

The Sonde of Music

An observational comedy about meteorological instruments

Characters:

Narrator -- Maarten Ambaum *played by* Andrea

Graeme-Maria -- Graeme, PhD researcher of the Year *played by* Daniel

Anthony Illingworth -- Mark Prosser

Rob Thompson -- Alec

Giles Harrison -- Dan

Captain Bellouin -- Nicholas Bellouin *played by* Alex

Children 1 & 4 -- Lauren

Children 2 & 5 -- Linda

Children 3 & 6 -- Max

Child 7 -- Greta Thunburg *played by* Meg

Observatree -- Tristan Quaife *played by* Kris

Peter Clark -- Dan

Neil Blanchonnet -- James

Peter Cook -- Wilson

Remi -- Alec

Jonathon Gregory -- Max

Nicki Robinson -- Devon

Helen Dacre -- Sophie

Tephigram Man -- Jake

Miguel -- Beth

Generic sheep -- Kris

Generic cow -- Jake

Janet Barlow -- Gwyneth

Javier -- Dom

Robin Hogan -- Carl

Ellie Highwood -- Beth

Toothbrush -- Devon

Customs Official (Tom Frame) -- Alec

Crowd of Oklahoma Students -- Extras

KEY:

Stage directions

Props

Slide

Band!

Confused...

Lights!

ACT 1

Scene 1

Synopsis: Open in Radar group, with Anthony Illingworth talking about Chilbolton with Rob Thompson. Everyone is dressed as a nun. They are waiting on Graeme-Maria (a post-doc) to give a presentation, except when she gets there, she forgets her slides, and ends up talking about her new method of in-situ observations instead. They send her away. They need to sort the problem with Graeme-Maria, and so send her to lecture for the Remote Sensing module instead.

Characters: Maarten, Anthony, Giles, Rob, GM, Captain

The nuns walk down the aisle from the back, featuring the members of Radar Group (Anthony, Giles, Rob, etc.) along with members of the band. The nuns have radar symbols on them, and are all holding fake candles.

They walk halfway down the aisle humming solemnly before spontaneously breaking out strongly into the below:

All: (Sung, unaccompanied) Do you believe in life after Steve?

I can feel something inside me say... Paul the porter has to stay now *(Repeat)*

As this is being sung, flash up in memoriam slides of Steven Gill, Paul the Porter, Hannah Gough, Ellie Highwood, Zappa, Jon Beverley flashes up briefly etc.

The band go to their instruments, and the narrator (Maarten Ambaum) enters the stage on the right. Radar group freeze on stage.

Full lights

Maarten: Good evening everyone and welcome to the 28th annual general election... sorry I mean Meteorology Pantomime! We BEGIN with the UK STILL in the European Union. Phew, we got that one right! This year's pantomime is the first edition of the Sonde of Music, an observational comedy about meteorological instruments. If second editions are more your thing, now is as good a time as any to mention the second edition of my book "Thermal Physics of the Atmosphere", which is currently in production! Now, we begin with remote sensing and clouds group, where Anthony Illingworth, Rob Thompson and Mother Giles Harrison have just been discussing for the last 3 or so hours their love for Chilbolton.

Anthony: *(Talking to Rob and Giles, mid-sentence)* ... And what's more, it's the world's largest, fully steerable and pointable meteorological radar.

Rob: Yes it most certainly is, I love it SO MUCH! It's almost got as many metal parts as I have now.

Amount of metal in Rob Thompson graph.

Rob puts headphones on.

Giles: Ha! Quite right Rob. You'll start conducting electricity soon! Actually, this gives me an idea for a new lab experim... oh sorry was I speaking out loud.

Rob's phone starts ringing, he eventually notices and removes his headphones. Giles looks perplexed and waves in front of Rob's face.

Rob: Oh sorry did you say something, I didn't hear a thing. I had these noise cancelling headphones in. They stop everything getting through, EVERYTHING.

Giles: Riight... Anyway! We should probably start the meeting. Where is Graeme-Maria?! He is meant to be talking today on the different ways we can remotely sense clouds.

Anthony: I hope he's not wasting time on that stupid radiosonde of his. He can't take his eyes off that darned thing. Lapse rates this, lapse rates that, inversion here, wind shear there.

Giles: Yes I know! The other day I saw him speaking to the darned balloon as if it were his child... *(Disturbed)* As if it could hear him...

Play video of Graeme in the field site.

Graeme-Maria rushes on from stage right frantically and apologetically..

Graeme-Maria: Oh I'm so sorry I'm late. I was just perfecting my meteorological instrument, made from only the very best materials! It can safely get to at least 15000 metres, well into that irrelevant stratosphere place, as long as it's not released into any air traffic that is.

Graeme-Maria throws guilty look.

Rob: Oh dear Graeme-Maria, what an absolute shambles. Actually, I could use some of these parts for a new left calf...

Rob moves towards the instrument, Graeme-Maria shields it.

Graeme-Maria: *(Backing away)* Hands off Rob! This is my most prized possession.

Giles: (*Exaggerated coughing to get Graeme-Maria's attention*) Do you have your presentation Graeme-Maria?

Graeme-Maria: Oh dear, I don't have it with me, sorry! I needed the USB it was on for a recent radiosonde launch. It will be high above our heads by now.

Giles: Oh Graeme-Maria, when will you learn to stop your messing around!

STOP YOUR MESSING AROUND

Stop your messing around (ah-ah-ah)
Better think of your research (ah-ah-ah)
You never turn up on time (ah-ah...)
It makes me just want to cry (ah-ah-ah)

PhD

A message to you, PhD

A message to you

We need you now to present (ah-ah-ah)

Bring-a-plot has no future (ah-ah-ah)

Better think of Chilbolton (ah-ah...)

Else you won't make it in Lyle (ah-ah-ah)

PhD

A message to you, PhD

A message to you

Everyone except Graeme-Maria: Just stop being so bad (ah-ah-ah)

Radiosondes are for losers (ah-ah-ah)

Remote sensing's in town (ah-ah...)

Graeme-Maria: (*Butting in*) Radar scientists are mad! **Everyone else:** (ahhhhhhhhhhhh)

Everyone crowding round Graeme-Maria, singing aggressively.

PhD

A message to you, PhD

An email to you, PhD

Oh, it's a whatsapp to you, PhD

Yeah, a fax to you, PhD

There is lots of commotion by all those in radar group.

Anthony: *(Said in the style of John Bercow, everyone gradually quietens)* Order, orrrrrrrrrrrrr, er, orrrrrrrrrrrrr.

Rob: Chuck him out Anthony!

Anthony: Er, order, I don't need any assistance from a junior minister! *(Attention passes to Graeme-Maria)* Graeme-Maria, you are to withdraw immediately from the chamber for the remainder of today's sitting. There has been far too much messing around from you.

Graeme-Maria exits stage left sniffing and looking dejected. Maarten gets the audience to go "awwwwwwww"

Giles: Oh what a shame. We urgently need to sort this problem with Graeme-Maria.

