



[The Fabric of Spacetime]

*(MILKY WAY drifts in. They exhaustedly drop
the dish. They stow away the dish.)*

MILKY WAY

Milky Way for...

EARTH

Forgotten?

MILKY WAY

Imaginary friends?

ERIS

No, we're your planetary friends.

EARTH

I'm not.

SOLAR SYSTEM PLANETS, NOT EARTH

No one is asking you, Earth.

ERIS

Don't give up. You're not the only one forgotten. Everyone remembers Pluto. But I'm cooler, literally. I'm Eris by the way, and I should be the heiress/heir-no-less of the dwarf planets. You may be barred, but barred spiral Galaxies are bigger than normal spirals like Triangulum and Andromeda.

JUPITER

You most certainly are a massive spiral galaxy.

SATURN

Says the gas giant with dozens of Jovian moooooons.

JUPITER

Go play with your ring.

SATURN

Jupiter is just jealous of mine. Got a ring to spare, Uranus?

URANUS

Two. In fact.

JUPITER**SATURN**

You are a two.

(Laughing.)

SUN

Planets. What is with the radio outbursts?

URANUS

Nomy/Mama/Papa Sun. My gas giant siblings are making me the butt of the joke!

MILKY WAY

Even planets have a nomy/mama/papa? And they have brains, too?



EARTH

You're a Galaxy. You have no brain. Unlike planets. Us planets have brains. At least, mine is in my inner core.

SUN

Earth, who are you talking to?

EARTH

Just mantling with my Mooooooon, nomy/mama/papa Sun.

MILKY WAY

May I talk to Mooooooon?

EARTH

You have your own natural satellites. Isn't that right, Mooooooon? Mooooooon...? Why don't you ever return my calls?!

ERIS

Earth and you have a lot in common. You are rather dense, if not diffused with clouds. But you're not in the inner circle like Earth is. Trust me as I make my way around the Kuiper Belt. I hate my elliptical orbit. One decade, you're with your family. The next centuries, you're a rogue planet.

MILKY WAY

Patience. Only a millennium.

EARTH

Oh yeah, you're a Galaxy. The frame of time is dilated for you. Let this rocky planet convert it... The last time you were in your family's orbit was... 13.81 billion years ago. As a Galaxy, do you hate being an oval?



(MILKY WAY is about to break down.)

SUN

Earth, I didn't raise you to be mean to other shapes.

EARTH

Just like you as a star, I'm very proud to be a sphere.

(MILKY WAY feels their body.)

Ew, waves...

(MILKY WAY feels their face.)

Pff, wrinkles.

ERIS

Don't take any more of Earth's bullying. They may be the perfect person that you always want to be. But you are already a person, Milky Way. What with your waves. And wrinkles, imperfect as they are. Just like Oort Cloud, who I want you to meet.

OORT CLOUD

I'm out of this Solar System and yet I have a stronghold on it, just like you. I've heard a lot about you, Milky Way. I have an influence that is about a hundred thousand astronomical units wide, but you, you are 6.685 billion. Personally, I know enough about comets' tails. Do you have a tale to share with us, Milky Way? Gather around, Solar System!

(The SOLAR SYSTEM pops out as puppets.)



EARTH

Gravity well... Theorize somethin'!

(MILKY WAY gracelessly and half-melodically bellows, with cracks. They suddenly hiccup.)

Milky Way warped themselves!

(The SOLAR SYSTEM bursts into laughter.)

(MILKY WAY bursts into tears.)

MILKY WAY

I hate myself...

OORT CLOUD

All the use crying, Milky Way. Let it out. Milk of celestial kindness. There is a pattern here. You show a huge quality.

(MILKY WAY examines their physical self.)

Not your mass. Oh, the ellipses... You are a special Galaxy. You hold something dear that no one else has. Well, *your siblings probably do, but they won't show it.*

MILKY WAY

Tell me.

OORT CLOUD

You hold personhood. Persons with warping voices, growing hairs that are waving, and whose skin are covered in wrinkles. There is a person in you, Milky Way.



EARTH

There are people in me.

SOLAR SYSTEM PLANETS, NOT EARTH

Cut your hubris, Earth!

OORT CLOUD

We like all things, *unearthly*, about you. You carry our weight,
our history, our culture, our voices.

MILKY WAY

Sing it.

OORT CLOUD

You must first, own it.

(MILKY WAY nears the SOLAR SYSTEM puppets.)

