

AN ADVENTURE OF CAPTAIN WASABUS

By Justin Alejandro Gonzales

Cast of Characters (in order of appearance):

1 male, 0 females, 10+ either

Snailio [m/f] The beloved pet snail of DeChaccus.

Captain Wasabus [m] Captain of the Old Sport. A space pirate with an unmatched love for booty and an unwavering commitment to the romanticism of piracy.

Jangles [m/f] A sensible skeleton loyal to Captain Wasabus, despite their relatively recent appointment as first mate.

Ignant [m/f] A posh, eloquent, and rather verbose rock that Wasabus keeps on his person at all times. They are capable of speaking to Captain Wasabus (and Wasabus only) through the mysterious power of telepathy.

Captain DeChaccus [m/f] Captain of the Caq'Tanq. A rival to Wasabus; unlike their counterpart, they take their profession seriously. They resent that Wasabus has gotten as far as he has with his unrefined bumbling.

Pirates [m/f] Members of DeChaccus's crew. There are at least four of them.

Buff Snailio [m/f] An anthropomorphized buff version of Snailio.

Astral Form Ignant [m/f] The spiritual projection of Ignant with a human appearance.

Time:

The far future; the Golden Age of Space Piracy.

Setting:

(Scenes 1) Aboard the Deck of the Old Sport

(Scene 2) The Bridge of the Old Sport

(Scene 3) The Galley of the Caq'Tanq

Notes:

In the script, characters that could be either gender have been assigned a gender for the sake of readability. Please change pronouns according to the casting of your production.

The script contains some crude humor.

*Translation: "Heartbeat . . . Captain . . . Do you feel it too?"

*For Brando:
Friend and Brother.*

Scene 1 – Aboard the Deck of the Old Sport

(At rise: the top deck of the Old Sport, a space pirate ship modeled after the galleons of old. It sails casually through a dazzling starfield. Inconspicuously, SNAILO inches across the deck with a key tied neatly around his shell. Offstage, WASABUS settles into his captain's quarters and examines a chest of plundered treasure. He speaks to himself; his voice is an over-the-top caricature of the stereotypical pirate.)

WASABUS (VOICE)

Ah, booty! Yarr, truly there be no better way to be putting down the sea dogs after a long day of looting from the defenseless masses! Respectfully, of course. Row me boat, is there anything more I need in me life than booty? Everything about booty swashes me buckles; the sight of it, the smell of it, the taste of it . . . yarr, the feeling of two grand handfuls of booty is what I live for! Oh, booty, how do I love ye? Let me count the ways . . . one . . . two . . . three . . . well, methinks that one is more of a technicality . . .

(Suddenly, we hear the chest slam shut.)

WASABUS (VOICE)

Blasting blunderbuss! Gravity, ye treacherous hag! Yarr, but ye'll need more than fundamental laws of the universe to keep me from me booty.

(WASABUS attempts to open the chest but discovers that it's locked.)

WASABUS (VOICE)

Blow me down, ye're locked! Confounding mechanism . . . yarr, but all I be needing to do is find me key. Now let's see; if I be a key, where would I be . . . ?

(As SNAILO moves onto a floorboard, it makes a comically loud creaking noise, which stops him cold.)

WASABUS (VOICE)

By Oilbeard's ghost, what in the Milky Way's lanky arm was that?

(WASABUS emerges onto the deck and surveys the scene. His eyes eventually land on SNAILO. WASABUS is agog and aghast at the sight of the creature.)

WASABUS

I be agog! I be aghast! Has misfortune come for me at last? Foul beast, I banish ye from me ship. Davy Jones knows the trouble ye've gotten up to! I'd wager the Old Sport be frightfully short of port-worthy now!

(SNALIO continues its creeping exit across the deck.)

WASABUS

Ha-ha, good riddance ye legless helmet-having scum rat! Yarr, the captain's orders never fail.

(WASABUS notices the key on SNAILO's shell.)

WASABUS

Hold a pinch . . . do that be a key strapped upon yer back? Yarr, it do be! There be no place for thieves on this space pirate ship. When I get me hands on ye, I'll—

(WASABUS marches towards SNAILO but stops himself; he staggers back in disgust.)

WASABUS

Piss on me eyes, ye're even more disgusting up close, ye slime-slicked slag-lick! Fine then, ye've forced me hand; I invoke mutual negotiation. Parley be upon ye!

(beat)

Now, I am prepared to offer no more than 100 space doubloons for yer peaceful surrender, which includes – but is not limited to – dropping me key, a 10,000-word apology, and 200 space doubloons to compensate for me pain and suffering. In addition—

(incensed)

Ye dirty soil-sucker, ye're ignoring me at yer own peril! I know ye can hear me with those creepy antennas; they be converting sound waves into electrolytes as I speak! I know, I looked it up!

(beat)

Yarr, how dare ye deny the parley of Captain Wasabus, fourth-most feared space pirate in the galaxy according to ScurvyOrange.com!

(beat)

Make a mockery of me, eh? Yarr, the bilge be spilt now!

(shouting upwards)

Jangles! Down the mast and at attention! Jolly Roger duty can wait, yer captain is in mortal danger.

(Almost immediately, JANGLES enters from ground level. She is a skeleton with a billowing black cape which, when held behind her head, gives her a vague resemblance to the Jolly Roger.)

JANGLES

First Mate Jangles ready for—

WASABUS

Fish sticks with a 'd'! How'd ye get down here so fast?

JANGLES

I'm a skeleton, captain; having no muscles or organs makes me very aerodynamic.

WASABUS

Yarr, good thing, because we be having a problem here that needs immediate attention.

JANGLES

What's that, captain?

WASABUS

Ye see that muck-bodied horror over there? I be needing you to take care of it.

JANGLES

Do you mean the snail, captain? What of it?

WASABUS

It be making haste with our rightful booty! We can't let it get away!

JANGLES

Our booty? Say no more, captain; the stakes have been firmly established.

(JANGLES marches in front of SNAILIO and stands in a strong defensive pose, feet apart.)

JANGLES

You'll go no further, thief! Stop where you are or there'll be consequences!