Rob: *(Wearing headphones, potentially sung)* If there's an IT problem ask Maria? *(Lifting his headphones and looking quizzical)*

Giles and Anthony: NOT THAT MARIA

Those on stage look dejected and shake their heads

Maarten: Deflated and disappointed with Graeme-Maria's research efforts, Radar group are at a loss with what to do next. Little do they know, that a solution may come sooner than expected.

Nicholas enters from stage left.

Everyone on stage still looks deflated, like they don't know what to do next, shaking heads, etc.

Captain Bellouin: Ahoy! *(Sees everyone in despair.)* Goodness, what has happened here.

Rob: Oh Captain Bellouin, all is woe, all is lost.

Captain Bellouin: Oh no! What a nightmare!

Giles breaks down sobbing

Giles: *(Squealing manically)* We don't know what to do with Graeme-Maria, it's all been downhill since he was PhD researcher of the year. So much potential *(clenches fist, stares at Nicholas intensely, gripping Captain Bellouin)*. His head is in the clouds, literally in the clouds. He'd go up with those radiosondes if he could.

Giles falls into Nicholas's arms. Nicholas gently pushes him away.

Rob guides Giles off stage right "Here here Giles, all will be okay, we'll get you a nice hot water bottle and some electric charge experiments....", with a roll of tissues/hankie.

Captain Bellouin: Deary me, what an unmitigated disaster. I may have a way to help though! I need a demonstrator for my remote sensing class. The last three have fallen through, after they all got confused between optical thickness and optical depth, *(looks to audience)* THE FOOLS. Graeme-Mariaaaa! Come back!

Graeme-Maria encroaches onto the stage nervously from stage right, holding a poorly inflated party balloon.

Anthony: Ah, Graeme-Maria, thank goodness' you are here. The Captain needs you to help with his remote sensing class.

Captain Bellouin: Yes, quite right Anthony! Graeme-Maria, come and help me! I am all out of options, and you were once a fine scientist, before all these balloons got hold of you and took you away from us *(Takes party balloon from Graeme-Maria and throws it to the audience)*.

Graeme-Maria: Oh, well, no one's ever asked me to help them before... *(emotional, new resolve)* That's brilliant, thank you! *(Still nervous)* But I wouldn't know anything about demonstrating, or teaching...

Captain Bellouin: Oh don't worry you'll be fine! It's about time you got into the big world outside this research group!

Anthony: Excuse me, sorry, there's a world outside the research group?

Captain Bellouin: *(Ignoring Anthony)* Come on, follow me to Met 1L61 Graeme-Maria, the site of many an angular momentum demonstration by Pete Inness spinning round on his chair.

Graeme-Maria and Nicholas walk off stage right together, Graeme-Maria slightly behind.

Graeme-Maria: *(whispering nervously, trying to regain confidence)* What if one of them bites me... Do I get to spin on a chair? Will the chair spin round on me? Who's Pete Inness?

Maarten: And so Graeme-Maria leaves the convent with Captain Bellouin to demonstrate for his remote sensing class, walking cross-country through the Wilderness in order to get there. The hills are well and truly alive, with the radiative transfer equation.

Light fades.

END OF SCENE 1

Scene 2

Synopsis: Graeme-Maria has started teaching the remote sensing class, watched over by the Captain. Introduction to the children. Graeme-Maria turns his back and children are seen to not be paying any attention whatsoever. Graeme-Maria then decides it is too boring in the classroom! The scene restarts outside in the atmospheric observatory, where a demonstration of the radiosonde ensues. The Captain arrives back at just the right moment and so decides that he really likes it, and then decides to present it to the whole department.

Characters: Graeme-Maria, Captain Bellouin, Tristan, Rob Thompson, Children 1-6, Greta, Maarten

The scene begins in a remote sensing class, where Graeme-Maria is teaching, and the Captain is to the side. The children are sat on chairs. The class is making a racket (think: paper aeroplanes, tomato sauce container with water. Generally disruptive)

Full lights

Maarten: *(Frantically rushing through papers)* Oh, terribly sorry, I appear to have lost the script. I left it on the Met Cluster and it's been decommissioned! All these IT issues are really starting to RACC up *(badum tss)*. *(Looks nervous)* I really hope that hasn't affected my new book! Right, umm, gonna have to start making it up here. And so, errrrr, I guessss we join Captain Bellouin's remote sensing class, where Graeme-Maria is lecturing for the first time. *(Whispers aside)* Someone go backstage and tell them we're winging it from here.

Captain Bellouin: Alright quiet down, quiet down. Class, I'd like you to meet your new demonstrator Graeme-Maria! Please introduce yourselves to him one by one on my whistle *(which is actually a kazoo)*

Get children to enter from the back/stage left, on kazoo one at a time?!

Child 1: I'm child 1, I'm 19, and I don't need a demonstrator. *(Child 1 turns his sign over to become child 4)*

Graeme-Maria: Well, nice to meet you child 1. In that case you can help me teach the rest of the class.

Child one screws his face up as if to say "I'll pass".

Child 2: I'm child 2, aaannnd "I am Masters going on PhD, and I know that I'm naive..."

Child 4: (*Looking quizzically at Child 2*) And weird.....

Grahamaria eyebrow raise

Child 3: I'm child 3, I'm 37, "and I fleetly flee and fly".

Graeme-Maria: Well... Okay, but do please try to keep your feet on the ground in this class.

Child 4: (*Blatantly wearing label child 4*) I'm child 5, and I am 20 Earth years old, or 37.6 Mars years if you would like to know.

Graeme-Maria: Well I didn't really, but thanks very much child... 4!

Child 5: *I'm* child 5, and you're smart.

Graeme-Maria: Wow, um, thanks so much! I was once PhD researcher of the year you know... For the work I did on atmospheric turbulence. I had to fly accelerometers into the sky on 70 standard weather balloons ... turbulence agitates the accelerometers and(*voice drifting off, starting to look in the opposite direction*)

Child 6: (*Coughing to interrupt -- Graeme-Maria snaps back to reality*) I'M CHILD 6, I'm 15, I'm here on a GCSE experience day, and I can't wait to taste my first Champagne.

Graeme-Maria: Well you'll have to settle for Prosecco, and wait until Fridays on Lyle 4. Uhh captain, what kind of class is this anyway?

Captain: Well, everyone wants to learn about remote sensing! And there's still one more!

Children gleeful.

Greta: And I'm Greta, from Sweden School Strikes Limited. Why are you guys doing nothing about climate change?

Graeme-Maria looks baffled.

Graeme-Maria: I... I don't think I saw you enrolled on blackboard for this course?

Children 1-6: There once was a girl called Greta... The future of climate upset her... Started school strikes... Standing up for their rights... They wanted to make the world better!

Graeme-Maria: (*Ignoring Greta's comment and the poem*) How lovely. Pleased to meet you all, I'm sure we'll all get along wonderfully! Let's start off by teaching you about the different remote sensing methods, which ones do you know about?

Graeme-Maria points individually at each child whilst they sing doradar so on, has stolen the kazoo from the Captain.

