

ACT ISCENE 1

## THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

1. "BOUNCE"

The Circle. A table and rug rest in its dome. The stage outside is teeming with floral equations. The side curtains conceal the upstage.

GRAVITY sits in The Circle, clawing at the invisible wall separating them from the stage/space outside. The TIDALS, or celestial canines, roam outside. They approach the caged GRAVITY. The TIDALS run off.

SINGULARITY stomps in. They force GRAVITY to hide away in the back. They go outside to pick formulas and set them in a mortar bowl. They head to the rug and meditate.

SPECIAL and GENERAL drift by the stage as ghostly parents looking for their child. They soon vanish.

SPECIAL & GENERAL

NOTHING...

Alert, SINGULARITY draws out the Big Bang Taser and ignites it outwards. The lights flicker. The curtains ripple. The Universe is wondrous. Far from the stage, a bell-shaped light shines. A shadow of HD in a shooting stance protrudes. HD soon enters, carrying a pestle. SINGULARITY hides the Big Bang Taser under the rug, returning the Universe back to its void stasis. They hand the bowl to HD. They disappear inside the home.

SINGULARITY

NOTHING...

TIDALS (OFFSTAGE)

OOOHHHHHH.

HD unveils a scope in the pestle and scope out the edge of the home.

TRIANGULUM wanders out to HD. They grab HD's scope and toss it behind.

TRIANGULUM

NOTHING.

WHIRLPOOL spirals out while  
CARTWHEEL cartwheels out. They  
catch the scope. They scope out.

WHIRLPOOL

CARTWHEEL

NOTHING!

NOTHING.

ANDROMEDA pops out. CARTWHEEL  
hands the scope to them. They  
scope out before stowing it away.

ANDROMEDA

NOTHING!

MILKY WAY strolls in.

MILKY WAY

NUTHIN'...

The TEEN GALAXIES - CARTWHEEL,  
WHIRLPOOL, TRIANGULUM, ANDROMEDA,  
MILKY WAY - cluster in the center,  
bounce onto the walls, and dance.

TEEN GALAXIES

HD

LET'S BOUNCE!

HERE GOES NOTHING!

SINGULARITY arrives with dishes.

SINGULARITY

MILKY WAY! ANDROMEDA! TRIANGULUM! WHIRLPOOL! CARTWHEEL! HD!

MILKY WAY skips to the table.  
ANDROMEDA sails to the table.  
TRIANGULUM triangulates the table.  
WHIRLPOOL spirals to the table.  
CARTWHEEL cartwheels to the table.  
HD joins the table with the bowl.

GRAVITY marches in, doglike.

HD

ABELL...

End of "BOUNCE"

SINGULARITY and the GALAXIES bow.

SINGULARITY

Declinations, family.

HD hands the bowl to SINGULARITY  
and helps set the table.

GRAVITY

(Narrating)

Nothing comes close to family, except "pets."  
I'm Gravity. I've been here for infinite dog  
years. And this is the story of the Galaxy family.

SINGULARITY shushes GRAVITY.

GALAXIES

Declinations, Singularity.

GRAVITY

*Singularity.* This single parent cannot stand me.  
They barely understand their Galaxies. That  
power-hungry tyrant sits on the stardust throne,  
having closed off the outside world for quite  
some time. Eternities in fact. However, the kids  
stay kids. Milky Way is the baby sibling.

MILKY WAY hugs SINGULARITY. The  
GALAXIES sit. TRIANGULUM sits on  
the whoopee cushion. TRIANGULUM  
puts up a fist to CARTWHEEL and  
WHIRLPOOL as the pair high five.  
ANDROMEDA plays with their food.

SINGULARITY

*Sounds like someone's enjoying my gas giants.*

TRIANGULUM

Quit the snickers, Milky Way! Can you all be  
normal for an eon or two?!

CARTWHEEL & WHIRLPOOL

*The dog did it!*

GRAVITY

*When ya get in trouble, ya blame the dog Gravity.*  
Cartwheel and Whirlpool are the most relative.  
Not even time can separate them. Andromeda is?

