

## Battle Plans for the Scottish Invasion of England

Scottish National Party  
Motto: "Maybe we'll spare Wales. Maybe."

- Step 1: Plant spies throughout the unsuspecting Reading Met Department.
- Step 2: ???
- Step 3: Take over England!



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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE NARRATOR – Curtis Wood

JACK – Kirsty Hanley

SUE-PERVISOR GRAY – Heather Ashton

DAISY THE COW – Anil Padhra and Victoria Sinclair

CAFETERIA WORKER – Emma Irvine

ROBIN HOGAN – Jon Shonk

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH – Lee Smith

CHARLTON

– Ian Boutle

CHALLINOR

– Laura Davies

HEAPS

– Jen Catto

TURNER

– David Paynter

} The A-is-for-Andy Team

1st OOMPA-LOOMPA – Emma Irvine

2nd OOMPA-LOOMPA – Keri Nicoll

ALAN O'NEILL

– Rob Chadwick

MAARTEN AMBAUM

– Nicky Chalmers

LESLEY GREY

– Dan Hodson

} The Guardians of the Stratosphere

THE GIANT – Claire McConnell

KEITH SHINE

– Lesley Allison

BRIAN HOSKINS

– Geoff Bell

} Shinekins

NEIL ELLIS – Steve Rumbold

HELEN DACRE

– Helen White

DAVID GRIMES

– Rob Thompson

GILES HARRISON

– Laura Davies

} The Guardians of the Troposphere

THE MODEL – Duncan Ackerley

JANET BARLOW

– Michelle Cain

AURORE PORSON

– David Livings

STEPHEN BELCHER

– Nick Klingaman

} The Guardians of the Boundary Layer

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE VOICE OF DALE CUNNINGHAM – Keri Nicoll

ROSEMARIE – Oli Browne

THE GOLDEN GOOSE – Alec Bennett

THE QUEEN – Clare Oatley

THE AUDIENCE

# ACT I

## SCENE I – I .

### The Ruins of the Department of Meteorology

THE NARRATOR, JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, DAISY

*The stage is empty except for Sue's list, which is propped up against the back wall. The screen shows the backdrop for the ruins of the Department. JACK and DAISY are up the beanstalk aisle. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY is off the band side. THE NARRATOR speaks from behind the podium.*

THE NARRATOR Ladies and gentlemen, we welcome you to the Department's Christmas panto. Our hero, Jack, a fifth-year Ph.D. student, is just returning from the Faculty Ph.D. research training session.

*JACK stumbles onto the stage and looks around, bewildered. He appears quite sleepy and somewhat dazed. As JACK enters, the flute theme from "Peter and the Wolf" plays.*

THE NARRATOR Here's Jack now. Hi Jack, how was the Faculty research training session?

JACK (*yawns*) I don't know; (*turns towards THE AUDIENCE*) it was so boring that I fell asleep for a week. (*Looks around behind himself, frantically*) Where's the Department gone? It was right here when I left! (*JACK asks THE AUDIENCE for help, even to the point of looking underneath members of THE AUDIENCE.*) Does anyone here know where the Department is? Is it over here? Or is it behind this? (*Pause*) So where's it gone?

*JACK looks behind him and sees the ruins of the Department on the backdrop.*

JACK (*to THE NARRATOR*) Oh no! What's happened?!

THE NARRATOR I don't know Jack!

JACK (*trying to console THE NARRATOR*) Oh, there there. You're the narrator; you're omniscient. You know everything.

THE NARRATOR (*sighs*) No, no, I meant (*deliberately*) "I don't know . . . Jack!" Look, why don't you just ask your SUE-pervisor Gray?

*SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY walks on from the band side. She is carrying a broom, which she uses to sweep up the rubble of the Department.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY There you are, Jack! Where have you been all this time? Surely the training session couldn't have lasted that long.

JACK Never mind that! What's happened to the Department? It's gone!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Well . . . do you remember how Health and Safety had to check the Department's new coffee urn?

JACK You mean the one that was covered with large "DO NOT USE" stickers and looked like a small thermonuclear device?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Yes, that's the one. Well, a few days ago the queue for the cappuccino machine was SO long and David Stephenson was SO desperate for his caffeine fix that he just couldn't wait. And you'll never guess what happened next.

JACK (*disbelievingly*) Oh no . . . he didn't?!

ACT I

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Yes Jack, he did. He used the urn, which promptly exploded, leveling the entire Meteorology building and destroying all of our valuable, 5\* research equipment. *(pause)* Miraculously, though, everyone was left unharmed!

JACK So no one was killed or even hurt in an explosion that destroyed an entire 5\* research facility? *(to THE AUDIENCE)* How very convenient!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Well actually, no one has seen David Stephenson since. Although I did just receive this postcard from him . . .

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *pulls out a postcard from her back pocket*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY . . .from *(pause, uncertain)* Exeter? Hmmm . . .strange that. I wonder why he would ever want to go down there.

JACK But why would the coffee urn just explode like that? Hang on a second . . .*(pause)* Didn't the Physics Department explode a while back? Hmmm . . .this seems awfully suspicious to me. So is there anything from the Department left?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Not much. All that we could recover was David Stephenson's cow, Daisy. *(calls)* Daisy . . .here girl!

DAISY *enters.* SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *gives DAISY a loving stroke.*

DAISY Moo!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY We found her hidden in the cupboard in Stephenson's office.

JACK But why would Stephenson keep a cow in his cupboard?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Apparently he thought that she could predict the rain!

*There is a pause while DAISY walks to the centre of the stage, looks up at the sky, and sits down on the floor.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY I've never heard of such an absurd idea!

*Claps of thunder sound, followed by the sound of raindrops*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Oh dear, it looks like the weather's taking a turn for the worse. *(begins crying)* Oh Jack, everything's going wrong! The Department's been destroyed; we have no research funding; it's raining; and the Queen is coming to visit next week!

JACK Why is the Queen coming here?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY To see our all 5\* research! But all we have left is this damned cow!

DAISY *(to SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, angrily)* MOO!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY You have to help us, Jack. I've made a list of everything we need to get the Department up and running again. Everyone knows that the Ph.D. students do all the work in the Department anyway, so I'm sure that you'll be able to get us back on our feet somehow.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *hands JACK a large sheet of paper, on which is clearly marked, on separate lines: "5\* Observations", "5\* Modeling", and "5\* Social Life."*

JACK *(Reading from the list)* 5\* Observations, 5\* Modeling, 5\* Social Life. This is gonna be expensive, especially that last one. How are we going to be able to afford all of this?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *and JACK look at DAISY, then at each other, then back at DAISY.*

DAISY *(worriedly)* Moo?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Jack, are you thinking what I'm thinking?

## SCENE II

JACK (*scratching his head*) Uh, I think so Sue . . . but even if Daisy and I do start a cabaret act, it'll take a while for us to earn all that money.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *smacks* JACK *in the back of the head*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY No, Jack! We can sell the cow to the Agriculture Department! Take Daisy over to them and see if you can get a good price for her.

JACK and DAISY *exit off the beanstalk side*. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *exits on the band side, sweeping the floor as she goes*.

*Blackout. Two chairs are placed centre stage.*

[. . .]

## SCENE I – II .

### The Agriculture Cafeteria

THE NARRATOR, JACK, DAISY, CAFETERIA WORKER, ROBIN HOGAN, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, TURNER

*The scene opens a backdrop showing the Agriculture cafeteria. Students are sitting inside the cafeteria, but their faces have been replaced with headshots of various Department staff. ROBIN HOGAN and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH are sitting on-stage in the chairs. JACK and DAISY are off the beanstalk side. CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER are at the back of the room. The lights come up on ROBIN HOGAN and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH. THE NARRATOR speaks from the podium.*

THE NARRATOR So Jack is sent on his way, Daisy in tow. He scrambles through the labyrinth of rubble from the once-proud Meteorology building, struggling to reach the nearby-but-mysteriously-unaffected Agriculture building. Along the way he is forced to fight off many feral undergraduates,

*Pause for sound effects of drunken students shouting*

THE NARRATOR who have been lost and confused since the destruction of the Department. Finally, he reaches the Agriculture cafeteria.

JACK and DAISY *enter from the beanstalk side*.

JACK (*To* DAISY) Phew Daisy, I thought we'd never make it!

DAISY (*happily*) Moo!

CAFETERIA WORKER (*from offstage*) Number twenty-eight . . . jacket with beans . . . TWENTY-EIGHT!!

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *gets up from his seat and walks over to the beanstalk side to retrieve his meal. JACK recognizes ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH and then notices that the people sitting in the cafeteria are all from the Met Department. ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH returns to his seat.*

JACK (*to* THE AUDIENCE) Hey, THIS is where the Met staff are! (*to* THE NARRATOR) What are they all doing in here?

THE NARRATOR I don't know Jack!

JACK (*consoling* THE NARRATOR) Now come on, I thought we had settled this. You know loads of stuff . . . you're the Narrator!

THE NARRATOR (*sighs*) No, no. (*deliberately*) I don't know . . . Jack. Why don't you try selling Daisy to Robin and Anthony over there?

ACT I

JACK *walks over to* ROBIN HOGAN *and* ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH

JACK Hi Robin and Anthony. What are you doing over here in the Agriculture cafeteria?

ROBIN HOGAN Oh Jack, are we glad to see you! After the coffee urn exploded we lost our radar and all of our observational capabilities. Since no one can predict the weather without a radar, we had no choice but to take shelter from the elements here in Agriculture.

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH And they have food here.