Child 1 - 7: *(Sung) "Do - Ra - a - Dar - So - Dar - Li - Dar"*

Graeme-Maria: "RA-DAR!" (Blows kazoo). Blimey, that was terrible, I think you all need to brush up on your singing skills.

Captain: *(Smiling absent-mindedly)* Well, that's all for introductions, today we will be learning about retrieval algorithms. *(Groans from all class especially Graeme-Maria, Captain glares at him).* I will leave you in the *capable* hands of Graeme-Maria. I need to go and organise project proposals for next year's intake of SITUATION students.

Captain leaves the stage left. Graeme-Maria moves to write on 'chalkboard'.

Maarten: Due to an excess of funding from NERC, otherwise known as Nev'er Ending Real Cash, a new Doctoral Training Partnership SITUATION has been founded, Students In TroUble Aren'T getting jObs Now, *(Goes on screen)*

Graeme-Maria: *(Writing on chalkboard)* Blah blah blah radio waves blah reflect blah refract and so on... satellite schmatellite.

Children appear to be paying no attention, one is snoozing, another is trying to balance the contents of his pencil case on his nose.

Graeme-Maria: *(Turns around to see none of the class paying attention. Coughs to get their attention)* I know... this is as dull as stratus cloud... Let's go outside and do something much more exciting! Let's go and sense the weather in-situ! To the field site!

Pretend to go outside by walking in a circle.

Maarten: And so the class meander off down towards the Reading University Atmospheric Observatory... as the crow flies... Graeme-Maria ploughs on through the mud, losing a few along the way to intruding branches and a noticeable lack of grass. But at last, caked in mud, they arrive...

They arrive in the observatory, and Tristan is on stage. Slide of Tristan?

Graeme-Maria: We are now outside! This is the observation site, here is the Stevenson screen *(nods head)*, thermometers *(points)*, 'observatree' *(gestures at tree, tree waves back)*, rain gauges...

Children's attention moves away from Graeme-Maria.

Rob: *(Appears on stage suddenly next to a rain gauge on a scooter)* GUESS WHAT!! One day in April 2011 the rain was sooo heavy, that the rain gauge drop counter didn't pick up anything because it was just one continuous stream. *(High pitched Rob laugh)* Hahahahaha. Wanna grab coffee? I have biscuits!

Rob leaves as quickly as he came.

Graeme-Maria: *(Gesturing back to grab the children's attention)* ... And as I was saying, here are the anemometers... but all this silliness can only measure ground level variables, you wanna measure full atmospheric profiles you need one of these bad boys, a radiosonde! Would you like to know more about radiosondes?

Children all say yes except Greta who says "I say we strike" or something.

Graeme-Maria: Well, I think it was Katy Perry who said it best.....

HOT N COLD

You haven't seen,
This machine, how it works,
Child 3! Come with me,
Can you see, observatree *(points to Tristan the tree)*
And you, Greta dear,
See this thing, over here.
Please don't go,
Balloons are really greee--at!

'Cause it's hot then it's cold

It's moist then it's dry

It veers then it backs

On adiabats

Expands on its flight,

Explodes at great heights,

Pressure, density,

And humidity,

(Someone jumps on screaming.)

When will these crazy curtains go, oh,

Windows 10 reset's really slow, yo,

(Gets pushed off stage.)

'Cause it's hot then it's cold

It's moist then it's dry

It veers then it backs

On adiabats.

We have to wait

For results, to come back

VIP, from EC,

We don't know, who he is,

Tephigram, or Skew-T,

Either-or, fine by me.

And we hope,

It didn't hit a plaannneee,

'Cause it's hot then it's cold

It's moist then it's dry

It veers then it backs

On adiabats

Expands on its flight,

Explodes at great heights,

Pressure, density,

And humidity,

(Someone jumps on screaming.)

Will the croquet ever end, no,

I really miss the Tassimo-o!

(Gets pushed off stage.)

'Cause it's hot then it's cold

It's moist then it's dry

It veers then it backs

On adiabats.

Someone... call Michel Barnier

Got a case of EU bi-polar

Stuck on a... Brexit coaster

Can't get off this ri----ide

You, change your mind, like the UK, changes leaders...

'Cause it's hot then it's cold

It's moist then it's dry

It veers then it backs

On adiabats

Expands on its flight,

Explodes at great heights,

Pressure, density,

And humidity, (X2)

(Someone jumps on screaming.)

Will Brexit ever really end, yo!

Will Crossrail finish in our lives, no!

(Gets pushed off stage.)

'Cause it's hot then it's cold

It's moist then it's dry

It veers then it backs

On adiabats, (bats bats bats)

Graeme-Maria center stage with the sonde, Tristan the observatree just on stage, stage left. Spotlight on stage.

Graeme-Maria: So this, class, is the sonde of music, used to measure vertical profiles of atmospheric fields. Our first instrument is the guitar-string-thermometer: as the temperature drops the tension in the string is increased, and we can measure the amount by the change in the pitch of the note.

guitarist illustrates by playing a slide note of ascending pitch

Graeme-Maria: Next is the trombarometer. With the ends sealed, what will happen to the trombone slide as the balloon ascends?

Child 3: As the balloon ascends and the pressure decreases, the slide will come out?

trombonist illustrates by playing a note of descending pitch

Graeme-Maria: Very good! And what do we think the milk bottle is used to measure?

Child 1: Number of cows in the sky?

Child 2: How keen the birds are on recycling?

Graeme-Maria opens question to children in the audience.

Graeme-Maria: No not quite: The combined milk-bottle-hygrometer-anemometer is used to measure wind speed and humidity. As moisture in the bottle accumulates, the pitch increases, and the louder the note, the stronger the wind speed.

Milk-bottle player blows on three consecutive bottles with increasing amounts of water in them

Child 4: With all that sound coming out of it, does the sonde of music also have SODAR?

Graeme-Maria: Yes child 4, but only diet SODAR, ever since they introduced the sugar tax... The last instrument on the sonde itself is something very nice, it measures the depositional growth of ice. It's called a riming detector. Finally, all the data gathered during the ascent is logged ...

Observatree Tristan: *Shrieeks*

Graeme-Maria: No, not that kind of logging. It's kept track of using this recorder.

Graeme-Maria blows on recorder

Mime of sonde ascent, trombone, guitar, milk bottle, recorder, updated tephigram x 3, interrupted by burst of balloon and loud crash as sonde falls on Tristan the Observatree.

Graeme-Maria: Oh no! My precious instruments!!

Tristan: Ow, not the face! This isn't the first time I've seen a balloon go straight into a tree you know, back in 2018 I had to ban a studen....

Captain enters site, all lights go back to normal.

Slide tephigram

Captain: *(Interrupting)* Yes yes, we all know that story, hang on, what's going on here. *(Sees marvelously accurate tephigram, looks astonished)* Oh my, this is wonderful, look at that vertical resolution. No need for those darned weighting functions! I must present this in GU01 tomorrow, at the lunchtime seminar! In-situ sensing is the future! Ummm, class dismissed!