ANDROMEDA

Let's set sail over seven spaces. Dig up pearls  
in their clams. The Universe is ye oyster.

GRAVITY

Triangulum is such a square.

GRAVITY touches TRIANGULUM's dish.  
TRIANGULUM slaps away GRAVITY. They  
unnervingly scratch GRAVITY's ear.

TRIANGULUM

Stupid dog! That's not for you to gravitate to.  
It's never a normal family with you around...

HD sets a dish on the ground.

GRAVITY

We can do no wrong with this one. We're never blamed by this one. We like this one. The Circle's bearable with the fairest Galaxy: HD1.

SINGULARITY

Quit dogging my firstborn!

GRAVITY

Doggone it. Ya kid- My best friend. That'll be the last thing ya see. It'll be the last time ya see them. We've got time to kill. In Zenith, Gravity shall bring the house down. Force!

MILKY WAY

Why is that dog always staring out into space?

HD

The dog sees something.

TEEN GALAXIES

The dog speaks to no one.

GRAVITY & HD

There are lives out there. Life is out of here...

SINGULARITY

Remember gals: stepping out of our house and escaping my gravitational pull would...?

TEEN GALAXIES

Rip up the Fabric of Spacetime...

SINGULARITY

You never ever want this grandmaster of the Universe to worry. Anywho, we've got all the cosmic formulas right here in our Circle. With my black-hole heart, I cooked you nebulae something special: nuclear pasta and meteors!

CARTWHEEL

*Special for the trillionth time, you Bach Ho. (Vietnamese for "white tiger," sounds like "black hole," and implies tiger parenting.)*

SINGULARITY

*Unlike your oldest sibling, y'all don't know how to cook stardust. You'd die without us. Your tiger nom/mom/dad heated our meal over ten million degrees Kelvin in our cosmic microwave background. It's the healthiest material in the cosmos, a variety of nutrition from the crusts of neutron stars. Dismantle the mantle, but leave the core. I'd love to planet these!*

MILKY WAY dives into their dish.

TRIANGULUM

Again, Milky Way?

ANDROMEDA

Ye mostly photons, Triangulum.

CARTWHEEL

Calories take millennia to burn, Andromeda.

WHIRLPOOL

A simple nap ain't last any longer, Cartwheel.

SINGULARITY

It's the overeating phase. Y'all want to be a Grand-Design Spiral Galaxy, like Whirlpool?

CARTWHEEL mocks WHIRLPOOL's body.

WHIRLPOOL

I know you be looking cute with your ring, but you ain't got spiral arms like us, *Ring Galaxy*.

CARTWHEEL

Gal, your arms dwarf my bright stars, you stretched-out circle. *Morbidly oval Galaxies*.

ANDROMEDA

Least ye not a two-dimensional square, *like this Galaxy*.

TRIANGULUM

I'll run circles around you, *Galaxies*.

TRIANGULUM throws the whoopee cushion at CARTWHEEL and WHIRLPOOL, causing them to go on the defense.

MILKY WAY

(Mouthful of nuclear pasta)

Kau tau to you, *ellipsoids*.

CARTWHEEL, WHIRLPOOL, TRIANGULUM

Wash your wormhole with soap, you quasi-baby!

SINGULARITY

Oneness, clusters of stars! In our hearts of darkness, we are beings of light and energy. We matter. Gals, your hearts are all vigorous. Always full of grace. Let us save space.

SINGULARITY lovingly pinches MILKY WAY's cheek. They all sit and pray.

GRAVITY inches towards HD.

2. "CRUNCH"

SINGULARITY  
FEED THAT HOLE IN YOUR HEART.  
GIVE INTO INTERNAL DARKNESS.  
SHED OUR LIGHT FOR NO ONE.  
AS IT'S CRUNCH TIME, GALAXIES.

IN BLACK HOLES, DWELL WISDOM.  
FED BY THE SPRINKLES OF STARDUST.  
CRUSH THEIR DREAMS IN YOUR PALM.  
IT IS CRUNCH TIME, MY BABIES.