CAFETERIA WORKER Number twenty-nine . . . tikka toastie . . . TWENTY-NINE!!

JACK I've just come from the Department too, but all that's left is this cow. My Supervisor Gray sent me here to try to sell her so that we can restore the Department to its former glory. I don't suppose you know of anyone who might want to buy it?

DAISY I am somewhat appalled that you want to sell me, Jack!

JACK, ROBIN HOGAN, *and* ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *all look at* DAISY, *confused.*

DAISY Uh, moo?

JACK, ROBIN HOGAN, *and* ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *return to their conversation as if nothing happened.*

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH Sorry Jack, but we're broke now. Our research grants have all been blown away and what money we had left over from the Ph.D. travel funds we've spent on cheese toasties and jacket potatoes . . . (*looks at his jacket potato*) and sorry, Jack, but they've just run out of beans.

JACK (*excitedly*) What, you mean magic beans?

ROBIN HOGAN *and* ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *exchange confused glances*

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH Uh no, baked beans.

JACK Oh no, now I can't even sell Daisy for beans!

DAISY (*happy*) Moo!

CAFETERIA WORKER TWENTY NINE! Tikka Toastie!

ROBIN HOGAN *jumps up out of his seat.*

ROBIN HOGAN Oh that's me! (*walks over to the beanstalk side to fetch food*) Why don't you try selling Daisy to Charlton, Challinor, Heaps, and Turner?

JACK Who?

*The lights dim and "The A-Team" theme music plays.*

THE NARRATOR (*deep, movie-advert-style voiceover*) In 2005, a team of crack meteorologists were kicked out of the Department by CGAM for a journal article they did not write. These men promptly escaped from a maximum-security stationary cupboard to the ECMWF underground.

CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, *and* TURNER *run onto the stage wearing jackets, swinging conkers and striking various masculine poses.*

THE NARRATOR Today, still wanted by the editors of the *Journal of Climate*, they survive as solution providers. If you have a problem . . . if no one else can help . . . and if you can find them . . . then maybe you can hire . . . The A-is-for-Andy Team!

*The lights go up. CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER unzip their jackets to reveal T-shirts with a single letter painted on each. They have arranged themselves so that their shirts spell "A-N-D-Y".*

SCENE II

*The music stops. JACK approaches CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER.*

CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS (*together*) Did someone call?

TURNER I pity da fool!

JACK Uh, excuse me? I was wondering if you could help me. The Department is in ruins; we have no money; the Queen is coming next week and I need to restore the Department's integrity.

CHALLINOR What do you need?

JACK We need 5\* observations, 5\* modeling, and a 5\* star social life.

HEAPS Okay, but what can you give us?

JACK (*hesitantly*) Uhh ... this cow?

*CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER look at JACK questioningly.*

JACK My SUE-pervisor found it in David Stephenson's cupboard.

*CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER gasp and smile knowingly and one another.*

CHARLTON Well, we do have something very special ... (*smiles knowingly at CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER and whispers to them*) Go with me on this one; it's for Stephenson's cow!

CHALLINOR Oh yes, what we can offer you will solve all your problems ... (*to CHARLTON, HEAPS, and TURNER*) I've heard about this cow; it's an expert forecaster!

HEAPS (*to CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, and TURNER*) Ah yes, it's definitely an upgrade over the ECMWF MOO-del.

*A drumroll starts.*

TURNER So Jack, for one day only, we'll offer you ...

JACK Yes ...

CHARLTON These amazing ...

JACK Yes ...

CHALLINOR Wonderful ...

JACK Yes! ...

HEAPS Magical ...

JACK YES! ...

TURNER Conkers!

JACK (*immediately*) YES!

*The drumroll ends with a pathetic "ping" from the cymbals.*

*JACK hurriedly accepts the conkers and examines them, while CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER grab DAISY and run off up the beanstalk aisle. "The A-Team" theme music plays briefly. Jack quickly loses his enthusiasm, though, as he realizes that he's just traded Daisy for a bunch of seemingly worthless conkers.*

CHARLTON (*over the music he is running up the aisle*) I love it when a plan comes together.

JACK (*realizing the "A-is-for-Andy Team" have left*) Oh, what? Hang on a minute, guys! What am I supposed to do with these? Sue's gonna kill me ...

ACT I

*Blackout.* ROBIN HOGAN and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *exit up a convenient aisle.* JACK *exits off the beanstalk side.* The chairs are removed from the stage.

[...]

SCENE I – III .

The Ruins of the Department of Meteorology

THE NARRATOR, JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, DAISY

*The scene opens with the screen showing a backdrop of the ruins of the Department.* SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *is on stage holding a broom and looking intently at a journal article.*

THE NARRATOR All Jack has to show for Daisy the Cow is a few “magic” conkers. He has woefully returned to the Department to face the inevitable wrath of his SUE-pervisor.

JACK *enters from the beanstalk side.*

JACK Ummm ... Sue, I need to tell you something.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*excitedly*) Ah Jack, I've been looking for you! (*looks JACK up and down*) I've just found this paper in the rubble. It's Stephenson and Harrison (2005)

...

JACK (*sheepishly*) Yeah ...

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY It's entitled “Improved anomalous precipitation forecasting techniques using revolutionary Bayesian bovine technology.”

JACK (*sheepishly*) Yeah ...

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY So Daisy's actually worth loads of money now! We can sell her to the BBC Weather Centre for a fortune!

JACK (*embarrassed*) Ah ...

DAISY (*from off-stage*) Moo!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Oh Jack! Tell me you didn't ...

JACK *nods reluctantly.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Well how much cash did they give you for her?

JACK Umm ... (*holds up the conkers*)

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*angrily raising her broom to strike JACK*) JACK! You've sold Daisy for a bunch of moldy conkers?! I'm somewhat appalled!

JACK (*defensively*) Well, they are MAGIC conkers!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*enraged*) I can't believe you've done this! How can I restore the Department's 5\* reputation with a few poorly grown conkers?! (*becoming extremely angry, she grabs the conkers in a blind rage*) I've already got Health and Safety on my back! These conkers are going back on the croquet lawn where they belong!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *hurls the conkers across the stage.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Now go and do something useful for a change!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *throws her broom at JACK and storms off the band-side.*

JACK Oh no, Sue's really annoyed with me now! What a mess!

SCENE III

JACK *begins to cry and lies down center stage. Blackout.*

THE NARRATOR That night, on the croquet lawn, something mysterious happened . . .

*The screen lights up to show an animation of a beanstalk growing quickly. This is accompanied by a cheesy growing sound effect (similar to a slide whistle), followed by a “ding” when the beanstalk finishes growing. The beanstalk is placed on stage on the beanstalk side.*

*The lights come back up. The screen returns to the backdrop for the ruins of the Department. The spotlight highlights the beanstalk.. JACK is asleep center stage. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY enters from the band-side of the stage and is horrified when she sees the beanstalk.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY JACK!

JACK *wakes up, still groggy.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY What have you done now? Look at the state of the croquet lawn!  
It’s all bumpy!

JACK (*still groggy*) Yeah, but there’s nothing unusual about that!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY That may be true, but it never had a beanstalk growing on it before!  
How can restore the 5\* social life of the Department if we can’t even play croquet?  
(*wailing*) Now we really have nothing left! (*she sobs quietly into her hands*)

JACK (*to THE AUDIENCE*) I don’t know what to do now. Sue sounds really upset. (*walks over the beanstalk*) It’s really tall, isn’t it? (*hope for some participation from THE AUDIENCE*) They did say they were magic conkers . . . maybe I should try to climb it.  
What do you think?

*We hope THE AUDIENCE will cheer JACK to climb the beanstalk.*

*JACK starts to climb the beanstalk, but stops when 1ST OOMPA-LOOMPA and 2ND OOMPA-LOOMPA run in from the band-side and across the stage and intercept him. 1ST OOMPA-LOOMPA is carrying a pink can of air freshener, which he hands to JACK.*

1ST OOMPA-LOOMPA You’re gonna need this, mate.

2ND OOMPA-LOOMPA It stinks up there!

JACK (*reading the label on the can*) “Best before 1965?” Uh . . . cheers. (*putting the can in his pocket*).(*to 1ST OOMPA-LOOMPA and 2ND OOMPA-LOOMPA*) Who are you?

1ST OOMPA-LOOMPA We’re plot facilitators . . .

2ND OOMPA-LOOMPA See ya!

*1ST OOMPA-LOOMPA and 2ND OOMPA-LOOMPA leave via the band side*

JACK (*shaking his head as if to remove cobwebs*) Two little men who look like Anthony Illingworth? Well, at least they’ve gone. I’d hate to think they’d keep coming back, singing songs about differential reflectivity . . . who would ever base a pantomime around that?

JACK (*preparing to climb*) Anyway, here goes!

*JACK begins to climb the beanstalk.*

*Blackout. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY exits up a convenient aisle. JACK remains behind the beanstalk.*

[. . .]



## ACT II

### SCENE II – I .

#### Outside the Giant's Castle

THE NARRATOR, JACK, ALAN O'NEILL, MAARTEN AMBAUM, LESLEY GREY

*The scene opens as the screen displays an empty blue sky with a silly cartoon castle hovering in the middle. A plunger with the word "Vortex" written on it is on the band side. JACK is behind the beanstalk. ALAN O'NEILL, MAARTEN AMBAUM, and LESLEY GREY are off the band side. THE NARRATOR speaks from behind the podium.*

THE NARRATOR And so, Jack boldly turned his tail and fled up the mighty beanstalk to escape the wrath of his most disgruntled supervisor. Bravely he hauled himself, higher and higher, branch over branch. Until, without a tropo-PAUSE, he passed through the PV=2 surface and into . . . the stratosphere!