Everyone leaves stage left apart from the Captain.

Captain wanders round giddily and sings Edelweiss, probably acapella. Captain wanders off as the song fades. A big hook hooks him off the stage because he tries to go on too long "Blosssssoom of snoow may you bloom and grow etc."

Captain: "Radiosonde, radiosonde, every morn we release ya'

Radiosonde, radiosonde, and tephigram the data

And the balloon it will bloom and grow, bloom and grow, then pop and fall down again.

Radiosonde, radiosonde, help us forecast the weather!"

Children: "radiosonde...." "radiosonde"

Captain exits only to suddenly return for a second rendition.

Captain: "Blossom of..." *(abruptly gets pulled off stage by something)*

Maarten: *(As Captain gets dragged off)* Ahhh, it looks like the Captain has been won over by the new radiosondes.

Light fades.

END OF SCENE 2

Scene 3:

*Synopsis: We are in GU01. Captain Lecturer regains his love for the sonde of music, and the class present it internally at the department, for a lunchtime seminar in GU01. All the random jokes about staff and emails and all. Presenting a radiosonde, madness song, V's post, J Greg's bday, Nicki you're so fine? Maria and Captain leave. Foreshadow Janet, tephigram/telegram, **SONG:***

In GU01 for the University Met Department Get together, where the Captain and Graeme-Maria are presenting their work on the new radiosonde design. The presentation fails, and all move to 1L61. Then break into song (Madness). After the presentation, Remi mumbles a question, and then they celebrate with J Gregorys birthday (brings cake), argument about catering (couldn't use bbq due to them not being cleaned) maarten ambaum gives handshake to whomever made the cake (coca cola tweet).

Characters: Captain, Narrator, Graeme-Maria, Children 4, Nicki, Remi, Neil Blanchonnet, Helen Dacre, Peter Clark, Peter Cook, Jonathon Gregory, Sea Monster, Tephigram Man.

Onstage in the seminar at the start: Maarten and Captain to his left, then GM, Pete Clark, Jon Gregory, Remi, Helen facing him from stage left. Lots of extras on-stage to start. Doesn't matter to have a crowded stage for this first little section.

Full lights

Maarten: So, the Captain giddely prepares his seminar on the new radiosonde design to the entire department. Note by the word 'entire', I mean the entire department who still attend the lunchtime seminar in week 11, so all 7 of them. We move now to GU01, where Ted Shepherd is just finishing the unabridged biography of Captain Nicholas Bellouin by way of introduction, who now has a good 10 minutes left to give his seminar.

Throughout this first section, Peter Clark appears to get sleepier and sleepier.

Captain: Okay, thank you so much Ted for that. Right now I'm here to talk about the in-situ sensing revolution!

Captain starts his slides, the background is black, and the font is illegible. Suddenly the projector breaks (Do this on the powerpoint screen)

Captain: Oh dear, it seems the projector has catastrophically failed. We will have to move to 1L61!

Lights down. *Everyone but Pete Clark hustles off stage.*

Lights back up.

Pete Clark is asleep still in GU01.

Peter Clark: *Snores* Warm tongue.... *Snores* Moist slot.... *Snores* Records are altogether boring

Lights down. Everyone hustles back on stage but without all the extras. Markedly less people present.

Lights back up.

Everyone sits down, now there are clearly less people in 1L61.

Captain: Right, finally, after all that silliness, I have less than 5 minutes to give my presentation. As I was saying....

Neil enters stage RIGHT.

Neil Blanchonnet: *(Comes on with laptop in hand)* This is a good opportunity to remind everyone that time is running out for Windows 7. All PC's need to be upgraded by the end of 2019 – more details available on the Windows 10 pages. Please do so as soon as is inconvenient for you.

Neil exits stage RIGHT.

Captain: Okay um.. Thanks Neil Blanchonnet. I'm sure no one will run into any problems with the update... Okay, finally, let's get started.

Peter cook enters, clutching his mug.

Peter Cook: I am having many problems with my PC.

Captain: Right that's quite enough *(pushing peter Cook dramatically back from whence he came)* distractions for one afternoon!

Captain goes off stage and puts on hat whilst everyone stands looking confused briefly.

Captain: "Hey you, don't use that, use this! This is the **(heavy heavy monster?)** sonde! The most accurate sonde around! So if you want to measure the air, and you've got a recorder to spare, you'd better hope the balloon won't tear, while you gather your obs with flair, in ascents.
RADIOOSSONNDDEE"

Madness song/instrumental (Everyone runs round stage)

Most children leave, except Child 4.

Captain: Right, umm... that's all then, any questions?!

Scattered applause.

Remi: (*Mumbles Incoherent question*) Croissant, retreat, APE, blahdeblah...

Captain: Ummm... Okay Remi, well we're out of time I'm afraid. We will speak later.... Yes, yes we'll do that, excellent. But now we must celebrate a special birthday!

Graeme-Maria: We had plans to have a BBQ to celebrate this momentous occasion, however, 7 months on from the Met BBQ, they STILL have not been cleaned. Good thing Jon Shonk hasn't stopped the DJ set I guess.

Captain: Jonathan Gregory, as it is your birthday, do you have anything to say?

People cry speech.

Jonathan Gregory: Well, it was my birthday almost 7 months ago now, and any birthday is an excuse to eat biscuits, so I have brought some, and I have sent a large collection of biscuits to Lyle 3... From the pattern of biscuits I provide, attempt to guess my age. Hint: It's Fibonnaci sequence based.

J Greg distributes biscuits

Maarten: (*Looking in disgust*) Those biscuits look a bit like fungus...

Child 4: Hey! I made them.

Maarten eats biscuit, makes an amazed face...

Maarten: At least they aren't Coca-Cola flavoured!

...and holds out his hand for a Paul Hollywood handshake. Everyone on stage cheers.

Child 4: (*in excitement*) Shut up!

Nicki enters from stage left.

Nicki: A pair of glasses have been found in the observatory by the observatree, if you think they might be yours please take a look.

Tristan the observatree, who lost glasses stumbling around blindly in background, destroying set etc.

Nicki goes away and appears each time, irritatingly.

Nicki: And also a "fleecy top" has been found in the coffee area.

Nicki: Also, if anyone could shed any light on the whereabouts of 2 chairs, made of pale oak, and lilac fabric, please let me know.

Powerpoint slide about fleecy top/hoodie. / chairs email slide

Everyone groans.

Nicki: Also, when you use the stapler, please can you return it to the stationery cupboard.

HEY NICKI

Oh Nikki, you're so fine

You're so fine you blow my mind, hey Nikki,

Hey Nikki, you're so fine

You're so fine you blow my mind, hey Nikki,

Hey Nikki

Oh Nikki, you're so fine

You're so fine you blow my mind, hey Nikki,

Hey Nikki

Nicki leaves stage left.

Maarten: Well if we want any more plot, we actually have to go somewhere else, otherwise this pantomime will never end and that's not good value for money! However, buy my book, as that is good value for money!

