

Space Rangers and the Viper Menace

Book, Lyrics & Music
by
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Setting

The Galactic Space Academy.

Time

In the distant future.

Cast of Characters

Strat Lancaster. Handsome, daredevil Space Ranger: Guardian of the Galaxy!

Venus deMille. His beautiful, but not particularly bright, girlfriend. Her clothing is as skimpy as her intellect. Skimpier.

Sparks McBeamish. Strat's Scottish sidekick, always ready with a quip and a swig of Scotch. Wears a kilt and sporran.

Milkita Vayovich. A deadly serious Space Rangerette, of Russian lineage.

Professor Nebulon. Head of the Space Academy, a short, white-haired, seemingly bookish man, who wears robes and who harbors a secret desire for...

Stellina Frost. The aloof, ultra-logical, and quite tall Assistant Dean of the Academy, who can, shall we say, "open up" in private.

Cosmo Biggs. Owner of Interspatial Universal Dynamics ("We put the worm in your wormhole"), ostensibly a captain of space industry, but secretly in league with Evil.

Urana Sidarkol. The evil in which Biggs is in league with, the Queen of the Nephilia Sector, who has designs on Strat, IUD, the Academy, the Galaxy, and anything else she currently does not hold in her sway.

Count Quasaro. Urana's henchman, a man not without designs of his own. Passionless, but still flamboyant, with a sort of perverted Jack Benny mannerism.

Mutato. A sort of mutating monster, the creation of Biggs.

Halley Oort. Another Space Ranger.

Astrid Lazon. A freshman "cadet" Ranger, a naturally wide-eyed hero-worshipper.

Other Space Rangers.

Musical Numbers

Act I

Scene 1.

"Space Rangers". Strat, Sparks, Milkita, Venus, Rangers

Scene 2.

"All-Star Reunion". Sparks, Venus, Milkita, Strat, Chorus

"Saved Again". Sparks, Venus, Milkita, Strat, Chorus

"Grounded". Strat, Sparks, Milkita, Venus

Scene 3.

"Who Am I Now?". Mutato, Biggs, Urana, Strat, Venus, Sparks, Milkita, Nebulon, Stellina

"This Galaxy's Not Big Enough". Urana, Biggs, Quasaro

Scene 5.

"Logical Conclusion". Stellina, Nebulon

"Girls From Space". Strat, Sparks

Scene 6.

"Space Jam". Chorus

"Wrapped Around". Urana, Venus

Act II

Scene 1.

"Space Rangers (Reprise)". Sparks, Milkita, Venus, Rangers

Scene 2.

"Have You Seen the Stars?". Venus, Sparks, Milkita, Nebulon, Stellina

Scene 3.

"You Send Me". Strat, Venus

"Invincible". Urana, Biggs, Quasaro

Scene 4.

"You Need a Name". Venus, Mutato, Milkita, Nebulon, Stellina, Strat, Sparks

Scene 5.

"Power". Urana, Biggs, Quasaro

"Power Redux". Urana, Biggs, Quasaro, Strat

"Saved Again (Reprise)". Ensemble

Scene Synopsis

Act I

Scene 1. In space, during a battle, in the distant future

Scene 2. Entrance Hall, Galactic Space Academy

Scene 3. Biggs IUD laboratory, shortly after

Scene 4. Entrance Hall, next day

Scene 5. Entrance Hall, that night

Scene 6. Entrance Hall, later that night

Act II

Scene 1. In space, immediately after

Scene 2. Entrance Hall, next morning

Scene 3. Biggs IUD lab, that afternoon

Scene 4. Entrance Hall, a little later

Scene 5. IUD Lab and Side Corridor, soon after

ACT I

SCENE 1

I.1.1 "Overture"

Stage is dark. During voiceover, a helmet, with interior lights reminiscent of "Battlestar Galactica", becomes visible. Other helmets appear, until finally, STRAT LANCASTER's helmet appears, in the vanguard of the others. Amid flashes of light and muted sounds of battle, RANGERS shoot ray guns during voiceover.

