

DOCTOR GEORGE'S
MAGNIFICENT ZEPPELIN

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A Two Act Musical Play by

Grant Sutor Vuille

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*The Characters are Named & Dedicated
To the Memory of my Family Pets & to the Late,
Great, Musical Theatre Diva,
Ethel Merman*

Character Descriptions

Doctor George

He is a middle-aged, or even older man who is a very kind, thoughtful individual. He is a genius of the fantastical sorts—an eccentric inventor bent on saving the world from evil, terrorism, and global conflict. Although he may say outrageous things, he always takes himself very seriously. He can often be a bit stuffy and bombastic, but remains a respected individual to his crew and surrounding characters.

Junie Moon

She is a young, glamorous TV reporter motivated to tagging along with, and reporting the great adventures of the famous Doctor George. She is an animated, involved, competent, and practical individual, and she is definitely not happy at all if she is not having her way. She knows when to put on the feminine charm to achieve her goals. Her presence helps to motivate the other characters into accepting new challenges.

Seymour

He is Doctor George's young male assistant and first mate and unrequited love interest to Junie Moon. He is awkward, yet dares to be fearless, but usually ends up cowering in fear. He is most attracted to Junie Moon, a person he immediately worships and reveres. Just glancing in her direction can be almost more than he can handle. When overcome by emotion or during sudden turns in the events and proceedings of the story he tends to lose control.

Max

He is Doctor George's young second mate and witty comic foil to Seymour and all the adventurous proceedings. Not too gullible, he is always amazed and frustrated by his ship mate's shenanigans. However, as naïve as Seymour might seem to him, he has genuine affection for him. Max is always able to come up with a witty remark to highlight the situation in which he and his colleagues find themselves.

Ethel, Buffy, & Gertrude Mermaid

They are the dazzling Mermaids of Mermaid's Isle who are colorful, animated, and very seductive characters. When they sing they light up the theatre with their vibrant, bold, performance, recalling the Andrew's Sisters singing in three-part-harmony. Ethel, the lead singer and the Mermaid's spokesperson, should be closely based on Broadway Diva, Ethel Merman—a brassy, vociferous, and in-charge individual whose clarion tone and timbre always dominates. Her equally colorful, glamorous onstage companions, Buffy and Gertrude Mermaid are also comic foils to one another in the same way as the zeppelin and pirate crew members.

Captain Bandit

He is a pirate captain who can be played as either a younger or somewhat older adult in the spirit of Captain Hook or Long John Silver. He is full of energy, dashing, handsome, and possesses a very robust, aggressive personality. As one of the antagonists he helps to get the story rolling with the adventure and eventual confrontation of the evil Fairie, Queen Thirteen. His antics help to create the tension and fun of the adventure.

Prince

He is Captain Bandit's rather astute first mate. Very bright and somewhat shy, he is often the one who seems to comprehend what's happening in the proceedings. He is Max's counterpart, and whenever onstage together, they can share an understanding. Their characters are simpatico.

Laddie

He is Captain Bandit's somewhat slower second mate. He can be as cowardly and fearful as Seymour, whose characteristics he resembles. He is always quick to douse his own fears by puffing up his chest and grumbling haplessly. He can frustrate Prince, and their comic foil personas mirror those of Max and Seymour, though their stations are reversed.

King Jaggar

As King of the Fairies on Jaggar's Isle, he can be played as a somewhat older male character, perhaps middle aged. He and Doctor George should share a positive space when relating to one another. He sparkles, glitters, and when not in his cage, he might be flying, dancing, and fluttering about the stage. Being a Fairie, he could be small in stature, but since the actors themselves and their interpretations and characterizations of the Fairies are the most important factor, that isn't necessarily so. King Jaggar loves his wife, Queen Thirteen, but he is extremely intimidated by her.

Queen Thirteen

She is the evil, misguided Queen of the Fairies and wife to King Jaggar. She can be very imposing and threatening, elaborately coiffed, gowned in predominantly black, with hints of purple, orange, and yellow. She doesn't glitter like the other Fairies but often tosses about black, purple, orange, and yellow confetti—Halloween colors—to make a point or to emphasize a statement she makes. Her costume should have lots of flare, flash, be gnarly-looking and spiked somehow. She should be played with the authority of a wicked queen as she's the central antagonist of the story.

Fairies "Winkie, Dinkie, & Twinkie"

They are three cute little female/male Fairies who sparkle, dash, swish, prance, and spin about willy-nilly in close proximity to their leader King Jaggar. They are filled with comical mischief and lots of precocious bits of business. They sparkle, glitter, and prance about more so than their beloved leader, King Jaggar. They've got plenty of Fairie dust in their pockets to toss about, and they can even be given voices, such as squealing, giggling, and laughter in the absence of actual lines in the play. Whenever they 'speak' it is interpreted as Xylophoneze in which a Xylophone from the orchestra highlights their speech. When all the characters onstage sing in full chorus they can use their natural voices. However, their antics should not be so obtrusive as to distract from the other characters or the progression of the story.

Jumper the Dragon

Jumper is a high-spirited green dragon. A male actor of some stature could play him, dressed up in a colorful green dragon costume. He should be sassy and aggressive, and all the characters should respond completely horrified and intimidated at his presence. Underneath his green scales, Jumper the Dragon is a pussycat with a lot of warmth who dislikes his job as Queen Thirteen's primary henchman. He actually helps to unify the evil-versus-good characters of the play, with an uncanny interpretation of the whole adventure. Jumper the Dragon is an unwilling participant on the scene, and he is definitely over the whole situation, wanting just to go back to his cave, blow smoke rings, and rest.

OFF-STAGE CHARACTERS

Mr. Whopperberg

He is the W.H.O.P. TV Station Manager, a gruff, crusty character who is Junie Moon's boss. She makes calls to him on her cell phone and refers to him in the dialogue as the motivating force of getting her story told.

Gloria Glamorude

The hard-hitting reporter a la Barbara Walters who is extremely gossipy, rude, and whose mention of exposure to Doctor George's Vanity-Ego-Reflector as the play begins is the moment that sparks the stories and adventures for Junie Moon.

Act 1 – Scene 1

Doctor George's Home in the U.S.A.

Act 1 – Scene 2

The Skies on the Way to Adventure

Act 1 – Scene 3

Experiencing Mermaid's Isle & the Pirates

Act 1 – Scene 4

Off to Rescue Junie Moon

**** Intermission ****

Act 2 – Scene 1

Thirteenland & The Source of True Evil

Time

The time shall be a comfortable, fantasy-dream-land present day period, perhaps somewhere in the early 21st Century. There should always be a sense of reverence for the future. “Once upon a time” applies to this story.

Setting

Doctor George's home in the land of the free, the United States of America, the skies on the way to Mermaid's Isle, the pirate's oceanic domain, and the fabulous, exotic Isle of Jaggar (a.k.a. Jaggar's Isle) home to King Jaggar, his misguided want-to-be-evil-terrorist wife, Queen Thirteen, a plethora of mischievous Fairies, and Jumper the Dragon.

ACT 1 – SCENE 1

Doctor George's Home in the U.S.A.