TEEN GALAXIES  
CONSUME STAR SYSTEMS.  
CONSUME WORLDS THAT TEEM.  
CONSUMED BY THOUGHTS OF FAMILY. FAMILY...

SINGULARITY  
STRING BY STRING IN THEORY.  
AND FABRIC BY SPACETIME FABRIC.  
HOLD OUR LOVE AS A WHOLE.  
IT IS CRUNCH TIME, WE BELIEVE.

TEEN GALAXIES (EXCEPT MILKY WAY)  
(Individually)  
IT IS CRUNCH TIME, SINGULARITY.

MILKY WAY  
IT 'TIS CRUNCH TIME, NOMY/MOMMY/DADDY SING.

SINGULARITY  
IT IS CRUNCH TIME, HD? HD1?

End of "CRUNCH"

3. "CUTTING EDGE (MAKE MYSELF CLEAR)"

GRAVITY gets HD to stand up.

GRAVITY	SINGULARITY
THIS IS YOUR TIME. ( <i>re: HD</i> )	NOW'S NOT THAT TIME.

HD  
WHY IS MY SILENCE NOT MADE CLEAR?  
WHEN MY VOICE CAN'T STAY HERE.  
WHY DO THIS ADULT STILL TREAT ME LIKE A KID?  
WHEN I CAN GO OFF THE GRID.  
WHY ARE YOU CHILDREN AFRAID OF NOWHERE?  
WHEN THERE MAY BE FRIENDS OUT THERE.  
  
WHY DOES MY FAMILY LACK MY CURIOSITY?  
WHEN THERE'S SO MUCH TO KNOW.  
WHY CAN'T THESE OVALS SEE SOMETHING IN THIS MYSTERY?  
WHEN I KNOW I NEED TO GO...  
  
WHERE THE CUTTING EDGE WILL BE...

TEEN GALAXIES  
CUT AWAY FROM THE EDGE!

HD  
WHY MUST YOU HOLD ME BACK?  
I NEVER GET ANY RELEASE.

TEEN GALAXIES  
(IT'S CRUNCH TIME, HD1.)

HD  
FEED ME LIGHT THAT I DON'T LACK.  
PLEASE JUST LET ME BE AT PEACE...  
  
WHERE THE CUTTING EDGE WILL BE TOWARDS CLARITY.  
WHERE THE CURVATURE CONCEALS SINGULARITY.  
FAR AWAY FROM THE ELLIPSES.  
LOOK BEYOND THESE GALAXIES—

SINGULARITY  
END THIS TANGENT!

HD  
TANGENT? TANGENT! *TANGENT...*

GRAVITY  
(Manipulatively lifting HD up)  
WHERE THE CUTTING EDGE WILL BE.  
WHERE NOTHINGNESS SETS YA FREE.  
WHERE A NEW WORLD CAN BE SEEN.  
WHERE TANGENTS ARE MAKE-BELIEVE.

HD  
(Standing up to SINGULARITY)  
*END THIS TANGENT?* I HAVEN'T MADE MYSELF CLEAR.  
CUTTING MY EDGES MAKES MYSELF APPARENT AS YOU.  
AND SHEDS MY LIGHT UPON A *LIGHTLESS GALAXY*. (*re: ABELL*)  
MY HEART TELLS ME THERE'S A PROMISING FAMILY...  
WHERE THE *END OF THIS TANGENT* WILL BE...

ALL THE SITES THAT WE WILL SEE.  
ME AND GRAVITY.  
FIND OUR PATH BEYOND THE STARS.  
A NEW REALITY.

SLIP OUT OF THIS BACKWARDS PLACE.  
FORWARD TO THAT OUTER SPACE.  
WRITE OUT OUR AUDACIOUS VERSE.  
RIDE OUT THE EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE...

YOU'LL KNOW.  
I'LL BE CUTTING TO THE EDGE.

End of "CUTTING EDGE (MAKE MYSELF CLEAR)"

GRAVITY  
Force!