VOICE

In the dim darkness of the distant past, or perhaps it is in the far-flung fields of the distant future, who can say when time stretches out so far... the Galaxy is not as empty as it will one day be... or perhaps once was. A great confederation of peoples rule this vast space, living in harmony and peace. Most of the time. But harmony and peace is not the legacy of humanity. Too often, there rises among us those who would threaten our peace, and our very existence in order to impose their own vision of Utopia. But when the Pax Galactica is threatened, there thankfully exists the Galactic Space Rangers to fight for equality, justice and harmony- no matter whom they have to blast to atoms in order to achieve it!

I.1.2 "Space Rangers"

VOICE (CONT'D)

This band of intrepid heros patrol the backwaters and dark eddies of the cosmos, seeking out those who deal in evil and sorrow. Great-hearted are the Space Rangers, and their legions include many names who will live forever in the hearts of free men and women everywhere. But none is as famous, nor as great-hearted, nor as heroic as the greatest of them all: Strat Lancaster, Galactic Space Ranger!

SPACE RANGERS

IN THE GALAXY, HUMANITY
PATIENTLY JUST WANTS TO BE
AS PEACEFUL AS THEY CAN AMONG THE STARS
AND WHILE THEY SLEEP, OUT IN THE DEEP
OF SPACE WE KEEP A CONSTANT SWEEP,

A VIGIL FOR THE EVIL AND BIZARRE!

WE ARE SPACE RANGERS, SPACE RANGERS
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
DEFENDERS OF HUMANITY
WE'RE NO STRANGERS TO DARK DANGERS
WE'RE THE ONES WHO FACE THEM FIRST
UNIQUE IN ALL THE UNIVERSE
WE'RE MAKING OUTER SPACE
A SAFER KIND OF PLACE

WE HAVE JUST ONE CHORE: GALACTIC WAR
THE THING THAT WE WERE DESTINED FOR
TO KEEP THE PEACE WE DO THE THINGS WE MUST
IT'S PLAIN TO SEE THE ENEMY
WILL SHORTLY BE MERE HISTORY
BLOWN TO SMITHEREENS AND COSMIC DUST

WE ARE SPACE RANGERS, SPACE RANGERS
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
DEFENDERS OF HUMANITY
WE'RE NO STRANGERS TO DARK DANGERS
WE'RE THE ONES WHO FACE THEM FIRST
UNIQUE IN ALL THE UNIVERSE
WE'RE MAKING OUTER SPACE
A SAFER KIND OF PLACE
FOR THE HUMAN RACE

SPARKS

Yow! Those Vipers are on the run, laddie!

MILKITA

Ve put fire in their britches, that for sure!

STRAT

Sparks, are you picking up that strange signal?

SPARKS

Ay, Strat. I've never seen anything like it.

MILKITA

It has origin in that nebula. Bearing theta 56,
upsilon 124. That's odd...

VENUS

What is it, Milkita?

MILKITA

No range can I determine. My instruments say it
is... infinitely far away!

SPARKS

That's crazy! We can see the thing, right
there, plain as the nose on yer face.

STRAT

How's your fuel?

SPARKS

We're all low, Strat.

STRAT

I've still got some to spare. I'm going to investigate. The rest of you, return to base!

SPARKS

What? You shouldna do it, laddie.

MILKITA

Is most unwise.

VENUS

Strat! You can't-

STRAT

Those are my orders! This anomaly must be investigated. And Venus...

VENUS

Yes, Strat?

STRAT

Don't worry. I'll make it in plenty of time for the reunion. Heck, I bet I beat you slowpokes back to the Academy. Strat, out.

STRAT peels off with a flash of light, his visor light goes out.

VENUS

Well, of all the-

SPARKS

Ye heard the man, Venus, so dinna worry. Knowing Strat Lancaster, he *will* get back before us. Let's rocket, ladies and gents! Hyper- *drive!*

INTENSE FLASH, THEN BLACKOUT

I.1.3 "Scene Change - Space Rangers"

SCENE 2

The Grand Entrance Hall for the Galactic Confederation Space Academy. A banner across the Grand Entrance (upstage center) reads, "Welcome Class of '08!" A table contains champagne flutes and refreshments. PROFESSOR NEBULON, STELLINA FROST and COSMO BIGGS enter through the Grand Entrance.

NEBULON

Everything is perfectly planned, Cosmo, perfectly planned, just the way you insisted.