(MUSICAL OVERTURE COMPLETES, LIGHTS UP as the CURTAIN OPENS revealing the large ZEPPELIN CENTER STAGE. There are a few SMALL LAND MASSES with SHRUBS and TREE PROPS on STATIONARY WAGONS completing the setting. DOCTOR GEORGE ENTERS STAGE LEFT and CROSSES to CENTER STAGE. He is a crusty, lovable, older gentleman dressed in a baggy, but colorful vested suit. He looks as though he would fit comfortably into a long ago century. His ZEPPELIN, a large, cucumber shaped BALLOON, nearly fills the UPSTAGE area. NETS and dozens of ROPES support the GONDOLA which resembles a small SPANISH GALLEON, its BOW pointing OFF STAGE LEFT, and with an UPPER PILOT'S DECK, STAGE RIGHT. This is where we have the CAPTAIN'S STEERING WHEEL, CONTROL LEVERS, FLASHING LIGHTS, ENGINE PROPELLERS, and SMOKING, SQUEAKING PIPES. DOCTOR GEORGE is followed on from STAGE LEFT by a beautiful young in-your-face TV reporter by the name of JUNIE MOON, who brings with her a small VIDEO CAMERA. SEYMOUR and MAX, DOCTOR GEORGE'S first and second crew mates, are on the ZEPPELIN, preparing for departure. They run about making adjustments to the ROPES, MECHANISMS, etc. They are DOCTOR GEORGE'S young dashing helpers and companions, who honor him with their respect and faithful servitude)

JUNIE MOON

(Aggressive, news reporter attitude)

Doctor George, can I please have a word with you before you depart? Can't you tell me anything about this mysterious journey you're about to take? The public has a right to know! As a citizen of United States of America, and as an attractive, glamorous, rookie TV newscaster, I demand you give me a statement!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Polite, but sternly)

I'm sorry, Miss Moon, but if I were to reveal anything to you about this mission, then it would no longer be top secret! I am under a classified commission by the United States Government to carry out sensitive experiments. To tell you any more would undermine this entire enterprise. Is everything secure, Seymour? Max?

SEYMOUR

(Dashing about, doing bits of business)

Aye, aye, Doctor, she's ready to fly!

(Checking ENGINE PROPELLERS)

Propellers engaged and ready to crank!

(Goes to the ANCHOR)

Standing by to hoist anchor!

(MAX fiddles with DIALS and LEVERS, SMOKE and STEAM emits as CONTROL LIGHTS FLASH)

MAX

Propane heater units are fired up and ready to go, Doctor George! Ready when you two are!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Delighted)

Excellent! Prepare to hoist anchor!

JUNIE MOON

Doctor George, don't you remember Gloria Glamorude, our gossip reporter from W.H.O.P. TV who came by to see you and got a glimpse at that secret device of yours? It totally transformed her from a rude reporter into a female version of Mr. Rogers! She said she'd smear you across the airwaves if you didn't disclose your vacation plans or your secret weapons device.

DOCTOR GEORGE

What? Oh, yes, that insolent Gloria Glamorude—she got a peek at my top secret invention, even though I tried to stop her! She threatened to expose me naked before the public conscience! Imagine that! I sent her packing!

JUNIE MOON

Yes, you did, indeed! And when she returned to W.H.O.P. TV she went on the air talking about hearts and flowers instead of her normal in-your-face newscaster attack persona.

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Smiling, reflecting)

Hmm...I doubt she will be bothersome to anyone ever again...ha, ha, ha...what a relief that will be for everyone in the TV news casting profession. Serves her right! She accused me of being a closeted bed-wetter! Ha, ha! Nosey reporters like you and she are everywhere on the TV and in-your-face, as you say. Ugh! Appalling! Gives me the shudders!

JUNIE MOON

I must insist that you allow me to travel with you. The public has a right to know, top secret or not! What did happen to my co-reporter Gloria Glamorude, Doctor George?

DOCTOR GEORGE

No, Miss Moon, no!

JUNIE MOON

She had accused you further of being up to dirty tricks, wire tapping, and even receiving hush money for your incredible invention!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Haven't you heard a thing I've said to you? I said, "No!"

JUNIE MOON

Later, that same evening, on the 7:00 p.m. newscast at W.H.O.P. TV, she had been transformed into a 1960's flower child! Her iconoclastic image as a hard-nosed-in-your-face-newswoman had been totally ruined!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Annoyed)

Enough of this in-your-face bunk! Miss Moon, really, have you news people no scruples? If I were to reveal more than is generally known, then the safety of my dedicated crew and I would be in serious jeopardy.

(SEYMOUR and MAX show off for JUNIE MOON as she aims her VIDEO CAMERA at them. They make muscles and pose, etc.)

JUNIE MOON

Your crew members are quite entertaining.

(DOCTOR GEORGE glares at them and they return to duty)

Might I have a word with them?

DOCTOR GEORGE

Most emphatically not! Max! Seymour! Prepare for the ascent! The idea! Horsing around for the TV camera. To your posts! Miss Moon, do not attempt to board this vessel!

(DOCTOR GEORGE charges up the GANGPLANK CENTER STAGE and positions himself on the PILOT'S BRIDGE. MAX takes the CAPTAIN'S WHEEL as SEYMOUR loosens the MOORING ROPES. JUNIE MOON sneaks ONBOARD and approaches SEYMOUR near the GANGPLANK)

JUNIE MOON

Are you Mister Seymour?

SEYMOUR

(Impressed at being recognized by such a beauty)

Yes, Ma'am. Gosh, you sure are such a pretty lady! Am I going to be on TV? I've always wanted to be a TV person who's appearing with the beautifully rich and famous, celebrity TV people.

JUNIE MOON

Well, thank you for the compliment, Seymour. My name is Junie Moon. I'm a rookie TV newscaster intent on clawing my way to the top of the TV news business. And glamour does have its advantages.

(JUNIE MOON indicates the BEAUTY SPOT on her right cheek and bats her eyes at SEYMOUR seductively)

MAX

(Observing)

Behave yourself, Seymour

JUNIE MOON

I didn't earn this beauty spot on my cheek by schlepping around the TV studio getting hoots and whistles from the studio crew!

SEYMOUR

(Admiring the BEAUTY SPOT)

Hubba, hubba, girl, an actual beauty spot, just like Liz Taylor's! Now I'm twice as attracted to you as before!

JUNIE MOON

(Enjoying the compliment, demure)

Yes, yes, it's all a part of the game, sweetie—and it helps me get my stories when people are attracted to me.

(Calculating)

Yes, Seymour, dear, you will be on TV, but only if you can tell me about this mission of Doctor George's that's about to begin.

(Checking before speaking, SEYMOUR looks around secretively)

SEYMOUR

(Intimately)

Gee, uh...Junie Moon...I like your name—but Doctor George swore me to secrecy. I can tell you, however, that we are going to be traveling halfway around the world!

JUNIE MOON

You must be very brave.

SEYMOUR

(Blushing)

Oh, yes, ma'am, thank you ma'am—Miss—Ms. Junie Moon...On the Isle of Jaggar we hope to—oops—it just slipped out....

JUNIE MOON

(With VIDEO CAMERA poised and ready)

The Isle of Jaggar? Oh! You mean Jaggar's Isle! Uh huh, go on, you were saying?

SEYMOUR

(Feeling awkward, worried)

Golly, please don't tell anyone I told you where we're headed or Doctor George will skin me alive! See you later TV lady, Miss...Ms. Junie Moon. I wish we could take you with us but it's much too dangerous. Now get off our zeppelin because I have to hoist up the gangplank. Hurry, before Doctor George notices you!

(She charges quickly off the vessel, then boldly turns around at the bottom)

JUNIE MOON

I live for danger, Mr. Seymour!

(SEYMOUR has begun his readiness duties, pulling, and checking ROPES, etc. He ignores her and JUNIE MOON turns away from him in frustration)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Is everything secure, men?

JUNIE MOON

(Talking to herself)

I simply can't miss out on an opportunity to document this adventure. It could change the world, and there might even be a promotion in it for me! A stepping stone to superstardom!

