



Sample Pages from Nerd Herd

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NERD HERD

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Christian Kiley



Nerd Herd

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Characters

4W + 3M + 1 Either (Extras as needed)

VOICE: The voice of the hit show Gallactica.

GALLACTICA: The star of the hit show. Played by Susan Simon. Her character has saved the earth many, many times.

HERMAN: The world's biggest fan of Gallactica, who also is in love with her.

LOUIS: Herman's best friend, the statistician of the football team, who is in love with Francene.

FRANCENE: A writer, comic book collector, and adventurer who is in love with Herman.

CAPTAIN: Captain of the football team. Has written Gallactica a letter to pledge his love to her.

JEN: Gallactica's personal assistant who wants to be Gallactica.

SALLY: A big fan of Gallactica who dresses just like her.

Settings

Herman's house

Francene's house

Comic Book Palooza

Present Day

Production Notes

The set for the play can be very simple or fairly elaborate. In the case of both Herman's and Francene's houses, chairs, bean bags, or a small sofa can create the area where they hang out and watch the show. You could also use rehearsal cubes if your concept is more minimalistic. It is easiest to use the fourth wall as the television (rather than having a set piece). In our production, we elected to reconfigure the few set pieces (chairs, bean bags, table) to differentiate Herman's living room (Scene 1) from Francene's living room (Scene 2).

Since comic book conventions have become enormous gatherings, far from the hundred or so collectors that attended the first ones in the 1960s, it might be best to simply have Gallactica's signing area on stage with the other action taking place around it (this helps with the flow by having minimal set changes). A table and a couple of chairs might work with some signs and posters to establish the environment.

Here is a look at the location of each scene:

1. Herman's house (living room): bean bags, chairs, table (or rehearsal cubes if you prefer).
2. Francene's house (living room): reconfiguring the set pieces from Scene 1.

3. Comic Book Palooza (main area): empty stage (can have signing areas, etc.).
4. Gallactica's signing area: a table and chairs for her signing area.
5. Gallactica's signing area: same as Scene 4.
6. Gallactica's signing area: same as Scenes 4 and 5.
7. Comic Book Palooza (main area): similar to Scene 3.
8. Comic Book Palooza (main area): similar to Scenes 3 and 7.

You may elect to keep Gallactica's signing area on stage for Scene 3 through Scene 8 and use curtains and/or lighting to separate the areas.

Gallactica's costume should be noticeably better in quality than Sally's (which she clearly made at home with great passion but questionable skill). Because there are multiple versions of the costume, you can certainly decide the level of quality of each (though Jen mentions on more than one occasion that she brings extra Gallactica costumes, so Jen and Francene might be dressed exactly like Gallactica).

If you wish to establish the vibe, feel, and popularity of Comic Book Palooza you might elect to have extras walking around in between scenes, etc. See the notes prior to each scene for suggestions in regards to extras. If you have rotating casts, it might be a good idea to have the actors play extras the nights they are not portraying one of the speaking roles.

Original Production

Nerd Herd was produced by the Etiwanda High School (Etiwanda, CA) Theatre Department and premiered on March 7, 2018. The playwright would like to thank the director and cast for their dedication, talent, and contributions throughout the rehearsal process.

Voice: Matthew Scott Fitzgerald

Gallactica: Athena Wuertemburg

Herman: Esteban Larrondo

Louis: Ricardo Murillo

Francene: Kylie Currie

Captain: Enifeoluwa Oluwadara

Jen: Dakota Coole

Sally: Samantha Gutierrez

Director: DJ Ortiz

Assistant Director: Aaron Smith

Assistant Director: Matthew Scott Fitzgerald

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Prologue – Gallactica!

In the darkness we hear VOICE. A light slowly rises on HERMAN, who joins VOICE in speaking.