COSMO

Good, good.

NEBULON

The music is perfectly arranged for the ball, the banner is perfectly placed, the caterers have created perfectly delicious culinary perfections, and the liquid refreshments—

NEBULON picks up a glass and sips.

NEBULON (CONT'D)

Perfect!

STELLINA

I have taken extreme care with every detail, Professor.

COSMO

And the alumni, they'll all be here?

NEBULON

Alumni?

COSMO

It *is* a reunion, Professor Nebulon. That *is* what Interspatial Universal Dynamics has sponsored, is it not?

NEBULON

Oh, my yes, well of course it is. And of course they are, you can certainly depend on the alumni being here. Reunion and all that.

NEBULON takes another sip.

COSMO

And our special alumnus, he is sure to be here as well?

NEBULON

Strat Lancaster? My God, Cosmo, have you lost your memory down one of your own IUD wormholes? You specifically stated in your offer to underwrite this class reunion, that everything depended on giving a hero's welcome to Strat Lancaster—

STELLINA

A man who certainly deserves a hero's welcome—

NEBULON

A Caesar's welcome! As many times as he's saved the whole galaxy, by thunder—

COSMO

Professor. I haven't forgotten. I just wanted to make sure you hadn't.

STELLINA

Professor Nebulon forgets nothing!

NEBULON

Never!

STELLINA

As long as I remember it for him.

NEBULON

Always!

COSMO

Interspatial Universal Dynamics is extremely proud of your distinguished graduate, as is everyone in the Galactic Confederation. And so of course I want to make sure that everything comes off as planned. Without a hitch.

NEBULON

No hitches, not one. Completely hitchless. You can take that to the bank. Ha-ha, as if you needed to take any more to the bank.

COSMO

Never hurts.

NEBULON

And your generous contributions to the Galactic Space Academy haven't hurt either.

(MORE)

NEBULON (CONT'D)

I don't know where we'd be without the Cosmo Biggs Library, the Biggs Cadet Induction Facility—

STELLINA

The Cosmo Anti-Grav Gymnasium—

COSMO

Don't forget the Cosmo Biggs GigaBiga Cosmotron.

NEBULON

How could I? The single most powerful cosmonic particle smasher in the known universe! And the unknown, too, for that matter! Thanks to the GigaBigatron, our people have been making tremendous strides in quarkatonic research.

STELLINA

Tremendous!

COSMO

Yes, I've seen the reports. Excellent work. The GigaBigatron was a good investment, a very good investment. Between you and me, Professor, don't be surprised to hear of a stunning IUD product announcement in the near future.

NEBULON

More money in the bank?

COSMO

A man could do worse than buy a little IUD stock, that's all I can say.

NEBULON nods to STELLINA, who punches data into her computer.

NEBULON

Thanks for the tip... well, not a tip, really, just sound investment advice, wouldn't you say?

COSMO

Think nothing of it, Professor. Consider this information a small token of my gratitude for the excellent work you do, and the space cadets your academy produces.

SOUND: Trumpet fanfare. There is a commotion heard out the door.

COSMO (CONT'D)

Sounds like those cadets are approaching. By the way, Nebulon, I've taken the liberty of inviting a special guest to the proceedings. I hope you don't mind.

NEBULON

(distracted as he awaits cadets)

My dear fellow, you paid for it, you can invite whomever you please. Oh, I can't wait to see my favorite pupil. I was, if I may say so, a mentor to Strat. He considered me his father. Really, I guess all the cadets did. Ah, my children!

ALUMNI (STRAT LANCASTER, SPARKS McBEAMISH, MILKITA VAYOVITCH, VENUS DEMILLE and others) stream in, loudly boisterous. They completely ignore NEBULON, who stands with open arms, and hit the drink table.

NEBULON (CONT'D)

How sharper than a serpent's tooth is a thankless cadet.

STRAT

Back at the old school!

HALLEY

It's been a while.

MILKITA

Too long!

SPARKS

At least they kept the liquor waitin' for us.

STRAT

A toast to the class of '08!

VENUS does cheerleader jumps.

VENUS

'08, '08, we're the class that's really great!

SPARKS

I'll drink to that!

MILKITA

McBeamish, you will drink to anything.