*Enter JACK from behind the beanstalk. He smells something horrid.*

JACK Pooh! Those strange little men were right; this place smells like a cross between the photocopier room on a hot day and whatever comes out of all those chimneys on the roof of the chemistry department!

THE NARRATOR Jack clearly didn't pay enough attention to all those ASSET talks in Weather and Climate Discussion, for he has forgotten that the stratosphere is filled with smelly ozone gas!

*JACK sprays the air freshener can around and then throws it off the beanstalk side.*

JACK That's better!

THE NARRATOR But what Jack doesn't realize is that his antique air freshener can from the days of free love also contains free radicals: CFCs, which he has now released directly into the ozone layer, setting off a devastating cascade reaction!

*An alarm sounds and red alert lights flash. Enter ALAN O'NEILL, MAARTEN AMBAUM, and LESLEY GREY from band side, clearly angry.*

ALAN O'NEILL That's the CFC alarm! Who's responsible for this?!

JACK Err, CFCs?! I don't know anything about that. Who are you?

ALAN O'NEILL Alan O'Neill: I'm here to monitor the stratosphere to its minutest detail utilising ridiculously complicated vocabulary and my far superior satellite apparatus!

MAARTEN AMBAUM Maarten Ambaum: I know more about stratosphere dynamics than anyone else in the world! I am here to make PV so complicated that nobody understands it except me!

LESLEY GREY Lesley Grey: At your service to keep our stratosphere nice and sparkly for everyone to share!

ALAN O'NEILL , MAARTEN AMBAUM, LESLEY GREY (*together*) We are the guardians of the stratosphere!

*A dramatic electric-organ chord plays.*

ALAN O'NEILL You know the stratosphere really is a vital and fascinating place, let me tell you . . .

ACT II

ALAN O'NEILL, MAARTEN AMBAUM, and LESLEY GREY sing "The Stratosphere Song"

ALAN O'NEILL It gets warmer with height in the stratosphere  
So don't worry, you won't need a hat up here  
Its complex dynamics are really rather queer  
And for forecasting weather, they don't matter, dear

MAARTEN AMBAUM (*interrupts, spoken*) No, you need to consider the non-linear interactions . . .

LESLEY GREY It's terribly dry in the stratosphere  
Any short-lived contrails soon disappear  
From a passing trans-Atlantic flight  
They cool us by day; they warm us by night

MAARTEN AMBAUM There's an ozone layer in the stratosphere  
You can sit in the sun getting fat on beer  
Like sun-block it protects your skin  
But without the smear!

ALAN O'NEILL , MAARTEN AMBAUM, LESLEY GREY (*together*) All those bad UV rays get absorbed in the haze

ALAN O'NEILL CFCs are not allowed in the stratosphere  
No we can't be having with that up here!  
The Montreal protocol states it clear  
CFC's break up ozone

LESLEY GREY It's a long way down from the stratosphere  
If you fell you'd make a terrible splat I fear

ALAN O'NEILL , MAARTEN AMBAUM, LESLEY GREY (*together*) And when things are looking blue  
Above PV equal two  
We've got to catch the one to blame  
And that, we believe, is you!

ALAN O'NEILL, MAARTEN AMBAUM, and LESLEY GREY *finish the song pointing at JACK accusingly*

MAARTEN AMBAUM Fool! Do you even know what you've done?

JACK *scratches his head*

JACK Err . . .

MAARTEN AMBAUM You have violated the Montreal Protocol and damaged the ozone layer!

JACK Montreal Protocol?

LESLEY GREY That's the one about reducing CFCs to stop ozone depletion.

JACK Oh no! I guess I have broken the Montreal Protocol!

ALAN O'NEILL Not to mention ruining years of stratospheric ozone measurements! It'll take ages to get the ASSET project running again!

JACK ASSET project?

ALAN O'NEILL The Assimilating Satellite Stupidly Expensive Technology project! You ill-educated incompetent!

MAARTEN AMBAUM What you've done is like pouring milk into a cup of coffee!

JACK (*hesitantly*) Ah, you mean the polar vortex becomes baroclinically unstable, forcing filaments of anomalously low PV to break off and move equatorwards, causing ozone-depleted air to be advected into mid-latitude regions?

SCENE I

MAARTEN AMBAUM No! It's just criminal to pour milk into coffee! Disgusting!

JACK Isn't there anything I can do to repair the ozone layer? Maybe someone in that distant castle could help.

ALAN O'NEILL To reach the castle you must answer three questions about the stratosphere! And should you be so stupid as to make a mistake, you shall be cast away into the depths of the stratospheric polar vortex, and certain doom!

LESLEY GREY (*to MAARTEN AMBAUM*) Maarten, engage the vortex!

MAARTEN AMBAUM *moves over to the band side and depresses the plunger.*  
THE NARRATOR *holds out a blue hoola hoop from offstage and spins it.*

ALAN O'NEILL , MAARTEN AMBAUM, LESLEY GREY He who seeks to cross the stratosphere must answer me these questions three, ere the stratospheric castle he see.

JACK Okay then!

MAARTEN AMBAUM It is given that the stratosphere affects the troposphere.

*Someone from the back may need to shout "Oh no it doesn't!" to inspire some banter between THE AUDIENCE and MAARTEN AMBAUM.*

MAARTEN AMBAUM With this in mind, how does the troposphere affect the mesosphere via the TTL and SSTs?

ALAN O'NEILL You can't possibly know the answer to that! Only I know the answer to that and I deliberately forgot it years ago so that no one else could ever know it.

MAARTEN AMBAUM Well really it's just an extrapolation from linear theory . . .

ALAN O'NEILL (*to MAARTEN AMBAUM*) Oh, what poppy-cock! Come here; I'll show you how to linearly extrapolate your theory!

ALAN O'NEILL *pushes MAARTEN AMBAUM into the vortex, then brushes himself off.*

ALAN O'NEILL Given that the stratosphere is blue, are you more likely to get frostbite on your nose or on your toes in the stratosphere?

LESLEY GREY The stratosphere isn't blue!

ALAN O'NEILL Oh yes it is!

LESLEY GREY Oh no it isn't!

ALAN O'NEILL Oh yes it is!

LESLEY GREY Well, we'll see about that!

LESLEY GREY *pushes ALAN O'NEILL into the vortex.*

LESLEY GREY You see, I told him it wasn't blue.

JACK Well I guess that settles it, then. It's definitely GREY.

LESLEY GREY Hmm, I suppose that leaves just me. Answer me this: How many T's in stratosphere?

JACK Argh no, not a spelling question! Yikes, I'd better ask the audience..

*He looks out into THE AUDIENCE for help*

JACK Right audience, I'll be needing your best guess, which means adults, hush now! You all have computers, so you probably haven't had to spell in years; what I need is the best of the best, trained and tested weekly: kids! Do you know how many T's are there in "stratosphere"?

*We hope that THE AUDIENCE answers correctly here.*

## ACT II

JACK (*to LESLEY GREY*) Two!

LESLEY GREY How depressing! A child answered that question correctly. I must be going soft.

*LESLEY GREY starts to wander off the beanstalk side, in front of JACK.*

JACK Wait a second! What about that hole in the ozone layer that I made?

LESLEY GREY Don't worry about that mess; we'll just blame it on solar flares. No one really believes there's any man-made influence on the stratosphere anyway.

*Grey exits. Jack walks off the band side in front of the podium. Blackout. A table and two chairs are moved onto centre stage.*

[...]

## SCENE II – II .

### Inside the Giant's Castle

THE NARRATOR, JACK, THE GIANT, THE SHINE SIDE, THE HOSKINS SIDE

*A table and two chair are centre stage. THE GIANT is seated on one chair in the corner on the band side, asleep and snoring loudly. On the table is a large book.*

THE NARRATOR Having vanquished the Guardians of the Stratosphere, Jack enters the castle that is inexplicably floating on a Polar Stratospheric Cloud just above the tropopause. He comes to a giant hall, in the corner of which a giant is slumbering peacefully in a giant chair with a giant book on his giant lap.

*JACK enters from the band side.*

JACK Look at that big man over there. He must be a giant. I wonder what he's been reading.

*JACK creeps over to THE GIANT and gently removes the book from his grasp. JACK reads the book's title.*

JACK "Ian James and the Giant Peach." That would make a good title for a panto.

*JACK flicks through the pages of the book*

JACK No, too difficult.

*JACK loudly slams the book shut. The Giant stirs and stretches, but doesn't notice JACK.*

THE GIANT Shinekins!

JACK Oh no! He's awake. I'd better hide.

*JACK quickly hides under the table.*

THE GIANT Shinekins! Where's my rotating Head of the Castle? Shinekins!

*Enter THE HOSKINS SIDE and THE SHINE SIDE, from the beanstalk side. THE SHINE SIDE wears football kit. THE HOSKINS SIDE wears cricket whites with pads and carries a bat. They are arguing with each other as they enter.*

THE HOSKINS SIDE Head of the Castle is your job really. I should be working on a new map of the castle to replace the one I drew up with McIntyre and Robertson in 1985.

THE SHINE SIDE Nonsense. I'm far too busy to be Head of the Castle. I've got to supervise all those apprentices fitting the new radiators!

SCENE II

THE GIANT Shinekins!

THE SHINE SIDE , THE HOSKINS SIDE (*together*) You bellowed, Reverend Professor Giant sir?