VOICE and HERMAN: How can one person out of billions on our tiny muddy planet that orbits our Sun, which is one of billions of stars in our Galaxy, which is only one of the billions of galaxies in our Universe, have any hope of surviving in the vast, expansive darkness and uncertainty? Born from the powerful love of two distant stars that defied math and collided at such speed, with such volatility, and with the hand of destiny as their navigator, that the result could only be the most amazing creation... Gallactica!

A light appears on GALLACTICA, who poses like the superhero she is. The music swells and the lights become brighter. Perhaps there is even a fan that creates a dynamic fluttering effect for GALLACTICA's cape. Blackout.

Scene I – Fandom

Lights up on HERMAN's house. A living room or recreational area where the friends gather to watch their favorite show. HERMAN and LOUIS reacting to the Gallactica show introduction.

HERMAN: Wow, is all I can say. Wow.

LOUIS: I know, right?

HERMAN: I am in love.

LOUIS: Not again.

HERMAN: No, not again. I have always felt this way, therefore, continuously.

LOUIS: You are sick.

HERMAN: Lovesick, yes. And the only cure is to meet her.

LOUIS: It's a character, right? There is an actress, Susan Simon, who plays Gallactica. She's not real. You know that? Right?

HERMAN: Let me preface this by telling you that my answer is as powerful as the "love of the two distant stars" that created Gallactica.

LOUIS: If belief were enough to make things real, we wouldn't need movies, video games, or even daydreams.

HERMAN: You sound like a grown-up.

LOUIS: The stats don't lie. And I would know, as the lord of my statistical serfdom I see the reality of the game. And the numbers don't lie.

HERMAN: You feel like your job as statistician for the football team qualifies you to give love advice?

LOUIS: It allows me to see the truth.

HERMAN: Okay, Truthteller. How long have you been trying to befriend Captain Craig Conrad?

LOUIS: It's a gradual process. Are you afraid he will become my first-string best friend, moving you to the bench?

HERMAN: I'm pretty confident in my role as your starting BFF.

LOUIS: Well, BFF, what would you do if you met Gallactica?

HERMAN: That's a great question. And one that requires extensive thought. Remember that episode where Gallactica flies around earth counterclockwise with such speed that she turns back time and allows FDR to stop World War II from happening?

LOUIS: Yes.

HERMAN: Remember, what she says at the end of the episode? With the music swelling in the background.

HERMAN and LOUIS: (*quoting Gallactica*) "Turning back time is only an amazing accomplishment, if you learn from your mistakes. It takes a true hero to do that."

LOUIS: What does that have to do with your infatuation with a fictional character who you actually think is real?

HERMAN: I'm not sure, I just like that episode.

LOUIS: You like all the episodes, you have them memorized, all the parts, probably even the commercials.

HERMAN: Thank you. That's the nicest thing you've ever said to me.

LOUIS: You need help, like serious help.

HERMAN: I'm hoping that my desperate circumstances will bring Gallactica to the rescue.

FRANCENE enters with an armful of comic books which she spills all over the floor with her less than graceful entrance.

FRANCENE: Comic book motherlode! I was riding my bike over here, which is no surprise, since that's how I get almost everywhere, and I passed the creepy old guy's house, you know the one. That one. And he was having a, get this, yard sale. What's next a: bake sale, lemonade stand, petting zoo. I know, if there was a chicken or rabbit in that guy's yard before today, I would have grabbed it and helped it escape, because anything on that property was likely in mortal peril. And then the craziest thing happened. He smiled at me. And I crashed my bike into a tree. I said "sorry Clark Kent," that's my bike's new name. I thought we were goners. I've heard some bikes get confiscated by this cranky old man, who was born before the invention of the wheel, and he turns them into torture devices for trick-or-treaters and fundraiser kids whose only mistake is being overly ambitious in trying to raise enough money to get their school a fancy water-bottle-filling-station. But was I ever wrong about him. Turns out he has had a sad, sad life and that he is selling everything, including the house, and moving into an old person's resort, like geriatric summer camp, but year-round.

LOUIS: Thankfully, you survived.

