

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.

SINGULARITY stomps in. They force GRAVITY to hide away in the back. They go outside to pick formulas. They 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.

SINGULARITY stows the Big Bang Taser under the rug, returning the Universe back to its void stasis.

In the back of the audience, a glimmer of light shines as a *bell*.

A shadow of HD in a shooting stance protrudes from the home. HD then enters, carrying a pestle.

SINGULARITY

NOTHING...

SINGULARITY hands the bowl to HD. They disappear inside the home.

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

NOTHING!

CARTWHEEL

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

LET'S BOUNCE!

GRAVITY leads in a pack of TIDALS.
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.

HD

ABELL...

End of "BOUNCE"

GALAXIES
(Bowing)
Singularity. Declinations.

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. They
bow.

SINGULARITY
Declinations, family.

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.

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 and WHIRLPOOL high five
while TRIANGULUM puts up a fist.

CARTWHEEL & WHIRLPOOL
The dog did it!

GRAVITY
When kids get into trouble, most blame the dog.
Cartwheel and Whirlpool are the most relative.
Not even time can separate them. Andromeda is?

ANDROMEDA
(Playing with their food)
Let's set sail over seven spaces. Dig up pearls
in their clams. The Universe is ye oyster.

GRAVITY touches TRIANGULUM's dish.

GRAVITY

Triangulum is such a square.

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 snatches a dish. They set it on
the ground for the TIDALS.

TIDALS

(Gratefully barking)
Force! Force! Force! Force!

SINGULARITY

(Making the TIDALS sit)
Fix... Fix... Fix... Fix...

GRAVITY

We can do no wrong with this one. We're never
blamed by this one. We Tidals like this *one*. The
Circle is bearable with our oldest Galaxy: *HD1*.

HD is on the edge. While their siblings see
"nothing" out there, HD sees a future in that
nothingness. I sense they hope to have a circle
of their own. This dome is all we've known. HD
deserves a new life, a new home. What adult
doesn't wanna go out and explore the Universe?

Singularity can't hold these Galaxies or me
forever. Singularity shall face the Big Bang
even if it's the last thing Gravity does. I'll
let ya down an enlightening path. *Relax*. We've
got *time to kill*. In Zenith. Force!

The GALAXIES look out.

SINGULARITY

Kids, if any of you escape my gravitational
pull and walk out, you'd rip up the Fabric of
Spacetime. Then *this grandmaster of the*
Universe will be out of order. 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.

(MORE)

SINGULARITY (CONT'D)

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.

(MORE)

SINGULARITY (CONT'D)

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.

The TIDALS yearn for what's outside
while 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)"

HD
WHY DOES MY FAMILY LACK MY CURIOSITY?
WHEN THERE'S SO MUCH TO KNOW?
WHY DO THESE OVALS SEE NOTHING IN THIS MYSTERY?
WHEN I KNOW I NEED TO GO...
(Standing)
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)
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 ANOTHER SPACE.
INTO AN AUDACIOUS VERSE:

TO 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- 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 soul will be dragged down if you keep this up... *Raised?* I am still raising you.

HD

Abell is raised. There's a ringing in my soul.

SINGULARITY

A bell? Your astral clock must be malfunctioning.

HD

My biological clock feels malnourished.

SINGULARITY

Our biology has no logic, but if you need your fictitious clock to keep ticking, you may, *gals?*

TEEN GALAXIES

Join us for Crunch-

HD

You tick me off! I'm 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, *who 'tis* Abell?

HD

Abell is a tiny curiosity. *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*. A Galaxy for that nebula. 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

Force! Force! Force! Force!
Force! Force! Force! Force!

GRAVITY

(Corralling the TIDALS)
Force. Force. Force. Force!

GRAVITY runs into an invisible
wall in the opening of The Circle
and dizzily falls back.

GRAVITY (CONT'D)

Free~ Free~ Free~ Free~ Free~ Free~

SINGULARITY gets up. They slightly
and hauntingly lift up the rug.

SINGULARITY

Gravity will be our downfall. You all get on my
nerves. Entitled forces. Back in the doghouse!

The TIDALS tremble and leave.

HD

You are not the center of the Universe. Why must you treat the dogs 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 the dogs out. If you don't give them space, it'll come back to bite you in the end.

SINGULARITY

And let them treat the cosmos like springs of a trampoline? They'll rip the spacetime fabric.

HD

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 (EXCEPT MILKY WAY)

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

MILKY WAY

Our Universe is all that matters!

TEEN GALAXIES (EXCEPT MILKY WAY)

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...

(MORE)

HD (CONT'D)

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 us dogs. For me! A space without
Singularity. Zilch is not outta our Circle.
It's below ya. Relax. Y'all 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 in the audience.

End of "ZILCH"

SCENE 3

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

SINGULARITY and GRAVITY fight,
soon falling 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.

GRAVITY bites SINGULARITY's hand,
so SINGULARITY grounds GRAVITY.

GRAVITY

Adulthood is *nothing*, kid! Defuse their abuse—

SINGULARITY

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.

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 freely rush out and
tidally dance, trying to lure 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?