

ACT ISCENE 1

## THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

1. "BOUNCE"

The Circle. A table and rug sits inside its dome. The stage outside teems 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 exit into 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 away 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.  
They go to the edge of the home  
and scope out.

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 then stow away the scope.

ANDROMEDA

NOTHING!

MILKY WAY strolls in.

MILKY WAY

NUTHIN'...

The TEEN GALAXIES - CARTWHEEL,  
WHIRLPOOL, TRIANGULUM, ANDROMEDA,  
MILKY WAY - cluster in the center.

TEEN GALAXIES

LET'S BOUNCE!

The TEEN GALAXIES bounce away from  
one another and land by the walls.  
They distinctly dance and pose.

GRAVITY leads in a pack of TIDALS.  
They prowl around the rug.

SINGULARITY (OFFSTAGE)

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"

SINGULARITY arrives with dishes.

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, with TRIANGULUM  
sitting 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 &amp; 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

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 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 the  
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 Galaxies or me, a tidal  
force, 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.  
Your tiger nom/mom/dad heated this special meal  
above ten million degrees Kelvin in our cosmic  
microwave background. 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 sit. SINGULARITY  
and the GALAXIES pray.

The TIDALS yearn for the 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.

## WHIRLPOOL

IT IS CRUNCH TIME, SINGULARITY.

## TRIANGULUM

IT IS CRUNCH TIME, SINGULARITY.

## CARTWHEEL

IT IS CRUNCH TIME, SINGULARITY.

## ANDROMEDA

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 repeating)

WHERE THE CUTTING EDGE WILL BE...

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:

HD (CONT'D)  
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 needs to accrete. You  
babies need to grow. This attitude's 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 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!

GRAVITY

(Corralling the TIDALS)

Force. Force. 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, and 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 shuteye. 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... 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...  
(Sensing perplexity)  
You were saying? *Water Bears and Elevators?*

4. "FIGURE"

HD brings out a board game, and  
MILKY WAY gets into it.

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

HD  
The box says: "Ages six to twenty eons." I may  
be old. Still, I like to mess around and play a  
game called "life." The goal's to go from one  
ellipse to another. Every ellipse are 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 soon not fit in your ellipse. I stopped  
being in yours, ten eternities ago. I don't feel  
like I fit in mine anymore. No longer a teen...  
You'll be in mine. 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 rests. *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. Ya'll 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.

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.