FRANCENE: Clearly. Hi, Herman.

HERMAN: Hey, Francene.

LOUIS: What did you get? And, hi Francene.

FRANCENE: Louis, I got the most amazing haul of comics ever acquired from a garage sale.

LOUIS: Do tell.

FRANCENE: Adventure Comics number two forty-seven.
Introducing...

ALL: The Legion of Super-Heroes!

FRANCENE: Worth, you might want to hold on to something sturdy for this, up to seventeen thousand dollars!

HERMAN: Did you have to give him a finger as collateral?

FRANCENE: My left pinky finger.

LOUIS: It cost you your soul?

FRANCENE: What's left of it.

HERMAN: You had to pledge your everlasting allegiance to him?

FRANCENE: Only for eternity.

LOUIS: You are going to be the getaway driver for a series of bank robberies?

FRANCENE: In games of Monopoly.

HERMAN: There is a curse.

LOUIS: A hex.

HERMAN: A blood oath.

FRANCENE: I simply said thank you and was on my way.

LOUIS: Wait. You ripped off an old man, Francene?

FRANCENE: When you say it that way it sounds terrible.

LOUIS: It is terrible. You said it yourself, he has a sad life. And you took advantage of him.

FRANCENE: Hey, I told him that it was worth a lot of money. I specifically used the word mint. And he said, "money doesn't have value to me anymore."

LOUIS: You're better than that, Francene.

HERMAN: Can you guys let it go? We have bigger issues to discuss.

FRANCENE: Thank you for having my back, Herman. It means a lot.

LOUIS: Yeah, pal. Thanks for having my back.

FRANCENE: Getting back to bigger issues, I was thinking we could watch the next Gallactica episode at my house. My mom just got a seventy-two-inch screen at her place to one-up my dad's sixty-eight-inch screen at his place.

LOUIS: I can bring my famous bite-sized pizzas.

HERMAN: Gallactica would be life-size. Or nearly.

LOUIS: And I'll bake a batch of pretzels without salt, Francene.

HERMAN: Gallactica in all her glory.

FRANCENE: Maybe come over an hour before and we can re-watch the last episode together, you know to get prepped for this one.

HERMAN: The season finale!

LOUIS: Should I bring a veggie tray?

FRANCENE: We could go for a walk afterwards and look up at the sky and talk about all the possibilities for-

HERMAN: Future episodes! You bet.

LOUIS: Who am I kidding, everyone just eats the ranch dip and not the veggies.

FRANCENE: (*picking up the comics*) See you tomorrow night then.

HERMAN: I wonder if Gallactica will finally face off with Thundertron? Now that would be a season finale.

LOUIS: I know what it's like to be the veggies. Neglected, wilted, untouched.

FRANCENE: I'm excited, Herman.

HERMAN: Me too, Gallactica. I mean, Francene.

LOUIS: Limp carrots and cauliflower, over here, is excited too.

ALL: (*LOUIS a little less enthusiastically*) "The result could only be the most amazing creation... Gallactica!"

Blackout.

Scene 2 – After the Season Finale

FRANCENE's house. The lights come up on the aftermath of the Gallactica season finale. Snack wrappers, bags, and cups are strewn about and HERMAN, FRANCENE, and LOUIS look exhausted, slouched in various positions that indicate their exhaustion. Furniture can be reconfigured and/or changed to indicate the change of location.

HERMAN: What was that?

FRANCENE: I'm not sure yet. My brain is still catching up.

LOUIS: I love you.

HERMAN: Pinch me. I want to make sure I'm awake.

FRANCENE: I don't know what to think.

LOUIS: Francene.

HERMAN: It's like everything I thought I knew about the world was wrong.

FRANCENE: Did Gallactica say that she would have to destroy the earth?

LOUIS: I love you.

HERMAN: "To save humanity, I have to destroy the earth, so that people can start over again somewhere new."

FRANCENE: Destroy the earth?

LOUIS: Francene, I love you.