SPARKS
I'll drink to that, too!

I.2.1 "All-Star Reunion"

SPARKS (CONT'D)
WE'LL RAISE A GLASS, AND MAKE A TOAST
AND DRINK TO WHAT WE ARE

SPARKS, MILKITA, STRAT & VENUS
WE'RE ALL WELL-KNOWN, THIS IS NO BOAST
EACH ONE OF US A STAR!

CHORUS
AN ALL-STAR REUNION
A COSY COMMUNION
THE STATE OF OUR UNION
IS LOYAL AND TRUE
THIS BAND OF COMPANIONS
WEARS GOLDEN MEDALLIONS
WE'RE BRAVER THAN STALLIONS
WE HAPPY, WE FEW
HEROINES AND HEROS
NOT ONE OF US A ZERO
WITHOUT US, THERE'D BE NO
REUNION TO DO

STRAT
I'M STRAT LANCASTER
IN SPACE I'M THE MASTER
MY ROCKET IS FASTER

VENUS
(**spoken**)
It's true!

STRAT
THAN ANY YOU'LL SEE
I'VE GOT TO REVEAL
WHAT I CANNOT CONCEAL
FROM HEAD TO MY BOOT HEEL
A HERO, THAT'S ME!
I WISH I COULD BE MODEST AND RESERVED
BUT I CAN'T HELP ACKNOWLEDGING
THE PRAISE THAT I'VE DESERVED

CHORUS
HE CAN'T HELP ACKNOWLEDGING
THE PRAISE THAT HE'S DESERVED

SPARKS
I'M SPARKS MCBEAMISH
I'VE NEVER BEEN SQUEAMISH
NOR GIVEN TO SCREAMISHLY

RUNNING WAY

THEY CALL ME THE SIDEKICK
I KNOW WHICH SIDE THAT I'LL PICK
I'LL BE THERE AND RIGHT QUICK
WHEN STRAT SAVES THE DAY
I'M ALWAYS GAME TO PUSH IT UP A NOTCH
AS LONG AS I'VE GOT LOTS AND LOTS
AND LOTS AND LOTS OF SCOTCH

CHORUS

AS LONG AS HE'S GOT LOTS AND LOTS
OF SINGLE MALTED SCOTCH

VENUS

(slower)

I'M VENUS DEMILLE
I GIVE MEN A THRILL
IF GOOD LOOKS COULD KILL

**She pulls blaster from holster
and, shooting over her shoulder,
blasts a bottle on bar.**

THEN I WOULD BE TOP GUN
THE BRIGHTEST, I'M NOT
BUT I USE WHAT I'VE GOT

SPARKS

(spoken)

WHAT SHE'S GOT IS HOT

VENUS does cheerleader jumps.

VENUS

WE'RE NUMBER ONE! WE'RE NUMBER ONE!
WE'LL WIN THE RACE IN OUTER SPACE
'CAUSE WE'RE NUMBER ONE!

MILKITA

MY NAME IS MILKITA
AND NO ONE IS SWEETER
BUT CROSS ME, I BEAT-A
THE WALL WITH YOUR HEAD
AM SMARTER THAN VENUS
AM ALMOST A GENIUS
BUT MEN CHOOSE BETWEEN US
THEY CHOOSE HER INSTEAD
I WONDER WHAT SHE HAS THAT I MUST LACK
I SHOULD TRY A FRONTAL FULL ATTACK

MILKITA stands before SPARKS

STRAT, SPARKS, VENUS & MILKITA

WE'RE HERE TO TELL THE MAN IN THE MOON
THAT HE'LL NEVER SEE A HAPPIER REUN-ION!

CHORUS

AN ALL-STAR REUNION
THIS COSY COMMUNION
THIS BAND OF COMPANIONS
WE HAPPY, WE FEW
HEROINES AND HEROS
NOT ONE OF US A ZERO
WITHOUT US, THERE'D BE NO
REUNION TO DO
WITHOUT US, THERE WOULD SIMPLY BE NO REASON
TO HAVE THIS ALL-STAR REUN-ION!

SPARKS

And while we're at it, three hyper-cheers for
the man o' the hour, Strat Lancaster, the
record holder for most consecutive years of
single-handedly saving the Galactic
Confederation!

