRACKERS)* Goodness. What a day! To think there's life beyond the stars.

Crackers There's life all right. *(Leading GOCKLEBRED DR)* Tell me, Gocklebred, are you the King of Soil?
(If GOCKLEBRED is a female, the question will obviously be "Queen" of Soil)

Gocklebred *(Laughing)* Me? King? No, I'm just your humble mayor.

Crackers Well, do you know the King?

Gocklebred *(Proudly)* But of course. I was invited to his coronation. And he'll be thrilled to learn of your visit.

Crackers Will he thank you?

Gocklebred Of course.

Crackers Reward you?

Gocklebred Of course.

Crackers How much?

Gocklebred Oh, well, I'm not sure.

Crackers Money?

Gocklebred Money? What's money?

Crackers Ah, will he give you land, houses, that sort of thing?

Gocklebred Well yes, I suppose. Look, this sort of thing's never happened before.

- Crackers** *(Starts the big-sell)* But it has now my friend, and you're staring at the chance of a lifetime, at first prize in the pools, a jackpot, the gold at the end of the rainbow. *(GOCKLEBRED is confused. What is CRACKERS on about?)*
- Gocklebred** I'm sorry. I don't understand.
- Crackers** You don't have to. Just trust me. You see your village, your country, your whole planet is ripe for development. Earth was like Soil. But we grew. We designed, discovered, developed. *(Strong)* We made progress.
- Gocklebred** *(Not sure)* Oh, I see.
- Crackers** Now I've got progress and you have it. *(Smooth)* And I bet you want it.
- Gocklebred** Well yes, but I'm not exactly sure what it is.
- Crackers** *(Wanders DC)* Progress? That's easy. It's fast-foods. Concrete. Yo-yos. Billboards. Neon signs. *(The clincher)* Personalised number plates.
- Gocklebred** *(Confused)* I've never even heard of those things. *(Goes to CRACKERS. GOCKLEBRED is being won over)* But they sound good.
- Crackers** Good!?! They're beautiful. And they're yours. I can deliver progress to Soil with you as head of retail.
- Gocklebred** *(Uncertain but excited)* Great. Thank you. Oh, it all sounds so wonderful.
- Crackers** But this is our secret. Just you and me. Now go and speak to your King. Tell him you need progress. Tell him you'll all make a fortune.
- Gocklebred** A fortune! That's fantastic. *(Tentative)* Ah, but what's it going to cost?
- Crackers** *(Greatly offended)* Cost? Do you mind? Please, how could you?
- Gocklebred** I'm sorry. But we must reward you for giving us progress.
- Crackers** *(False modesty)* Oh all right, if you insist. Maybe a couple of tiny items.
- Gocklebred** Of course. Anything. Please. Just name them.
- Crackers** Ah, how about exclusive rights to pizzas, video-clips and oil?
- Gocklebred** *(Happily shaking hands with CRACKERS)* Done, whatever they are, they're yours. Oh I'm so happy. *(MUSIC BEGINS)*
- Crackers** You and me both, pal. We're in the money.

No. 11 Opportunity Reprise

- C'kers & Gocklebred** *Top opportunity has come to us today
Top opportunity, we won't let it slip away.
We'll make the most of what we have got
Strike together while the iron's hot, oh
Top opportunity has come to us today.*
(CRACKERS & GOCKLEBRED happily shake hands but before they speak, a cry is heard offstage UL)
- Gumen** Prepare for gloom and doom!
- Gang** *(Parrot-fashion, still)* Prepare for gloom and doom!
(GOCKLEBRED despairs, CRACKERS fumes. GUMEN & GANG enter UL)
- Gocklebred** *(Attacks GUMEN)* Now listen, Gumen, I warned you. Take your pathetic prophecies and push off.
- Gumen** *(Pointing at CRACKERS)* Green frog!
- Gang** *(Pointing)* Green frog!
- Crackers** *(Angry)* I'll green frog you, you moron. You're worse than the loonies on Earth.

Gumen *(Suddenly shocked, doesn't understand)* Earth?

Gang *(Mimics)* Earth?

Gumen *(To GANG)* Not now! *(To CRACKERS. Keen)* You mean, you have people on Earth? People like here on Soil?

Crackers What do you think I am? A peanut? *(Spot on, CRACKERS!)*

Gumen Have they been told the end of the world is nigh?

Gang *(They think it's their cue)* The end of the world is nigh!

Gumen *(Furious with GANG)* Not now! *(Polite to CRACKERS)* I'm so sorry. You were saying?

Crackers Oh we've got crazies everywhere. Politics, religion, football, *(Most scathing)* and especially TV chat shows. Now *they* are weird!

Gumen The message is obviously not getting through. *(To GANG)* Prepare for Earth.

Gang *(Mimics)* Prepare for Earth!

Gocklebred Earth!? Don't be ridiculous. It's another planet.

Gumen Which soon will end. *(Marching off DR)* Earthlings, your fate awaits!

Gang *(Chanting as they tramp after GUMEN)* Earthlings, your mate awaits!
(GUMEN waits at edge of stage as GANG file past. GUMEN last to leave)

Gumen *(Furious)* That's fate not mate!

Gang *(Oblivious to their error)* That's fate not mate!

Gumen Ohhhh! *(Or other sound of despair)*

Gang *(Mimicking GUMEN)* Ohhhh!
(GUMEN nearing a nervous breakdown, exits after GANG. CRACKERS fumes)

Gocklebred Don't worry about them. They're harmless. Nothing can spoil our progress.
(ROCKO & TOD enter down steps wearing Soil clothes dressed as simple farm workers)

Rocko Surprise! *(CRACKERS & GOCKLEBRED spin round)*

Crackers *(Hates their clothes)* What in red rockets are you wearing?

Tod This is the latest gear. *(Turning a la mannequin)* What do you reckon?

Gocklebred *(Impressed)* Oh it's very smart. *Very smart.*

Crackers *(Unimpressed)* You look totally ridiculous.

Gocklebred *(Concerned)* Ridiculous? You mean this is not progress?

Rocko *(Laughing)* Progress? Hey, what's he been saying?

Crackers *(Covering up)* Nothing. Nothing. Ah, what's the news from home?