HERMAN: Gallactica said, "only twelve people would survive."

FRANCENE: Twelve.

HERMAN: Out of billions.

FRANCENE: Twelve.

LOUIS: Francene, the unexpected turn of events in this episode prompted me to tell you that I love you!

HERMAN: She won't do it.

FRANCENE: No, it's a trick.

HERMAN: Yeah, a ploy.

FRANCENE: Right, a twist.

HERMAN: The old "pretend to destroy the earth but really save it" move.

LOUIS: Could you both shut up please!

HERMAN and FRANCENE both look at LOUIS.

HERMAN and FRANCENE: What Louis?

LOUIS: I know you are my best friend, Herm but you can't see what is right in front of you. You have a four-point-eight GPA and you can't see what is so clearly and completely right in front of you. Right here. Well, I'm sick of it. This season finale reminded me that life is too short to wait for something to happen. I have to make it happen.

HERMAN: You're right, buddy. You're so right. I think we should seize the moment and go to Comic Book Palooza next weekend. Gallactica will be there. This is my chance.

FRANCENE: That sounds great!

LOUIS: Not exactly.

HERMAN: A quest. Just like *The Hobbit*.

LOUIS: Except we're taller than hobbits and dwarves and there's no ring.

FRANCENE: What will you do, you know, if you meet her?

HERMAN: Gallactica? If I meet Gallactica? I'm not sure. She's probably heard proclamations of love so many times that they don't even impact her anymore.

LOUIS: I wonder what that must be like.

HERMAN: I will have to write something so compelling, so moving and powerful, that she will have to listen. I can do it. I know I can.

FRANCENE: Of course, you can. I believe in you.

LOUIS: Me too.

FRANCENE: I could help you, you know, to write it. I'm a pretty good writer.

LOUIS: You're a great writer. I remember your story about the glow worm who couldn't glow.

FRANCENE: That was second grade.

LOUIS: Yeah, but my point is-

HERMAN: This is something I've got to do myself. I mean, I want you guys to be a part of it of course. This will be the best quest three friends have ever undertaken together.

FRANCENE: The best.

LOUIS: Yeah, the best.

Blackout.

Scene 3 – Comic Book Palooza!

Comic Book Palooza. This is an area of the convention where fans can congregate and make their game plan for the day (who to see, what to do). When the lights come up, fans can be milling about, excitedly pointing at things, looking at maps, etc. “CAPTAIN” CRAIG CONRAD is pacing around nervously in his football jersey as the trio of friends, HERMAN, FRANCENE, and LOUIS enter.

HERMAN: I can't believe I'm standing right in the middle of sold out Comic Book Palooza!

FRANCENE: We, right? We are standing here.

HERMAN: Like the opening sequence of my dream.

LOUIS: Did you see that guy from *The Walking Dead* over there?

FRANCENE: Where's Gallactica? I mean that's who we came to see.

LOUIS: Look at the line for William Shatner. I heard he takes garbage bags of cash home from these things.

FRANCENE: Isn't that guy over there from school?

LOUIS: That's Captain Craig Conrad!

HERMAN: At Comic Book Palooza? It can't be.

LOUIS: Should we, you know, roll up on him, and drop some salutations?

FRANCENE: Why are you talking like that?

LOUIS: He's very intimidating. Last game, against Central, he threw for three-hundred and twelve yards and two touchdowns and rushed for one-hundred and nine yards and one touchdown. He is being recruited by virtually every division one school on earth.

HERMAN: Easy, stat master.

LOUIS: I know, I can't help it. I love numbers. They speak to me.

FRANCENE: Go on, Louis, say hi to him.

LOUIS: Really? I don't know. He runs a four-four forty. Four-four.

HERMAN: We'll go with you. I mean, if he wanted to be undercover, he wouldn't have worn his jersey, right?