Graeme-Maria speaking to Maarten.

Graeme-Maria: AH, I have an idea! So, we need to find the Tassimo machine, it's broken twice now but is still rather young as Tassimo machines go. I bet they have it recuperating at the hospital on London Road.

Captain: Yes, let us depart at once!

Captain and Graeme-Maria and child leave stage right, everyone else is left standing at the party.

Maarten: And so the Captain and Graeme-Maria depart the scene, leaving the rest of the department, all 4 of them, still forcing themselves to eat biscuits at Jonathan Gregory's party.

Staff finish biscuits.

Giant cardboard sea monster rises from the deep to admonish them... As the email about Jonathon gregory says something about the just so story.

Sea Monster: *(Literally said)* Inarticulate rambling about not having any biscuits and croissants.

Helen: Ummm, Remi did you say something?!

J. Gregory: Oh no, don't worry, it's just the departmental sea monster. *(Hands biscuits to seamonster)*

Everyone continues to chat. The seamonster calms down and eats biscuits. Tephigram man enters somehow.

Tephigram man: Hi! Is this building HUMMS?

Helen: No we're meteorology actually. Also HUMMS doesn't exist anymore, it's Edith Morley. Let me draw you a map.

Helen pretends to draw map and shows it to the delivery guy, map of campus flashes up on screen. Map to Edith Morley with squiggly route (Tolkein map of middle earth, here be dragons.)

Tephigram man: Oh dear, well I have an urgent delivery for you guys too. A tephigram from Janet Barlow. Begin transcript: "Help". Full stop. End transcript. Have a nice day! Oh, by the way, there seems to be an exceptional amount of CAPE.

Insert some kind of ECMWF foreshadowing, add to Tephigram slide? Add slide of a slide with ECMWF branding?

Tephigram man potentially wearing a cape or 5?

Tephigram man leaves with seamonster.

Helen: What a nice man!

Maarten: And so, Graeme-Maria and the Captain stride off towards the hospital to find the broken Tassimo. 3 entire scenes have got us to that point... Good grief. Well, we have some fantastic interval acts coming up, so don't step out for long. When you leave to go to the toilet, particularly if you are using 1L32 in Meteorology, I kindly encourage you to use the flush option which is available on every toilet. The last cubicle remains off limits. Oh, but before you go, there's someone we've forgotten!

Lights dim

Lights turn on

Peter Clark wakes up, still in GU01.

Peter Clark: Well there's another half an hour of my day lost.

Peter Clark stumbles off hopping up and down on one leg, and hitting himself on the head with a bottle (c.f. Mr Mets).

Lights fade

END OF SCENE 3

END OF ACT 1

Interval: Birthdays (Panto Dame), Mr Mets (TBC), Staff Interval Act (TBC), Postdocs (TBC), weddings (TBC).

ACT 2

Scene 4:

*Synopsis: Graeme-Maria, the Captain, and the children, make their way along London Road in an attempt to find the Royal Berkshire Hospital. On their way, they stumble across the Mother Nun outside the Museum of English Rural Life. (Goats outside bleating MERL? Or yodelling?). They go inside and have some banter about cricket the sport and **bats**, and SI units and absolute units of sheep. They find a tractor. Banter with Elon Musk. And someone finds a tassimo. All is happy and they make their way back to the department. Add some bants with the Dame here.*

Characters: Maarten, Graeme-Maria, Greta, Children, Sheep, Cow, Miguel, Giles, Captain.

Full lights

Maarten: Welcome back everyone! We hope you enjoyed the interval... I certainly did. I only had one glass of wine, I had no idea how big the cabinet was. *(Email appears on slide)* Just to remind ourselves, Graeme-Maria et al. have gone on a mission to the Royal Bosch-ire Hospital to find the Met Department Tassimo, as God forbid they have no fancy coffee.

Graeme-Maria and Captain Bellouin, with the children slightly behind, wander down Redlands Road (across stage from left to right then back again to center, seeking the hospital).

Graeme-Maria: Oh, I do hope the Tassimo is okay and not in an unstable condition!

Joke about stable buoyancy condition on screen.

Bat flies across the stage (Lobbed bat YEET etc.). Child 4 instantly follows bat across the stage to stage left.

Child 4: Oooooo, the claaaaawwwwww.

Child 2: Was that... A BAT?

Captain: Wow what, a cricket bat?! Ben Stokes must be in Reading. That man knows how to swing a bat!

Greta: What no, a mammalian bat. Usually Ben Stokes keeps hold of the bat.. *(scornfully)* CAPTAIN.

Picture of Ben Stokes on screen.

Captain: *(Disdainfully)* I don't need a lecture on the laws of cricket, Greta!

Child 6: Let's follow it! I always follow bats whenever I see one. There was this time I thought I was following a bat but actually it was a UFO and I stormed area 51 and lots of other people were there and long story short it all got a bit out of hand.

Everyone runs after bat, run round somewhere.

Maarten: Where is that bat going? Oh my word, it looks like it's heading straight for the Museum of English Rural Life. With all the tweeting going on from that museum, you'd be expecting it'd be birds heading in, not bats.

Child 5: It's gone into the MERL. How on earth can a bat get in there, I think it's wingin' it, they can't have library cards!

Maarten: Oh yes they can!

Oh no they can't etc.

Maarten: Oh yes they can (how long do I need to keep this up?). *(Library card appears)* I hope the bat is planning on taking out a copy of my thermodynamics textbook, after all, he needs to know how moisture in the atmosphere will affect his sonar. And so they all enter the Museum of English Rural Life. Their lives will never be the same again.

Graeme-Maria and children leave stage left, Captain leaves stage right.

Miguel and sheep and Giles come on from stage right towards narrator.

GM, Captain, children enter the MERL, in front of them, are several sheep/puppets and some cows. Giles is there.

They arrive, and Miguel is there dressed as count dracula from Sesame Street.

Sheep and cow: MERRRRLLLLL MEEEEERRRL. TASSSSIMMOOOO (cow). MEEERRRRLLLLL.
(Continue until interrupted).

Miguel: One child, 2 child, 3 child!, 4 CHILD! Many children.

Child 6: (Pointing at the back) Look! The bat is Count Miguel!

Miguel swishes his cape and leaves stage left.

Child 3 spots Giles on the right side of the stage, points at him.

Child 3: What on earth. It's Mother Giles Harrison. What are you doing here Mother?

Everyone joins Giles stage right.

Giles: Before I came here, my favourite unit was Kelvin, but now, I see in front of me this sheep is an ABSOLUTE UNIT (tweet appears on screen).

Greta: I thought you did meteorology, not METrology.

(powerpoint on metrology email)

Giles: Pipe down Greta. I'll tell you why I'm here. This place is so full of my FAVOURITE THINGS (gesturing towards band)!

Everyone stands there.

Giles: Well, aren't we going to sing it. I said FAVOURITE THINGS! You know, the song from the actual musical!