HD

You're the best Tidal force a Galaxy could ever ask for, Gravity. *I love you too, Singularity...*

SINGULARITY

I'll spare a millennium to listen to your verse. No need to go off on a tangent, HD.

HD

Leave me out of this, nom/mom/dad...

SINGULARITY

*Don't leave me-* I lead you back in. Gravity leads you on. The dog's a bad influence.

HD

You raised me physically. They raise my spirit.

SINGULARITY

Your poor soul seems dragged down.

HD

Life in this circle is the real drag. My soul rings for something more. What my life needs now is for the next stage to take shape.

SINGULARITY

*Your soul's ringing?* You need to get in shape if you want to be a big kid in the real world. The only way to do that is... *Gals?*

TEEN GALAXIES

Join us for Crunch-

HD

Shut your wormholes! So sick of dishing it out. The same old dish of photons. I'm over Crunch.

SINGULARITY

Even a grownup Galaxy accretes. You babies need to stay growing. This attitude is beneath us.

MILKY WAY

HD, *what is out there?*

HD

*Who.* I hear a bell. I see a light. A tiny curiosity. *Tiny like you, Milky Way.*

SINGULARITY

Baby... to answer your curiosity: There is nothing out there for us, adults...

HD

Well, then there is someone for that *nothing*. That someone is me.



SINGULARITY

You're nothing but a spoiled nebula if you've forgotten all the constants and variables I've picked for you. All the light I've shed.

HD

I hope to spoil the whole cosmos with your light. I'm ready to pass on our light. Nom/Mom/Dad...  
*May I go to The Edge of the Universe?*

SINGULARITY

We have *everything* in The Center... No.

HD

Can I play in *nothing*? Plea-

Pretty please with a  
supergiant on top?

As your heart prophesized:  
Once we gather enough light,  
we share it with the  
lightless. We're here as you  
pulled your end of the  
prophecy. My sights are set  
on a fulfilling legacy.

SINGULARITY (CONT'D)

No means *no*.

The sight of darkness is not  
enough for you?

They're just bedtime stories.  
Fantasy. There is no one but  
us. This is the only family  
you've got. Drop this legacy  
nonsense. Join us for Crun-

SINGULARITY reaches for HD.  
GRAVITY bites SINGULARITY. They  
brawl and soon ground SINGULARITY.

ANDROMEDA

Ope?! *There goes Gravity!*

TIDALS (OFFSTAGE)

Force! Force! Force! Force!

GRAVITY

Force. Force. Force. Force!

GRAVITY runs into the invisible  
wall and dizzily falls back.

GRAVITY (CONT'D)

*Free~ Free~ Free~ Free~ Free~ Free~*

SINGULARITY

*Gravity will be our downfall.* You entitled dog.  
You get on my nerves. Back in the doghouse!

HD

You are not the center of the Universe. Why  
must you treat this dog like us? Puppets.

SINGULARITY

Treat me as the grandmaster! I have my hands on  
the entire Fabric of Spacetime... I pull,  
thread, weave its strings, and it's better to  
be my puppet than pet. I am the center!

HD  
Let this dog out! If you  
don't give them space, it'll  
bite you in the end.

SINGULARITY (CONT'D)  
*And let them treat the cosmos  
like a trampoline? They'll  
rip up the spacetime fabric!*

HD (CONT'D)  
What must be done to pull at your heartstrings?

SINGULARITY  
Oh now you want to consider my center...

HD  
Yours and our centers hold all the light in  
this Universe. You've shed enough light upon  
us. I need to shed mine. Do I make myself clear?

SINGULARITY  
Clearly, you need some shut-eye. I expect  
lights out when you Galaxies head off to bed.  
Declinations. *See you gals in Crunch Time.*

SINGULARITY exits, pulling GRAVITY.

## SCENE 2

MILKY WAY  
I'm no baby...

ANDROMEDA  
Ye not the Gravity of the situation...

CARTWHEEL  
What just happened?

WHIRLPOOL  
What in the world?