(JUNIE MOON sneaks back ONBOARD before SEYMOUR has a chance to pull in the PLANK. She hides inside a large PICKLE BARREL, LEFT OF CENTER pulling it closed with a short ROPE attached to the underside of the LID. It is near some CRATES which the characters can leap upon from time to time in order to pontificate)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Seymour! Haven't you hoisted the anchor yet? Max and I are impatiently waiting!

(SEYMOUR pulls in the GANGPLANK)

SEYMOUR

Sorry, Sir, I'd forgotten to pull in the plank first—and then comes the anchor.

(Hoisting the ANCHOR)

I've got it now, Sir! Ready for lift-off!

MAX

(Amused)

You were flirting with that sexy TV reporter, Seymour. I saw you!

SEYMOUR

Shh! Mind your own business, Max!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Miffed at their interest)

Oh, blast! I hope that nosy wench is gone! Has that rookie TV news gal departed?

SEYMOUR

I chased her away before I hoisted in the gangplank, Doctor George, Sir. Up, up, and away!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Excellent!

(He puts his finger to the wind)

The skies are clear, the wind's at our back. Let's have lift-off!

MAX

Aye, aye, Doctor George, Sir!

(MUSIC SWELLS as MAX and SEYMOUR throw SWITCHES, making CONTROL LIGHTS FLASH, SMOKE and STEAM BLOW, PROPELLERS SPIN, until off they go into the SKY via LIGHTING and DESCENDING PROP / PROJECTED CLOUD EFFECTS. The illusion of FORWARD MOVEMENT is helped when the few SMALL LAND MASSES with SHRUBS and TREES ROLL OFF STAGE RIGHT along with the CLOUDS. The OFF STAGE LEFT FAN can create the WIND EFFECTS when the ZEPPELIN is SAILING FORWARD THROUGH THE SKIES. LIGHTING EFFECTS and ACTION CONTINUE INTO ACT 1 – SCENE 2)

ACT 1 – SCENE 2

The Skies on the Way to Adventure

(MUSIC FADES. They are ALOFT. The OFF STAGE LEFT FAN continuously whips up a gentle BREEZE. A few BIRDS fly by on invisible wires DOWN STAGE LEFT to RIGHT. A STORK carrying a SWADDLED BABY from its beak also passes by. MAX is noticing these events)

MAX

(Mesmerized)

Look, Doctor George, someone's expecting!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(At the CAPTAIN'S WHEEL, he steps away to observe)

Ah, new life beginning. Isn't it exhilarating? Take the wheel, Max, we've reached cruising speed! Man the controls, Seymour!

SEYMOUR

(Taking MAX'S position at the CONTROLS)

Yes, Sir, thank you, Sir! Isn't the world beautiful from up above? It's so peaceful up here. I wish it were always that way on the ground. I wouldn't mind being a bird at all if I weren't so afraid of heights!

(He jumps back from the RAILING, fearfully, doing a double take)

Oh! It makes me dizzy looking down!

(DOCTOR GEORGE is at the BOW of the ZEPPELIN, scanning the earth below with his small TELESCOPE)

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Standing proudly)

It's the fear that men harbor which creates all the violence in the world. Only the quest for truth and knowledge can release mankind from his prison of ignorance. Face up to your fears, Seymour, and look down upon the Earth in its entire glorious splendor and you will soon be set free to explore the universe of the soul!

SEYMOUR

Oh, I'm okay as long as I don't hang over the side and look down.

(He peeks over the RAILING again)

Oh, what an incredible rush that is!

(He takes a few deep breaths and goes back to his CONTROLS and LEVERS)

I think I need a little break from that entire splendid look over the side.

(He gets a little wobbly in the legs before righting himself)

Oh, help me.

MAX

You sure are a wise man, Doctor George, and you sure are a silly ass, Seymour! We've been flying this zeppelin for months! You should be over your fear of heights by now.

SEYMOUR

How do you conquer your fears, Doctor George?

DOCTOR GEORGE

(With exhilaration)

Take a deep breath. Look fear straight in the eye. Allow the universe to envelope you with the light and spirit of being. For it is at that very moment that anything and everything wonderful is possible!

(SEYMOUR, inspired, takes a few deep breaths and dashes towards the side RAILING, clutching it while looking down, but he suddenly faints and falls backwards to the deck with fear and trembling)

SEYMOUR

(Dizzy, rising to his feet)

Whew! I sure am glad I have this zeppelin deck beneath my feet! As long as we have it to keep us aloft, I'm not afraid anymore, I don't think.

(He grimaces)

DOCTOR GEORGE

(With warmth)

And, oh, what a Magnificent Zeppelin it is, too!

(The music begins for the song "DOCTOR GEORGE'S MAGNIFICENT ZEPPELIN" and DOCTOR GEORGE begins to sing)

I'm Doctor George and this is my Magnificent Zeppelin / We're sailing high, so high, up into the sky / With Seymour and Max along an adventure is imminent / So come along with us along with us and your spirit will fly / We will take her up and spin around, don't worry about a thing / With Seymour and Max right by our sides we then can really sing / I'm Doctor George and this is my Magnificent Zeppelin, so come along...

MAX & SEYMOUR

So come along...

DOCTOR GEORGE

So come along. We're flying high...

MAX & SEYMOUR

We're flying high...

DOCTOR GEORGE

So very high. So high, so high...

MAX & SEYMOUR

So high, so high...

DOCTOR GEORGE

So very high...

MAX & SEYMOUR

So very high...

DOCTOR GEORGE, MAX, & SEYMOUR

Up into the skies!

(Repeat from the beginning, MUSIC ONLY, as they DANCE and CAVORT about. JUNIE MOON slyly sneaks out from inside her PICKLE BARREL hideaway and begins VIDEOGRAPHING them awkwardly DANCING. MAX and SEYMOUR sing a SECOND VERSE, DANCING TOGETHER, as DOCTOR GEORGE claps his hands, standing aside, somewhat winded)

MAX & SEYMOUR

He's Doctor George and this is his Magnificent Zeppelin / He's flying high, so high, right clear through the skies / With us along we're sure to encounter adventures / So have no fears and soar with us through the air / We will fly about doing loop-de-loops, throwing away our cares / We're the greatest crew he's ever had and that is why we share / He's Doctor George and this is his Magnificent Zeppelin / So come along...

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Joining in the singing)

So come along...

MAX & SEYMOUR

So come along. We're flying high...

DOCTOR GEORGE

We're flying high...

MAX & SEYMOUR

So very high. So high, so high...

DOCTOR GEORGE

So high, so high...

MAX & SEYMOUR

So very high...

DOCTOR GEORGE

So very high...

DOCTOR GEORGE, MAX, & SEYMOUR

Up into the skies!

(JUNIE MOON dashes back and gets inside the PICKLE BARREL as SEYMOUR begins SWABBING the DECK with a MOP and BUCKET. JUNIE MOON peeks out at him from her hiding place. Each time he catches a glimpse of her, she ducks back inside the PICKLE BARREL. This little charade continues for a few short moments until SEYMOUR casually goes over to the PICKLE BARREL and lifts up the LID to peek inside. JUNIE MOON pokes her head up and he pretends not to notice her)

SEYMOUR

Yummy yum, yum, what tasty pickles have we here? Doctor George! Max?

(JUNIE MOON looks about desperately and then scrunches up even tighter so as not to be seen, though it is already too late. She continues poking her head out and peeking up at him from her hiding place while he catches glimpses of her. Finally, in desperation, JUNIE MOON places a PICKLE directly in his hand. SEYMOUR takes a bite, crunching it and enjoying the taste, then walks a few steps away from her)

Golly, these pickles are great! I could eat them all!