Giles begins Favourite things song, on all of the favourite things you can find in the MERL

FAVOURITE THINGS

Absolute units and chickens with trousers,
Learning about agricultural founders,
Seeing the sheep and the joy that they bring,
these are a few of my favourite things!

Weather ballooning and tephigram soundings,
Rumbles of thunder and big lightning flashes,
Convective downpours and gale-force winds,
These are a few of my favourite things.

(brief pause)

Undergrads coding, croquet lawn is growing,
So close to Christmas, the models say snowing,
Weather vane lights up, the met choir sings,
These are a few of my favourite things.

**When the RACC breaks,
And the lift's stuck,
Tassimo's gone mad,
I simply remember my lightning research,
And then I don't feeeelllll sooo bad!**

Aerosols, clouds and the radiative forcing,
Using Chilbolton for our data sourcing,
Like the ionosphere? Give me a ring,
These are a few of my favourite things.

Receiving emails signed best wishes Sue,
Avoiding campus to dodge Freshers Flu,
Python deciding on float or a string,
These are a few of my favourite things.

(brief pause)

Twitter debating on climate change impact,
How can the Met curtains still remain intact,
Whilst in the coffee room microwaves ping,
These are a few of my favourite things.

**When the RACC breaks,
And the lift's stuck,
Tassimo's gone mad,
I simply remember my lightning research,
And then I don't feeeelllll sooo baaaa-aaa--aaaaaad!**

Graeme-Maria: Right, we might as well explore the MERL, class! Follow me.

All proceed deeper into the MERL by crossing from stage right to stage left.

Giles: Well, look at all these farming implements. Spade, rake, till, hoe, hoe, hoe! *(Ba-dum-tsss)*

Miguel: Hoe Hoe Hoe, 3 hoes.

Child 1: Oh look- there's a collection of ladybird books... *(Pointing out imaginary books)* There's a farmer, Cinderella.... Oh and one about PhD life!

Graeme-Maria: Oh, that book is why I got PhD researcher of the year!

Giles: Child 2, don't walk in front of that tractor, you'll get tired! *(ba dum tssss)*

Child 2: But if I walk behind it, I'll get exhausted! *(ba dum, no tssss)*

Child 3: Woah look over here! *(Pointing at screen)* There's a bunch of Tassimos hiding amongst the farm animals!

On screen show multiple tassimos.

Giles: That one looks like it's in a stable condition! It's oscillating around its neutral buoyancy level.

Sheep strokes the Tassimo, stage right.

Graeme-Maria: Fantastic- we were just on our way to find the tassimo from the hospital! But we'll take this one instead. Wait, whatever happened to Captain Bellouin?

Captain appears suddenly from stage right.

Captain: Ehh, sorry, I got really rather distracted. Has anyone seen this picture of a chicken in trousers. I mean, it's an 18th century chicken, in trousers. HILARIOUS! *(Tweet appears)*

Captain wanders off immediately stage left whilst pointing excitedly at things.

Maarten: Riiiggghhhh, we seem to have lost the plot. But thankfully we have found a Tassimo to fuel the department for the next little while. Peter Clark might even stay awake in next week's seminar.

Disclaimer: PC does not drink Tassimo

Lights fade

END OF SCENE 4

Scene 5:

Synopsis: GM et al. return back to the Met Department, new Tassimo in tow. They turn up and the coffee-room is full of people, the carpet has suddenly turned blue, and smells of both glue and fish (due to someone microwaving fish), the walls have been painted, and the furniture is in the wrong place, but the curtains remain the same. The department is covered in ECMWF merchandise. Tom Frame is still sat horizontal in his usual chair. A hubbub is around Janet Barlow, who is insisting she is okay, after the Tephigram incident earlier, however, she says she has heard from Humphrey Lean that ECMWF are moving their HQ to UoR Whiteknights campus. GM seems shocked, and shouts for the "Captain" for help, leaning on him for support. Someone (that looks suspiciously like Simon Lee -- read wearing a bald cap) enters stage... "Captain Stratosphere?" with his Nature paper flash up on the powerpoint. Captain Bellouin enters, pushing him offstage. He wonders what the huff is about. GM asks Javier what has happened whilst they are away, some interviewing thing. Hospital bus joke. Then, Robin Hogan enters, and he wants the Captain to work for ECMWF for 95% of his time now they are closer, and so he can't teach his class anymore. The children despair, and decide that they want to leave this stupid agreement between ECMWF and UoR, even if it means they leave without a deal and so don't get any instructions on how to use the IFS (?). They decide that the Radar group will make an escape to America (the land of freedom, greatness, and chlorinated chicken), under the guise of presenting the Sonde of Music at AMS.

Characters: Maarten, GM, Giles, Janet, Javier, Tom Frame, Children, Robin, Helen Dacre, Captain.

Full lights

Maarten: Now, after that BRIEF diversion, Graeme-Maria and the class arrive back at the Met Department, cradling the stolen Tassimo as if it was the secret to life itself. Little do they know the chaos that they are arriving back to.

Open on coffee room, decor has changed since they have last been there, lots of people around, lots of ECMWF merchandise, Tom Frame sat on a chair with a coffee near narrator, bad smell. GM, Greta, Helen enter from stage left. Tom Frame stays entire scene.

Tom Frame and Helen start on stage. Graeme-Maria and Greta come on from stage left.

Graeme-Maria: *(Sniffing)* Hi Helen! What is that awful smell?

Helen Dacre: Oh, well, they've been replacing the carpet in the coffee room. Don't worry, they've been exceptionally quiet about it and it has caused no disruption to our work. On top of that, they clearly decided the curtains, being so beautiful and full of life, must stay at least another 22 years.

Graeme-Maria: Well, they still have more life in them than the plaiinnn exterior of the Philip Lyle building.

Janet enters from stage left with Peter Clark from stage right.

Helen Dacre: Oh Janet, we got your tephigram, are you okay?

Janet: I'm fine. I am just feeling VERY embarrassed! Really sorry to bother you all. *(Whispering)* However, I did hear Peter Clark say something about ECMWF.

Peter Clark: What are you all talking about?! These decorations have always been here, and the EU flag, and the rubber ducks on the lake, and the European anthem playing in the background. Did you not notice before?

Graeme-Maria looks suspicious.

Javier enters boldly from stage right. There is now quite a crowd on stage. Spread out! GM, Javier, Greta slightly in front.

Graeme-Maria: Javier, do you know what's going on?

Javier: What, no! Nothing has changed around here? Everything is *completely* the same as it was.

Greta: *(pulls out Lie-DAR)* You're Lying! My Lie-DAR says so. It is a light based instrument, and you - my friend - are in the DARC! *(ba dum tsss)*

Lights go down and all leave the stage bar Greta and Javier and the Captain. Javier screams a shrill Mexican scream., someone wheels on wheely chair to strap Javier to.

Greta: *(Lights remain down)* Good, this is much better for the environment!

Captain Bellouin approaches menacingly from stage left with menacing French accent.

Captain: I'm going to ask you one more time, Señor Amezcua. I would recommend answering truthfully, or at least say something funny...