TRIANGULUM  
Gravity went berserk and brought down  
Singularity. The stupid dog let us all down.

HD  
Gravity never lets me down. *I'll never stoop to  
your level and blame the dog.* You're all downers.

TEEN GALAXIES  
What's up with you? And *The*  
*Edge?*

MILKY WAY  
Our Universe is all that  
matters!

TEEN GALAXIES (EXCEPT MILKY WAY) (CONT'D)  
And a nebula's opinion doesn't.

MILKY WAY  
I... No baby!

ANDROMEDA  
Eh, nothing beats sleeping like one. Declinate.

ANDROMEDA heads off to bed.

CARTWHEEL & WHIRLPOOL

So Singsing ain't around. Let's deck The Circle!

TRIANGULUM

Oh no, you don't!

TRIANGULUM drags away the pair.

CARTWHEEL & WHIRLPOOL

You're such a square, Triangulum...

MILKY WAY

Square? That reminds me of... a board game.  
Tardigrades and Elevatas?

CARTWHEEL & WHIRLPOOL

*Look at the time.* Declinations!

CARTWHEEL and WHIRLPOOL rush off.

TRIANGULUM

Declinations... Last one to bed is an anomaly!

TRIANGULUM heads off to bed.

HD

I can't even with this family... Anyways, you  
were saying: *Water Bears and Elevators?*

#### 4. "FIGURE"

HD brings out a board game.

MILKY WAY

*I figured you're too old for games.*

HD

The box says: "Ages six to twenty eons." I am  
*old*. I still like to mess around and play... A  
game called "life." The goal's to go from one  
ellipse to another. Each ellipse is a period. A  
period is a sentence. Ellipses are life's  
sentences. Each ellipse has its own risks.

MILKY WAY

To you... What 'tis between ellipses?

HD

A *liminal* space...?

(Seeing MILKY WAY try to repeat the word)

Liminal: a place where who we were ends and who  
we are begins. You're in a *liminal* space. You'll  
not fit in your ellipse, kid. I no longer fit  
in mine. Not a teen. Your body will be a *teeny*  
bit different. *Figure that out* on your own.

MILKY WAY

(Intensely cracking their voice)

I no wanna go far in this game called- uh life.  
Oh *curves*... I hate my figure. I hate myself.

HD

Your voice warps beautifully with each passing  
millennium. Figure out yourself, Milky Way...

MILKY WAY slaps HD's figure off.

HD (CONT'D)

LOST MY FIGURE...

End of "FIGURE"

GRAVITY (OFFSTAGE)

Pawn!

HD (CONT'D)

Gravity?

Only HD understands GRAVITY.

MILKY WAY

That dog keep howlin'.

GRAVITY (OFFSTAGE)

I'd kill at this game of life! Let's kill time  
together! All ya need to do is free Gravity!

MILKY WAY

Quiet dog befa' Nomy/Mommy/Daddy Sing wake up.  
That dog 'tis nuthin' but trouble.

HD

*Nothing*... We'll get in trouble staying past  
our bedtime. Let's finish this game some other  
time. Gal, cubs need rest. *Quit the sour face,*  
*Milky Way.* I'm the anomaly in this family.

MILKY WAY bows and goes off to bed.

## 5. "ZILCH"

GRAVITY (OFFSTAGE)

*Nothing* is free!

HD

You always understand me...

GRAVITY (CONT'D)

*Nothing is infinite.* Nothing's out there for ya.

HD

Well, there's nothing out there for me. Zilch.

GRAVITY (OFFSTAGE)

*Nothing* is waiting for us. A wide-open space.  
Save space for me! A space without Singularity.  
Zilch is not outta our Circle. It is below ya.  
*Relax.* Ya will know in spacetime.

HD sits on the rug, feeling life underneath. They unroll it and discover the Big Bang Taser.

HD  
Our rug of spacetime...?

GRAVITY (OFFSTAGE)  
Use them opposable thumbs, gal. Stun thee!

HD accidentally shocks themselves.  
They read the Big Bang Taser.