(He turns and winks at her, and startled, she ducks back inside the PICKLE BARREL again. SEYMOUR casually goes over to the PICKLE BARREL, lifts up the LID, exposing JUNIE MOON who peeks out at him looking worried, waving her hand for him to be quiet)

JUNIE MOON

Shh, please, Mr. Seymour, please don't tell Doctor George I sneaked on board—you'll give me away!

SEYMOUR

Ms. Moon, Doctor George can be very severe whenever anyone is caught spying on one of his secret missions.

JUNIE MOON

Please forgive me, Mr. Seymour, I know it was wrong of me, but I just couldn't miss out on an opportunity like this. You won't tell on me, will you?

SEYMOUR

But I must! It is my duty to inform him. I could be discharged for harboring a spy.

JUNIE MOON

But I'm not a spy! I'm a rookie documentary news reporter for W.H.O.P. TV on a very important assignment! Mr. Whopperberg, the station manager, sent me himself! Don't forget about my colleague Gloria Glamorude—Doctor George's invention transformed her—remember? She's sitting under a tree somewhere right now sucking daisies, thanks to him!

SEYMOUR

(Haughtily)

Ha! A likely story at best! How can I be certain that what you tell me is true? What proof can I have to verify this claim of yours?

(She holds up her VIDEO CAMERA. SEYMOUR adjusts his hair with spit in order to feel sexier)

JUNIE MOON

My expensive broadcast quality video camera, for one thing.

(She lifts the I.D. BADGE dangling from her neck)

Here's my W.H.O.P. TV I.D. badge, and--

(She reaches into a small SHOULDER BAG that she carries with her, pulling out a PACKET of PRESS PASSES and CREDIT CARDS)

--my credit cards and, most important, my many press-passes!

(They unfold before his eyes)

What more proof could you possibly need?

SEYMOUR

(Squinting, concentrating, examining the evidence)

Hmmm, I guess this proves you're not a foreign agent bent on the domination and destruction of the world as we know it—or does it? At least you seem to be from this country. You are a citizen of the Land-of-the-Free, aren't you?

JUNIE MOON

Of course I'm a citizen of the United States of America! Isn't it obvious? These half-dozen credit cards prove that alone! Americans are up to their eyebrows in debt!

SEYMOUR

(Nodding his head, thinking carefully)

Hmm, yes...the credit cards, naturally. That makes things clearer.

JUNIE MOON

(Relieved)

I take it this means you'll help me out and not toss me over the side wearing a parachute?

(Glancing over the railing, she gulps)

But to make things worse, we're flying over the ocean now!

SEYMOUR

(Hesitating, continuing to tease her)

Parachute? We only brought enough for three. I doubt if we could spare one as they're meant for us and our safety in an emergency. You'll just have to do without a parachute!

JUNIE MOON

Surely Doctor George wouldn't even consider such a barbaric act! I'll need a boat, too!

SEYMOUR

(Matter of fact)

And since we are over the ocean, you won't honestly need a parachute anyway, as you can just do a swan dive over the side and swim back to shore! One never knows about such things. When you're airborne, you have to obey the law of the skies.

JUNIE MOON

Which are?

SEYMOUR

(Shrugging)

Anything goes!

(Shocked, she throws her arms around him)

JUNIE MOON

Oh, Seymour, I beg of you, please don't turn me in to Doctor George, I'll do anything you ask of me! Besides, Mr. Seymour, I'm afraid of flying.

(She swoons, shuddering as she glances over the side again)

Oh! Ugh, and heights, and water! You, see, I fell off my grandfather's knee when I was a child....

(Dizzily, clutching him tightly)

Oh, I think I'm going to be sick!

SEYMOUR

(Thoughtfully)

This is certainly a coincidence.

JUNIE MOON

Are you going to be sick, too?

SEYMOUR

(Comforting)

No, nothing like that, Miss Moon, it's just that we both seem to have the same things in common.

(DOCTOR GEORGE has been on the BRIDGE, scanning the skies with his TELESCOPE. MAX controls the CAPTAIN'S WHEEL.)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Clear skies ahead, by thunder! We're out over the seas on the way to Jaggar's Isle!

(Crossing to MAX)

Max! Give me the captain's wheel and fetch me a treat! I'm simply dying.

MAX

(Horrified)

Surely not, Sir! If you're ill, maybe we should call a doctor!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Miffed, then more forcefully)

Dying for a little snack! Blast it all, Max, I'm not dying, you twit! I've a hankering for a fresh dill pickle! And I'll have you know that I am a doctor, so I know how to take care of myself, or my name isn't Doctor George, by thunder!

MAX

(Sheepishly)

I'm sorry, Sir, of course you're a doctor, Sir. By thunder it is, Sir.

DOCTOR GEORGE

And we don't have a telephone on board this vessel, so nobody's calling anyone. We haven't a radio or cell phone, either. You can't believe in them—our mission is top secret, and we cannot be sending out signals that might be picked up by the enemies of our great nation, which we are defending independently, and secretly, completely on our own—even the United States Government doesn't know the entirety of our plans! It is ours and ours alone--I'm speaking of our mission to save the world from evil, destruction, and all animal, vegetable, mineral, creature, being, and personal, catastrophic, environmental terrorism!

(He gasps)

MAX

Guess I forgot. Gee, Doctor, that was a mouthful—animal, vegetable, mineral, what?

(Scratching his head)

Um, gee, what was it again you wanted me to do, Sir?

DOCTOR GEORGE

It's time for a treat! Aren't you a wee bit hungry, too, Max, my boy?

MAX

Yes, Sir, indeed, Sir.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Good! Then won't you please be so kind as to allow me to take over the captain's wheel whilst you fetch us both a couple of fresh dill pickles from that pickle barrel over there?

(MAX salutes, standing at attention before springing to action)

MAX

Yes, Sir, your doctor-ness, Sir! Two dill pickles coming up!

(Hesitating, he dashes to the CONTROLS)

Just let me finish my adjustments and calculations for our propane hot air generator, first.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Blast it, Max, I can take care of that! Snap to it, my boy, I need that fresh dill pickle now! I'm famished!

(Nervously, reluctant to leave the CONTROLS, MAX shuffles back and forth with indecision)

MAX

But, Sir, it'll blow if I don't, uh, the hot air levels on these gizmos are dangerously high! And we don't know if she can take these pressures!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Interrupting)

Don't be insolent, Max! I built all these controls and gizmo's and I know how they work! Bring me a pickle now and don't dilly-dally! I'm feeling faint and need a pickle to boost my metabolism posthaste!

MAX

Yes, Sir, yes, Sir, right away, Sir!

(MAX drops what he was trying to do with the CONTROLS and rushes to the PICKLE BARREL where JUNIE MOON has been hiding. DOCTOR GEORGE manages to bumble a bit and make a few awkward mistakes causing SMOKE and STEAM to emit. He reacts with alarm, jumping around while trying to steer the CAPTAIN'S WHEEL, which is difficult while adjusting the CONTROLS. As MAX approaches the PICKLE BARREL, SEYMOUR turns to JUNIE MOON who has been clandestinely watching the preceding's)

SEYMOUR

Quick! Get back inside the pickle barrel!

(She pulls the LID closed. SEYMOUR then whistles a tune, dusts with a RAG, adjusts ROPEs carelessly, and finally has an awkward time with his MOP and BUCKET. All the while, MAX struggles to open the PICKLE BARREL, but JUNIE MOON keeps it shut by pulling on the ROPE inside. MAX'S struggle to open the PICKLE BARREL can trade off with SEYMOUR'S unsuccessful attempts with the various props)

MAX

(Frustrated, exhausted)

Seymour, will you help me with this confounded pickle barrel? The lid's stuck and I can't open it!