THE GIANT Yes, Shinekins. I had a dream. I saw a stopwatch shining before me . . . 19.9 it said!

THE SHINE SIDE Is it time for another record attempt sir?

THE GIANT Yes! We're going to do the 300 pint challenge! Bring forth the Official Frisbee!

THE HOSKINS SIDE Oh no! Not again . . .

THE SHINE SIDE Yesss! (*to THE HOSKINS SIDE*) Last time you did the challenge, so this time I'm the drinker and you're the designated timekeeper. Come on!

THE SHINE SIDE *and* THE HOSKINS SIDE *fetch the frisbee from the beanstalk side. THE HOSKINS SIDE lays his cricket bat against the table as they go. When they return THE SHINE SIDE also carries two straws and THE HOSKINS SIDE a giant stop watch.*

THE SHINE SIDE Careful! Don't spill any.

THE SHINE SIDE *and* THE HOSKINS SIDE *set up the Frisbee on the table. THE GIANT and THE SHINE SIDE sit either side with straws. THE HOSKINS SIDE holds the stopwatch.*

THE GIANT On one. Three . . . two . . . one!

THE GIANT *and* THE SHINE SIDE *drink. The music from "Countdown" plays while THE GIANT and THE SHINE SIDE drink in comedy style. THE HOSKINS SIDE tries to observe the challenge while remaining attached to the back of THE SHINE SIDE. "Countdown" music finishes. THE GIANT and THE SHINE SIDE are clearly exhausted and THE SHINE SIDE is drunk.*

THE HOSKINS SIDE 19.9 seconds!

THE GIANT A new record!

THE HOSKINS SIDE Steady on. We haven't calibrated the stopwatch yet. According to my preliminary calculations, the time is  $20.6 \pm 0.7$  seconds.

THE GIANT Not good enough! Again! Fetch me more beer!

THE SHINE SIDE Range 4.5 km, azimuth 40°, reflectivity 60dBZ. It's hailing in Sonning.

THE HOSKINS SIDE I fear he's too drunk, Sir.

THE GIANT Oh, forget it! These little people just can't hold their drink! Now what was I doing before I fell asleep? I'm always falling asleep these days. That's right, I was working on my autobiography! Where did that book go?

JACK *looks down at his book and then back up at THE AUDIENCE, frightened.*

JACK Oh no!

THE GIANT Who said that?

*All freeze. The electric-organ chord plays again.*

THE NARRATOR (*in the style of "Batman"*) Is this the end for our intrepid hero? How will he explain his presence in the midst of more beer and beards than seen at your average CAMRA festival? Will the Giant eat him for lunch? Or will Shinekins take him away and make him listen to an interminable sequence of 40th Anniversary speeches about how great the castle is? Let's see what happens next.

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*looking under the table*) What the . . . ?

ACT II

JACK (*crawling out from under the table*) Hello! My name's Jack.

THE HOSKINS SIDE Jack? Do we know a Jack?

THE SHINE SIDE I (*hiccups drunkenly*) don't know Jack.

THE HOSKINS SIDE Ha! That's right you don't.

THE GIANT (*in a loud, deep voice*) Theta, phi, rho, t, I smell the blood of a Ph.D.! Submitted now or submitting later, I'll steal his research for my next paper! Get him!

*Some "Batman"-style fight music plays. THE HOSKINS SIDE grabs the cricket bat from the table. JACK makes a move towards the beanstalk-side exit, but THE HOSKINS SIDE and THE SHINE SIDE head him off.*

THE SHINE SIDE (*quite drunk and slowing down THE HOSKINS SIDE*) Fog on the Thames at Pangbourne!

*JACK reverses direction and runs towards the band-side exit, but THE GIANT heads him off there.*

THE GIANT I've got you now!

*THE GIANT and THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE advance on JACK from either side. THE HOSKINS SIDE readies his cricket bat and takes a swing at JACK. JACK ducks. THE HOSKINS SIDE hits THE GIANT instead and THE GIANT collapses in a heap center stage.*

THE SHINE SIDE Anaprop, anaprop, anaprop. Argh! That Goring hill.

*THE SHINE SIDE passes out, dragging THE HOSKINS SIDE down to the ground with him.*

JACK (*looking at the frisbee*) We could have fun with this down the Tuns, but right now I think I should use it to parachute to safety.

*JACK grabs the Frisbee and exits towards the beanstalk. Blackout. The chairs are removed from the stage.*

[...]

SCENE II – III .

The Ruins of the Met Department

THE NARRATOR, JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, ROBIN HOGAN, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, NEIL ELLIS

*The scene opens with the screen showing the backdrop for the ruins of the Department. A table is centre stage. NEIL ELLIS is standing on the band side. JACK is behind the beanstalk. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY is off the beanstalk side. ROBIN HOGAN and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH are off the band side.*

THE NARRATOR So, our intrepid hero has triumphantly returned, fresh from his adventure in the castle. Back in the ruins of the Department he searches for his SUE-pervisor Gray, but he runs into his best buddy Neil and is quickly distracted.

*JACK enters from the beanstalk.*

JACK (*looking at his watch*) Hey Neil! It's 4:05 ... Time to go to the Tuns!

NEIL ELLIS Ah, I thought I'd been doing too much work. (*pointing at the Frisbee*) What's that, Jack?

SCENE III

JACK (*setting the frisbee down on the table*) It's an amazing new drinking device I discovered on my travels in the stratosphere. You fill it with 300 pints, and then you drink it as fast as you can!

NEIL ELLIS Sounds great! Lets have a go now! I'll grab some of my secret Wednesday-afternoon beer-stash . . . now, where did the server room get blown to? Oh yes . . .

NEIL ELLIS *walks offstage band side and returns with the several large beer cans marked "100 pints" and two straws. He pours in the beer, throws the cans on the ground, and gives JACK a straw. They assume "the position", ready to begin drinking. Enter SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY from beanstalk side.*

JACK Okay, we'll start drinking on one. 3 . . . 2 . . .

JACK *sees SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY and gets up, trying to stand between SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY and the frisbee. NEIL ELLIS hasn't noticed her and is concentrating hard on the frisbee, straw in hand . . .*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY I was ONE-dering where you'd got to!

*As soon as SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY says "ONE", NEIL ELLIS starts drinking in dramatic and comedic fashion.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY What's this? Drinking, on university property? In working hours?

JACK No, of course not! It's . . . errr . . . a pan-evaporation, um . . . measurement thingy . . .

NEIL ELLIS *stops drinking and looks exhausted*

NEIL ELLIS (*drunk*) Anomalous signal over Henley . . . river clutter . . . must be Head of the River time again . . .

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*to JACK*) What's wrong with Neil?

JACK Just ignore him; he's not been the same without his servers.

NEIL ELLIS Warning! 60-degree phase shift noted. Recalibrating . . .

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *jumps onto the stage from the band side.*

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH What was that?! I could have sworn I just heard Chilbolton radar data on the airwaves. But it couldn't be . . .

ROBIN HOGAN *jumps on stage behind ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH.*

ROBIN HOGAN You must be delirious, Anthony. (*with a smug grin*) You obviously can't handle your curries as well as I can.

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH Really Robin, you're the one being ridiculous; it's quite clearly radar. You must recognise . . .

NEIL ELLIS High Differential Reflectivity over Wokingham . . . Z remains low . . . analysis concludes birds.

ROBIN HOGAN It is; it is! That's definitely radar data! Look—a radar dish! Just like at Chilbolton!

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH (*wistfully*) Ah, Chilbolton: the worlds largest, pointable, steerable . . .

ROBIN HOGAN Anthony, ssh, no!

NEIL ELLIS Co-polar correlation dropped to 0.97; mismatched beam suspected.

NEIL ELLIS *passes out.*

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH Where did you get the radar dish from?

JACK Well, I . . .

ACT II

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*stepping in front of JACK*) A student of mine, working under my close personal direction, helped me to uncover this invaluable departmental tool. Jack, update my list, please!

JACK *pulls out the list and crosses off "5\* observations"*

JACK Right, that's 5\* observations!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Anthony, Robin, please set this dish up on the field site!

JACK, ROBIN HOGAN, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, and NEIL ELLIS *stop what they're doing*

JACK , ROBIN HOGAN, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, NEIL ELLIS (*together*) ATMOSPHERIC OBSERVATORY!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*dismissive*) ... in the Atmospheric Observatory

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *puts her arm round JACK as they stroll up the beanstalk-side aisle*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY So tell me, Jack. How did you find this radar dish ... ?

ROBIN HOGAN and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *remain and sing "Radar" to the tune of "Gay Bar"*

ROBIN HOGAN , ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH Girl, I want to take you to the radar

I want to take you to the radar  
I want to take you to the radar, radar, radar  
Let's start a scan, start a PPI scan  
At the radar, radar, radar; wow, at the radar

ROBIN HOGAN , ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH Now tell me, do you, do you have any clutter

I want to clear all your clutter  
At the radar, radar, radar

ROBIN HOGAN , ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH I've got bright bands to account for

I've got bright bands to account for  
I've got bright bands to account for  
At the radar, radar, radar, wow

ROBIN HOGAN , ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH I'm a superstar at the radar

I'm a superstar at the radar  
Yeah, I'm a superstar at the radar  
I'm a superstar at the radar  
Superstar, superstar...

*Blackout as the music finishes.*

[...]

*Interval.*

[...]

## ACT III

### SCENE III – I .

#### The Ruins of the Department of Meteorology

THE NARRATOR, JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, ROBIN HOGAN, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH

THE NARRATOR Jack's bid to restore the Department to its former glories continues. After Jack's heroic mission up the beanstalk to recover the radar from the Giant, the Department's observational capabilities have increased to the power of six. But the Department is still lacking a model. Now we rejoin Jack at the Met Department ruins.