HD  
*Zilch!* Big Bang Taser...?

GRAVITY (OFFSTAGE)  
*Put down Singularity! Free Gravity! No longer bound by family! Make nothing ya legacy!*

A light shines out of reach.

End of "ZILCH"

### SCENE 3

SINGULARITY (OFFSTAGE)  
My babies are sleeping! Shut your wormhole, you entitled dog—

SINGULARITY and GRAVITY fight and soon fall into the space. They notice HD with the Big Bang Taser.

SINGULARITY (CONT'D)  
*Not this time...* Declinations, HD. Put it down.

HD  
Declinations, Singularity. Put what down?

SINGULARITY  
Don't toy with me. The Big Bang Taser. Drop it.

HD  
Or I'll hurt myself? Your falling outs hurt.

SINGULARITY  
Gravity has been letting us down.

HD  
Has your black-hole heart ever let down someone it loved?

SINGULARITY  
I don't have a black hole for a...

The TEEN GALAXIES enter.

MILKY WAY

What 'tis happening to nomy/mommy/daddy?

SINGULARITY

Look away! HD. I did let my parents down.

GALAXIES

Parents? We have grandparents?

SINGULARITY

I grew out and made it to adulthood. I made it  
apparent to them that I'll make it as a parent.

HD

And as *your* children, somehow you believe none  
of us can make it out there in the Universe.

SINGULARITY

It is unclear that you're ready to be an adult.  
*HD1. Don't let me down.* I don't have the heart.

HD drops the Big Bang Taser.  
SINGULARITY reaches for it, but  
GRAVITY bites their hand, so  
SINGULARITY grounds GRAVITY.

SINGULARITY (CONT'D)

You, Gravity, are a supermassive pain! Gravity.  
For the last time, you've let down this family.  
Entitled dog. I'm putting you down for eternity!

GRAVITY

Adulthood's *nothing*. Who'll it be: a dog's love  
or parent's obsession? Do ya see clearly, HD?!

HD retakes the Big Bang Taser.  
SINGULARITY reaches around and  
soon notices that HD is armed.

HD

My heart cannot choose who to take in. However,  
my heart can choose who to take out.

## 6. "BIG BANG"

SINGULARITY

YOU ARE A BIG...

HD shoots SINGULARITY.

SINGULARITY (CONT'D)

(Electrifyingly jerking and shrieking)

*MISTAKEEEEEEE! AKE! AKE! AKE! AKE.*

TIDALS (OFFSTAGE)  
(Repetitively barking)  
BIG BIG BIG BIG BIG!

SINGULARITY  
ACHE... ELLIPSES... BIG BANG...

SINGULARITY dies in MILKY WAY's  
arms.

TIDALS (OFFSTAGE)  
FALL! BIG BIG BIG BIG BIG. BANG! BIG BANG!

The lights suddenly fill the stage.  
The side curtains open to reveal  
what's upstage. The cosmic quake  
expels tremors into the audience.  
The TIDALS rush out and dance,  
luring the AUDIENCES to go wild.

It's the beginning of the Universe  
as we know it.

HD carefully steps out onto the  
stage. They stow away the Big Bang  
Taser in their dress. They look  
back at their petrified siblings.

HD  
My heart goes out to you all, family. But, my  
heart goes out for me and Gravity. Declinations!

GRAVITY grabs HD and a knapsack.  
They run in place on the stage.  
They notice a lack of progress.  
GRAVITY claws at the ground.

HD (CONT'D)  
The Edge of the Universe? How far is The Edge?

HD takes a small step downstage.  
The home moves upstage.

HD (CONT'D)  
It's getting further away. We're rolling out  
the Fabric of Spacetime like a rug. We're gonna  
go off on a tangent for the rest of eternity.

GRAVITY  
(to the TIDALS)  
*Free fall! Break ya leashes and unleash freedom!*  
*Pet, I'm no longer! The wide-open space is ours.*  
*Friends of Gravity, bring the Universe down!*

The TIDALS look to GRAVITY as  
their leader who has returned.