ALL

Hyper-hip (hooray!) Hyper-hip (hooray!) Hyper-
hip (hooray!)

STRAT

Sparks, you're embarrassing me. This is really
too much.

VENUS

No way is it too much. Not for the greatest
galactic good guy ever!

SPARKS

Not to mention the brightest star in your
constellation.

VENUS

I am kind of attracted to the boy.

SPARKS

Like xrays to a black hole.

STRAT

Like what to a what?

VENUS

Sparks, you say the weirdest things.

MILKITA

Words not weirdest thing he does.

SPARKS

I only get weird when I'm around you folk.

STRAT

Which is all the time.

SPARKS

Aye. Yer right.

NEBULON

Strat! It's great to have you back on campus. Although I suppose I should address you as "First Lieutenant Lancaster", eh?

MILKITA

Actually, Professor Nebulon, is now Captain Lancaster. Strat was recently promoted.

SPARKS

Again.

QUEEN URANA SIDHARKOL and her minister, COUNT QUASARO enter unnoticed and survey the scene. QUASARO points at STRAT and whispers something to URANA.

NEBULON

Well, well, well, my boy. Captain! At this rate, it can't be too much longer before you make admiral.

STRAT

It was a field promotion. During our last action against the Viper Squadron in the Sirius sector. You see, we were surrounded in four dimensions, when all of a-

COSMO

Surely no one could deserve it more. Professor?

NEBULON

Oh my, where have my manners gone? I'm ruder than one of those Space Vipers! Captain Strat Lancaster, allow me to introduce Cosmo Biggs, one of the Academy's most generous benefactors-

COSMO

The most generous benefactor.

STRAT

Cosmo Biggs? Same as the Biggs Holographic Archives? And the Cosmo Biggs Arena?

SPARKS

Home field of the Rocketmen, the best damn fusionball team in this or any sector.

CADETS, NEBULON, STELLINA

Rockets gonna sock it to you. Zoom! Zoom! Zoom!

VENUS does a cheerleader jump.

VENUS

Zoomeroonie!!!

COSMO

Guilty as charged, I'm afraid.

STRAT

Sir, it is an honor to meet you. You've done so much for the Academy.

COSMO

The honor is mine, I assure you, captain. You've done so much for the galaxy.

URANA

(stepping into the conversation)

Yes, he has done much. It is a wonder how the galaxy ever survived without young Lancaster to constantly save it.

NEBULON

Queen Urana. Your highness!

NEBULON bows.

NEBULON (CONT'D)

But I had no idea you were coming.

COSMO

Professor Nebulon, this is the special guest I told you about. Please welcome Queen Urana Sidharkol, ruler of the Nephilia Sector.

ALL bow, curtsy, genuflect, etc.

STRAT

Your highness.

URANA

Please, please. No excessive groveling. A humble bow is sufficient. So nice to finally meet you Professor. Your work at the Academy is known throughout the galaxy. And of course the famous Strat Lancaster needs no introduction. You are such a big, brave man, Captain Lancaster. Or may I call you Strat?

STRAT

Why, sure, your highness!

URANA

And you may call me Urana if you like.

STRAT

I would like. Thanks... Urana.

VENUS

Hmph.

QUASARO

Ahem.

URANA

Oh, yes, Quasaro. Professor Nebulon, this is my minister and chief advisor, Count Quasaro.

QUASARO clicks his heels and bows.

QUASARO

At your service.

URANA

Strat, I overheard you saying that you were promoted during a battle with that horrible Viper Squadron. That must have been terribly exciting. And dangerous.

VENUS

Oh, it was! Terribly exciting. And terribly dangerous, wasn't it, Strat? Darling.

STRAT

Yes. Uh, Urana, this is my... friend, Venus DeMille.

VENUS

Friend?!

STRAT

Really good friend. She's a girl. She's my really good, uh, girl, uh, friend.

URANA

You must be very proud of your boy... friend, Venus, is it?

VENUS

(taking STRAT's arm)

Oh, you bet I am. Proud enough to go supernova. He's the cutest little galaxy-saver in the whole universe! Tell the queen about your fight with the Vipers, Strat.