Tod No news. We just need you, *(Indicating CRACKERS)* our communications expert.

Gocklebred Oh no! Is there a problem?

Crackers *(Aside to GOCKLEBRED)* No problem. I fixed it. *(To OTHERS)* Okay, let's get aboard the spaceship and talk to Earth.

Rocko And what a story we've got. They are never going to believe this.

Tod *(Yawning)* Well I need a rest? You know we've been awake for ages.

Gocklebred Yes, please rest. There's so much to see and do but it can wait. You all get into your spaceship and have a sleep.

Rocko We'll need some peace and quiet. *(Friendly threat)* Now no rowdy parties.

Gocklebred Don't worry. This is a peaceful place. Nothing ever happens here. *(Lights dim, night draws in)* Sleep well, my friends. *(ROCKO & TOD exit to spaceship)*

Rocko Will do. Thanks Gocklebred. See you tomorrow.

Tod See ya, Gocklebred. Goodnight.

Gocklebred Goodnight. *(Quietly to CRACKERS)* Hey, I really like this progress.

Crackers *(Exiting to spaceship)* Tomorrow, matey. Just you see we're not disturbed.

Gocklebred You won't be. *(Calls to ASTRONAUTS)* Sleep tight. *(CRACKERS pauses on steps, puts a finger to pursed lips then exits. GOCKLEBRED nods. He's alone. Pause. Smiling he addresses audience.)* You know, Soil is famous for its peace and quiet. *(Indicates spaceship)* That is, except for spaceships. *(Smiles)* And who knows? We might get *another* visitor from outer space. Ha! *(Exits UR laughing)* Two spaceships! Now there's a laugh.

(Lights dim, it's now quite dark and quiet. Add sound effects (F.X.) of nature, an owl, etc. This is sleepy Soil. Peace and quiet. Suddenly F.X. of a whining noise is heard - use sound of electric drill. It grows louder. Very loud. Suddenly ALL LIGHTS flash on for four seconds. Even the auditorium lights. Yes, lightning does strike twice on Soil. A blast of smoke/steam spurts from UL. BLACKOUT. Kill sound effects. Pause. Remove the cover [if one was used] on lights behind trees. This is your Martian spaceship - a collection of lights, preferably various colours, and in a pattern. There is no spaceship as such - just the lights. The trees hide the spaceship but in the dark the various lights indicate the presence of the U.F.O. General dim lighting comes up and the U.F.O. glows behind the trees UL. Re-introduce the F.X. of night sounds. We can just see shadowy figures amongst the trees. Then a Martian's head appears. Then another. You can have a trio or more. MUSIC BEGINS. MARTIANS move downstage to celebrate their landing on Earth. Oops! Wrong again!)

No. 12 Martians

Martians *If you believe there's a man in the moon
Then what about, what about us?
If you believe New York has snow in June
Then what about, what about us?
If you believe that it's darkest at noon
Then what about, what about us?
You swallow baloney that's blatantly phoney
So what about, what about us?
We're Martians
Funny figures with sticks poking out of our head.
We're Martians
And be warned that we leave punks and skinheads for dead!
If you believe there's a man in the moon
Then what about, what about us?*

(Dialogue during song. MARTIANS confront audience, pointing/threatening, etc)

Sput What you staring at? Don't you have manners on Earth?

Nick It rude to stare!

Buckley I stop you staring!

(BUCKLEY starts towards the audience but is stopped and brought back by NICK. BUCKLEY is not happy. SPUT keeps up the verbal attack)

Sput *(Sarcastic)* Oh, so you never heard of us. *(Scoffs)* Garbage! What about T.V. and movies?

Nick What about U.F.O. reports? Your media full of them!

Buckley *(Again sets off to thump the entire audience)* Liars! I fix lot of you! *(Again NICK has to restrain BUCKLEY. SPUT gives final blast)*

Sput Wimps! Gutless! You say there are U.F.Os. Now one lands, you chicken!

Nick We real!

Buckley *(Threatening audience)* Look me! Hand up who say I not real?
(BUCKLEY gives derisive gesture to the stunned audience [they should be stunned] then joins other MARTIANS in repeat of chorus. Immediately song ends, SPUT takes control)

Sput Nick. You with me. Buckley. You guard.

Buckley *(Angry)* Why me? It always me?

Nick Do as told.

Sput We explore. You contact Mars. Message reads - *Safe landing Earth. Now we capture Earthlings.*

Buckley I refuse. Me sick of dirty jobs.

Nick *(Threatens BUCKLEY)* Hey, Buckley! You do it.

Sput *(Threatens BUCKLEY)* Or else. *(To NICK)* Nick. Come. *(SPUT exits UR)*

Buckley *(Scoffs, speaks rudely to NICK)* Yeah. Go on, Nick. Off!

(NICK gives threatening gesture to BUCKLEY who returns the compliment. NICK scampers off UR after SPUT. If you have other MARTIANS, they exit with SPUT. BUCKLEY'S alone. He looks round then, shaking his head, exits through trees to Martian spaceship. We can't see him. He could go offstage. Pause. Morning arrives. Lights come up slowly. Lights on Martian rocket dim. Add bird calls and other morning sounds. GOCKLEBRED & MOCRON enter UR, head C, stop and call to ASTRONAUTS)

Gocklebred *(Calling)* Hello, spaceship! Is there anyone there?

Mocron *(Also calling)* Good morning. Rise and shine.
(Pause. ROCKO & TOD enter down the steps each tucking in the shirt of their new Soil-suit. TOD shakes hands with MOCRON, ROCKO with GOCKLEBRED)

Rocko *(All smiles)* Good morning.

Gocklebred It is indeed. And I trust you slept well.

Mocron Hey, Tod, your clothes look great.

Tod Yes, they're the latest fashion here on Soil. *(TOD and MOCRON joke)*

Gocklebred Now I hope you weren't disturbed? No wild parties or anything.

Rocko Funny you should say that. Something did wake me. And believe it or not, it sounded like a spaceship.

Gocklebred *(Laughing)* A spaceship! Oh very good. You must've been dreaming. Anyway, you can tell us all about it in the village hall. There's a special breakfast in your honour. *(GOCKLEBRED indicates and starts leading them UR)*

Rocko Sounds great. But what about your work?