LOUIS: Good point. (LOUIS crosses to CAPTAIN followed by HERMAN and FRANCENE) Captain! Great game last night. That rushing touchdown in the second half was a thing of beauty. I mean, you cut, doubled back, hurdled a lineman, zigzagged, spun into a double pirouette, and then took it to the house. The house! That's the end zone. But you know that. I mean you spend enough time there. Am I right, Cap?

CAPTAIN: I'm sorry, who are you?

HERMAN: Yikes. I think my best friend status is safe. He doesn't even know your name.

LOUIS: Louis. I'm the scorekeeper for the team, the football team, the football team that you're the captain of, and that you're going to lead to a state championship.

CAPTAIN: I've never seen you.

LOUIS: I have a pretty severe grass allergy. I stay up in the booth. It's the best seat in the house.

CAPTAIN: Nice to meet you, Larry.

LOUIS: Louis. Close, though. You got the L.

HERMAN: I think the bigger question lingering in the rarified air of a comic book convention, Cap, is what you, the most popular boy in school, are doing here.

CAPTAIN: My little brother loves this stuff. I better go find him.

LOUIS: You're an only child. Sorry, stat slip. But the stats don't lie.

CAPTAIN: Look, you got me. I'm here to meet Gallactica. And you could ruin me if you wanted to. You could destroy my reputation, which I have been building like an ice sculpture in the desert since I was old enough to throw a spiral.

FRANCENE: An ice sculpture in the desert is... never mind.

HERMAN: Gallactica, really? I don't think she'll like you. You're not her type.

CAPTAIN: I'm in love with her.

HERMAN: In love with Gallactica?

CAPTAIN: I wrote her a poem extrapolating on my deepest feelings.

FRANCENE: Maybe I should proofread it before you give it to her?

CAPTAIN: No, I want her to see me for who I really am.

HERMAN: Yikes. Not a great idea.

CAPTAIN: I've been saving my allowance and doing extra chores since the very first episode. I bought the platinum package.

LOUIS: That's the kind of sacrifice it takes to be a champion.

HERMAN: Wait, you need a special package to talk to Gallactica?

CAPTAIN: Yeah, the platinum package. It includes one signed item, must be flat, like a picture, one selfie with her, and thirty seconds to talk with her. That's when I'm going to give her the letter. I figure tons of creeps are going to try to tell her they love her in person. But I thought, the letter, that will be different.

LOUIS: And the jersey, Captain, stroke of genius. The superhero and the super athlete. It's perfect.

HERMAN: It's perfectly ridiculous.

CAPTAIN: What did you say?

HERMAN: What could you possibly say or write that would make Gallactica fall in love with you. You're as dense as the asteroid that she smashed into a million pieces when she saved the earth for the twenty-fourth time in season five, episode eight.

CAPTAIN: And like that asteroid, Gallactica will touch me.

HERMAN: With her fist. Smashing you into a million pieces.

CAPTAIN: That's what I feel happens to my heart every time I see her. She destroys me with her smile and her biceps. If even one piece of me, a tiny piece, is near her, then I am with her.

LOUIS: Very romantic, Captain.

HERMAN: You have everything, why do you need Gallactica?

CAPTAIN: Without her, I have nothing. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to fulfill my destiny.

CAPTAIN exits.

FRANCENE: You have to admit, he's committed.

LOUIS: Without a doubt.

HERMAN: Committed, like a resident in an asylum.

LOUIS: I just can't believe he was here and he talked to us, to me.

HERMAN: Yeah, he's your new BFF.

LOUIS: Not yet, but maybe he will give me a cool nickname. King Louis! Captain and King Louis, best friends forever.

HERMAN: I'm going to the snack bar. Drowning my sorrows in cherry slush and imitation cheese is the only way out of this despair. I can't believe I won't get to meet her.

FRANCENE: Herman, what is a quest without some adversity? You're not going to give up. Your dream is close enough to see, to touch even, and we are not giving up until we get you there. Now say it with me: "born from the powerful..."