<u>12. WARP, WAVES, AND WRINKLES</u>

SOLAR SYSTEM

MILKY WAY'S
ON THEIR OWN.
ALL ALONE.
KNOW THAT FOR
US AT HOME.
YOU'RE THE ONLY WAY FORWARD,
THROUGH WARP, WAVES, AND WRINKLES.

(The SOLAR SYSTEM puppets are livelier.)

THROUGH IT ALL.
THICK AND THIN.
THROUGH THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE.



OORT CLOUD

YOUR PLANETARY FRIENDS FEEL LIKE THEY'RE IN YOUR HEAD.

SOLAR SYSTEM

IMAGINARY!

OORT CLOUD

BUT REALLY...

ERIS

THE SOLAR SYSTEM IS LOCATED ON YOUR ARM.

SOLAR SYSTEM

ONE OF SEVERAL...

*(Extra arms extend out behind MILKY WAY.
They are unaware of these arms.)*

ERIS

ARMS, IN FACT.

URANUS

Check a mirror!

MILKY WAY

What's mirror?

URANUS

It's the thing to check what you look like!

MILKY WAY

I never know what I look like...

(The extra arms shake MILKY WAY's hands.)

SOLAR SYSTEM

Neither do we. But take it from us, we know you're beautiful on the inside!

(The SOLAR SYSTEM puppets shake each hand.)

SCUTUM-CRUX ARM.
PERSEUS ARM.
NORMA, CYGNUS.
SAGITTARIUS,
ARM AND HEART.
WE'RE HOME ON THE ORION.
ARM SO SMALL AND SO MINOR.

[A tiny arm pops out.]

OORT CLOUD

You are Magellanic.

(MILKY WAY ponders.)

They're not planets and you don't need to imagine. We hid a present in your waves.

(MILKY WAY digs into their outfit. They pull out two magnolia flowers.)

Like you, they have existed from the beginning of time. They signify perseverance and longevity—



(MILKY WAY devours the flowers.)

OORT CLOUD (cont.)

Don't eat your natural satellites!

MILKY WAY

(Mouthful of Magellanic Clouds.)

I gravitate my feelings...

OORT CLOUD

You primordial nebula... Go ahead and have a taste of the Local Group while you're at it. Cook Sagittarius at 3 megaparsecs.

MILKY WAY

Parsecs no work like that. Parsecs distance, not time.

OORT CLOUD

I'm parsecs away from losing it. Go back to coughing up gas and dust.

JUPITER

It's the nature of Galaxies... They'll eat everything.

SATURN

Like us gas giants. We're persons too after all!

OORT CLOUD

Eat me... There are plenty of other celestial objects to see outside you anyways... I mean, persons.

ERIS

Like you said, Oort Cloud: Milky Way has always been a person.
In fact, they have reached a new stage in personhood.

(MILKY WAY sings with natural cracks and flaws.)

MILKY WAY

I NOW HAVE
WARP, WAVES, AND WRINKLES.
I LIVE WITH IT.

WARP, WAVES, AND WRINKLES.

(Deepening voice.)

I LOVE MYSELF.

(The extra arms may hug MILKY WAY.)

(Many SOLAR SYSTEMs spiral in. These dancers resemble known and unknown stars and planets, while EARTH drags their feet. They orbit MILKY WAY like the spiral arms around a supermassive black hole of a Galaxy. One dancer places a halo on MILKY WAY's head.)

SOLAR SYSTEM

HALO FRIEND
AND OUR HOME.
PROTECTOR
AND OUR RIDE.
HITCHHIKER
AND THE ONLY WAY OUT OF OUR...

WARP, WAVES, AND WRINKLES!
WE LOVE IT ALL!

(MILKY WAY loves this galactic stage that they have reached in their life.)



SUN

Any more radio outbursts and I'll supernova your asteroids!

(MILKY WAY and the SOLAR SYSTEMs lower a bit in distress. They confidently resume.)

MILKY WAY

SOLAR SYSTEM

OUR WARP, WAVES, AND WRINKLES!

[End of "Warp, Waves, and Wrinkles."]

[The stage goes red as though the Sun has become a red giant and is swallowing the Solar System in their wake.]

(The SOLAR SYSTEMs run away and steal MILKY WAY's halo. EARTH screams in the searing heat. JUPITER and SATURN maniacally laugh.)

(MILKY WAY suddenly feels a headache. They touch their forehead. They take their hand off to reveal a zit on their forehead.)

MILKY WAY

W- W- N- Wr-

OORT CLOUD

Warp, waves, and wrinkles, we got a sense for... But not red giants. Welcome to adolescence.

(MILKY WAY passes out on the ground.)