(SNAILIO passes under JANGLES. JANGLES repositions and puts her feet together to form a blockade, but SNAILIO simply changes course.)

JANGLES

It's not following my orders!

WASABUS

It be frustrating, right?

JANGLES

Well, I suppose it is a snail. Maybe it just doesn't understand.

WASABUS

Yarr, but ye know what it will understand? A salty stomper to the skullcap! Just kick it against the wall and be done with it, I grow weary of these psychological games.

JANGLES

Aye, aye, captain! This gastropod is about to be a *pastropod*!

(JANGLES kicks SNAILIO with all her might, but he goes nowhere. Instead, we hear a devastating crack as JANGLES' toe shatters upon impact. She is paralyzed for a moment before the pain fully registers.)

JANGLES

AAAAAAHAHAHOOOW! That shell is NOT made of calcium! I am NOT okay!

WASABUS

From the deep! That skullduggeranious leech be impervious to the might of even First Mate Jangles! What be worse, it be totally immune to me commanding presence and arresting charm! Yarr, there be only one thing for it . . .

(WASABUS procures IGNANT from his person and holds her before him.)

WASABUS

Ignant, this be the time for yer sharpness of wit. What say ye?

(As IGNANT speaks, a spotlight shines upon her and sophisticated classical music plays.)

IGNANT

Good evening, Captain Archibald Jakonmee Wasabus. It is only after careful consideration and evaluation of all relevant factors that I have come to the following conclusions. Based upon the indicated pain response of First Mate Jangles, the region of the Milky Way Galaxy in which we currently find ourselves, and the average carrying capacity of the common snail, it is most reasonable to assume that the shell possessed by this particular specimen is comprised of superhardium. Physical attacks will surely prove ineffective; therefore, my recommendation is to exploit the specimen's biological structure by dehydrating its body with a generous handful of sodium chloride, which may easily be obtained from the galley.

WASABUS

Yarr, thanks, matey.

(WASABUS puts IGNANT away.)

WASABUS

Ye get all that, Jangles? That there be superhardium!

JANGLES

Respectfully, captain, I believe I made it clear in my application that I am not a rock whisperer.

WASABUS

Aye, right ye be, Jangles. To cut to the quick, I need some sodium chloride from the galley to melt the bugger. Are ye fit for a gopher?

JANGLES

Yes, captain!

WASABUS

Then gopher!

JANGLES

Yes, captain!

(JANGLES, still in considerable pain, hobbles offstage to the galley.)

WASABUS

Yarr, ye're going to get it now, ye stalked-eyed, mouth-footed—

(JANGLES returns from the galley holding a salt shaker and a pepper shaker.)

JANGLES

I'm back, captain! Sorry to keep you waiting; that new set of quintuple combo-padlocks we had installed are still giving me trouble. Anyway, I couldn't remember if sodium chloride was salt or pepper, so I grabbed both.

WASABUS

Great work, lass! To be speaking true, the answer skirts me, too.

JANGLES

I can look it up on the computer in the bridge!

WASABUS

Nay, Jangles, we haven't the time! We're just going to have to take our chances with Lady Luck.

JANGLES

We're going to guess?

WASABUS

Yarr. Sometimes, ye have to take risks.

(WASABUS quickly evaluates the options then picks the pepper shaker.)

WASABUS

That's the name of the game.

(WASABUS approaches SNAILIO with full confidence and towers imposingly over him before pouring the pepper. SNAILIO stops. JANGLES joins WASABUS, both watching to see what happens.)

JANGLES

Is this what dying looks like, captain?

WASABUS

Only God knows, matey.

(beat)

Maybe just another dash.

(WASABUS pours a copious amount of pepper onto SNAILIO. SNAILIO rumbles and loudly emanates the sound of a gasoline engine revving up. He then zooms off stage, having acquired relatively ludicrous speed. He reenters, seemingly drunk on his new power and partly out of control. He zips every which way like a hyperactive cartoon character.)

WASABUS

Spacezooks! We only made the capper stronger! Yarr, it'll be sixteen leaps of a lackadaisical space dolphin before ye'll swab the crud out of me floorboards!

JANGLES

What now, captain?

WASABUS

The salt, Jangles! Throw that damnable salt like it owes ye a pint!

(JANGLES throws the salt in the direction of SNAILIO, but it misses and flies overboard. With little hesitation, JANGLES jumps overboard.)

WASABUS

First Mate Jang—

(JANGLES leaps back onto the deck almost as soon as she disappeared. She holds two impractically large butterfly nets. WASABUS takes one. They both begin frantically pursuing SNAILIO and failing in slapstick fashion. As the chase continues, the Caq'Tanq – the space pirate vessel captained by DECHACCUS – warps in near the Old Sport but goes unnoticed. The chase concludes with WASABUS and JANGLES left exhausted and in position to see SNAILIO come to a complete stop. Looking up, they see why; DECHACCUS has entered, boarding the deck with self-assured superiority. Unlike WASABUS, he is threatening.)

DECHACCUS

I—

(Instantly, both WASABUS and JANGLES javelin-throw their nets at DECHACCUS with little effect and to DECHACCUS' annoyance.)

DECHACCUS

I see that you have met my dear Snailio.

(to SNAILIO)

Come!

(SNAILIO quickly crawls onto DECHACCUS' shoulder.)

WASABUS

Ha-ha!

(aside, to JANGLES)

Come.

JANGLES

(aside, to WASABUS)

Why is that funny?

DECHACCUS

Captain Wasabus. I have so been looking forward to knocking you down a peg. I counted on you still having that mollusk phobia from all those years ago. I suppose you can rule out exposure therapy as a solution.

WASABUS

. . . What? Sorry, it be harder than a drunkard's kidney to focus on what yer saying with that sun in me eye. Jangles, did ye hear any of his blabbering?

JANGLES

I don't have ears, captain.

WASABUS

Shame. Could ye say all of that trite again? I'll listen this time, swear on me lunch.

(DECHACCUS, having no patience for WASABUS, briskly approaches him and draws close, putting the point of a saber to WASABUS' throat.)

DECHACCUS

Can you hear me now?

(beat)

Good. Listen well. I'm not here to play games, Wasabus. You're toe-to-toe with a real space pirate; I've put holes in men twice your size just to watch them bleed.