Gocklebred Oh that can wait. It's not every day we get a spaceship from Earth.

Rocko Okay. Ah, hang on, we're not all here. *(Calls)* Crackers! Crackers!
(CRACKERS emerges looking ridiculous. He wears his Soil suit but it's far too big. He staggers down steps. OTHERS laugh. CRACKERS is not amused. He faces front then spreads wide his arms. His pants fall to the floor revealing large polka-dot underpants. Hoots of mirth from the OTHERS)

Crackers I thought you said these were handmade!

Rocko *(Indicating exit UR)* They are. Come on. You can have them adjusted over breakfast. *(ROCKO sets off with TOD and MOCRON)* You two seem like good mates [pals].

Tod & M'ron *(Happy)* We are. *(TRIO exit happily)*

Gocklebred *(Helping CRACKERS)* Follow me, Mister Progress.
(CRACKERS signals to cool it. GOCKLEBRED nods and indicates he is sorry)

- Crackers** *(Whispers)* Shhhh. I told you. That's our special secret.
(GOCKLEBRED & CRACKERS exit miming their secret. CRACKERS has his suit "adjusted" in the village. The moment the stage is empty, a puffing PLIMM bursts on DL. Excited, PLIMM thinks aloud)
- Plimm** This is it. The juiciest gossip ever! Astronauts! Spaceship! Planet Earth! Wow! I've gotta tell the others. *(Hears voices offstages)* What's that? Someone's coming. More gossip. I'd better hide! *(PLIMM races behind haystack then into corn. He's not happy. He needs a good listening and viewing position. Suddenly he sees the scarecrow)* Of course! The scarecrow! *(He rushes to it and removes its hat. He hurriedly puts it on and moves C. He's fiddling with the hat when he hears voices offstage and quickly assumes the position of a scarecrow. BUTWICK & JUB enter UR and move C near PLIMM. BUTWICK is excited, JUB very nervous. PLIMM'S hat is large)*
- Butwick** Now's the time with everyone feeding their face. *(Proud, gesture above heads of audience)* Now we can fly through the sky.
- Jub** *(Bubbling)* Oh Butwick, I'm so excited.
- Butwick** You get the machine, I'll get the clothes. *(BUTWICK exits LC to spaceship)*
(BUTWICK exits. JUB in mild panic doesn't know what to do)
- Plimm** *(PLIMM points to haystack)* It's over there.
- Jub** *(Relieved)* Oh thanks very much.
(JUB starts to haystack, suddenly stops, turns and stares at frozen PLIMM. Not even a blink. JUB scratches his head, shrugs and runs to fetch flying machine RC. The following business needs good timing. The actors use small unseen signals. PLIMM drops his arms and turns his head to look at JUB who has his back to PLIMM as he manoeuvres machine. Suddenly [this is the critical signal] JUB turns and forces PLIMM to become a scarecrow again. JUB suspects something's wrong and slowly approaches PLIMM staring at the motionless scarecrow. JUB walks behind PLIMM and ends up LC. JUB stares hard. BUTWICK enters down steps, coming up behind the unsuspecting JUB)
- Jub** *(Suddenly knows scarecrow's identity)* Hang on. I know you. You're ...
(Good timing. BUTWICK taps JUB who turns and nearly dies. BUTWICK is wearing one astronaut's suit and holding another. JUB falls to ground, pleading for his life)
No, please, I didn't mean to. *(BUTWICK starts removing helmet)* Please, he made me do it. I promise to be good. *(BUTWICK removes helmet. JUB'S eyes pop out like organ-stops)* Butwick!
- Butwick** It's me, Stupid.
- Jub** *(Rises, petrified)* Butwick! What are you doing? What are you wearing?
- Butwick** Don't ask questions. Just put this on. *(Tosses uniform to JUB)*
- Jub** *(Confused, shocked)* What!? But this is an astronaut's uniform.
- Butwick** Exactly. And when we land on Earth, they'll think we're friendly if we're wearing their clothes.
- Jub** *(Understands, is overcome with admiration)* Oh Butwick, that's brilliant!
- Butwick** *(Tinkers with machine)* Just do it.
(JUB removes his jacket. He looks around for somewhere to put it. He sees PLIMM now frozen as the scarecrow. JUB puts jacket on PLIMM. This could be funny because PLIMM'S arms move to accommodate the jacket. JUB is too stupid to realise PLIMM'S arms are moving. JUB hops into his spacesuit and helmet and thinks he's terrific)
- Jub** Hey Butwick. How do I look?
(JUB turns round on the spot holding out his arms. BUTWICK keeps working)
- Butwick** Great. Now where's the soap?
- Jub** The soap? Oh. *(Thinks, remembers. Pointing at PLIMM)* It's in my jacket!

(BUTWICK is tinkering. JUB rummages in jacket then finds the soap. PLIMM is tickled and struggles not to laugh. Don't overdo it but JUB'S pocket-searching causes PLIMM to giggle. JUB steps back in surprise staring hard at a motionless PLIMM. JUB resumes the pocket-search. Gently hand goes into pocket. PLIMM gives tiny giggle. It tickles. Then JUB starts routine. Hand in, giggle, hand out. Repeat once or twice. It's pure pantomime. Finally JUB goes to put his hand in jacket, stops short but PLIMM giggles in anticipation. JUB is delighted)

Jub *(Pointing at frozen PLIMM)* Aha! Gotcha! Gotcha, gotcha, gotcha! *(To BUTWICK)* Butwick! Look. I tricked the giggling scarecrow.

Butwick *(Stops work, angry)* Give me the soap or you stay behind.
(JUB suddenly worried and hurriedly takes soap to BUTWICK who immediately resumes work. He's soaping the string-camshaft!)

Jub *(Handing soap to BUTWICK)* Oh Butwick, I'm sorry. Here. Please let me fly. Don't leave me behind. Please. *(PLIMM produces a hanky from JUB'S jacket and wipes his brow. JUB looks across)* Hey! That's mine! *(PLIMM freezes. JUB goes to PLIMM and takes the limp hanky from the frozen hand. JUB stares hard at PLIMM)* You're not a scarecrow. You're ...