SPARKS

Na, let me tell her. It's usually my tail the
Strat-man is pulling out of the fire.

I.2.2 "Saved Again"

SPARKS (CONT'D)

THE VIPER SQUADS WERE FIRING
LEFT AND RIGHT
OUR COMRADES WERE EXPIRING
SHOT DOWN IN MID-FLIGHT
AND WHEN YOU'RE DEAD
IT'S HARD TO FIGHT
THE SITUATION HOPELESS
NO RESCUE IN SIGHT

CHORUS

WHEN SUDDENLY
OUT OF THE BLUE
WHO CAN IT BE?
IT'S YOU KNOW WHO
LIKE AN ANGEL IN THE NIGHT
SAVED AGAIN!

SPARKS

THANK THE STARS, 'CAUSE WE ARE

CHORUS

SAVED AGAIN!

SPARKS

LOOK AT THAT, IT'S STRAT, WE'RE

CHORUS

SAVED AGAIN! THANK THE STARS THAT WE'RE ALL SAVED AGAIN!

MILKITA

REMEMBER WHEN STRAT SAVED THAT PRINCESS, OH VAT WAZ HER NAME?

**VENUS forms two buns over her ears
with her hands.**

VENUS

(spoken)

Princess Leia.

SPARKS

Oh, yeah!

(sings)

HE RESCUES FICTITIOUS PEOPLE AND REAL ONES THE SAME

(spoken)

He's real democratic that way.

VENUS

THEY HELD PRINCESS LEIA HOSTAGE
IN A TINY ROOM
AND WE DON'T PAY HER POSTAGE
SHE'LL MEET HER DOOM
THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME
'TIL THINGS GO BOOM
SOMEONE NEEDS TO SAVE HER
WHOM DO YOU PRESUME?

CHORUS

NO VOLUNTEER
NOBODY DARED
WE QUAKED IN FEAR
OH, WE WERE SCARED
THEN STRAT BURST THROUGH THE GLOOM!
SAVED AGAIN!

VENUS & SPARKS

LEIA'S SKIN WAS BY HIM

CHORUS

SAVED AGAIN!

VENUS & SPARKS

THANKS TO HIS SKILL WE WILL BE

CHORUS

SAVED AGAIN! THANK THE STARS THAT WE'RE ALL SAVED AGAIN!

STRAT

I'M A TOTAL SPACE CADET
LIVE BY THE SPACEMAN'S LAW
I NEVER WILL REGRET
THAT I HAVE SAVED YOU ONE AND ALL
FROM DEATH AND CERTAIN DOOM
AND FROM THE VIPER'S CLAW
ANYTIME YOU'RE IN TROUBLE
YOU KNOW WHO YOU CAN CALL

CHORUS

HE'S BOUND TO SAVE US ALL
SAVED AGAIN! JUST LOOK AT THAT, IT'S STRAT, WE'RE
SAVED AGAIN! HE'S SUCH A STAR, AND WE ARE
SAVED AGAIN! HE'LL SAVE THE DAY. YAY!
SAVED AGAIN! THANK THE STARS, 'CAUSE WE ARE
SAVED AGAIN! THANK THE STARS THAT WE'RE ALL SAVED AGAIN!

URANA

And you graduated from this very academy?

STRAT

Class of '08.

VENUS

Top of the class of '08.

URANA takes STRAT's arm and leads him away from VENUS.

URANA

Really? A warrior and a scholar. My, what an irresistible combination.

VENUS follows them.

VENUS

Oh, he's perfectly resistible, if you try.

NEBULON

Strat was one of the finest students I ever taught. And he scored higher on his entrance exams than anyone in academy history. Stellina, access Strat's scholastic records, show the queen what a stellar student he was!

STELLINA

Yes, Professor.

STELLINA begins punching her handheld computer.

STRAT

No, please—

URANA

Oh, by all means, do show me. I'm dying to learn all I can about this fascinating hero. Simply dying.

VENUS

(under her breath)

Please, be my guest.

STELLINA

Here we are. Truly impressive entrance examination scores.

NEBULON

What did I tell you?

STELLINA

But what...? This can't be right!

NEBULON

What can't be right?

STELLINA

Why, this is impossible!

URANA

What's impossible?