(beat)

Don't you know who I am? Captain of the Caq'Tanq, "The Dread Curator", "The Lacerater of Qualaxar!" A.S.7872, twelfth bunk . . . ringing a bell?

WASABUS

Oh, I know ye. It's about time ye crossed me path . . . DeCockass!

DECHACCUS

DeChaccus! It's pronounced "DeChaccus!" It's French!

WASABUS

(to JANGLES)

Yarr, French for what?

(WASABUS and JANGLES share a chuckle. DECHACCUS kicks WASABUS square in the chest, sending him to the ground. DECHACCUS pins him down with his foot and aims his firearm at him. JANGLES comes to WASABUS' defense with a cutlass, but DECHACCUS fends her off with little effort.)

DECHACCUS

I will reiterate for you, you pathetic clown of a man: you face a *real* space pirate. One who does not galivant and pussyfoot around his enemy spinning all sorts of nonsense. One who does not treat his life as a farce, stumbling from one encounter to the next with not a mote of aplomb or grace. *I* am one who kills without question and takes without heed.

(DECHACCUS steps away, confident that he will not suffer a counterattack.)

DECHACCUS

The only reason you draw breath is because I want you to be alive to suffer the ridicule of all the riffraff out there whom you've fooled into believing that you deserve to be taken seriously. When they hear that the "Great Captain Wasabus" was bested by a simple snail, they'll see you for what you really are: a joke.

(beat)

It is men like me who deserve to be feared. If you want to play pretend, go join the children in the sandbox where you belong.

(Satisfied, DECHACCUS begins to walk away. As he exits with SNAILO, JANGLES gets to her feet and calls out in defiance.)

JANGLES

You should know that Captain Wasabus is the fourth-most feared space pirate in the galaxy according to ScurvyOrange.com! So you can take your sandbox, expose its contents to extreme heat and pressure, and shove that lovely diamond right up your port hole, you shore-shagger!

(JANGLES approaches WASABUS and helps him to his feet.)

WASABUS

Yarr, thank ye, lass.

(to the Caq'Tanq)

Ye should have killed me when ye had the chance, ye cavernous cranium-having bogan!

(The Caq'Tanq warps away.)

WASABUS

They won't be getting away with our booty tonight Jangles, ye can bet yer best rib on that one. Let the midnight oil burn! To the bridge!

JANGLES

We'll learn them not to tarnish our space pirate honor!

WASABUS

Nay, First Mate Jangles, I couldn't give a flippity-flopping barracuda about "honor." This is about me booty. Honor can't buy ye ale, but booty? Booty is the root of all ale. And rum. And grog! Let DeCockass spit his drivel. He'll choke on it soon enough!

(WASABUS and JANGLES exit to the bridge of the Old Sport.)

Scene 2 – The Bridge of the Old Sport

(At rise: the interior of the bridge of the Old Sport, the room from which the ship is piloted. There is a desk on which sits a laptop. The laptop is equipped with a flight stick and is connected to the wall via an excessively long cable. In front of the desk are two wheeled swivel chairs; one for WASABUS and one for JANGLES. They both enter with determination and leap into their seats which slide away from the desk. With similar determination, they scooch their way back and huddle around the laptop.)

JANGLES

Let's get 'em, captain!

WASABUS

Yarr, I be pleased with yer bloodthirstiness, lass! Ye've got real malt in yer marrow, but she isn't called the "New-and-Improved-Work-Properly-When-You-Need-Her-To Sport." Nay, this fair vessel be the Old Sport; ye've got to make dandy-sure that her ticker's still ticking!

JANGLES

Sorry captain, I crave violence. Running diagnostics!

(JANGLES taps away at the laptop while WASABUS swivels around the room taking note of various objects and devices.)

WASABUS

Engine core?

JANGLES

Check!

WASABUS

Forward thrusters?

JANGLES

Check!

WASABUS

Rear— He-he . . . rear thrusters?

JANGLES

Check!

Gravimetric warp drive? WASABUS

Check! JANGLES

Cryodesiccated multi-stage coolant system? WASABUS

Er . . . we're getting an error on that one, captain! JANGLES

(WASABUS lifts his chair and slams it on the ground matter-of-factly.)

Yarr, how about now? WASABUS

. . . Check! JANGLES

Engine core? WASABUS

Yep, still good! JANGLES

Hydroconvergent Double-arcng Mechanical Delineator? WASABUS

Check! JANGLES

Polyphonographic Energized Neutralizing Coprolitic Intergalactic Laser? WASABUS

Sharpness coefficient at twenty percent! JANGLES

Space lights? WASABUS

Check! JANGLES

Space shield?
WASABUS

Check!
JANGLES

Space space heater?
WASABUS

Check, check, and check!
JANGLES

Yo ho-ho, we're good to go! I'll pilot. Ye take navigation, First Mate Jangles, and bring me the horizon!
WASABUS

Aye, aye, captain!
JANGLES

(beat)

Captain, how do we know where we're going?
WASABUS

Check under your seat.
(JANGLES reaches underneath the seat of her chair and finds a folded slip of paper. She reads it and inputs something into the laptop.)

Course set for the Caq'Tanq! North of due east of due up, Gemini-relative, 5.138.008!
JANGLES

Excellent, Jangles! We're going to feed this sector our dust. Brace for the jump!
WASABUS

(WASABUS takes hold of the flight stick and presses it forward. The Old Sport lurches on in a sudden burst of speed before evening out into a steady cruise.)

Steady on for seventy bigspans, Captain.
JANGLES

Looks like we're in for an easy trip, lass.
WASABUS

Aye, Captain.
JANGLES

(There is a long pause.)

WASABUS

What be our distance now, First Mate Jangles?

JANGLES

. . . Sixty-nine bigspans, Captain.

WASABUS

Nice.

(There is another long pause.)

JANGLES

I hope I'm not prying, captain, but . . . do you know DeChaccus? Personally?

WASABUS

Yarr, don't be getting yer pelvis in pretzel over that, Jangles. I be an open book! I once took a piss on me own house, and ye can put that on me gravestone!