*The lights go up on the stage. JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, ROBIN HOGAN and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH are on stage. The screen shows the backdrop for the ruins of the Met Department.*

JACK Phew, what an adventure! I feel like I've been barn-dancing all night—I'm going to the Tuns.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY There's no time to relax, Jack. Now that we have all these observations we need a 5\* model to assimilate them.

JACK A model?! Where on Earth are we going to get one of those?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*looking up at the beanstalk*) Well . . .

ROBIN HOGAN (*looking up the beakstalk*) Well . . .

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH (*looking up the beanstalk*) Well . . .

JACK (*to THE AUDIENCE*) Do you have any ideas? I can't think of anywhere to find such a thing. Where would you look? . . . Up there? Really? . . . I don't want to go up there again.

*JACK engages THE AUDIENCE in some "Oh yes you do" banter.*

JACK (*to SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, ROBIN HOGAN, and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH*) But there's a Giant up there. And two-headed Head of Castle. And I've only just BEAN. Why can't one of you go?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY I can't. I have to go back to the NCAS meeting. Be careful, though, Jack. There's a storm brewing in the Atlantic from a "secondary frontal wave development".

*SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY hurries off the band-side.*

JACK (*calling after SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY*) Secondary frontal Dave Wevelopment? What's that? Sue?!

JACK (*to ROBIN HOGAN and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH*) Anyway, what about you lot? Can't you go?

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH No, no, no, . . . Too busy; off to an ESA meeting in Tokyo . . . try e-mail.

JACK Are you ever here?

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH Well, I was in a particularly dull lunchtime seminar and my mind started wandering. When I had my sabbatical, my body started to follow. Now I've just become used to not being around.

### ACT III

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *hurries off the band-side.*

ROBIN HOGAN I can't climb. I did my knee in whilst skiing!

ROBIN HOGAN *hurries off the band-side.*

JACK (*to THE AUDIENCE*) Great . . . I'm left here all on my own . . . (*stamps his feet*) I don't want to go up the beanstalk. I've got better things to do! (*to THE AUDIENCE*) Should I? . . . Well . . . if I must . . . (*starts climbing*) . . . At least I don't have to worry about those Guardians this time.

*Blackout. JACK moves behind the beanstalk.*

[. . .]

### SCENE III – II .

#### Outside the Giant's Castle

THE NARRATOR, HELEN DACRE, DAVID GRIMES, GILES HARRISON, JACK

*The scene opens with the screen showing the backdrop for the outside of the Giant's castle. HELEN DACRE and GILES HARRISON are standing on stage. DAVID GRIMES is up the band-side aisle. JACK is behind the beanstalk. THE NARRATOR speaks from behind the podium.*

THE NARRATOR After a strenuous ascent up the North Face, Jack finally reaches the top of the beanstalk. But little does he expect what awaits him: His victory over the Guardians of the Stratosphere has led to an unexpected promotion for Dastardly Dacre, Gruesome Grimes, and Horrible Harrison . . . the Guardians of the Troposphere. (*pause*) Wait a second, there are only two of them there. Where's that Grimes?

DAVID GRIMES *runs in from the back up the band-side aisle, wearing teeny-tiny shorts. When he reaches the stage he leans on his knee, panting.*

HELEN DACRE Nice shorts . . . nothing on my swimming cozzie, though.

JACK *enters from behind the beanstalk*

GILES HARRISON Ummm . . . there's . . . someone here . . . (*he points at JACK*).

HELEN DACRE David, you do it. You're the scariest (*aside to THE AUDIENCE*) . . . at least in those shorts.

DAVID GRIMES (*in a deep, thundery voice*) WHO GOES THERE?!

JACK Just a lowly Ph.D. student.

DAVID GRIMES NONE SHALL PASS.

JACK Go on . . . what's the question?

HELEN DACRE Two collaborators—one from Reading and the other from Norwich—are going to investigate recent tornado activity in Leicester. The first boards the 10:32 train from Reading to Manchester Piccadilly. The other boards the 04:47 train from Norwich . . . It IS in the middle of nowhere. They intend to meet at Birmingham New Street at 12:03 for a spot of light lunch. Unfortunately but not unexpectedly, both trains are delayed due to “the wrong type of rain.” This precipitation comes from an intense low pressure system with a central pressure of 974 millibars, coming in from the Atlantic. According to the recent storm climatology devised by Dacre (2004), it was one of the 32% of low pressures system found over Britain formed by which mechanism?

JACK Umm . . . it's . . . secondary frontal wave development?

SCENE III

GILES HARRISON Unbelievable! . . . I'm somewhat appalled! Where could one so young get such knowledge?

DAVID GRIMES (to HELEN DACRE) It's those "Current Weather" meetings of yours!

HELEN DACRE (*exasperated*) Weather and Climate Discussion!

*JACK sneaks past HELEN DACRE, GILES HARRISON, and DAVID GRIMES while they are arguing, exiting on the band-side. The screen shows clouds building ominously.*

DAVID GRIMES It's just a fancy new name, like the "Atmospheric Observatory" . . . nobody actually call it that.

GILES HARRISON But the Observatory has all of the electrical sensors now.

DAVID GRIMES It's always had an evaporation tank but nobody calls it a paddling pool.

GILES HARRISON I think there's a storm brewing (*excitedly*) the potential gradient is really high!

*A stroke of lightning flares and a clap of thunder sounds. HELEN DACRE, GILES HARRISON, and DAVID GRIMES fall to the floor.*

*Blackout. A table and two chairs are placed on the stage.*

[...]

SCENE III – III .

Inside the Giant's Castle

THE NARRATOR, JACK, THE GIANT, THE SHINE SIDE, THE HOSKINS SIDE, THE MODEL

*The scene opens with the screen showing the inside of the Giant's castle. THE GIANT, THE SHINE SIDE, and THE HOSKINS SIDE are in their chairs, asleep. JACK is off the band side. THE MODEL is off the beanstalk side. THE NARRATOR speaks from behind the podium.*

THE NARRATOR So Jack has defeated the Guardians of the Troposphere and has sneaked into the castle. The not-so-Jolly-but-certainly-green Giant and Shinekins are in the corner, still sleeping off the effects of the 300 Pint Frisbee Challenge.

*JACK enters.*

JACK Phew! I feel glad that I got that question right. It was SHOCK-ingly hard. They seemed some bright SPARKS! I'm glad of that FLASH of inspiration and that I kept my weather knowledge CURRENT.

THE NARRATOR Leave off the electricity puns; I think you've already STRUCK the right chord. Jack, why don't you start looking for that model before the Giant wakes up? I'm POSITIVE that there's one around here somewhere.

JACK But I don't even know what I'm looking for.

*As JACK searches the stage, THE MODEL saunters onto the stage in an extraordinarily skimpy tutu. From offstage an arrow is held that reads "MODEL" and points at THE MODEL. JACK, however, still doesn't see THE MODEL.*

JACK (to THE AUDIENCE) It could be a GCM, an ocean model, or even a crap model . . . sorry, crop model. But where can I find one?

*Finally JACK sees THE MODEL.*

### ACT III

JACK (*to THE AUDIENCE*) Oh, there's a model! (*to THE MODEL*) Wait, you're not the sort of model I wanted! You look more like (*pause, then with an air of distaste*) David Marshall.

THE MODEL Don't worry; I can be any sort of model for you, darling. I'm ADAPTIVE.

*At this, THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE wake up and notice JACK and THE MODEL. The heads rotate quickly through the next few lines.*

THE SHINE SIDE Oh my goodness!

THE HOSKINS SIDE What is that thing?!

THE SHINE SIDE It's so ugly!

THE HOSKINS SIDE Surely the mesh doesn't need to be that tight . . .

THE SHINE SIDE . . . to resolve those features!

THE HOSKINS SIDE Think of the poor coupler . . .

*THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE cover their eyes at the ugliness of the model while JACK, frightened, grabs THE MODEL and begins to run.*

JACK Quickly! Let's get out of here!

THE MODEL You can tell that it's confused. It called me (*upset and sniffing*) ugly. But why should I go with you?

JACK Well, we're going to have many opportunities for modeling work in our newly refurbished Department. (*begins listing on his fingers*) The RMetS calendar, the photography competition . . .

THE MODEL (*excited*) Yeah! I could be the meteorological phenomenon of the year!

*THE MODEL and JACK run across the stage and back to the beanstalk. THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE regain control.*

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*peering between his fingers*) Phew! They've gone!

THE SHINE SIDE What was that big hairy thing?

THE HOSKINS SIDE I'm sure I've seen the little one somewhere before . . .

*Blackout. THE GIANT, THE SHINE SIDE, and THE HOSKINS SIDE exit up a convenient aisle. THE MODEL and JACK remain behind the beanstalk. The table and chairs are removed from the stage.*

### SCENE III – IV .

#### The Ruins of the Meteorology Department

THE NARRATOR, THE MODEL, JACK, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, ROBIN HOGAN, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY

*ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH and ROBIN HOGAN are standing around. JACK and THE MODEL enter from the beanstalk. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY is off the band side. THE NARRATOR speaks from behind the podium.*

THE NARRATOR Jack and the model safely descend the beanstalk and return to the ruins of the Met Department . . .

THE MODEL (*to JACK*) I don't see any photo shoots! You lured me down here with OCEANS of false promises.

JACK I told no lies, only slight inaccuracies.