STRAT

Is something wrong, Doctor Frost?

STELLINA

Something is terribly, terribly wrong.

NEBULON

Well, for Sagan's sake, what is it?!

STELLINA

According to the records, Strat Lancaster never took his final exams.

STRAT

Did what? Of course I took my finals!

STELLINA

If you had taken them, the grades would be recorded here. And they are definitely not recorded here.

NEBULON

Are you sure you're looking in the right place?

STELLINA

Professor!

STRAT

Someone must have tampered with the records!

COSMO

Impossible. The Biggs Data Protection System is absolutely impervious to computer break-in.

NEBULON

He's right. Our own scientists verified that the encryption code is mathematically impossible to crack.

STRAT

I know I took my final exams.

STELLINA

Mister Lancaster, if you had, the grades would be in this system.

SPARKS

"Mister" Lancaster? What happened to Captain?

STELLINA

I'm afraid that if Strat Lancaster never took his final exams, he never actually graduated. And if he never graduated—

NEBULON

Great Blazing Balls of Hydrogen Gas! Then he's not legally a Space Ranger!

STRAT

This is crazy! What are you talking about?

HALLEY

Not a Space Ranger!?

SPARKS

He's the greatest bloody Space Ranger that's ever been!

STELLINA

Not if he never graduated. In fact, his merely piloting a space cruiser without proper credentials is, strictly speaking, illegal.

COSMO

Professor, this is a serious matter. Very serious indeed. This could have dire implications with respect to the Academy's reputation. I mean, if you allow cadets to zoom around the galaxy as Space Rangers without actually graduating—

STRAT

This is nuts! Are you trying to say I'm not a Space Ranger?

NEBULON

I'm sorry, Strat. But until we get this matter worked out, I'm afraid you will have to consider yourself grounded from the fleet.

URANA

Grounded! But who will save the Confederation from the dreaded Viper Squadron?

COSMO

A valid question. Come, your majesty. I'll escort you to your quarters.

URANA

Thank you, Mister Biggs. This is all quite a shocking development.

COSMO

Nebulon, I'm sorry this reunion has turned into such a fiasco. Naturally, I don't hold you completely responsible. But something must be done to rectify the matter. I'm sure you agree.

NEBULON

Naturally, Cosmo.

COSMO

Then we'll discuss it further. Good day, Space Rangers. And you, too, Mister Lancaster.

COSMO, URANA and QUASARO exit.

SPARKS

"Mister" Lancaster! This is unbelievable.

NEBULON

Perhaps, but until we can sort things out, we must all play by the rules. And I'm afraid that means no more Space Rangers for you, Strat.

STRAT

Yes, Professor Nebulon.

STELLINA

I'm sure we'll find some reasonable solution.

**NEBULON, STELLINA and RANGERS
exit, leaving STRAT, SPARKS, VENUS
MILKITA, ASTRID and HALLEY.**

VENUS

Oh, Strat! This is terrible.

SPARKS

Yeah, they really did a Pluto on you, mon! One minute a planet, the next-

Makes a chopping motion.

ASTRID

Captain Lancaster-

STRAT

I'm afraid it's just plain old Strat, Miss...?

ASTRID

(shyly nervous)

Astrid. Astrid Lazon. I'm... I'm a freshman here at the Academy. And I think, well, I think it's awful what Professor Nebulon is doing!

(MORE)

ASTRID (CONT'D)

I mean you're the greatest Ranger that's ever been, you're the whole reason I joined- I mean, all of us... I mean... Oh, this is just terrible. I've a good mind to quit the Academy!

STRAT

Whoa, don't go all nova. You stay in the Academy, you hear? This'll all work out, I'm sure. Professor Nebulon is just doing his job.

ASTRID

But the Vipers! What'll we do without you?

STRAT

We'll do fine. Now, run along... Astrid? You get back to the books. We're going to need all the Space Rangers this Academy can graduate.

ASTRID

Yes, sir, Captain! And you're still captain in my book!

She salutes and runs off.

VENUS

That was sweet, Strat. But what are we going to do? The fleet needs you.

STRAT

We'll do what Professor Nebulon says. He's a wise man. He'll figure something.

MILKITA

But until he does, it would seem you are grounded.