ALL (*LOUIS less enthusiastically*): "... love of two distant stars that defied math and collided at such speed, with such volatility, and with the hand of destiny as their navigator, that the result could only be the most amazing creation... Gallactica!"

FRANCENE: Now you guys go get a snack and I'm going to take care of some business.

HERMAN: I can't believe I got this close to her and won't be able to meet her.

FRANCENE: I believe in you. I will get you in to see Gallactica. Do you believe in me?

HERMAN: Who am I kidding? She's out of my league.

HERMAN exits. FRANCENE takes out Adventure Comics number two forty-seven from her backpack.

LOUIS: You're not going to sell that are you? For him?

FRANCENE: I'm considering it.

LOUIS: Why are you doing this?

FRANCENE: I care about him.

LOUIS: And I care about you. And watching him disregard your feelings makes me sick. Do you even like this stupid show?

FRANCENE: I do like it. I could make it better, you know, the writing. I often rewrite it as I watch it.

LOUIS: You can rewrite the show but you can't rewrite Herman. He is who he is. You can't change him.

FRANCENE: I can try. I have to believe amazing things are possible.

LOUIS: I'll get you a cherry slush and a pretzel.

FRANCENE and LOUIS: Hold the salt.

LOUIS exits. FRANCENE looks out.

FRANCENE: Sometimes superheroes get their powers by some freak accident. I want to earn mine. Gallactica, I hope you're ready for me.

Scene 4 – Comic Book Palooza!

Gallactica's signing area. A table and chairs can be placed upstage. Fans can be milling about while JEN and GALLACTICA are surveying the scene.

GALLACTICA: Remember when we first started out? No one knew who Gallactica was. The lines were short. We were an obscure little fringe show.

JEN: Now look at you. World famous.

GALLACTICA: I'm not sure that's a good thing.

JEN: Look at that line. Do you know how many people dream their entire lives of this? Of being this popular.

GALLACTICA: I guess. It used to be magical. And now it's not. Like that moment when you see behind the colorful lights and scenery at your favorite amusement park and realize it's two-dimensional flats and painted lies.

JEN: Look out there at those faces, filled with anticipation, eager to meet their hero.

GALLACTICA: If they only knew the truth.

JEN: People don't pay for the truth, they get it in large supply every day for free.

GALLACTICA: Maybe it's time for me to move on.

JEN: They have big plans for you in the upcoming season.

GALLACTICA: I know.

JEN: Are you going to be okay?

GALLACTICA: Yeah. I mean, what am I complaining about here? Look at this.

JEN: How many of these people do you think went to their prom?

GALLACTICA: Are you kidding, this is their prom. They spend more money on their outfits than most brides spend on their wedding dresses.

JEN: Remember what we did for prom?

GALLACTICA: Don't remind me.

JEN and GALLACTICA: Star Trek marathon!

GALLACTICA: Promise me you'll never remind me of that again.

JEN: I can't promise that.

GALLACTICA: I know.

JEN: Try to have fun, okay?

GALLACTICA: I'll try. I'm not sure who has changed more. Them or me.

JEN: Probably both.

GALLACTICA: You know when a band you really love makes it big and you long for the early days when they were just starting out, hungry, passionate, real. Every song is a struggle to survive in the early days.

JEN: Sure.

GALLACTICA: I'm a sellout.

JEN: You're not. You were meant to be Gallactica.

GALLACTICA: Don't say it.

JEN: It's your-

GALLACTICA: No!

JEN: Destiny.

GALLACTICA: You said it.

JEN: I did. And I meant it.

GALLACTICA: I'm envious of that.

“CAPTAIN” CRAIG CONRAD has somehow bypassed security and is nervously looking around.

GALLACTICA: Weirdo alert.

JEN: How did he get back here?

GALLACTICA: And in that jersey. What cosplay is that?

JEN: I have no idea, there are so many. I saw a baby Voldemort earlier. Go back to your dressing room, I’ve got this.

GALLACTICA: Alright. Be careful.