Butwick *(Angry roar. JUB & PLIMM get a fright)* Jub! Last chance. Help or I fly alone.

Jub *(Returns to Butwick. Begging)* I'm sorry, Butwick. I'll help! I'll do anything.

Butwick *(Furious but resumes work)* I need some straw.

Jub *(Recovering)* Okay. Straw. Ah. *(JUB runs to haystack and fetches some straw. JUB brings straw to BUTWICK. PLIMM drops his arms and observes the aviators)* Here.
(BUTWICK takes a small portion of the straw and places it in the machine. He's lining the feathered-injected carburettor. He then asks for help without lifting his head)

Butwick Hold this. *(JUB uncertain offers free hand to BUTWICK)* Both hands!

(Flustered, JUB looks round, sees PLIMM)

Plimm Here, I'll take it.

Jub *(Hands excess straw to PLIMM)* Oh, thanks a lot. *(JUB returns to BUTWICK. Suddenly JUB looks up at audience and jaw drops. JUB looks back at PLIMM who is frozen)*

Butwick Jub. Concentrate.

(JUB concentrates on helping BUTWICK. PLIMM wipes his nose and the straw makes him sneeze. The straw tickles of course and PLIMM, who holds on as long as possible, [we see the sneeze coming] finally lets it rip!)

Plimm Ahhhh - choo! *(PLIMM freezes as scarecrow)*

Butwick *(Not looking up)* Bless you.

Jub *(Concerned, moving to BUTWICK. PLIMM pockets straw)* No, Butwick. It wasn't me. It was the scarecrow who sneezed! *(JUB points to PLIMM)*
(BUTWICK stops work and looks hard at PLIMM. No movement. Just your typical scarecrow. BUTWICK is not happy and glares at the quivering JUB then decides)

Butwick *(Wiping hands on his clothes)* Okay, that's it. I'm going alone.

(JUB mortified, falls to the ground and grabs BUTWICK'S legs)

Jub *(Begging)* Oh no, Butwick. Please let me go! I'll be good. I promise.

Butwick *(Breaks free, walks to other side of machine)* Let go! Get lost.

Jub *(Follows on knees)* No, it was just a joke. A game. I sneezed. It was me. Look.
(Gives pathetic sneeze) Ahhh-choo! See? A sneeze from little old Jub.

Butwick You're mad.

Jub *(Pleads)* Oh I am, I am. I'm completely mad. But please take me. Please.

Butwick *(Pause, reluctantly agrees)* Oh, all right. *(JUB embraces BUTWICK)* Hey! Stop that! Stop it! *(JUB desists)* Prepare for take-off.

Jub *(Agog)* Take-off!?

Butwick *(Pushing machine RC)* We're going. Now move that scarecrow. Hurry!
(JUB rushes to PLIMM. They join hands and JUB runs PLIMM upstage. They shake hands and JUB is happy when he suddenly goes crazy. He gets a terrific fright, screams and frightens PLIMM who falls to the ground. JUB backs C facing and pointing UL. Note: The next few pages of dialogue need plenty of pace. One set of characters exit as another enters. Keep things moving)

Jub *(Petrified)* Ahhh! Oh! Ow! Ooo! *(Continues. BUTWICK runs to JUB)*

Butwick You fool! You'll bring the others!

Jub *(Trembling, points UL.)* L L L Look ...

Butwick *(Helping JUB)* What? I can't see anything. *(Suddenly in awe)* Goodnight!
(BUTWICK has seen the cause of JUB'S fear. BUCKLEY steps out from behind a tree UL. He brandishes a strange-looking gun and is strange-looking anyway. He's a Martian. PLIMM is frozen on the ground UC)

Buckley *(Moving LC brandishing gun)* Move do not!

Butwick *(Very scared)* W W Who are you? *(JUB continues to whimper)*

Buckley *(Speaks slowly)* Me? I come Mars.

B'wick & Jub Mars!

Plimm Mars!

Buckley *(Slightly thrown)* Who said that?

Jub *(Petrified)* S S S Said what?

Butwick *(Even he's scared)* M M M Must be an echo.

Buckley *(Moves a little to BUTWICK & JUB who move slightly RC)* You from Earth.

Butwick No! We're from Soil.

Buckley Don't lie! You wear Earthling clothes to fly in sky.

Jub But these aren't my clothes.

Butwick That's right. We stole them from the Earthlings.

Buckley Liars! You Earthlings! I steal your flying machine. Me return Mars.

Butwick No please. *(Suddenly surprised)* Mars! Where's Mars?

Buckley Come, now. You Earthlings watch television. Steven Spielberg. *E.T. My Favourite Martian.* *(Substitute other well-known people/characters/programs if necessary)* This my big break. *(Gestures DR)* Step aside.

Jub *(Scrambles gladly DR)* Certainly.
(BUTWICK joins JUB DR. PLIMM carefully rises and becomes scarecrow UC. BUCKLEY slowly moves to machine C and inspects the great invention)

Buckley So, this latest invention from Earth. Brilliant. *(Examines then looks up suddenly full of surprise)* No engine! Where engine?

Butwick *(Scared and ignorant)* Engine? W W W What's an engine?

Buckley *(Nasty)* No games. Show me where ... *(Stops suddenly and is wildly impressed)* Ah! You fly without engine? *(In awe)* Fantastic!

Jub *(Crawls a little towards BUCKLEY, hands clasped in prayer-position)* Please sir. I'm just a village farmer.

Buckley *(Mean, threatening)* Destination? Where you go?

Butwick Earth.

Buckley *(Furious, waving gun from JUB to BUTWICK and return)* Earth! We on Earth! *(Nasty)* So, you not talk. Okay. *(Looks round, sees PLIMM, suddenly strides to and points weapon at PLIMM'S head. PLIMM turns pale)* Talk or he dies!

Jub *(Petrified)* But that's just a scarecrow.

Buckley What?!

Butwick It's not alive. It's made of straw.

Plimm *(Petrified)* That's right. I'm only made of straw.
(BUCKLEY furious/confused, snatches straw poking out of PLIMM'S pocket or jacket. Talk about luck! Obviously they must be telling the truth. PLIMM is a heart-attack about to happen. BUCKLEY tosses straw aside, moves C and threatens BUTWICK & JUB who immediately feel the heat again. PLIMM heaves discreet sigh of relief)

Buckley *(Moving to machine)* Okay. How you fly this thing?