THE MODEL Slight?! I'm SHORE you could steer a ship through them.

SCENE IV

ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH (*to THE MODEL*) Nothing like your traditional 100% errors.

ROBIN HOGAN Or 3 dB . . . You know why we radar people use dB, don't you? It's so our errors seem smaller than they really are.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *enters, looking particularly disgusted. She inspects THE MODEL.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*to JACK*) So THIS is your model, Jack? A big man in a tutu?

THE MODEL Big?! I've just got flexible boundaries!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*concerned*) I don't know Jack . . .

JACK Oh I wish everyone would just stop saying that! Have some self-confidence, Sue!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY No, you see, what I meant was . . .never mind. This model isn't quite 5\*, but it will have to do. The Queen is coming tomorrow so we need to get it RUNNING. (*pointing at THE MODEL*) You! Onto the treadmill!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *chases THE MODEL off the band side of the stage, forcing him to jog. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY remains on stage.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Jack! Update my list!

JACK *grabs the list and crosses off 5\* modelling.*

JACK Done!

ROBIN HOGAN But there's still nothing to actually do around here . . .I feel so bored and nerdy . . . We really need a social life, but that drained away with the final drips from the old coffee urn.

JACK Hmm . . . Where could we get a 5\* social life?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, *and* ROBIN HOGAN *all look at the beanstalk in a leading fashion.*

JACK Oh no . . .not again!

*Blackout. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, and ROBIN HOGAN exit up a convenient aisle.*

[. . .]



## ACT IV

### SCENE IV – I .

#### Outside the Giant's Castle

THE NARRATOR, JANET BARLOW, AURORE PORSON, JACK, STEPHEN BELCHER,  
DALE CUNNINGHAM, THE HOSKINS SIDE, THE SHINE SIDE

*The scene opens as the screen shows the backdrop for the outside of the Giant's castle. JANET BARLOW and AURORE PORSON are standing on the band-side, holding files and papers. STEPHEN BELCHER is off the beanstalk side. JACK is behind the beanstalk. THE HOSKINS SIDE and THE SHINE SIDE are off the band side. THE NARRATOR speaks from behind the podium.*

THE NARRATOR Jack, the 5th year student, reluctantly reaches the top of the beanstalk for the third time, looking for something to restore the Department's social status. He encountered some clear-air turbulence on the way up, but then he passed into the calm stratosphere.

JANET BARLOW So Aurore, have you prepared for today's Boundary Layer Group meeting?

AURORE PORSON Well I have Janet, but there isn't much point really. I doubt that Stephen Belcher will even turn up.

JANET BARLOW (*looking at her watch*) You're right; he's already ten minutes late. Shall we just get started without him?

JACK *enters.*

JANET BARLOW (*flustered*) Halt! Who goes there? Student or staff?

JACK I'm Jack and I'm on my way to the castle.

AURORE PORSON Jack? I don't know Jack.

JANET BARLOW (*consoling AURORE PORSON*) Oh no, I'm sure you know plenty of things, dear. (*to JACK*) We're the Guardians of the Boundary Layer. (*proudly*) We've recently been promoted and we've now ascended to higher . . . heights.

AURORE PORSON (*correcting*) Loftier heights.

JANET BARLOW To get to the castle, you must answer us these questions three. The questions you must answer true . . .

AURORE PORSON . . . or nasty things will happen to you. (*to JANET BARLOW*) What's the first question going to be, Janet?

JANET BARLOW The question that is number one . . .

AURORE PORSON From which research year do you come?

JACK *looks shocked that the question is so ridiculously easy. He turns towards THE AUDIENCE and counts the years of his study slowly on his fingers, looking more and more distraught as he counts.*

JACK Well, in my first year I discovered Snakey-B and hangovers; in my second year I discovered Departmental sport at all times of the day and night; in my third year I discovered all the money that can be made in demonstrating; in my fourth year I discovered what happens to students who don't work in their first three years . . .

JACK *pauses and realizes that he is in his fifth year. He looks scared.*

ACT IV

JACK I certainly have much to fear, for I'm already in my fifth year!

JANET BARLOW *and* JACK *look quite unsettled at Jack's correct answer.*

JANET BARLOW Drat! Yes. . . and now time for question two, you'll never get this one:

AUORE PORSON How do you make an Irish stew?

JANET BARLOW That's the thing our mothers do.

AUORE PORSON (*to* JANET BARLOW, *baffled*) My mother doesn't. She makes Belgian waffles.

JANET BARLOW *sighs.* JACK *turns to* THE AUDIENCE *and thinks.*

JACK What do you put in stew? Carrots, potatoes, leeks, stock, water, beef . . .

JACK *pauses again and turns back to* JANET BARLOW *and* AUORE PORSON.

JACK All you really have to do, if you want to make an Irish stew, is simmer him at Gas Mark 2, for thirty minutes till he's done through. (*to off-stage*) Is that not right, Dale?

DALE CUNNINGHAM (*offstage*) 'Tis true, 'tis true.

JANET BARLOW *hurriedly flicks through her notes.*

JANET BARLOW Damn it; he's right again!

AUORE PORSON We need someone to ask him a much harder question.

STEPHEN BELCHER *enters. He is dressed like the Fonz. He glides slowly and coolly onto the stage and stops—spinning on the spot—next to* JANET BARLOW *and* AUORE PORSON.

STEPHEN BELCHER (*impersonating the Fonz*) Hey!

AUORE PORSON Zut alors! That was cool.

STEPHEN BELCHER (*seductively*) Well babe, now that we've moved above the inversion there's no such thing as friction. (*winks at* AUORE PORSON) Oooh la la!

AUORE PORSON *giggles like a schoolgirl.*

JANET BARLOW (*disapprovingly*) Well, it's about time, too! You're late, Stephen. What time do you call this?

STEPHEN BELCHER (*looking nonchalantly at his watch*) It's fourteen minutes past twelve! Time for our midday Boundary Layer meeting. (*turning to* JACK) Who is this?

JANET BARLOW (*sighs*) He wants to gain access to the Castle. He's got two questions right; we need a stinker for the third.

STEPHEN BELCHER (*to* JANET BARLOW *and* AUORE PORSON) Right, how's this? (*to* JACK) If parcels ascend adiabatically on a Sunday, and there is a contribution to the lapse rate from the radiative forcing the convective system has on the atmosphere, and the effects of CAPE are neglected, is the planetary boundary layer at the top, middle, or bottom of the troposphere?

JACK *looks baffled. He turns to* THE AUDIENCE.

JACK Ooh, I don't know! Which should go for? What's the answer: top, middle, or bottom? Help me out here, guys!

*We hope that* THE AUDIENCE *responds with the correct answer.*

JACK The planetary boundary layer is at the (*pause*) bottom of the troposphere.

JANET BARLOW Crivens!

AUORE PORSON Sacre bleu!

SCENE II

STEPHEN BELCHER Damn!

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*offstage*) You three!

*The Guardians Freeze*

THE NARRATOR Here comes Shinekins. Could this be the end of the new Guardians?

JANET BARLOW, AURORE PORSON, and STEPHEN BELCHER *look scared as* THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE *enters with a mean expression and a clipboard.* THE HOSKINS SIDE *faces* JANET BARLOW, AURORE PORSON, and STEPHEN BELCHER.

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*impersonating Alan Sugar*) I'm the most belligerent person you will ever come across. I don't like time-wasters; I don't like late-comers. And I definitely don't like people who get outwitted by Ph.D. students.

THE SHINE SIDE (*interrupting*) Can I fire them, please? It's my turn!

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*angrily*) No. I do the Alan Sugar thing up here. (*turning to* JANET BARLOW, AURORE PORSON, and STEPHEN BELCHER) Stephen, Aurore, and Janet. You're a bunch of lightweights. You're fired.

*A drum beat plays.* JANET BARLOW, AURORE PORSON, and STEPHEN BELCHER *slink off stage and up the band-side aisle, looking seriously dejected.* THE HOSKINS SIDE *points at* JACK.

THE HOSKINS SIDE You! Come with us.

THE HOSKINS SIDE and THE SHINE SIDE *force* JACK *off the beanstalk side.*  
*Blackout. A table and a chair are placed centre stage. The coffee urn is placed on the table.*

[...]

SCENE IV – II .

Inside the Giant's Castle

JACK, THE SHINE SIDE, THE HOSKINS SIDE, THE GIANT, ROSEMARIE

THE GIANT *is sitting at a table next to a spanking-new coffee urn, slurping coffee loudly.* ROSEMARIE *is off the beanstalk side.* THE GOLDEN GOOSE *is off the band side.* THE HOSKINS SIDE and THE SHINE SIDE *drag* Jack *into the Castle from the beanstalk side.*

JACK (*to* THE AUDIENCE) Check out that coffee urn! Steamin'!! Think how many mugs-per-minute we could get from that baby! Nothing perks up the social life of a department more than a permanent coffee high.

THE SHINE SIDE Look what we've found, Mr Giant Sir!

THE GIANT Good work! That's the dirty thief that stole our Met toys. And with perfect timing! I'm feeling a bit peckish.

JACK Oh, me too! What's on the menu?

THE GIANT (*bellowing*) YOU ARE!

JACK Oh, you wouldn't want to eat me! I'm not very tasty.

THE HOSKINS SIDE No, there's not much meat on that meto, is there?

THE GIANT I don't care! I haven't eaten in three weeks, and Ag sandwiches don't count. You're lucky I haven't eaten you, Shinekins!