(beat)

As far as DeCockass be concerned, aye, we used to be acquaintances. Colleagues, if you will.

JANGLES

Peers, if one would be so inclined?

WASABUS

Aye. We knew each other back in me BYM days.

JANGLES

You were in the BYM?

WASABUS

That I was, a non-zero number of years ago. There be shame in it, but I was a landlubber once. DeCockass and I both toiled under the banner of the Procrastii Nation. He was in me bunkhouse, so we worked together on the odd occasion.

JANGLES

Fascinating. What did you do?

WASABUS

Yarr . . . I should have been out there with the rest of the pukes, but they kept me locked up in the . . .

(remembering painfully)

. . . the office. Doing . . .

(repressing nauseousness)

. . . spreadsheets! All bloody day!

(WASABUS suddenly and violently faints into the laptop, prompting a self-destruct sequence to begin. JANGLES catches and supports his limp body whilst canceling the sequence in a scramble. JANGLES then attempts to rouse WASABUS.)

JANGLES

Captain! Captain, are you al—

(WASABUS springs back into consciousness and continues as if nothing happened.)

WASABUS

It was absolute monkey's chaff, it was! I got the same training as everyone else, and I was a right banger at it too. So was DeCockass; the difference being that I could shut my clap trap about for two seconds. But I suppose he *was* an ace at almost everything they threw at him. Almost, he-he; never trust that lummoX with a stove. Sometimes I can still taste that burned water . . .

JANGLES

So, when did you become space pirates?

WASABUS

It turned out that 'ol DeCockass was a spy for Phallicrom-4 the whole time. Ye see, he was secretly a Phallicromian sympathizer. He called himself "Phallicrom-4's Kin." He hijacked a BYM freighter and has been a space pirate ever since. All the straight-laced flapjacks were shocked he was a fly in the soup, but I could believe it.

JANGLES

DeChaccus is a turncoat!

WASABUS

Aye, a betrayer of the BYM and his compatriots. That, I could not respect. But the gumption . . . yarr, the gumption had merit. I was inspired to become a space pirate in kind, but I did it the honorable way; I stole my freighter on a weekend!

JANGLES

An incredible yarn, captain! I could only dream of being so bold.

(The laptop flashes with an alert. JANGLES examines it.)

JANGLES

Captain, our obstruction sensors are detecting a wide cluster of large objects, dead-ahead!

(WASABUS takes hold of the flight stick and prepares to make evasive maneuvers.)

WASABUS

Dead ahead? Not today, we're not! Which way, First Mate Jangles?

JANGLES

It looks like an undocumented asteroid field. It's huge; we're too close to go around it safely at this speed. We have to go through!

WASABUS

Ha-ha! That's what I like to hear!

(The Old Sport enters the asteroid field, and maneuvers the best it can with its unwieldy movement. Debris can be heard striking the hull.)

WASABUS

Yarr, these pesky pumice pustules be getting to fresh for me. I'll show them not to violate me personal space. Engaging ballistics!

(WASABUS fires the Old Sport's guns, but it has no effect.)

JANGLES

We didn't penetrate their armor!

WASABUS

What? These be the finest shells our budget can muster!

JANGLES

Scans indicate that these are superhardium asteroids, captain.

WASABUS

Walk me down the plank! This stuff is a real pain, Jangles.
(realizing)

Pane . . . scampering scallywags!

JANGLES

What's the matter, captain?

WASABUS

I left the window in me quarters open! Me personal effects are in jeopardy.

JANGLES

Oh, no . . . I left my window open, too!

(WASABUS and JANGLES look at each other, then the laptop, then the general situation; they know that neither of them can leave. Suddenly, WASABUS has an idea. WASABUS procures IGNANT from his person and sets her on the desk.)

WASABUS

Ignant, do ye know how to pilot this thing?

(As IGNANT speaks, a spotlight once again illuminates her and a sophisticated classical music plays. WASABUS and JANGLES continue to fly through the asteroid field as she delivers her monologue.)

IGNANT

Good evening, Captain Archibald Jakonmee Wasabus. We must first consider if any modifications have been made to the software, firmware, or hardware of the Old Sport, which I shall henceforth refer to as “the vessel.” Based upon your philosophy of, and I quote, “If it isn’t broke, don’t fix it,” I believe it is safe to assume that this is not the case. Therefore, my knowledge of the operation of the vessel is satisfactory, thanks in no small part to the simplicity of the rudimentary systems in place. In short, the vital internal statistics of the vessel and imminent external variables are displayed by the portable personal computer that sits upon this desk. In order to manipulate the vessel within space, one must utilize the multi-directional flight stick. To control the pitch of the vessel, one must press forwards or pull backwards on the flight stick, minding that the degree of movement is proportional to the force used to do so; for roll, one must push left or right; for yaw, one must rotate the flight stick around its vertical axis.

WASABUS

Hammer to the nail, matey! Take the reins, we’ll be back in a turn of Titan.

(WASABUS and JANGLES hurry out to close their windows, leaving IGNANT on the desk at the controls. IGNANT, being a rock, simply sits in place as the sounds of devastating hull damage and warning alarms fill the bridge. After a short while, WASABUS enters.)

WASABUS

What on the third rock from the Sun is going on in here? Ignant, I told ye to take the reins!

(WASABUS listens to IGNANT who speaks to him telepathically.)

WASABUS

What do ye mean ye don't know telekinesis? . . . Still figuring it out? How do ye think ye're talking to me right now? . . . Yarr, don't be getting technical with me now . . . pathy, nesis, call it whatever ye want. Once ye do figure it out, let me know so I don't go and put ye in charge of plumbing or some such trite. And where in the 895 Helio is Jangles?

(JANGLES enters.)

WASABUS

Where were ye? I thought ye were aerodynamic.

JANGLES

(genuinely)

Oh, right. I'll remember next time, captain.

(JANGLES notices the chaos occurring around her and rushes to the laptop. WASABUS joins her. JANGLES examines the readings on the screen. WASABUS pockets IGNANT and tries in vain to steer the Old Sport.)

WASABUS

Why isn't this working, First Mate Jangles? The old girl be more stubborn than usual.