I.2.3 "Grounded"

MILKITA (CONT'D)

PRIMITIVE MAN WAS STUCK
GLUED TO THE GROUND, JUST STUCK
HE LONGED TO SOAR LIKE BIRD

VENUS

LIKE A DOVE!

STRAT

LIKE AN EAGLE

SPARKS

LIKE A BAT!

MILKITA

FOR AGES IT SEEMED ABSURD

VENUS, MILKITA, HALLEY
AND EVERY TRY TO REACH THE SKY
ENDED UP BY GOING HIGHER, AND HIGHER, AND HIGHER—

SPARKS
AND THEN BY GOING SPLAT!

ALL
THEN WILBUR AND ORVILLE, ON A WINDY BEACH
GOT UP WHERE THE GROUND WAS JUST RIGHT OUT OF REACH
THEN EVERYTHING TOOK OFF, STARTED UP A RACE
HIGHER AND FASTER AND SOARING AND BLASTING
AND FINALLY INTO SPACE!

MILKITA
THERE WAS YURI GAGARIN

SPARKS
READY AND RARING

STRAT
SOME GUY NAMED GLENN

HALLEY
I'VE READ ABOUT HIM

VENUS
THOSE ASTRONAUTS WERE SPUNKY

SPARKS
WEREN'T SOME OF THOSE GUYS MONKEYS?

(spoken)
I'm just sayin'.

MILKITA, SPARKS, VENUS, HALLEY
AND HIGHER AND FASTER AND FURTHER THEY FLEW
AND EVERY FLIGHT LED RIGHT TO YOU!

STRAT
(spoken)
Me?

MILKITA, SPARKS, VENUS, HALLEY
YOU! LED RIGHT TO THIS MOMENT, AND RIGHT TO YOU.
AND WHAT DID YOU DO? YOU GOT

STRAT
GROUNDED, AND I DO NOT KNOW WHY
BUT ONE DAY, YOU'LL SEE ME FLY AGAIN
I'LL FLY AGAIN
ONE DAY YOU'LL SEE ME FLY AGAIN!
I MAY BE GROUNDED NOW
BUT I'LL GET UP SOMEHOW
I'LL GET UP SOMEHOW, YOU'LL SEE

THERE'S NO WAY THEY'RE GONNA KEEP ME
ON THE GROUND!
I MAY BE GROUNDED NOW
BUT I'LL GET UP SOMEHOW
I MAY BE STUCK ON EARTH
BUT I WILL HAVE REBIRTH
I MAY BE TERRA-BOUND
BUT THEY CAN'T KEEP ME DOWN,
THEY'LL NEVER KEEP ME DOWN!

ALL
WE MAY BE GROUNDED NOW
BUT WE'LL GET UP SOMEHOW
WE MAY BE STUCK ON EARTH
BUT WE WILL HAVE REBIRTH
OUR PLACES REALLY ARE
OUT THERE BEYOND THE STARS
WE ALL GOT TO FLY, WE ALL GOT TO FLY

STRAT
GROUNDED, THAT IS NO PLACE FOR ME

MILKITA, SPARKS, VENUS, HALLEY
BUT ONE DAY, YOU KNOW WHERE HE WILL BE
HE'LL FLY AGAIN

ALL
ONE DAY YOU'LL SEE US FLY AGAIN!
WE MAY BE GROUNDED NOW, BUT WE'LL GET UP SOMEHOW
OUR PLACES REALLY ARE OUT THERE BEYOND THE STARS
UP, UP, UP AND AWAY, IT'S TIME TO SAVE THE DAY
THERE IS NO WAY WE'LL STAY-

MILKITA, SPARKS, VENUS, HALLEY
GROUNDED, WE'D LOVE TO SEE THEM TRY TO KEEP HIM
GROUNDED, JUST LET' EM TRY, HE'S BOUND TO FLY
HE'LL FLY AGAIN

STRAT
I'LL FLY AGAIN

MILKITA, SPARKS, VENUS, HALLEY
ONE DAY YOU'LL SEE HIM FLY AGAIN!

STRAT
ONE DAY YOU'LL SEE ME-

ALL
FLY!

BLACKOUT

I.2.4 "Scene Change - Grounded"