Butwick *(Pointing upstage)* Ah, we carry it up that mountain then take off.

Buckley *(BUCKLEY looks in that direction then resumes questions)* And?

Jub Then we fly like the b b b birds.

Buckley *(Confused)* The b b b birds?

Butwick *(Wants to help but is also terrified)* He means the b b b birds.

Jub Yes. *(Flaps his arms)* The b b b birds.
(BUCKLEY is not sure. He looks at the machine, the petrified aviators, the mountain. Suddenly he believes this is the most brilliant invention ever)

Buckley Of course! The engineless rocket. *(Excited)* And I've got it. Me! First Martian to fly without engine. Me! *(Angry, barks order)* Pick up! *(BUTWICK & JUB nervously collect their machine and exit UR. BUCKLEY threatens and urges them on)* Quick. Move! *(etc. PLIMM'S eyes dart sideways)* Come on. Up mountain!
(TRIO exit, pause, then re-enter as far UR as possible. They walk behind haystack and crows. BUTWICK & JUB have machine on their heads - it's light. BUCKLEY follows driving them on. The ramp behind crows slopes up to the back of the trees. They struggle [literally] upwards. Don't drag)

Butwick *(Climbing)* Listen, we haven't actually flown it yet.

Buckley Don't lie. This great invention. Move!

Jub Please don't hurt us. I promise I won't tell.

Buckley You tell everyone! I want universe to know. Now hurry!
(They go behind tops of trees and offstage or hide on ramp. They've gone. Maybe a cry of pain from JUB when hit by BUCKLEY. Pause. PLIMM comes alive. He moves towards haystack to see what is happening. He describes what he sees thus keeping us informed)

Plimm Sensational! Fantastic gossip! *(Pointing UL)* Look! They've got the flying machine on the mountain. The Martian's getting in. He's about to take off! *(Pointing excitedly UL)* There! It's starting now!

Buckley *(Voice-over)* Farewell Earth. Buckley fly Mars. Farewell! *(Next word is drawn out)* Farewell *(The word turns into a scream)* AHHHHHH! *(The voice-over could be recorded using an echo-effect so that scream goes on and on, bouncing around the valleys as he plunges back to Soil. Using a large stuffed dummy [identical to BUCKLEY], he drops out of the roof. PLIMM rushes to the dead BUCKLEY [the dummy] and announces in big voice)* Gossip sensation! Martian falls from sky! *(Smirking)* But then, *(Milk it)* he only had Buckley's chance!

(MUSIC BEGINS. PLIMM enjoys his joke. NOTE: The term "Buckley's chance" is an Australian expression meaning "no chance". You could substitute "What goes up, must come down". During the REPRISE, dim the lights and use a spot only on PLIMM. In the darkness upstage, remove the dummy)

No. 13 Gossip Reprise

Plimm *Love may make the world go round but gossip pays the rental
Faith may move the mountain ground but gossip's transcendental.
Hope may spring, from breast abound, its presence pure and gentle
And love may make the world go round but gossip pays the rental.*

Plimm *(Thrilled with this big break) Oh this is marvellous. Marvellous. (Is disturbed as BUTWICK & JUB stagger down ramp upstage) They're coming. I'd better hide.
(PLIMM races UC and becomes scarecrow again. BUTWICK & JUB stagger on UR and collapse C. The failed aviators are devastated. PLIMM is just behind and above them, watching, moving his head)*

Butwick *(Greatly upset) My machine. My dream. It's gone, all gone.*

Jub *(Trying to help) But look on the bright side, Butwick. It couldn't fly.*

Butwick *(Angry) Of course it could fly! It just needs two pilots. (Sad again) And now it's smashed. Gone forever. (Breaks down sobbing)*

Jub *(Comforting him) Oh never mind, Butwick. We can build another.*

Butwick *(Between sobs) No we can't. We've run out of string. (More crying)*

Gumen *(Enters DR. Shouts an order) Seize them!
(GUMEN'S GANG race on DR and capture BUTWICK & JUB who are sad and surprised, their capture is easy. GUMEN strides C taking control. Next two speeches overlap)*

Butwick *(Being held) Hey! Let go! Hey! (Continues to struggle in vain)*

Jub *(Being held) Stop! Watch it! Hey! (Continues struggling in vain)*

Gumen *Silence! (Struggling stops) Pay heed, Earthlings!*

B'wick & Jub *(Staggered) Earthlings!*

Gumen *I will spread my message on Earth. You will fly me there in your machine!*

Butwick *We can't. It's smashed. (Pointing) It fell off the mountain.*

Gumen *(Angry) Liar! There it stands. (Points LC to spaceship)*

Jub *That's not our machine. That belongs to the Earthlings!*

Gumen *Exactly. Your machine. (Pointing) Now get in!
(GANG force BUTWICK & JUB towards LC. The captives protest)*

Butwick *But we're not Earthlings. We live here on Soil!*

Jub *It's me, Jub!*

Butwick *And me, Butwick!*

Gumen *Take them away! (Protesting, BUTWICK & JUB are pushed/dragged up the steps of the spaceship. GUMEN addresses the world [the audience] with defiant fanaticism) Farewell Soil. Soon I will proclaim my message on Earth (Big announcement) I am the greatest!*

Gang *(Offstage or on steps) I am the latest!*

Gumen *(Despairs - will they ever get it right?) That's greatest not latest!*

Gang *(Exact mimic as always) That's greatest not latest!*

(GUMEN groans, the GANG groans in echo and GUMEN exits after GANG up steps. We hear BUTWICK and JUB calling. PLIMM comes alive and moves cautiously LC. The steps disappear offstage)

Butwick *(Protests from offstage)* I tell you, I don't know. I'm not from Earth!

Gumen *(From offstage)* Fly or die!

Jub *(Offstage, big baby is screaming with fear)* No! Please! I want me Mum!

Gumen Press that red thing. Now!

Gang *(Offstage, they mimic GUMEN)* Press that red thing. Now!