JANGLES

All core systems are in critical condition. If we continue like this, we're done for!

WASABUS

Dead men set no sails, lass, and I've still got booty to plunder. Brace yerself, I'm hitting the emergency brake!

(WASABUS gets up and taps along the walls, listening for the position of the emergency brake mechanism. Once he finds it, he slams the wall with his chair. The Old Sport comes to an immediate halt, throwing WASABUS and JANGLES to the ground. There is a short pause as they lie motionless.)

JANGLES

That wasn't good for my toe.

WASABUS

At least the brakes still be in pristine condition.

JANGLES

What now, captain?

(There is another short pause, both still lying on the floor.)

WASABUS

(to the laptop)

Computer, where be we?

(Silence)

WASABUS

Computer, I asked ye a question.

JANGLES

I don't think we opted in for voice control, captain.

WASABUS

Hmm. Unfortunate.

(There is a longer pause before WASABUS rises to his feet and shuffles over to the laptop. He consults it for their location. JANGLES speaks from the ground.)

JANGLES

Is the GPS still operational?

WASABUS

Aye. It says we be smack-dab in the center of the "Incomprehensipation Zone."

(At this, JANGLES sits up.)

JANGLES

I'm not sure I heard you right. Could you spell that, to be sure?

WASABUS

. . . Jangles are ye serious?

(JANGLES rises to her feet and joins WASABUS at the laptop.)

JANGLES

Well, captain, it's just that if you said what I think you said . . .

(JANGLES reads the information.)

JANGLES

We're saved! It seems Lady Luck has changed her mind tonight! My cousin Babangles lives in the Incomprehension Zone. They also happen to be a bus driver. I'll make a call to have them pick us up, captain.

WASABUS

Excellent, lass! Fortune always fights for the winning team.

(JANGLES calls her cousin as she makes her way out.
WASABUS follows.)

JANGLES

(on the phone)

Babangles, how are you? . . . The space pirate gig is going well, thank you for asking. Hey, I had a favor to ask . . . No, you don't need to kill anybody . . .

(JANGLES exits.)

WASABUS

Hmm. What's a bus?

(WASABUS exits.)

Scene 3 – The Galley of the Caq'Tanq

(At rise: the interior of the galley aboard the Caq'Tanq. PIRATES, whose dress evokes that of French revolutionaries, eat their meals at various tables, chatting amongst themselves and getting up to late-night shenanigans. WASABUS and JANGLES enter, distracted by their conversation. They wear matching disguises which are laughably conspicuous.)

WASABUS

. . . Anyway, to be making a big story brief, the space ogre and the mutant hedgehog wind up having a protracted and gratuitous forbidden romance.

JANGLES

Wow. That certainly took a drastic turn.

WASABUS

Aye, lass. Subversive and erotic!

(WASABUS notices the room. He takes a deep whiff, and then sniffs around a few more times.)

WASABUS

Put him in the bed with the captain's daughter! I lost the scent! All I be getting now be . . . sea water . . . space ketchup . . . and a tastelessly generous helping of pepper. Leprous Leviathan, that is far too much sodium chloride!

JANGLES

He must be close, captain! I can feel it in my . . .

(aside)

. . . brain.

(to WASABUS)

He may be in this very room, but I've never seen such a large crew before.

WASABUS

Yarr, it not be the size that matters, First Mate Jangles. It be all about the girth.

(Two PIRATES notice WASABUS and JANGLES and approach with suspicion.)

WASABUS

Take these limp-leaf milkweeds shuffling over here like two newborn fawns. NO GIRTH. NO MASS. They both step on a scale, and they be getting a negative number. Ye could take ten of these iron-deficient dandelions with a feather duster.

(Whenever the PIRATES speak, they sing-talk their lines.)

PIRATE 1

You there!

PIRATE 2

What's wrong with you?

PIRATE 1

Have you both seen a ghost or what?

JANGLES

Funny you should say that; my cousin actually just dropped us off.

WASABUS

What be of it if space pirates be on a space pirate ship? It be like peanut butter and jelly; taxes and evasion; gunpowder and birthday parties!

JANGLES

(to WASABUS)

Is that why . . .

(JANGLES decides it's best not to think about it and drops the thought.)

PIRATE 1

Space pirate you say . . .

PIRATE 2

Space pirate may be . . .

(A third PIRATE joins the group.)

PIRATE 3

But you don't look like space pirates to me!

PIRATE 1

You'll give us proof, or you'll be gone!

(The PIRATES simultaneously draw their weapons.)

PIRATE 2

If it's a battle you don't want . . .

PIRATE 3

You'll sing a shanty, full of jaunt!

(The entire crew of pirates join in.)

ALL PIRATES

Just tell us which key you'll be on!

(WASABUS and JANGLES are flabbergasted.)

JANGLES

Well, captain? Which shanty shall we sing?

WASABUS

Well, surely one of the myriad that we know. It just be so hard to choose . . . under pressure . . .

(The PIRATES begin to become restless.)

WASABUS

Alright, alright, don't be loading yer loin-linings now! I just had to think about it . . . for a moment . . . First Mate Jangles, follow me lead. In the key of . . . er . . .

JANGLES

C major.

WASABUS

That would be "C, captain" to you, First Mate Jangles. Don't get too brazen for yer bones.

(WASABUS clears his throat and prepares to sing. As he sings, it's clear that he's trying to make it up as he goes.)

WASABUS

Red . . .

JANGLES

Red . . .

WASABUS

Red . . .

JANGLES

Red . . .

WASABUS

The . . . red . . . by the Billy O' Tea, what comes after "red" . . . ?

(The PIRATES jeer.)

WASABUS

Yarr! What did I say about shitting yerselves? That's just how we pretty our pipes, don't that be right, Jangles?

JANGLES

Aye, aye!

(to the PIRATES)

So keep it in your colons!

(to WASABUS)

What now?

(WASABUS thinks, then has a devious idea.)

WASABUS

(to the PIRATES)

Now that we be warmed up proper, it be my incredulous pleasure to marinade yer ears with a shanty befitting of a couple of space pirates such as us.

(to a PIRATE)

Accordionado, give me that jaunty polka-type beat!