SEYMOUR

(Suddenly macho, forgetting about JUNIE MOON'S plight)

Stand aside, Max, and let a real man show you how it's done!

MAX

(Offended)

A real man? Are you insinuating that I'm not man enough for the job?

(SEYMOUR, wanting to impress JUNIE MOON, struts about puffing up his chest)

SEYMOUR

(Reflecting, self centered)

Not at all, my friend, but if you wanna impress the ladies, ya gotta show 'em a little beef, eh? Rise to the occasion, so to speak!

(SEYMOUR raises his eyebrows up and down with a confident smirk)

MAX

(Highly amused)

Oh, Seymour, come on, this is Max you're talking to, mate.

(SEYMOUR starts off with the OIL CAN, in which he generously lubricates the LID, but shooting and spilling some OIL over the side RAILING into the ocean. DOCTOR GEORGE witnesses this act and is alarmed)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Good, God, Seymour! Don't spill that filthy oil over the side into the ocean below!

SEYMOUR

But I was trying to—I needed to....

DOCTOR GEORGE

Don't you know that oil and water don't mix? Are you single handedly trying to destroy the ocean's environment?

SEYMOUR

Golly, Sir, I'm sorry! I don't want to disturb the sea creatures!

DOCTOR GEORGE

May I remind you, Seymour, my child, that this secret mission of ours is out to thwart terrorists! Including environmental terrorists!

SEYMOUR

Gee, I was just trying to get the lid off to get you a pickle. I'm not a child, Sir.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Selfish, inconsiderate, thoughtless deeds are the acts of children!

MAX

(Gloating, stifling laughter)

You're a man-child, Seymour, a terrorist man-child, ha, ha.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Enough nonsense! Return to your previous assignment to fetch me a pickle—but please, no more naughty pranks or mistakes!

MAX

You heard the good Doctor, Seymour.

(SEYMOUR mutters, puts the OIL CAN aside, and then tries every technique that MAX had tried but still fails to open the PICKLE BARREL. He begins speaking to JUNIE MOON in a harsh whisper)

SEYMOUR

Geez, Louise, you can let go, now. Miss Moon, it's just me, Seymour, your friend, remember?

(Chortling nervously)

She's tougher than I thought! Don't worry, guys, I can get it! She can't stop the courageous Seymour, manly man among men!

MAX

You mean, man-child among men, don't you?

DOCTOR GEORGE

Remember, Seymour, It's better to have tried and failed, than to have not tried at all.

MAX

(Heckling)

Failure is not an option, try, Seymour, try, lest you fail...psst, fail, fail you fool!

JUNIE MOON

(Whispering back desperately)

Psst! Seymour! Have you lost your mind? You'll give me away! I'm hiding here! I don't want to be thrown into the ocean without a parachute!

MAX

She? She, who? Are you talking to us, Seymour?

SEYMOUR

Did I say she? Just a figure of speech is all that is, Max. You know, just like the zeppelin. She's a great zeppelin, ain't she?

MAX

(Proudly admiring)

Yes, I see, Seymour. She's a great, magnificent zeppelin, isn't she, Seymour? What about dill pickle barrels, then?

SEYMOUR

Well....

(Indicating the PICKLE BARREL)

She's a great, magnificent dill pickle barrel, of course, Max!

MAX

(Shaking his head)

Yeah, I guess. If you say so.

SEYMOUR

Of course I say so. I wouldn't lie about a thing like that would I, Max?

MAX

(Shrugging, dryly sarcastic)

No, I guess not. But she's still not open!

SEYMOUR

(Imitating sarcasm)

Very well, then, I must say? Let's try her again, shall we, Max?

(Once again, SEYMOUR tries every trick in the book to try and get the PICKLE BARREL open. Then MAX tries to tug at it with him)

MAX

(Puzzled)

That's a mighty feisty pickle barrel. Let me try loosening the lid again, Seymour.

(Miffed)

If the pickle barrel's a she, then are the pickles inside of it all he's? Pickles are cucumbers after all, and their shape is--well, unusual, don't you think?

(MAX grabs at the HANDLE on the LID and tugs, but SEYMOUR pushes him away)

SEYMOUR

Not so fast, I can do it!

(Rubbing his hands together)

Guess I need a little elbow grease.

(He grabs the OIL CAN and oils the LID, then, rubbing his own elbows with oil, he begins speaking loudly to the BARREL)

Gee, I wonder if there are any dill pickles in you after all, Mr. Barrel, Sir. It'd sure be a shame if there weren't any, being as how we've all been working up quite an appetite trying to pull your lid off!

MAX

Pickle barrels can't talk, Seymour. Duh.

(SEYMOUR puts his arm around MAX, stepping away)

SEYMOUR

Max, you don't suppose Doctor George's enemies or a spy could have eaten all the delicious pickles inside this pickle barrel and have sealed it shut to protect the secret hiding place of the transmitting devices inside?

MAX

(Thoughtfully, distracted)

Spies? I seriously doubt that, Seymour. I don't think Doctor George has any enemies on board. We are off to Jaggar's Isle to fight the terrorist enemies of mankind, however—what are you getting at?

(JUNIE MOON pops open the LID with ease, handing SEYMOUR a big PICKLE. MAX doesn't see the exchange, but is suspicious when he notices SEYMOUR doing a double take)

SEYMOUR

(Fidgeting guiltily)

What? Oops! Oh, hmm. Silly me, uh, now, I'm going to, hmm....

(SEYMOUR steps quickly to the side concealing her as she pulls the LID shut. He grins sheepishly at the very suspicious MAX)

MAX

Are you up to something?

SEYMOUR

Here you are, Max, pal, a nice big salty green fresh one. I've never seen such a fat juicy dill pickle!

(MAX carefully inspects the PICKLE)

MAX

(Convinced of its authenticity)

Yes, indeed it is, Seymour. A delicious example from the deli in Pickle Heaven. I was wrong to doubt you. Thanks! Gee, it's large enough to make all the girls blush!

SEYMOUR

(Stifling gasp)

I don't think I know what you mean, Max.

(MAX takes his PICKLE to the BRIDGE, munching on it as he approaches DOCTOR GEORGE. SEYMOUR wipes the sweat from his brow and sits down on the RAILING, forgetting his fear of heights. He sighs with relief before recalling his fear and then leaps to the DECK. MAX is munching on his delicious PICKLE when he meets DOCTOR GEORGE who glares at him for forgetting to bring him one, too. MAX does an about face and returns to the BARREL for another PICKLE. JUNIE MOON lifts the LID open, just enough to extend her arm, and hands him another PICKLE to take to DOCTOR GEORGE. MAX takes it without thinking and starts back to the BRIDGE. He is halfway there when he suddenly reacts with a jolt, stops in his tracks, and stares at the big green DILL PICKLE in his hand)

MAX

(Puzzled)

Huh? Gosh! Did I see what I just saw?

(Rethinking carefully)

Amazing, prying open that lid was easier than I thought. I must have had an adrenaline rush of strength. Guess I'm quite the man after all, eh, Seymour? Run for cover, ladies, here I come!

(He climbs up the STEPS to the BRIDGE with speed, flexing his muscles. He hands DOCTOR GEORGE his PICKLE)

Here ya go, Doc. If you have other assignments requiring feats of strength, let me know!

(DOCTOR GEORGE nervously bumbles at the CONTROLS which are totally out of whack, SMOKING, WHISTLING, and POPPING)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Yes, you're back, thank Heaven, dear boy, I need you at the controls, now! I seem to be having a little trouble!