ACT IV

*Giant and Shinekins move in towards Jack. He holds up his hand, pleading*

JACK Wait! Surely there must be something I could do for you! (*to THE AUDIENCE*) . . . to stop him from snacking on my innards!

THE GIANT No, no! I can't think of any use for you! Shinekins, fetch the oregano!

THE SHINE SIDE Sir, sir! What about your competition? We need one more act, and I'm sure he won't pose you any threat!

THE GIANT Well, as long as I can eat him after he loses. We'd better get ready!

*The lights go down. JACK, THE GIANT, THE SHINE SIDE, and THE HOSKINS SIDE remain on stage.*

THE NARRATOR (*grandly*) And now, live from the magnificent QBO Theatre high in the stratosphere, it's the event you've all been waiting for! Over the last ten weeks we've been searching high and low and now it's come down to this. The final three contestants will sing for you tonight. This is: The Met Factor 2006!

*The screen displays the Met Factor logo. The lights come up on the stage.*

JACK Hang on a minute! I'm no met-mug! What do I get if I win?

THE GIANT Well . . . the chances of you winning are about the same as me getting through Research Day without falling asleep and snoring! If you win, I'll give you your freedom. But if you lose then I get to gobble your gizzards!

JACK Okay; it's a deal!

*A fanfare plays. THE GIANT moves to the center of the stage, ushering JACK, THE SHINE SIDE, and THE HOSKINS SIDE to the beanstalk side. The spotlight illuminates THE GIANT.*

THE GIANT T, phi, rho, sum. I smell the fear of Ph.D. scum! Be he melodic or be he tone-deaf, he can't beat my tune in the deep bass clef!

*THE GIANT stands grandly and sings the following song to the tune of "Everywhere We Go"*

THE GIANT I'm the giant  
I eat students  
Yummy, crunchy students,  
Undergrads and postgrads.  
And when I'm not eating them  
I sleep and sleep and snore.  
And if you can't hear me,  
I'll snore a little louder!

THE NARRATOR Now let's hear what our judge thought. Simon?

*ROSEMARIE enters.*

THE NARRATOR Wait a second! Rosemarie? But I thought Simon Cowel was judging this competition.

ROSEMARIE (*sweetly*) No, dear. That evil man would have been far too mean to these poor contestants. The scriptwriters thought it would be far better to have a kinder, gentler perspective on the singing.

THE NARRATOR Well okay. Do tell us what you thought of the Giant's singing.

ROSEMARIE (*turning vitriolic, as if she were Simon Cowell*) Well that was utterly rubbish! I've spent my whole career listening to students whine and moan, but I've never heard anything quite that painful! And that pong! Did you sleep at the end of the 1L corridor last night?! Next please!

SCENE II

*Enraged, THE GIANT storms over to the band side. THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE move to center stage. The music begins. THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE sing the following song to the tune of "I Got You Babe."*

THE SHINE SIDE They say it's you, but we don't know,

THE HOSKINS SIDE We wish we knew who's head will be on show,

THE SHINE SIDE Well I don't know, why when or who,

THE HOSKINS SIDE , THE SHINE SIDE (*together*) But you got me and beardy I got you.

THE SHINE SIDE Bri

I got you, Bri

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*spoken*) And I got you Keith . . .

*The music ends. A brief pause.*

ROSEMARIE (*impersonating Simon Cowell*) Hmmm . . .that was interesting. I've never heard any pair take that song and make it sound so absolutely horrid. Whoever said two Heads of the Castle were better than one? It only makes more work for the poor secretaries! Next!

*Dejected, THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE return to the band side as JACK moves to the center stage, noticeably nervous.*

JACK I just thought I'd sing a little song from my days back in the Met Department before it was destroyed.

*JACK sings The PV Song.*

*We hope that THE AUDIENCE goes wild. JACK takes a bow.*

ROSEMARIE (*somewhat sweeter*) Well, what could I possibly say to this poor student? Your song was certainly a novel interpretation of a classic. You've got a bright future ahead of you, my dear. Maybe not in music . . .but you were certainly much better than the other two!

THE NARRATOR I think we have a winner! Rosemarie, could you fetch us some victory wine, please?

*ROSEMARIE exits off the beanstalk side.*

THE GIANT That's not fair!

*THE GIANT begins to cry. THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE console him. JACK sneaks past them, grabs the coffee urn, and turns to leave off the band side.*

JACK (*stopping in his tracks and looking around*) Hang on a minute. Something doesn't feel right. If this is Jack and the Beanstalk, where's the Golden Goose? It must be around here somewhere.

*Some faint honking can be heard in the background, which gradually grows louder and louder. THE GOLDEN GOOSE waddles onto the stage from the band-side.*

JACK I knew the script-writers wouldn't let me down! Good job guys!

THE GOLDEN GOOSE Gordon Bennett! I've been waiting back there for ages!

JACK Come on Goose, let's skedaddle!

*JACK and THE GOLDEN GOOSE exit to the beanstalk*

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*to THE GIANT*) Look! He's nicking your urn now!

ACT IV

THE GIANT (*angrily*) Hey!!!

THE GIANT, THE SHINE SIDE, and THE HOSKINS SIDE *pursue* JACK and THE GOLDEN GOOSE.

*Blackout. The table and chair are removed from the stage.*

[...]

SCENE IV – III .

The Ruins of the Department of Meteorology

THE NARRATOR, JACK, THE MODEL, ROBIN HOGAN, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, TURNER, DAISY

*The scene opens with* JACK, *climbing off the beanstalk.* THE MODEL, ROBIN HOGAN, and ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH *are on stage.* CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, TURNER, and DAISY *are up the beanstalk-side aisle.* THE GOLDEN GOOSE *is behind the beanstalk.* THE NARRATOR *speaks from behind the podium.*

THE NARRATOR So the Department are out in CORIOLIS FORCE to welcome their adventurers back from their latest trip up the beanstalk. And what's this? The A-for-Andy Team are dropping by too!

*The "A-Team" theme music plays.* CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER *rush onto the stage from with* DAISY. *They crowd around* JACK. THE GOLDEN GOOSE *waddles onto the stage from the beanstalk, honking randomly.*

TURNER Hi Jack!

HEAPS So how was your latest adventure?

TURNER Did you get what you went for?

HEAPS Thanks for the cow, man! It's given us plenty of gallons to the mile!

JACK Well, I didn't think much of your magic conkers, guys. In fact I've got a bit of a situation going on here. (*coolly*) I seem to have incurred the wrath of a rather large, hungry, man-eating giant and his two Heads of Castle. He's climbing down the beanstalk as we speak. Do you think you could deal with it?

CHARLTON Do you have a paperclip?

*Everyone on stage begins rummaging through their pockets in search of a paperclip. Eventually* THE MODEL *finds one in his costume and holds it up.*

THE MODEL Here's one. It nearly fell through a larger gap in my adaptive mesh.

CHARLTON Great! Fetch the oxycetaline blow-torch boys - it's welding time!

HEAPS *grabs the paperclip from* THE MODEL. CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER *move off the beanstalk side of the stage. The sound of electric tools plays.*

CHARLTON, CHALLINOR, HEAPS, and TURNER *return with a chainsaw. CHALLINOR takes saw and prepares to cut down the beanstalk*

CHALLINOR Ha ha!

*Blackout. We hear the sound of a falling tree (beanstalk). The screen lights up to show an animated* THE GIANT and THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE *falling across the background. THE GIANT and THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE scream, followed by two loud thumps. The background shakes as they hit the ground.*

SCENE IV

[...]

SCENE IV – IV .

The Ruins of the Department of Meteorology

THE GIANT, THE GOLDEN GOOSE, THE SHINE SIDE, THE HOSKINS SIDE,  
JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY

*The scene opens on THE GIANT, who is lying on the floor in the middle of the stage. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY is crouching over him. THE GOLDEN GOOSE is sitting at the front of the stage on the band side. THE HOSKINS SIDE and THE SHINE SIDE are lying in a heap to the band side of the stage.*

THE NARRATOR And so the mighty beanstalk was felled. We return to the scene now that the smoke has cleared.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY (*to THE GIANT*) Are you alright? That looked like quite a nasty fall you took there.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *stands up and moves to the front of the stage to address THE AUDIENCE.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Life is such a fragile, precious thing. It passes like shadows in the forest with a changing solar zenith angle.

THE GIANT (*sitting up*) Uh . . . I'm not quite dead yet!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY It drifts through time like Rossby waves in a rotating annulus. It passes quickly . . . like foam on the sea

THE GIANT It's only a flesh wound!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY like a twenty-two-degree halo, like snow in Reading . . .

THE GIANT I'm feeling a bit better, actually!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *turns around to face THE GIANT, who now is standing. The theme of "Late Night Love" from 210FM or other romantic-type music plays. SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY and THE GIANT stare at each other, temporarily transfixed.*

THE GIANT Oh my, what blue eyes you have!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Oh my, what big socks you have!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY *and THE GIANT run into each other's arms and freeze.*

THE NARRATOR Things are definitely looking up for the Department of Meteorology. They have the radar dish for their observational capabilities; they can now do modeling thanks to the scantily clad David Marshall; and they now have a brand new coffee urn, which should certainly restore the Department's social life. But there are still a couple of important things missing.

JACK *enters from the beanstalk-side aisle.*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Thanks to you Jack, we now have everything we need to restore the Department to its former glory.

JACK (*objecting*) But the building itself is still in ruins!

THE GIANT (*to SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY*) I'll rebuild it for you, my sweet. Anything you want.

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Oh thank you, thank you! But we don't have any funding. There's no way we could possibly raise enough money for world-class research before the Queen gets here.