(A PIRATE procures an accordion and starts playing; a jaunty polka beat begins.)

WASABUS

(to the PIRATES)

Of course, we interplanetary privateers refuse to be bound by the several-foot-high walls that encircle the perimeter of the so-called public domain. That's right; we're going to space pirate our shanty!

(The PIRATES get hyped up.)

JANGLES

Captain, where are you going with this?

WASABUS

(to JANGLES)

Yarr, do ye remember the ditty from the moving picture we saw last week?

JANGLES

I remember everything.

(WASABUS and JANGLES knowingly nod at each other, and then hype the PIRATES up further before singing.)

They sing and dance to the tune of the shanty *Santianna*,
but to the tempo of the polka beat.)

<i>Oh, Desdemona thrust on home.</i>	WASABUS
<i>Away, Desdemona!</i>	JANGLES
<i>They never caught her going home.</i>	WASABUS
<i>Around the rings of Uranus!</i>	BOTH
<i>She made a stop for burgs and fries.</i>	WASABUS
<i>Gourmet, Desdemona!</i>	JANGLES
<i>The cooks could not believe their eyes.</i>	WASABUS
<i>Around the rings of Uranus!</i>	BOTH
<i>Some savvy spies were on her tail.</i>	WASABUS
<i>Oy vey, Desdemona!</i>	JANGLES
<i>But money talked and then they bailed.</i>	WASABUS
<i>Around the rings of Uranus!</i>	BOTH
<i>When she got home she claimed her gold.</i>	WASABUS
<i>Get paid, Desdemona!</i>	JANGLES

WASABUS

And to this day her feats are told.

BOTH

Around the rings of Uranus!

(WASABUS and JANGLES finish their number to the applause of the PIRATES.)

WASABUS

Thank ye, thank ye! They love us, Jangles; they really love us!

JANGLES

They said a skeleton would never be able to sing, but look at me now!

(As WASABUS, JANGLES, and the PIRATES celebrate, a skeptical PIRATE steps forward and speaks over the clamor.)

PIRATE 4

*At the end of the day you have proven but nothing/
For the song you have sung? It is royalty free!*

PIRATE 1

You know, he has a point.

PIRATE 2

Even if that wasn't the case . . .

PIRATE 3

A pirate you would not be, you've egg on your face!

PIRATE 4

. . . Because that's copyright infringement!

JANGLES

Oh, okay, so we suddenly love the law now?

WASABUS

Yarr, I bet ye be looking both ways at the crosswalk, ye prissy twinkle-toed civilians!
And I'll have ye be knowing that copyright infringement is badass!

PIRATE 4

*We should have known you two were frauds/
We should have known these chumps were fakes/
And here's another little issue . . .*

*Your lyrics sung were new to me/
 And that is grounds for parody/
 So you'd be well within your rights/
 To sing that song for us tonight/
 So if to pirate was your aim/
 That is your third strike of the game!*

PIRATE 3

And not to mention that we are sailing through space!

PIRATE 2

The international water laws are in place!

PIRATE 1

Time to fill you with holes!

ALL PIRATES

Fill you up with holes!

(The PIRATES train their weapons on WASABUS and JANGLES.)

WASABUS

The singing be good though, wouldn't ye say?

(The PIRATES murmur in agreement. While they are distracted, WASABUS and JANGLES make for cover and the PIRATES begin to fire. WASABUS is able to make it, but JANGLES slips and falls. It seems that she is a goner, but she stands up, amazed to discover that the shots are whizzing through her skeletal body.)

JANGLES

Look, captain! I'm invincible!

(JANGLES is entertained by this notion and does a little jig. However, she fails to notice the PIRATE with a massive war hammer closing in on her.)

WASABUS

First Mate Jangles! Point yer peepers portside!

(JANGLES sees the PIRATE and ducks, but gets clobbered anyway. The PIRATE skulks into the shuffle. JANGLES scuttles behind cover with WASABUS and they both start

firing back. They're pinned down and the situation seems dire.)

WASABUS

Are ye sunny side up, lass?

JANGLES

I'm not sure.

(JANGLES taps her ribs, which make the sound of an out-of-tune xylophone.)

JANGLES

A bit out of tune, but it'll heal.

WASABUS

They're nailing us down like a hammer nailing in a nail! We might not be able to shoot our way out of this one . . .

JANGLES

Maybe you can schmooze them, captain!

WASABUS

Aye, "the schmooze is mightier than the schammer." Spoken with your wisdom teeth, Jangles!

(WASABUS stands up from behind cover.)

WASABUS

Hey, everyone! Time out! I'm calling a time ou—

(A shot nearly hits WASABUS which prompts him to duck back down.)

WASABUS

Roll me like Northumbria, they be so blinded by rage that me silver tongue has been nulled and voided! There must be some other way to get them to stop shooting at us . . .

(WASABUS turns to look at JANGLES. They lock eyes.)

JANGLES

(somewhat flustered)

Doki doki . . . Kyaputen . . . anata mo sore o kanjimasu ka . . . ?*

WASABUS

I don't be knowing what kind of necromantic incantation ye be speaking, lass, but I be needing ye to hold still. I think better when I be staring into the abyss.

JANGLES

Yes, captain!

(JANGLES enters a state of self-induced rigor mortis.)

WASABUS

(aside)

Aha! That be it!

(to JANGLES)

First Mate Jangles, how do ye feel about some overtime?

(JANGLES responds with mumbles, unable to move. WASABUS pokes at an imaginary keypad on her forehead and then cranks her arm like a slot machine. This sequence unfreezes JANGLES.)

JANGLES

I could always use the overtime, captain!

WASABUS

Outstanding! First Mate Jangles; Jolly Roger Duty!

JANGLES

Aye, aye, captain!

(JANGLES stands up and holds her cape behind her head, giving her a vague resemblance to the Jolly Roger. The PIRATES gasp and stop shooting. WASABUS stands behind JANGLES.)

WASABUS

Yarr, I see ye drips are space pirate enough to respect the Space Pirate Code. Ye wouldn't want to shoot the Jolly Roger and commit a *faux pas*, now would ye?

(WASABUS and JANGLES begin to slowly cross the room.)