(Not yet comprehending the emergency situation, MAX continues to puff up and flex his muscles proudly)

MAX

Trouble? Yes, Sir, I know what you mean, Sir. Perhaps you noticed how I managed to open that pickle barrel singlehanded! I'm at your command, Doctor. What tasks have you to assign me with that will require a well toned individual such as me?

(He hands him the pickle)

That pickle barrel sure contains scrumptious treats within, it's a very friendly sort of barrel and I—huh? Wait a minute?

(Distracted from the emergency, DOCTOR GEORGE takes a bite of the PICKLE)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Delicious, this is a tasty treat, most definitely! Gentlemen, I have to agree with the both of you, she's a mighty generous pickle barrel to be sure!

MAX

Sir? I think maybe the barrel is alive!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Oh, how nice for the pickle barrel. Now, about these pressure gauges. I've been resetting some of them, and—

MAX

—Resetting? Oh, no, Sir!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Why, yes, I thought we needed more pressure and I—

MAX

--But, Sir!

(There is an EXPLOSION of SMOKE, STEAM, and FLASHING LIGHTS, all POPPING and CRACKLING at the SPATTERING MECHANISMS and GIZMOS. They jump back at first and then try to regain control. JUNIE MOON pops out from inside the PICKLE BARREL, gets out of it and begins VIDEOGRAPHING the turmoil, while SEYMOUR rushes over to help DOCTOR GEORGE and MAX at the BRIDGE. To keep the excitement going the dialogue should be overlapping)

DOCTOR GEORGE

What, by thunder, have I done?

MAX

You busted a valve—get me a wrench, quick!

SEYMOUR

Merciful Heavens, the zeppelin will crash if we don't fix it!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Let me take the wheel!

MAX

Doctor George, help me with this valve, it's stuck!

SEYMOUR

Let me take the wheel, Doctor George, go and help Max with that stuck valve!

JUNIE MOON

That's it! That's what I like to see! Plenty of action! Max! Seymour! Show me what you've got! Doctor George, give me a nice profile, come on—puff out your chest, be daring--careful, not too much man-boob. Easy on the man-boob, Doctor George.

DOCTOR GEORGE

I'm not a man-boob, Seymour! Why do you insult me?

SEYMOUR

It wasn't me! I didn't refer to your boobs, Sir.

MAX

Help me tighten this valve, Doctor George, it's a tough one!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Befuddled, near useless)

What? Did somebody else say something? Who's talking to me?

SEYMOUR

Max, hurry up, tighten that valve and reset the gauges or we'll lose all the hot air pressure and our zeppelin will crash!

(Moving around skillfully, positioning herself for better coverage, JUNIE MOON continues to VIDEOGRAPH the excitement)

JUNIE MOON

This'll be the big news item of the week! Flex those biceps, boys!

MAX

(Urgently)

Doctor George, I'm talking to you. Help me, please—grab hold of the wrench!

SEYMOUR

(Getting really panicky)

We're losing altitude! I want my Mama! I'm sorry I wouldn't eat my spinach, Mama!

JUNIE MOON

(Jockeying for position)

Stand aside, Seymour, I need to get a tighter shot of Doctor George!

SEYMOUR

(Freaking out)

Can you ever forgive me, Mama? I tried, Mama, Oh, how I tried!

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Gathering courage)

Never fear, Max! I have everything under control! Am I hearing voices? Tighter shot of what?

JUNIE MOON

Suck in that gut and show me some pecks, Doctor George!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Pecks? Some pecks? A peck of what, Max?

JUNIE MOON

Now you're kicking it up a notch! Hey, Doc, does this accident mean the mission will have to be aborted?

(Racing around, totally unnerved, SEYMOUR fruitlessly tries to pull it together)

SEYMOUR

Guys, hurry up and fix this thing, or we're all doomed!

(MAX'S confidence helps begin to calm the MECHANISMS)

MAX

I think I've almost got it! Stand aside, Doctor George! Let me do it!

JUNIE MOON

Doctor George, do your crew members have a health plan, or carry life and casualty insurance?

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Befuddled, confused)

Max, did you say something to me? I swear I'm hearing voices!

JUNIE MOON

(Aggressively)

In the event there are any survivors, Doctor George, do you expect them to sue you for damages?

(Focusing her VIDEO CAMERA for a close-up)

SEYMOUR

(Resigned, hands positioned in prayer)

Dear God, I know I haven't always been a good boy, but if you could find it in your heart to forgive me for not eating my spinach as a child, I know it would make Mama very happy. And I just want to say, I'd like to reside on a cloud in Heaven that's not quite as high as we are now.

DOCTOR GEORGE

I must be losing my mind. Yes, yes, by God, we have insurance!

MAX

Just a few more twists, Doctor George, and we're home free.

(Still breathing heavily, puzzling the situation, SEYMOUR, too, realizes that things are coming under control)

SEYMOUR

Hey, Max, good—boy, I think we've passed the danger point, she's coming around.

JUNIE MOON

Doctor George, can we now safely assume that the mission will continue as originally planned?

DOCTOR GEORGE

Yes, yes, I think we've recovered from our little mishap, eh boys? And of course we plan to—young lady, how did you manage to get on board?

(SEYMOUR goes to her side and puts his arm around her)

MAX

(Shocked)

Sir, there's a female onboard!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Quite so!

SEYMOUR

Please, sir, it was my own doing. I allowed her to sneak on board. I hid her inside the pickle barrel.

MAX

(Dryly sarcastically)

Ah, the mysterious pickle barrel gag! Now I get it! Very clever, Seymour.

SEYMOUR

You couldn't have done it without me, Max, so button up, there's a lady present.

JUNIE MOON

(Pleading)

I beg you, dear Doctor, do not throw me over the side. Have mercy, please, my intentions are entirely honorable. If Mr. Whopperberg at W.H.O.P. TV allows me to sell my video to the networks I'll give you a fifty percent split! We stand to rake in a generous amount of money which can easily help offset the cost of this secret mission of yours.

MAX

Hooray! Now I can afford to go back to college and become what I was meant to be!

SEYMOUR

Which is?

MAX

A rocket scientist! Zeppelins are so passé. They went out with the Hindenburg. Poof!

(Indicating an explosion)

I need a challenge.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Your offer is most generous, Miss Moon, but never mind about that just now, we'll discuss the details later.

(During this speech, SEYMOUR and MAX are quietly strutting, puffing up their chests, behaving possessively, and giving each other looks as if to say, lay off JUNIE MOON, she's mine)

JUNIE MOON

Look at your crew, Doctor, they want me to come along.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Boys, cut it out! We've not time to turn back, young lady, and you are a pest--I probably should throw you overboard!

SEYMOUR

(Shocked)

No, dear Doctor, no!

MAX

Gee, that's really harsh, even for you, Doctor George.

JUNIE MOON

Surely you must be reasonable, Doctor! It would be horrible to toss me over the side. If I drowned it would be murder!

SEYMOUR

(Begging)

Doctor George, no, no, you can't mean this—please spare her life!

MAX

(Assessing the situation)

Seymour may be right, Doctor. Murdering someone goes against all your mission's principles. We don't want to kill disagreeable persons, just reform them peacefully, don't we?

SEYMOUR

Listen to Max, Doctor George, Ms. Moon is not an evil person, or even a terrorist for that matter!

JUNIE MOON

Honestly, Doctor George, I only want to help your mission by documenting it. It's a golden opportunity to raise awareness for conflicts all over the world. Have mercy on me, dear Doctor, please!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Blast! You reporters are all alike! You make sense out of nonsense!

JUNIE MOON

(Meekly)

Just think how great it would be to have our own TV Special of the Week.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Like on PBS?