(Sound effects as engine roars to life. Smoke whooshes onto stage. PLIMM is forced C shielding his face. Lights flood onto stage from LC. PLIMM looks away. GUMEN roars, the GANG roars and BUTWICK and JUB are lost. The next speeches are ad lib, on top of one another and over the sound effects)

Gumen Fly!

Gang Fly!

Butwick Help! Help! *(Continues)*

Jub It's me, Jub! Take me home! *(Continues)*

Gumen The end of the world is nigh!

Gang The end of the world is pie!

Gumen That's pie not nigh!

Gang That's pie not nigh!

B'wick & Jub Help!!!! *(Dragged out and fading away)*

(Spaceship lifts off. Bright lights LC dim and die. PLIMM moves towards LC looking up. Engine noises and voices fade. PLIMM stunned. Silence. PLIMM coughs and fans smoke)

Plimm *(Overjoyed. Staggers DC)* Stupendous! Momentous! *(PLIMM recalls the events counting them on his fingers)* Now, let's see. A new flying machine, a Martian, a dead Martian, a busted flying machine, Butwick and Jub captured by Gumen, the Earthling's flying machine gone. Wow! *(Emphatic, ecstatic)* This is hot! *(Suddenly despairs)* But who's going to believe me? *(Looks UR)* Someone's coming. I'll have to surprise them!

(PLIMM darts UC and becomes scarecrow as GOCKLEBRED and CRACKERS enter UR deep in conversation. They stop C near PLIMM)

Gocklebred You've got some marvellous ideas, Crackers. I never knew such things were possible.

Crackers Anything's possible. Now let's make a quick trip to Earth.

Gocklebred Oh the King's going to love you. Especially in your spaceship.

Crackers I know. And all I want is total control on fast-foods, TV and transport.

Gocklebred Of course. But it doesn't seem fair. You should have more, much more.

Crackers Please, I don't want to be greedy. Now let's get going. I'll fire up the spaceship, you make sure there's no-one around.

(CRACKERS bounces off LC, GOCKLEBRED turns, stops and looks suspiciously at PLIMM whose eyes swell with fear. GOCKLEBRED moves to PLIMM and thinks he recognises the scarecrow. GOCKLEBRED raises an accusing finger)

Gocklebred Hey! I know you!

Crackers *(Bursts in furious. Roars)* Damn and blast! It's gone!

(GOCKLEBRED forgets PLIMM. Spins around)

Gocklebred What? What's gone?

Crackers *(Going bananas)* The spaceship's gone!

Gocklebred The spaceship! But how?

- Crackers** Of all the low-down dirty trick's. I'll murder them. I saw this place first. I deserve the spoils.
- Gocklebred** *(Confused)* Spoils? What spoils? Does this mean our deal's off?
(SPUT, NICK and other MATIANS if used, enter quietly UR and hide near haystack. We can see them. CRACKERS is building up steam)
- Crackers** *(Furious)* Of course it's off. The poker machines are back on Earth.
- Gocklebred** But is there some other way you could return?
- Crackers** *(Angry sarcasm)* Oh very funny. Get me the Yellow Pages and look up R for rocket.
- Gocklebred** *(Terribly confused)* I'm sorry but I don't understand.
- Sput** *(Leading MATIANS down. They all point their guns)* Perhaps we help.
(GOCKLEBRED and CRACKERS spin around. GOCKLEBRED is frightened and backs DL. CRACKERS thinks it's some more fanatics like GUMEN)
- Crackers** Oh not you again! Get lost, you loonies!
- Gocklebred** *(Frightened, warms CRACKERS)* Crackers, no! They're strangers! Be careful!
- Crackers** Your gloom 'n doom mates went that-a-way. *(Points DR)*
- Sput** You. Quiet. Now listen.
- Crackers** *(Goes for SPUT)* Don't you tell me to be quiet. *(SPUT fires and CRACKERS is winded/wounded. He falls to the ground, complaining)* Ow! *(GOCKLEBRED goes to assist. CRACKERS and GOCKLEBRED are very scared)*
- Nick** Be still. Do as we say.
- Gocklebred** Please. We mean no harm.
- Crackers** *(Over-acting at its best/worst)* My arm, oh my arm. I'm dying. *(He's only stunned)*
- Sput** We from Mars.
- Crackers** *(Stunned)* Mars?
- Sput** We capture two Earthlings.
- Gocklebred** What is Mars?
- Nick** You come with us.
- Crackers** Hang on. This isn't Earth.
- Sput** You. Two Earthlings. You chosen. *(Indicates UL)* Now go!
- Crackers** No! You're wrong! This isn't Earth. This is Soil!
- Gocklebred** That's right. I'm from Soil. *(Indicating CRACKERS)* But *he's* from Earth.
- Crackers** *(Turns on GOCKLEBRED and tries to strangle him)* Why you dirty rat!
(CRACKERS would have strangled GOCKLEBRED but the MARTIANS intervene)
- Nick** Stop! No fighting! *(The fight is stopped)*
- Sput** Come. Our spaceship here.
- Crackers** *(As he and GOCKLEBRED are moved UL)* Spaceship? Where are we going?
- Sput** Mars.
- C'kers & G'bred** *(Aghast)* Mars! *(PLIMM turns slowly to watch. What a day)*
- Crackers** Listen, you can drop me off on Earth. I'll make it worth your while.
- Nick** Move! *(They are in or almost in the trees)*
- Crackers** *(Being kidnapped)* You can have the fast-food concession here on Soil.
- Sput** Move! *(Now they are into the trees)*
- Crackers** *(Calling)* And pay TV. And computers! *(Desperate)* And Christmas!
- Nick** Spaceship ready for takeoff.
- Sput** Proceed.

FX *(Engine starting. Dim lights on stage. Lights glow behind trees. CRACKERS screams)*

Crackers And video clips! *(Engine noises increase)* Football! Anything!

Sput *(Calling. These commands could even be amplified)* Lift-off!