WASABUS

Ye'll be excusing us now.

(PIRATE 4 approaches JANGLES.)

PIRATE 4

Something's fishy about this flag . . .

(In a flash, WASABUS takes off his disguise and places it on PIRATE 4.)

WASABUS

Who's this guy?

(Instantly the other PIRATES dogpile on PIRATE 4. PIRATE 1 takes notice of WASABUS.)

PIRATE 1

*You're Captain Wasabus, here in the flesh/
Everyone! Let's put this struggle to rest.*

ALL PIRATES

*Honor us/
with one/
more song!*

WASABUS

Yo ho-ho! Gladly, mates! Jangles, yer off the clock. Accordionado, take it away!

(The polka beat returns. JANGLES throws off her disguise and joins WASABUS and the PIRATES in singing and dancing, once again to the tune of *Santianna*.)

WASABUS

The Desdemona flew once more.

JANGLES and PIRATES

Away, Desdemona!

WASABUS

But this time had new plans in store.

ALL

Around the rings of Uranus!

WASABUS

She landed on Puck's rocky face.

JANGLES and PIRATES

Belay, Desdemona!

WASABUS

And this would be the perfect place.

ALL

Around the rings of Uranus!

WASABUS

She set up shop with crew and all.

JANGLES and PIRATES

Hooray, Desdemona!

WASABUS

With her venture she did not stall.

ALL

Around the rings of Uranus.

WASABUS

So to this day on Bogle Point . . .

JANGLES and PIRATES

Today, Desdemona.

WASABUS

You can enjoy her burger joint.

ALL

Around the rings of Uranus!

(At the end of the song, everyone shares a moment of joyous camaraderie. DECHACCUS enters.)

DECHACCUS

What is going on in here?!

(The room falls silent.)

DECHACCUS

Wasabus. What an unwelcome surprise. I don't recall seeing your ship appear on my radar. Unless that space bus *wasn't* here to deliver tea and rum . . . ? He-he. Ha ha ha! Ship trouble, hm? You know, I didn't think you could get more pathetic, what with your skeleton crew. But now you've come to face me without even a vessel to your name. If nothing else, your brazenness is worthy of applause.

(The PIRATES applaud. DECHACCUS shoots PIRATE 2, who falls dead. The room is silent once again.)

DECHACCUS

Do you have a death wish, Wasabus? Or was there something you hoped to gain by meeting me here?

WASABUS

Ye be a smart cookie, DeCockass. Won't ye wager a guess?

(beat)

Come on, me booty!

JANGLES

(outburst)

Ha! Come! I get it now!

(DECHACCUS shoots JANGLES, but the shot flies through her.)

WASABUS

I want me key back, and I be prepared to duel ye for it.

DECHACCUS

So you would propose a Captains' Duel? You and I? Hmph. Preposterous. You haven't earned the right.

JANGLES

Okay, number five.

DECHACCUS

ScurvyOrange.com is not and has never been credible! They are know-nothings; armchair pirates who have never set foot on a space galleon. In fact, if you love them so much, I think you two would fit right in.

(beat)

I'm giving you one last chance to walk away, call your bus driver, and take your little field trip somewhere else. This is no place for children.

WASABUS

Ye'd like that, wouldn't ye? Ye'd love to see us walk away with our tails between our legs. "Owo, Captain DeCockass is so scawy! Wet's go home and cw y about it!" Let's get this straight. I respect ye, DeCockass; you're good.

(antagonizing)

But I'm better.

DECHACCUS

Then prove it.

(calling offstage)

Snailio!

(BUFF SNAILIO enters. He has been mutated into a human man with an incredible physique. He showers himself in pepper then strikes several poses, flaunting his new body with the goal of intimidation. WASABUS and JANGLES watch on in horror.)

WASABUS

Shiver me timbers!

JANGLES

Abomination! Abomination!

DECHACCUS

Behold, my precious son. Defeat him, Wasabus, and you shall get your chance at me. I should think it simple for a hardened space pirate like you to put away a simple creature such as this. But I am beholden to formalities.

(to BUFF SNAILIO)

Snailio! Your challenger awaits.

(BUFF SNAILIO turns to face WASABUS and takes a few steps towards him. This prompts WASABUS to cower and become paralyzed with fear. JANGLES goes to him.)

JANGLES

Captain! Are you alright?

WASABUS

Me greatest nightmare . . . I . . . can't . . .

DECHACCUS

(mocking)

What's that? You can't? You can't what?

(JANGLES turns to DECHACCUS and draws her cutlass.)

JANGLES

He can't believe that you would be such a coward, you . . . toothless, craven, weak-kneed codpiece!

(to BUFF SNAILIO)

And as for you: you won't lay a viscous finger on my captain, by my honor as first mate of the Old Sport! You got away once, but this time, you die. Have at you!

(JANGLES engages in battle with BUFF SNAILIO. She puts up a good fight, but is ultimately defeated. She falls at the feet of WASABUS, unconscious. At this, WASABUS's concern overrides his fear and he stoops to check on her.)

WASABUS

Jangles? Jangles! I be needing ye to tell that Sandman to shove off!

DECHACCUS

Snailio!

(with bloodlust)

Kill.

(BUFF SNAILIO closes in for a killing blow on WASABUS, but moments before impact BUFF SNAILIO freezes as if held by some unseen force. WASABUS feels an object vibrating on his person, and procures IGNANT to discover that she is the culprit. Sophisticated classical music begins to play as a spotlight tracks ASTRAL FORM IGNANT, who enters with her hand extended towards BUFF SNAILIO.)

AS. IGNANT

Good evening, Captain Archibald Jakonmee Wasabus, and others. It is with pleasure – albeit with regrettable tardiness – that I come before you tonight to report that over the span of the multiple hours spent in transit on the space bus, I was able to devise a method by which I could harness the capabilities of telekinesis that lay latent within myself. In other words, Captain: I figured it out.

(With an effortless gesture, ASTRAL FORM IGNANT flings BUFF SNAILIO across the room. He is freed for only a moment before being ensnared once again.)