(Grumbling)

Oh, you mean that horrible Whopperberg channel, hmm, bah!

SEYMOUR

Mercy, Doctor, please, mercy.

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Shaking his head)

It goes against my civilized nature to be deliberately cruel.

(He grimaces at JUNIE MOON)

You may continue to document this mission.

SEYMOUR

Hooray! We'll be famous!

MAX

We'll be stars! Junie Moon and I, together at last!

SEYMOUR

Junie Moon, my sweet, I know you and I will last forever!

MAX

Come with me, Miss Moon, let us run off to the Casbar, together!

(They make a grab for her and clutch JUNIE MOON possessively, both attempting to pull her aside)

SEYMOUR

I got first dibs! I saw her first!

MAX

That's not fair! You're older, Seymour! Why don't you let us little guys with enough brains to go to college have a chance?

(Breaking free of both of them)

JUNIE MOON

Sorry to disappoint you boys, but I have other plans. There's an important mission here to document on video and that comes first. Doctor George, for starters, exactly where are we headed, sir?

DOCTOR GEORGE

To the ancient Isle of Jaggar, Land of the Fairies, to test out my secret invention which I hope will save the world from the evils of terrorism, fascism, and environmental abuses including all intolerable animal, vegetable, and mineral rights abuses. And of course, let us not forget, we will thwart the total spiritual destruction and annihilation of our planets citizens!

JUNIE MOON

How ambitious! What kind of invention is it, Doctor?

DOCTOR GEORGE

It's a special computerized mirror I call the Vanity-Ego-Reflector. Anyone who stares into its depths sees themselves exactly as they are—unmasked and naked before the universe. It's digital!

(MAX and SEYMOUR gush with excitement)

SEYMOUR

Digital?

MAX

Yes, digital.

SEYMOUR

Really? Super dooper electronic!

MAX

Magnetic, and radioactive, Doctor George?

SEYMOUR

How fabulous! Wow! I get it!

JUNIE MOON

(Skeptical)

Digital? I didn't think you were interested in digital things, Doctor George. You don't even have a cell phone!

(JUNIE MOON whips out her CELL PHONE to make a call)

Excuse me, Doctor George, I need to make a call to Mr. Whopperberg, the station manager at W.H.O.P. TV. I need to let him know our plans.

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Interrupting)

Don't make that call, Ms. Moon. Throw it over the side, quickly--we need to have our plans remain secret!

(JUNIE MOON thinks about this, hesitates, then fakes throwing it over the side, secretly tucking it back into her pocket)

JUNIE MOON

No more cell phone, Doctor. Gone! All gone, see?

(She shows her empty hands to everyone and smiles boldly. Satisfied that the cell phone is no more, DOCTOR GEORGE begins to explain his invention to them)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Digital? Twits! It's what all modern inventions use! If it's digital, then it has to be great! And all of my inventions are great!

(JUNIE MOON, SEYMOUR, and MAX gasp with incredulity. DOCTOR GEORGE shrugs and continues speaking to them almost reluctantly and matter-of-factly)

Corrupt and evil beings, and terrorist type persons, are instantly humbled when they see themselves as they truly are deep inside themselves! Don't forget about your gossipy reporter at W.H.O.P. TV —Ms. Gloria Glamorude—she will be rude no more! Ha, ha!

(Growing confident in his explanation of goals for the invention)

Gazing into it, sinister beings at once recognize the need to change their evil ways for a healthy, happy, compassionate, and peaceful lifestyle. Imagine living without prejudice, in complete harmony, peace, and alignment with all the living beings and fantasy creatures of the Earth! The world will become a paradise, a Heaven-on-Earth, as it were.

(He looks about mystically)

Of, course, as a Heaven concept, then somehow your favorite deity will have to be included, because we don't wish to exclude any spiritual quest others may wish to ponder. Yes, the Heavens are full of deities.

JUNIE MOON

Okay, doc, I got you. It's digital, yes, but what's its source of power? Deities in Heaven, or does it come with batteries?

DOCTOR GEORGE

(Gravely)

The source of its power is dark matter. Yes, indeed, the very substance that holds the universe together, by thunder! I'm the first inventor ever to harness its energy!

JUNIE MOON

Dark matter? Oh, yes, the thing astronomers, scientists, and physics professors contemplate.

SEYMOUR

I might like to work as a scientist someday. Will I need schooling, or can I just learn it on my own, like you, Doctor George? Where did you get your scientific ideas from, anyway?

DOCTOR GEORGE

From years, upon years, of personal sacrifice and study, Seymour, don't be insolent.

SEYMOUR

Forgive me, Sir, but honestly, where did you get all these wacky ideas?

DOCTOR GEORGE

Wacky? Coming from you, I'm sure that seems sensible. For your information, Seymour, I attended many, many universities and colleges for many, many years. My knowledge led me to the creation of my invention to save the world from evil.

JUNIE MOON

Great! That wacky invention ought to be a big seller among the politicians, the military industrial complex, and the soldiers everywhere fighting the evils of terrorists wreaking pointless havoc worldwide—that's genius, Doctor!

MAX

What will our religious leaders think, Doctor George? People of all nations worship so many deity varieties. Most don't like a scientific approach to conflict, especially the conflicts each of us have within ourselves.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Yes, Max, that is correct. And that's the secret of dark matter. It dwells within the entire universe, and it dwells within our very soul.

MAX

Jesus Christ said that Heaven is within. Was he speaking about Heaven being where this dark matter exists?

DOCTOR GEORGE

In my opinion, yes, but the secrets of dark matter are still just that; secrets.

JUNIE MOON

Keep talking, Doc, and you'll beat them all with the power of dark matter! Their evil minds will be reversed forever. Sensational!

SEYMOUR

Deity? What's that?

MAX

Gee whiz, Seymour—The Man upstairs—I give up!

SEYMOUR

Upstairs?

(Ignoring his crew's remarks, he continues)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Precisely, Miss Moon, with dark matter powering my device, terrorists, dictators, fascists, sociopaths, and criminals whose egotistical ineptitudes always result in revolutions, war, and violence, will be humbled, rest assured!

(CANNON FIRE, FLAMES and SMOKE shoots forth loudly as a prop CANNON BALL ENTERS STAGE LEFT and sails through the air, tearing through the ZEPPELIN'S BALLOON, leaving a LARGE HOLE. DOCTOR GEORGE grabs his TELESCOPE)

MAX

Doctor George, someone has shot a hole in the zeppelin! What shall we do?

DOCTOR GEORGE

Oh, my stars! Just as I thought! We've been cruising so low over the ocean because of our mishap that Captain Bandit the pirate has managed to hit us with cannon fire! Max, stay at the wheel while Seymour climbs up the ropes to sew up the tear!

SEYMOUR

(Frightened)

But, Doctor George, sir, please, no! I can't, I'm scared of heights, Remember?

(He hyperventilates)

JUNIE MOON

Seymour, you must, or we'll crash into the sea!

DOCTOR GEORGE

Quick, Max, hand me my Hypnotic Umbrella!

(MAX gets it from one of the CRATES, hands it to him, and DOCTOR GEORGE opens it. It has a SPIRAL painted on it, and he spins it around and around, aimed directly at SEYMOUR, He spins it continuously throughout the scene)

MAX

(Skeptical)

Hmm, can this really work, Doctor?

DOCTOR GEORGE

Yes, Max. Never doubt me. Seymour! Listen to my commands! You are in a deep, deep trance. You are no longer afraid of heights! Believe in yourself, Seymour. Look deeply into the spiraling umbrella and concentrate. You can save us all my making the necessary zeppelin tear repairs.