ACT IV

JACK That wasn't on the list!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Yeah, I forgot about it.

JACK (*groans*)

THE GOLDEN GOOSE *honks loudly three times.*

THE GIANT Hang on! My goose!

JACK Your goose?

THE GIANT Yes, my brand-spanking-new Walker Institute Goose. It lays golden multi-disciplinary research grants! If you're nice to him, maybe he'll give you the money you need! (*whispers*) I hear he has the inside track to all the choicest NERC funding.

JACK *looks suspicious, but walks over to THE GOLDEN GOOSE. He pats it on the head twice.*

THE GOLDEN GOOSE Oooh, hello!

JACK  *rubs its stomach.*

THE GOLDEN GOOSE Ooh, don't! It tickles. Hee hee!

THE GOLDEN GOOSE *drops a giant piece of cardboard that has "Walker Institute Crisps" written on the back of it. JACK quickly grabs it.*

JACK "Walker Institute Crisps?" (*accusingly*) We need money, not salty snacks!! They're not even flavoured!

THE GOLDEN GOOSE (*sighs*) Look inside the bag, Jack . . .

JACK *reaches "inside" the bag. He pulls out a number of golden streamers that have been fixed to the back of the board so that they do not show over the sides.*

JACK (*throwing the streamers into the air*) They're research grants! Crispy golden Walker-Institute research grants for everyone!

JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY, and THE GIANT *begin frantically grabbing the research grants, to the point where they're fighting over the last few.*

JACK Wait a second! We should take these grants to our Head of Department so that everyone can have a share in them.

*pause*

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Bother! We still need someone to become Head of Department.

JACK But I thought no-one was harmed in the explosion?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY They weren't. We haven't had a proper Head of Department for ages.

JACK That looks bad.

THE GIANT Uh . . . (*thoughtful pause*) Shinekins will do that!

THE SHINE SIDE and THE HOSKINS SIDE *sit up and look confused.*

THE SHINE SIDE What?

THE GIANT Good news, my two-headed friend. We've just got ourselves new jobs: I have a building contract and you have a very prestigious position.

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*suspiciously*) What prestigious position?

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY It pays well, and you'll be well-recognized among meteorologists all over the world.

## SCENE V

THE SHINE SIDE Ooh . . .

THE GIANT Plus all the sausage, mash, and gravy you can eat!

THE SHINE SIDE How about brunch?

THE HOSKINS SIDE Yeah, can we get balti and steak too?

JACK Whatever you like.

THE SHINE SIDE We'll do it!

SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY Excellent. The position is yours, Shinekins.

THE SHINE SIDE Okay, great!

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*curious*) But what's the position?

THE GIANT Why, our new Head of Department, of course!

*The lights go out.*

THE SHINE SIDE , THE HOSKINS SIDE (*together*) Noooooo!!!

[...]

## SCENE IV – V .

### The Department Coffee Room

THE NARRATOR, THE GIANT, THE SHINE SIDE, THE HOSKINS SIDE, ROBIN HOGAN, THE QUEEN, DAVID GRIMES, THE GOLDEN GOOSE, THE MODEL, ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, JACK, SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY

*The scene opens on darkness.*

THE NARRATOR The Giant quickly got to work constructing the new Meteorology building. He spared no effort in making it the most beautiful, exquisite, 5\* research facility in the world. He built a new coffee room . . .

*The screen shows a backdrop of the new coffee room, which looks a lot like the current coffee room.*

THE NARRATOR . . . a new croquet lawn . . .

*The screen shows a backdrop of a perfectly flat croquet lawn, complete with a large bubble level.*

THE NARRATOR . . . and a new office for SUE-pervisor Gray.

*The screen shows a backdrop of a Disney-style fairy-tale castle. Sue Gray's head appears on the body of a popular Disney princess.*

THE NARRATOR Now it's the day of the Queen's grand visit. The red carpet has been rolled out and everyone is happy. They are drinking nice coffee from the brand-new coffee urn to calm their nerves. Some of them, however, seem to have overdone it.

*The lights come up on the stage. The coffee urn is in the middle of the stage; ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH, the radar dish, and THE MODEL are further towards the back. ANTHONY ILLINGWORTH is spinning around and making radar-ish noises. AURORE PORSON is further downstage, eyeing THE MODEL seductively. JACK and SUE-PERIVSOR GRAY are standing on the band side of the stage, sipping coffee. ROBIN HOGAN is buzzing around with a coffee cup in his hand, clearly high on caffeine. DAVID GRIMES is prodding THE GOLDEN GOOSE on the beanstalk-side of the stage. THE GIANT is holding a clipboard and some other tools, inspecting his handiwork on the new walls and ceiling. The general feeling here should be one of caffeine-induced pandemonium.*

ACT IV

THE SHINE SIDE *and* THE HOSKINS SIDE *are standing on two chairs*

THE SHINE SIDE Guys! Calm down, will you?

ROBIN HOGAN *stops buzzing about long enough to mumble something incoherent to* THE SHINE SIDE.

THE HOSKINS SIDE No, seriously. Calm down . . . this is important!

THE SHINE SIDE (*pointing at* DAVID GRIMES) Hey you! Stop fondling that goose! It's had a hard day!

DAVID GRIMES *moves away from* THE GOLDEN GOOSE. ROBIN HOGAN *stops next to* THE SHINE SIDE *again and mumbles something else incoherently before rushing off again.*

THE HOSKINS SIDE (*to* AURORE PORSON) Oi! Aurore, stop ogling that Model. He's a top-of-the-range research tool.

AURORE PORSON *walks away from* THE MODEL *in a huff and sulks in a corner.*

THE SHINE SIDE Illingworth! Stop playing with your radar dish! The Queen's here!

ROBIN HOGAN *mumbles to* THE SHINE SIDE *again.*

THE SHINE SIDE THE HOSKINS SIDE (*together*) Silence!

*Everyone freezes on the spot, but continues to tremble in their caffeine-induced hyperactive state.*

THE SHINE SIDE Ladies and gentlemen . . .

THE HOSKINS SIDE . . . Her Majesty, the Queen.

THE QUEEN *walks down the beanstalk-aisle. The National Anthem plays in the background. Everyone on stage salutes but continues trembling. THE QUEEN takes center stage.*

THE QUEEN Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure that one is here today to present the Department of Meteorology at the University of Reading with the Queen's Award for the Bestest, Friendliest, Cleverest, Sexiest University Department in the whole wide world, ever!

*Everyone applauds. The final song is to the tune of "American Pie."*

A long, long time ago . . .  
I can still remember  
Before the department lay in a pile.  
And I knew if I had my chance,  
That I could save the Met barndance  
And maybe Sue'd be happy for a while.

But Stevenson just couldn't wait;  
And so he sealed the metos' fate.  
Bad news on the field trip,  
I couldn't take one more sip.

I can't remember if I cried,  
But thankfully nobody died  
When the explosion shattered deep inside  
The day the coffee urn died.

SCENE V

So bye-bye, morning caffeine high.  
Took my mug down to the kitchen,  
But it all went awry  
Them good old profs were drinkin' whiskey and rye  
And singin', "Where is our hot water supply?"  
"We need a hot water supply."

The beanstalk reached up to the stars,  
And after getting past the strato-guards,  
Our hero met a giant man.  
He ran off with his drinking dish,  
Which fulfilled our observations wish,  
But that was just the first step of the plan. Jack's supervisor wasn't satisfied,

And although he tried his best to hide,  
She sent him up again.  
Man, she really is a pain! So up the beanstalk Jack did climb;

He did it for the second time.  
A model was all that he required,  
And my—what he acquired! I started singin',

Bye-Bye, morning caffeine high.  
Took my mug down to the kitchen  
But it all went awry.  
Them good old profs were drinkin' whiskey and rye  
And singin', "Where is our hot water supply?"  
"We need a hot water supply."

Now for forty years we've been on our own  
Look how much our department's grown  
But that's not how it used to be.  
When the student tried to evade his doom,  
He sang the department's famous tune,  
With a little help from you and me,

Oh, and while the giant was in his hoose,  
Our hero stole his golden goose.  
Shinekins was insenced;  
His anger was immense. Ooh!  
And while the pair were making tracks,  
The A-Team felled it with an axe,  
And the giant fell down with a smack  
The day the coffee died.

We were singing,  
"Bye-bye, morning caffeine high."  
Took my mug down to the kitchen,  
But it all went awry.  
Them good old profs were drinkin' whiskey and rye  
And singin', "Where is our hot water supply?"  
"We need a hot water supply."

ACT IV

Sue met a giant who made her swoon;  
They hit it off like the dish and spoon.  
He rebuilt the department in a day.  
They went down to the stationary store  
Where I'd pilfered pencils years before,  
And Shinekins at last agreed to stay.

In the coffee room the people scream,  
And Shinekins cried, "Here comes the Queen".  
A royal word was spoken:  
"I declare the department open"  
The three men that I most admire:  
Hoskins, Robertson 'n' McIntyre,  
Let's hope they never will retire  
The day the beanstalk died.

And they were singing,  
"Bye-bye, morning caffeine high."  
Took my mug down to the kitchen,  
But it all went awry.  
Them good old profs were drinkin' whiskey and rye  
And singin', "Where is our hot water supply?"  
"We need a hot water supply."

They were singing,  
"Bye-bye, morning caffeine high."  
Took my mug down to the kitchen,  
But it all went awry.  
Them good old profs were drinkin' whiskey and rye  
And singin', "Where is our hot water supply?"  
"We need a hot water supply."