The Captain shines the light on Javier (a torch?).

Javier: Heey noow... what are you doiinnngg, I am verrryy angry about this. I was less angrryyy when the wall was built.....

Greta: Captain, he is clearly too angry, we will have to apply the Kalman filter before the response can be assimilated. *(ba dum tsss)*

Captain: Greta, what the actual heck bro, how do you know this much about data assimilation?

Greta: Well, children all over the world are striking from school demanding to know more about Kalman filters and Hybrid Var-EnKF. A worthy cause indeed.

The Kalman filter might be a tin foil hat.

Javier: Okay, okay, I guess there is onneee thing. The ECMWF needed to annex Meteorology because they can't add any more vertical levels at the current site, so they are cramped for desk space and can't resolve tropopause sharpness.

Greta: Of course! I knew it! This is a disgrace Captain. Will you stand for this?

Captain: Absolutely not. With the ECMWF here, bringing all their European regulations, the Agric cafe will no longer be able to sell straight bananas.

Greta: Yes, quite right Captain. Furthermore, all the money they pump into ECMWF would be better used to treat Tassimo machines at the Royal Boschire Hospital.

Bus joke on slide (Borrissss)

Full lights return and all the class children and GM. Tom Frame is there. Robin enters too. All from stage left. Javier remains strapped to chair centre stage. Robin and Child 5 move towards Captain.

Child 5: Where were you guys! We've been stuck here listening to Met Office employees talking about goodness knows what.

Captain: We were in a scary place indeed. Even more scary than MatLab code. Ohhh, hi there Robin. Fancy seeing you here.

Robin: Captain Bellouin! I'm glad you're back. I've been meaning to talk to you. Now we're moving next to your department, more staff will be required to work for us, including you... 95% of the time!

Captain: But that means I won't be able to teach my class anymore!

Greta: This is wrong! No Captain! We will miss you. We'll just be left with Graeme-Maria making us sing all the time.

Captain looks disconsolate.

Child 5: What was it again? Do-so-li-ra-do-dar-me-ray? Ahhhhhh, I can't take it anymore. He's always way too happy!

Children despair as this means Graeme-Maria will have to teach them forever.

Graeme-Maria: I have confidence that everyone will be alright! (*Sings*) "I have confidence in sunshine, I have confidence in rain."

Robin: WOW! Maybe you should join us at ECMWF, you can make the IFS have even better forecasts.

Robin, smiling, turns and exits stage left.

Child 3: Don't leave us with Graeme-Maria, Captain! You mustn't go to ECMWF!

Child 6: Let's have a vote!

Children 1-3 and Greta: We all vote leave!

Children 4-6: And we all vote remain!

Graeme-Maria: Well, it appears to be almost split down the middle. A clear result then, leave it is.

TAKE ON ME

Negotiate away,
This withdrawal deal's... gonna be great!
I don't know what
I'm to say I'll just speak anyway
Need a majority!
Everyone loves an election, okay.

Leave means leave (leave means leave)

Leave leave means (leave leave means)

We'll be gone,

In a year or twooooo.

So needless to say,
The people's vote... won't be happ'ning!
Extension away,
Simply postpone it for 50 more days,
Say after me,
We can drag this out forever!

Leave means leave (leave means leave)

Leave leave means (leave leave means)

We'll be gone,

In a year or twooooo

Musical interlude

What's left to say,
Is no deal, off the table?
Vote Boris in,
Get Christmas done, But then it's back next year.
Will it go away?
Even Reading IT would solve this quicker.

Leave means leave (leave means leave)

Leave leave means (leave leave means)

We'll be gone,

In a year or twooooo

Captain: I know! Let's jump ship altogether. Let's go Stateside. Let's make meteorology great again.

Greta: Yes, I've always loved America.

Photo of Greta scorning at Trump.

Graeme-Maria: Well, AGU is happening right now? Maybe we should jump on a plane there?

Captain: Yesss, yesss, perhaps we should. We will leave tomorrow at dawn. *(Looks powerfully at audience, dramatic music from band. Sweat glistens)*

Child 5: But Captain, what about our studies!

Captain: Don't you worry about those Child 5. I will simply prorogue all our work for the next 50 years. I need time to draft a keynote speech anyway.

Graeme-Maria: Sounds completely reasonable Captain! No one will notice a thing. Besides, people take breaks from their research all the time. Right, come on children, we must be quick!

They all march off stage left. After all have left Captain comes on and wheels Javier off stage right still strapped to wheely chair before running off stage left. Someone says "Oh hi Tom!"

Maarten: Well, with the ECMWF moving to the department, the remote sensing class decide to desert to the United States of America. Will they make it? *(Starts looking existential)* Will my new book make it? Will this panto make it?

Lights fade with Tom Frame still sitting there. He finally leaves stage left under the cover of darkness.

END OF SCENE 5

Scene 6:

Synopsis: They arrive at the nearest airport, everyone is carrying poster tubes, looking ready to go to AGU. GM is holding a basket/bag full of the radiosonde, with a blanket over it, looking worried. Greta insists that they should in fact be taking a boat across the Atlantic, but everyone ignores her and leaves her behind, she sits with a school strikes for climate sign. Someone makes a comment about the UoR strike for half an hour. They realise that they don't have the right visas or documentation, and so won't be able to get past immigration. Aha! The Captain realises that earlier, Ed Hawkins had given him some gear with Climate stripes, and so they would be able to get through customs, as the American Government are incapable of seeing evidence of anthropogenic climate change. Someone makes a comment about what has happened to the delivery boy now, as he was so nice. They end up on a plane with the MMet students in Oklahoma merch.

Characters: Maarten, Captain, Children, GM, Ellie Highwood, Greta, Oral B Toothbrush, Customs Official.

Full lights

Maarten: We pick up with Graeme-Maria, the children, and Captain Bellouin, all with poster tubes and all their luggage. However, they appear to have got lost on the way to Heathrow Airport Terminal 2.

There is much commotion as Captain, all children, and GM enter from stage left.

Captain: Greta, where have you taken us! You were meant to be in charge of directions. This doesn't look like Heathrow at all.

Yachts in background.

Greta: Don't worry, it will be plain sailing from here *(laughs maniacally)*

Graeme-Maria: Hang on, you haven't taken us to Heathrow at all, you've tricked us into taking a yacht to the States. Oh dear, we don't have time for that, whatever do we do now?!

Child 2: We could take a Russian submarine there, they are always spying on the US?

Child 6: Fake news. There is no Russian collusion.

Child 4: No one said anything about collusion Child 6. Besides, we can't leave poor Greta here.

Captain: Yehhhhhh, I say we can. So long, farewell Greta!

Graeme-Maria: Auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye!

Everyone departs the scene stage left, leaving Greta stranded with the yachts, striking with a sign. She wanders off stage right.

Maarten: And so the whole gang abandon Greta to travel to the actual airport. Surely nothing else can go wrong from here.

We are now at Heathrow airport, and GM, Captain and children without Greta enter from stage left.