C'kers & G'bred Noooooo!!
(CRACKERS and GOCKLEBRED scream in fear and frustration. Increase FX. Suddenly all lights come on including in the auditorium for four seconds. PLIMM staggers backwards DR. What a sight! PLIMM does the looking for the audience. After brief burst of ALL lights, BLACKOUT. Pause. FX quickly fade. If needed, cover coloured lights upstage UL. Slowly bring up normal day lighting. PLIMM is shocked and staggers DC)

Plimm Unbelievable! Unforgettable! I think I've been zapped. *(Suddenly it's all too much and PLIMM swoons. He's overdosed on hot gossip. He collapses DC)* Ohhhh.
(PLIMM is motionless. TOD and MOCRON enter UR chatting as they've become good friends. They wander C and at first don't notice PLIMM)

Tod Mocron, that sounds absolutely fantastic.

Mocron Yes but there's more, much more. Wait'll you see the ... *(TOD sees PLIMM)*

Tod Look! *(They rush to the motionless PLIMM)* Get help. Quickly!
(MOCRON quickly exits UR and TOD half-lifts the delirious PLIMM)

Plimm Unconventional! Unconstitutional! *(Continues muttering)*

Tod Take it easy, Plimm. You're going to be okay.
(TOD tries to make PLIMM comfortable but PLIMM just blabs away)

Plimm Unaccountable! Unavoidable! Un-anything-able. Ohhh!
(TOD races in with DAZZLEIGH, ROCKO and EVERONE else who hasn't flown away)

Rocko What's up? What happened?
(ROCKO and DAZZLEIGH examine PLIMM. OTHERS spread around)

Tod We came in and Plimm was just lying here, groaning. *(PLIMM groans)*

Plimm Undeniable! Under-wonder-ful. *(PLIMM is helped to sit)*

Rocko *(To TOD)* Tod, get the first-aid kit from the ship.

Tod *(Racing offstage LC)* Roger.

Plimm Unmistakeable! Unspeakable!

Dazzleigh Stay calm, Plimm. We're getting help for you now.

Tod *(From offstage)* It's gone! *(TOD races in)* It's gone! The spaceship's gone!
(ROCKO drops PLIMM who falls back again, hurts himself and groans again. OTHERS help him. He continues to mutter)

Rocko *(Angry)* Tod, this is no time for jokes. I told you to get the first-aid kit.

Tod I'm not joking. *(Emphatic)* The spaceship's gone.
(Big buzz from OTHERS. ROCKO and DAZZLEIGH race offstage LC then quickly return)

Rocko *(Shock and anger)* I don't believe it. Crackers! He's stolen the ship!

Dazzleigh And Gocklebred. He's gone too.

Tod The fool. He took off alone.

Mocron But why Gocklebred?

Dazzleigh Oh now I get it. They spent as lot of time talking.

Rocko Yeah and planning. Some get-rich-quick scheme. Money from Soil.

Plimm *(Still in trance)* Unimaginable!

Tod *(Alarmed)* Oh no. They won't make it. I didn't convert the spare fuel.

Rocko *(Even more alarmed)* What!?

Plimm Unworkable. *(Mutterings continue)*

Tod They'll just drift in space ... *(Serious)* forever.

Rocko *They're stuck in space and we're stuck here.*
(Silence. Pause. Stunned reaction from EVERYBODY. ROCKO and TOD are stuck on Soil without communication. Their spaceship with CRACKERS and GOCKLEBRED is destined to spin forever in space. PLIMM recovering slowly. He breaks the silence)

Plimm I know what happened. *(Nobody heeds PLIMM)*

Tod What'll we do?

Rocko What *can* we do?

Plimm *(Loud, desperate)* Listen. *(Struggles to his feet)*
(PLIMM'S loud cry makes OTHERS look at him. It's his big chance. He's desperate)

Dazzleigh *(Snaps at PLIMM)* Be quiet, Gossip. This is serious.

Plimm *(Excited)* Yes I know it's serious. *(Desperate)* And I saw *everything!*

Mocron *(Annoyed)* Look, we're sick of your gossip. Just go away.

Dazzleigh *(Grabs PLIMM. Annoyed)* Hey, what are wearing? They're Jub's clothes.

Plimm That's right. He put them on me when I was a scarecrow.

Rocko *(Ignores PLIMM. Speaks to DAZZLEIGH who releases PLIMM)* I'm afraid we're stuck.
 Our radio's on the ship and this planet is, well ...

Dazzleigh Undiscovered and unheard of. *(ROCKO nods)*

Plimm *(Begging to be heard)* Please. Listen. I know what happened.

Mocron *(Disgusted)* Right that's enough from you. Go and take off!

Plimm Yes! That's what they did! *(Pointing skywards)* Take off!

Tod He's mad.

Plimm *(Falls down despairing, begging)* No, no. You must listen. It's the truth.
(DAZZLEIGH and OTHERS are impressed by PLIMM'S impassioned pleas. He is helped to stand. DAZZLEIGH decides to give PLIMM one more chance)

Dazzleigh All right, Plimm; one more chance. But this had better be good. Any lies and you're banished - forever! *(Big buzz from VILLAGERS. This is serious)*

Plimm *(Gulps. His big chance)* Gocklebred flew away with Crackers the astronaut.

Rocko We know that, Dopey. Tell us something we don't know.

Plimm But they didn't go in the *first* flying machine.

Tod What!?

Plimm They went in the second flying machine - with the Martains.
(Huge buzz from VILLAGERS. ROCKO and TOD despair. Who is this idiot?)

Rocko *(Sending up PLIMM)* Oh yeah? Little green folk with sticks in their heads?
(If necessary change the word 'green' to the colour worn by the Martians)

Plimm That's them. *(ROCKO and TOD believe PLIMM is mad)* They landed over there.
(He points UL. OTHERS look. One or two move to see. Of course there's nothing there)

Tod *(Ignores PLIMM and wanders DR)* I'm gonna miss my family back on Earth.

Mocron *(Follows TOD)* Hey, Tod. You've got a new family now. *(Pause)* Mine.
(TOD and MOCRON embrace warmly. They can be friends forever)

Plimm *(Still blabbing)* The Earthlings' spaceship left with Butwick and Jub.

Dazzleigh *(Threatens)* I warned you, Plimm. No more lies!

Plimm But it's true. They were captured by Gumen.

Dazzleigh Gumen!?

Plimm Yes. He thought they were astronauts from Earth.

Rocko *(Refers to Plimm)* You've got hand to him. Plimm's a brilliant liar. He'd make a fortune back on Earth. Put him in politics.