(SEYMOUR reacts zombie-like and grabs a large NEEDLE and some STRING which he places in his mouth before he climbs the ROPES to the torn ZEPPELIN BALLOON. He is somewhat awkward and loses his grip a few times, startling EVERYONE)

JUNIE MOON

My goodness, you've hypnotized him. This is great stuff for my video.

(SEYMOUR begins sewing up the TEAR while EVERYONE cheers him on)

MAX

He won't hurt himself will he, Doctor?

JUNIE MOON

If he could only stay hypnotized he'd never have to worry about heights again.

MAX

Look at him, he hasn't flinched, he's still concentrating, that's a first!

JUNIE MOON

That's it! You can do it, Seymour! He's so brave, it's fascinating, a mouse becomes a man!

MAX

Ha! More like a mouse becomes a rat. No offense, Seymour, pal.

DOCTOR GEORGE

Continue with the necessary repairs, Seymour. Focus on how this is the easiest job you've ever had. You have all the necessary confidence to complete the task.

JUNIE MOON

This video is going to make history—give us more attitude, Seymour! Make us believe in you!

DOCTOR GEORGE

My hypnotic commands have successfully helped you in overcoming your unnatural fear of heights.

MAX

Wow, that a boy, Seymour! Gee, I guess I underestimated him. Doctor George, you amaze me. Can I borrow that Hypnotic Umbrella so I can pass my college entrance exams? I always get nervous and freeze up when I take tests.

JUNIE MOON

You're the man, Seymour, keep it up, play to the camera, the camera loves you! Show the camera you love it!
(SEYMOUR finishes the task and begins to climb down)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Gaze deeply into the Hypnotic Umbrella, you will return to normal when I stop spinning it.

MAX

Uh, oh, we're losing altitude again! We're going to have to land in the water!

JUNIE MOON

Give me a little profile, Seymour. I'm going to give you a special spot in our documentary.

MAX

It's a good thing this zeppelin gondola is able to float! I hope those pirates don't catch up to us, or they'll blow us all to kingdom come!

(Max takes over the controls)

We've lost too much hot air, Doctor George, I'm setting her down! Everyone, brace yourselves!

(AIR, SEA, SOUND, and LIGHTING EFFECTS begin as ACTION CONTINUES INTO ACT 1 – SCENE 3)

ACT 1 – SCENE 3

Experiencing Mermaid's Isle & the Pirates

(The ACTION CONTINUES as SEYMOUR rejoins them on the DECK. They set the GONDOLA down into the WATER. JIG-SAW WAVES on EITHER SIDE and IN FRONT of the ZEPPELIN ENTER from the WINGS and rock back and forth to allow it to appear that the ZEPPELIN has landed in the ocean. DOCTOR GEORGE puts away the HYPNOTIC UMBRELLA as SEYMOUR comes out of his trance and leaps with fright into JUNIE MOON'S arms)

JUNIE MOON

Settle down, Seymour, you did a great job of repairing the balloon, we're all so proud of you.

SEYMOUR

You mean that?

JUNIE MOON

Sure I do, and I've got it all on video to prove it!

SEYMOUR

(Sheepishly)

Does this mean we can go steady?

(He embraces her, obsessing upon her mole)

Your beauty spot makes me want to love you all the more!

JUNIE MOON

(Releasing herself from his embrace)

Beauty spot? Silly, I paint that on! Liz Taylor was born with hers. It's simply not real, Seymour.

SEYMOUR

You paint on a replica of Elizabeth Taylor's beauty spot? Yes, Elizabeth Taylor's the movie star you remind me of—at least, the beauty spot on your right cheek does.

(Again he pulls JUNIE MOON closer to him)

Elizabeth was awesome on the movie screen back in the twentieth century—and you've got me feeling really warm and fuzzy inside! Perhaps I'm Richard Burton reincarnated, hubba, hubba, hubba.

(She squirms inside his embrace and begins pushing him back away from her, rejecting his attentions)

JUNIE MOON

Not so fast, Seymour. You're cute, but you're no Richard Burton, and I'm not sure you're even my type—you're too skittish! I need a man who is not afraid to stand up to me; you know, sweep me off my feet and run away with me!

(The PIRATE BOAT ENTERS from STAGE LEFT. It is a CUT-OUT PROP supported by the three PIRATES and it CROSSES TO CENTER STAGE quickly, then PAUSES as CAPTAIN BANDIT sweeps

JUNIE MOON OFF of the GONDOLA, continuing OFF STAGE RIGHT as she screams. The dialogue is under the action of her kidnapping)

CAPTAIN BANDIT

Shiver me timbers, you'll be coming with us, you sky wench, welcome aboard!

LADDIE

Oh, boy, Captain Bandit, are we kidnapping a beautiful angel? Prince, look!

PRINCE

Yes, Laddie, we'll be ransoming her for treasure! You belong to our domain now, lady; you're a sea pirates' delight.

JUNIE MOON

Help! Help! I'm being kidnapped by vicious pirates! Seymour! Doctor George! Max! Come and rescue me! Help!

SEYMOUR

Oh my goodness! Captain Bandit and his pirates have kidnapped my precious honey-bunch! Whatever shall we do?

DOCTOR GEORGE

We'll follow them closely, and then at exactly the right moment, just in the nick of time, we'll snatch her up and run away like crazy on our twinkle toes in the opposite direction!

SEYMOUR

Yeah, Doctor George, that's a great plan! You truly are a genius!

MAX

Twinkle toes? Impossible! We can't outrun vicious pirates! They'll capture us all and make us walk the plank, for pity's sake.

SEYMOUR

You're such a pessimist, Max.

DOCTOR GEORGE

I was speaking metaphorically. Naturally, we'll not have to run—this is not a track and field exercise—we'll just sail away up into the skies on my Magnificent Zeppelin, silly boys!

MAX

(Testy, losing patience)

Oh, fine, except that we're grounded—over water! And I hope we're not going to sink! Don't forget the ocean is underneath us, and the pirates have abducted our TV reporter stowaway, Junie Moon! Now, who will document our secret mission? We didn't think to bring a video camera ourselves, now did we?

SEYMOUR

Oh, no! This is terrible, Max! Are you saying our zeppelin won't fly?

MAX

Well, Seymour, I have to make some repairs first, and that'll take time. Meanwhile, the pirates are way ahead of us.

SEYMOUR

Why can't we just sail after them in the ocean? The gondola seems to float just fine. It's designed like an old Spanish galleon, and they're practically unsinkable—Captain Hook sailed around in one chasing after Peter Pan, remember?

MAX

Yes, Seymour, and the Crocodile still had him for dinner—well, perhaps she is sea worthy after all. The hole from that pirate cannon ball ripped through the balloon and not the gondola, thank goodness.

SEYMOUR

(Contemplating their situation)

Let's just say she drifts along. She's not as fast in the water as she is in the air, however, and our pirate enemies are making pretty good time in that speedboat of theirs.

MAX

(Admiring the ZEPPELIN)

Yes, this zeppelin definitely reminds me of those slow lumbering Spanish galleons from centuries ago—did you know Christopher Columbus, Doctor George?

DOCTOR GEORGE

Yes, of course I know who Christopher Columbus—was—I never met him, silly, you young people think anyone over thirty is ancient. Well, let's not be down hearted, I'll think of something. Get busy, Max! Make your repairs and stop flapping your jaw, while I scan the horizons!

MAX

Sorry, Doc, you know what's best.

(DOCTOR GEORGE looks through his TELESCOPE)

DOCTOR GEORGE

Blast, I've lost all sight of them! Without knowing their direction our search could take months!