Child 1: Oh I do feel sorry for poor Greta, all alone, striking.

Graeme-Maria: Do not worry Child 1. She is from the University of Reading, and so she'll only strike for half an hour (8 hours atm). She'll probably be down the SCR about now. (She might even have a pension at the end of it.)

They queue up for boarding across the stage, with a load of MMet Oklahoma students off to the US.

Maarten: Oh, it looks like they're getting on a plane with all the MMet students off to Oklahoma. Oh what a beautiful morning to travel. Hopefully they pick up a good thriller in the airport bookstore. I can think of one (*holds up a copy, winks at audience*). And so several hours later, the gang arrive at American immigration. The leave process is almost complete.

They arrive at immigration in America, shuffling 2 steps to the right. Customs official comes on from stage right.

Graeme-Maria: We've made it guys!

Child 3: Yes! I was a bit worried we were going to be hit by a hurricane whilst over Alabama. It looked to be in the direct line of the storm. In the end it was fine!

Sharpie-gate slide

Child 1: It was interesting to see all those presidential military jets dumping huge amounts of water onto Alabama though. I could've sworn I saw the President himself leaning out the door with a leaf blower.

Child 5: Oh no, nevermind that everyone! Greta had all our documentation in order to get into the country. (*Clenches fist*) She has fooled us for the last time.

Everybody panics.

Captain: Damn, I knew she was up to something! I would rather be dead in a ditch than fail to get past immigration by October 31st.

Children (together): Oh nooo! They are probably going to split us up and put us in cages....

Child 6: Heellpppp! I don't think I can live without my toothbrush!

Toothbrush enters from stage left.

Oral B: Did someone say something about a toothbrush!

Child 1: *(Pushing the toothbrush away humorously)* Right team, let's think sensibly, we're gonna have to get rid of everything except our guns, then they might let us in.

Graeme-Maria: Oh dear, I only have the one machine gun. Anyone got any other ideas?

Captain: Ummm, has anyone run anyone over in the UK recently, whilst being married to an intelligence official? I hear diplomatic immunity can get you far around here.

Child 2: Yehhh I diiidd, but I already got off my charges because I'm related to the royal family.

Graeme-Maria: Didn't you run someone over Captain? There was a story in the news of a dangerous driver sweating profusely who went by your name.

Captain: No I have categorically not run anyone over! At the time of the incident I was in Pizza Express in Woking with my daughter. I remember it distinctly because I am rarely in Pizza Express, certainly not in Woking *(coughs awkwardly)*. *In addition, there is a small problem with that story. I can't sweat you see. The climate strikes last summer gave me an overdose of adrenalin, which means, well I can't, or I couldn't at the time, sweat. (coughs awkwardly)*

Everyone stands around awkwardly for a brief moment.

Child 3: Hang on! I've got an idea! Where's that stripy poster that we made? Can we use that?

Climate stripes Palmer building slide.

Captain: Genius! Let's wear the climate stripes! The American government is *incapable* of seeing evidence of anthropogenic climate change. There's no way they'll spot us. Now. Where can we get some climate stripes from?

Ellie Highwood enters from stage right.

Maarten: Oh look! It's Ellie Highwood!

Ellie H: I'm back and I'm just in time to save the day. Here's some climate stripe t-shirts I gave the world earlier.

The crew get dressed in climate stripes and tiptoe past a customs official on the left side of the stage, to whom they are invisible.

Child 3: *(Fist pumps)* Like a charm!

Ellie H: Whilst I'm here, I'm taking away the Athena Swan award. The diversity in this Panto has been embarrassingly poor.

Ellie Highwood leaves stage and rejoins band. YEET.

Graeme-Maria: Sorry Ellie! But look on the bright side, Captain, Children! Here we are in the land of the free, free to use our Radio-Sonde and study the weather *together forever*.

Riming detector goes off in GM bag.

Child 5: Graeme-Maria! Be careful, you've set off the *riming* detector, we don't want the customs officers to follow us!

Graeme-Maria: Oh shush, Child 5! As I was saying, we can study the weather without the meddling interference of the ECMWF. Even Lady Hale can't get to us here. It's a really happy time!

Greta appears from stage right suddenly.

Greta: How dare you! You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words! Entire eco-systems are collapsing! We are in the middle of a mass extinction!

Graeme-Maria: Oh yes, yes... of course Greta, you are quite right! Hang on, where on earth did you come from?

Greta: Teleportation is carbon neutral you know. Anyway, we are all back together now, away from the clutches of ECMWF. This, of course, can mean only one thing. A celebration, in the form of musical song.

Graeme-Maria: Absolutely! Children, shall we try do-ra-dar once again!

Child 1: No way! I absolutely do-ra-don't wanna sing that one again!

Captain: I've got an idea! A song really really full of joy, to reflect how we feel about successfully running away and illegally entering the United States of America. Javier was right, it really is that easy! Now, just like we practiced, no mistakes. Ready, on my whistle (*gets thrown kazoo from backstage*), 3... 2... 1... (*blows kazoo*)

All on stage sing together.

All: "JOY TO THE WORLD, THE PANTO'S DONE."

AIR HOSTESS... DEFINITELY

(Let's go! Yehhhhhh! Alriiighhhttt!)

Looking - at the observatory
I thought - what is that I see,
I knew, that I had to flee.
And then, as I crossed the pond,
I saw, a real radiosonde,
I felt, a very special bond.

Those instruments it's bearing,
So hot I can't stop staring,
I can't believe - it's inflaattablllee.
The balloon pressure's rising,
This radiosonde is rising nowwww.

Tephigram!
This is my latest jam,
You know it tells us if we will freeze or fry,
And if the atmosphere looks really dry.
It's full of gas,
And rises in a flash,
Hope to see you soon on a field site for a radiosonde launch!
Tephigram!

Launching, balloons in the air,
You can, release one if you dare,
Make sure, it doesn't have a tear.
Then you, go and grab a beer,
Whilst it soars, through the atmosphere,
Watch out, for excessive shear.

Graeme-Maria's trying,
To stop the children crying,
They didn't know the field site's cold!
Greta will soon be striking,
Boris has got no mandate now!

(GO!)

Tephigram!

**This is my latest jam,
You know it tells us if we will freeze or fry,
And if the atmosphere looks really dry.
It's full of gas,
And rises in a flash,
Hope to see you soon on a field site for a radiosonde launch!
Tephigram!**

T Tephigram t tephigram... t tephigrammmmmmm etc.

The measurements it's taking,
Are so intoxicating,
We are obsessed with radiosondeesss....
Check out the after party,
I'm glad this panto's over noooww.

**Tephigram!
This is my latest jam,
You know it tells us if we will freeze or fry,
And if the atmosphere looks really dry.
It's full of gas,
And rises in a flash,
Hope to see you soon on a field site for a radiosonde launch!
Tephigram!**

**T Tephigram t tephigram etc. oooooooooo / Cos you're my radiosonde we have a
special bond**

Lights fade

END OF SCENE 6

END OF ACT 2