Plimm But wait. There's more. Butwick and Jub built a flying machine.
Mocron *Another* flying machine. That's three.
Plimm And a Martian made them carry it up the mountain. *(Points upstage)*
Rocko *(Amused)* Oh no, not *another* Martian! *(VILLAGERS laugh)*
Plimm *(Desperate)* It's true. He started to fly but then he crashed. *(Laughter)* It's true. He landed right here.
(Points to spot where dummy landed. More laughter. Amused, DAZZLEIGH forgives PLIMM the incurable gossip)
Dazzleigh I could never banish you, Plimm. You're so entertaining. We need a good laugh. Don't we?
(“Yes” they cry but PLIMM despairs because nobody will believe him)
Plimm No, please, it's true. It's all true. I really, really saw it.
Tod *(Teasing PLIMM)* Oh yeah? Pull the other one. *(Laughter)*
Rocko *(More teasing)* And I suppose the scarecrow saw it too? *(More laughter)*
Plimm *(Despairs)* No. yes. No! *I* was the scarecrow. Look!
(PLIMM throws wide his arms. OTHERS roar. PLIMM breaks down, is comforted by friends)
Dazzleigh *(To EVERYONE)* My friends. Today our family increases. We welcome to our village and homes, our new and trusted friends, Rocko and Tod.
(Applause from VILLAGERS. DAZZLEIGH embraces ROCKO and TOD. EVERYONE is emotional and happy. Many handshakes and embraces. PLIMM mutters and sobs)
Plimm *(Breaking down)* It's true, it's true. I saw everything Ohhh.
(VILLAGERS smile and pat him. “There, there, it'll be all right” etc)
Rocko *(Addressing COMPANY)* Thank you. Thank you one and all. It's true our lives can never be the same. But if I had to leave my home, my family and planet, I could think of no better place in which to live. Thank you.
(More applause, more embracing, everyone is happy, except poor PLIMM)
Plimm But what about the Martians and the scarecrow? *(Huge roar of laughter)*
Dazzleigh Later, Plimm, later. *(Winks)* Bet it's not as good as the real thing.
(MUSIC BEGINS)
Plimm *(Despairing)* But it *is* the real thing!
(Big laugh from ALL except PLIMM. Joyful singing. PLIMM eventually won over)

No. 14 Stranger Than Fiction

	<i>Truth is stranger than fiction, take a look, take a look at us</i>
	<i>Life may seem a contradiction, take a look, take a look at us</i>
	<i>Writers write well with conviction, some readers they nonplus, but</i>
	<i>Truth is stranger than fiction, take a look, take a look at us.</i>
GROUP A	<i>First you have the sci-fi novel, boy they write some guff</i>
GROUP B	<i>And those Martian movies when enough is not enough</i>
GROUP C	<i>Then the Sunday papers with their old U.F.O. bluff</i>
COMPANY	<i>It's amazin' what you'll gaze in, all that crazy made up stuff.</i>

(COMPANY repeats chorus. They're happy and the new VILLAGERS are delighted with their new home. End of song CURTAIN or BLACKOUT as COMPANY prepares for Curtain Calls)

No. 15 Curtain Calls

Company *Welcome to the planet of Soil*
Welcome to the planet of Soil
We're not the same as you on Earth
But welcome to the planet of Soil.
We're hundreds of years behind you
We haven't any cars or trains
It's certain we never could find you
We've never heard of aeroplanes.
We're not the same as you on Earth
But welcome to the planet of Soil.
The end of the world, the end of the world.
Spaceship to Earth will you answer somehow?
Tell us exactly just where we are now
Nobody said they'd be crops and a cow
Spaceship to Earth, where the hell are we now?
Truth is stranger than fiction, take a look, take a look at us
Life may seem a contradiction, take a look, take a look at us
Writers write well with conviction, some readers they nonplus, but
Truth is stranger than fiction, take a look, take a look [3 times]
Take a look, take a look at us! Yow!

CURTAIN

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Some Other FOX Musicals

Germs

The most popular FOX musical ever! Huge success in many countries. Inside a human [what a set!] the germs spread disease. The human fights back. Some germs mutiny - it's a bloodless coup! Tension mounts and builds to a heart-stopping finale. The set, costumes, make-up, music, comedy and drama make this a marvellous musical. Perfect for schools and youth theatre. A fantastic musical! Performed by adults, youth theatre as well as primary and secondary schools. *Germs* is great!

ByTes

Set inside a computer, the bytes are hard at work. Dos is the boss, Rom and Ram the librarians, Qwerty's quirky, Basic's basic and Virus and Hacker lurk nearby. Pixel and the Pixettes are sick of office work and want to get into showbiz. Qwerty comes up with a brilliant idea to revolutionise computing. Instead of the boring on/off of binary, why not *on*, *off* or *maybe*? A third answer. It will make billions of computers more interesting. Bytes will no longer get boring work. The climax sees a fantastic computer game of dungeons and dragons in a frantic race to save the world! Witty songs from *The Pirate Buster* to *You Can't Beat Love*. A great way to entertain and educate.

Jungle

A marvellous, mysterious set. Costumes to thrill and entertain. The characters are full of comedy and drama. Croc is selling *super* stition. Zebra wants a pedestrian crossing named after him. Hippo bemoans the lack of manners and Chimp is worried about the different species of humans on the endangered list e.g. doctors with neat handwriting, students who can spell and rock stars who can sing! The young chimps are unemployed and up to monkey business. But things really hot up when a circus comes to town. A circus with performing humans. *Jungle* is a lively, witty and moving musical. When the full company sings *The Animal Anthem* it's a wonderful sight and sound.

RAT RACE

The set is a huge pile of rubbish. Living in, on and under the rubbish are many downtrodden rats. Ferocious cats and giant street-sweeping machines threaten everyone. Food is scarce. Danger looms. Enter Snortle Tozer, philosopher, politician or con-rat? The promise of a new life is fantastic. The rubbish is transformed into a glittering staircase for the stunning ticker-tape finale *We're Nice*. Top hats and smiles, balloons and happiness. What a sight! What a song! What a show! Audiences and performers love this show. A hit in several countries with all ages.