AS. IGNANT

In addition, it would seem that the phenomenon of astral projection is tangentially, if not peripherally, related to the processes that enable telekinesis to manifest. To speak with utmost candor, I do surely recognize that in the scenario that is transpiring at this current moment, the employment of the aforementioned astral projection is wholly unnecessary. However, in my assessment, I was of the mind that it may serve as a potent intimidation factor. And, on a personal level, with proper respect, it is quite pleasurable to stand on my own legs for a spell.

(BUFF SNAILIO is pulled closer.)

AS. IGNANT

Now, on the subject of the primary threat at hand, my analysis would suggest that no human or human-adjacent species could hope best this specimen physically; its mutations have increased its strength and durability to incomparable levels. That said, its heart has not sufficiently kept pace, and is frightfully weak. Given at most 72 hours' time, one would expect it to expire from cardiac failure. Therefore, I have determined the most efficient course of action.

(ASTRAL FORM IGNANT causes BUFF SNAILIO's heart to burst inside his chest, then tosses his dead body aside. ASTRAL FORM IGNANT lifts JANGLES into her arms.)

AS. IGNANT

Before my mental energy is exhausted, I shall take First Mate Jangles to an infirmary and have her injuries assessed. I wish you every success on the remainder of your bizarre adventure, Captain.

(to a PIRATE)

Which way?

(The PIRATE dutifully leads ASTRAL FORM IGNANT offstage. There is a short pause.)

DECHACCUS

What the hell was that?

WASABUS

(reinvigorated)

Ye can call her magma, because she be one hot rock! Wow!

DECHACCUS

My Snailio . . .

WASABUS

Yarr, he looked mighty tough. To think he'd be undone by a rock. Really puts the 'raw' in 'ironic.'

DECHACCUS

That's enough.

(DECHACCUS dramatically removes his coat and steps forward to battle, saber drawn.)

DECHACCUS

I accept your challenge, and declare this Captains' Duel official.

(DECHACCUS hands his gun over to a PIRATE. With his firearm secure, the PIRATES are once again free to get hyped up for the duel. WASABUS draws his sword.)

WASABUS

Good luck, have fun!

DECHACCUS

Perish!

(WASABUS and DECHACCUS duel. Unlike DECHACCUS, WASABUS does not aim for lethal damage. Instead, he opts to humiliate DECHACCUS with slapstick attacks and tomfoolery. The battle ends when WASABUS throws his gun at DECHACCUS; he catches it, and in a desperate ploy to win points it at WASABUS and pulls the trigger. However, it clicks ineffectually. The room becomes still; he has broken the Space Pirate Code.)

WASABUS

Uh oh, party foul! Or, as they say in yer language: *faux pas!*

(DECHACCUS collapses in defeat. WASABUS approaches him.)

WASABUS

(darkly)

Ye've broken the Space Pirate Code, DeCockass. Ye know what that means, don't ye?

DECHACCUS

Do me a favor and kill me already.

(WASABUS raises his sword in the air as if to bring it down upon DECHACCUS, but he instead pretends to knight him.)

WASABUS

I be dubbing thee: Sir Cockass! Yo ho-ho! Now, hand over me booty, squire.

DECHACCUS

You'll have to pilfer it from my corpse.

WASABUS

What's the sum total of times I've told ye? I not be here to kill ye. I just want me booty!

DECHACCUS

But I lie defeated at your feet. I am at your mercy! My life is forfeit to you; it is your right, no, your *duty* to take it!

WASABUS

Woah, now. Grasp yer gallopers there, weirdo. I not be into all of that domination stuff.

(DECHACCUS stands up.)

DECHACCUS

You spit in the face of the Space Pirate Code!

WASABUS

Aye! But I be supposing that only makes us square.

(DECHACCUS, realizing the truth of this, slumps back down to the ground. JANGLES enters, rejuvenated. Her entrance is accompanied by a canned “audience cheering” sound effect.)

JANGLES

I got here instantly, Captain. I hope I didn’t miss anyth—
(seeing DECHACCUS)

Aw, nuts!

(There is a canned “audience laughing” sound effect.)

WASABUS

First Mate Jangles! I be so glad yer up and away! Did Ignant work her mumbo jumbo magic on ye?

JANGLES

I just needed some ice. But she told me everything; looks like the duel went well.

WASABUS

Yarr, only thing left now is to get me booty.

JANGLES

(to DECHACCUS)

You’re lucky to be alive to cough it up, bozo.

DECHACCUS

“Lucky?” That’s not the word I’d use.

(DECHACCUS stands up once again. He notices that the PIRATES are still there.)

DECHACCUS
(to the PIRATES)

What the hell are you all still looking at?

(The PIRATES hurry offstage.)

DECHACCUS
You've beaten me . . . Captain Wasabus. If you should force me to live with this truth, then I shall accept it. So, if it's your treasure you—

WASABUS
Booty.

DECHACCUS
. . . If it's your booty you want, then I will deny you no longer.

(DECHACCUS hands over the key.)

DECHACCUS
Here.

WASABUS
Thank ye . . . Captain DeChaccus.

(beat)

Ye know, ye make a remarkably alright space pirate. Ye've got brains in yer head. Ye've got heart, somewhere in that dead man's chest of yers.

(WASABUS presses his finger to DECHACCUS' heart. When he looks down at it, WASABUS flicks him in the nose and playfully slaps his face.)

WASABUS
But ye could at least look like yer happy to be here, ye one-eyed monster!
(to JANGLES)
Come on, Jangles! I left me oven on.

(WASABUS and JANGLES begin to exit.)

DECHACCUS
Wait! Captain Wasabus, there is something I must know!

WASABUS
Yarr? And what that be?

DECHACCUS

What does . . . BYM stand for?

(WASABUS and JANGLES share a devious look as the PIRATES, ASTRAL FORM IGNANT, and BUFF SNAILO all reenter, apparently alive and well. They all take positions as a chorus.)

WASABUS

Hmm . . . I don't know . . .

(ALL but DECHACCUS sing in unison.)

ALL

But your mother might!

JANGLES

(to the audience, gangster style)

Call your mom!

(ALL, including DECHACCUS, strike a pose on the beat of a final accordion note for a freeze-frame ending. Blackout.)

End of Play