JEN: He’s not dangerous. Just infatuated.

GALLACTICA exits. JEN approaches CAPTAIN.

JEN: May I help you?

CAPTAIN: I’m looking for the VIP entrance. I bought the platinum package.

CAPTAIN shows his lanyard or ticket.

JEN: It appears you did.

CAPTAIN: Appearances can be deceiving.

JEN: Yes, they can. You appear to be a football player.

CAPTAIN: I am actually the captain of my football team.

JEN: This is no cosplay then?

CAPTAIN: This is as real as it gets.

JEN: Let’s hope not.

CAPTAIN: I wear my jersey almost every day.

JEN: That’s not making it any better.

CAPTAIN: Can I see her? Gallactica.

JEN: She’s not seeing anyone yet.

CAPTAIN: I wrote her a letter and within the letter a poem and within the poem my true feelings.

JEN: I see. Well, you’re going to need to wait in the VIP line over there.

CAPTAIN: Okay. Thanks.

JEN: How did you get through security?

CAPTAIN: One of the many reasons Gallactica and I are meant to be together is that we both have superhero abilities. I'm basically the male Gallactica.

JEN: Maybe creep it down a notch.

CAPTAIN: What do you mean? This is me. People expect athletes to be a certain way. They expect their talent to only be between the lines. I'm scoring touchdowns everywhere.

JEN: Not sure what that means.

CAPTAIN: Exactly. I'm a mystery.

JEN: Good luck, Captain. Good luck, over there.

FRANCENE sneaks in and watches.

CAPTAIN: Thank you. "With the hand of destiny as their navigator..."

CAPTAIN and JEN: "...the result could only be the most amazing creation..."

CAPTAIN: "...Gallactica!" Wow! Did you feel that? The power of truth.

CAPTAIN exits with gusto. Reenters.

CAPTAIN: Did you see that? Even my exits are super-heroic.

CAPTAIN exits with even more gusto. Reenters.

CAPTAIN: That one was even better.

JEN: Better quit while you're ahead.

CAPTAIN: Good point.

CAPTAIN exits again with great gusto.

CAPTAIN: (*whispers from offstage*) Even better than the last one.

JEN: Wow. Crazy. Crazy, lovely, messed up beyond belief, dreamers who never wake up from their dreams. I want to be Gallactica. Darn. I said it out loud. I want to be Gallactica. I did it again.

FRANCENE: Hello, Gallactica.

JEN: How did you get in here? This is a secured area with a very insecure person in it.

FRANCENE: How'd I get in here? Long, twisted story.

JEN: Go on.

FRANCENE: I used my laser beam eyes to cut through the wall, then I lassooed the guard with my magic rope, and tunneled under the surface into Gallactica's dressing room. There was another guard there. Bigger, tougher, faster, and smarter than the first one. I shouted "dance off" and with my amazing moves I danced around him until he passed out. Then I rolled his body over the hole so that no one could follow me. Just basic superhero stuff, really.

JEN: Very believable.

FRANCENE: Creativity can be a superpower.

JEN: You have to go. This is a restricted area.

FRANCENE: I bribed the guard with a Cinnabomb. That's how I got in.

JEN: Yeah, Jimmy loves his Cinnabombs. Extra icing?

FRANCENE: Oh, yeah.

JEN: Nice play.

FRANCENE: Thanks.

FRANCENE starts to walk away.

JEN: Wait. I'm going to regret this but, if you went to the trouble to find out what Jimmy's favorite pastry was so that you could bribe him, I want to know why.

FRANCENE: There's this boy...

JEN: I know this story well.

FRANCENE: He really wants to meet Gallactica.

JEN: Why can't he put on his big boy pants and do it himself?

FRANCENE: All I can say in my defense is that love will do strange things to a person. It's a form of euphoric temporary insanity.

JEN: You want me to arrange a meeting between the boy you love and the superhero he loves? Which if by some miracle works, means he will not love you?

FRANCENE: Sounds pretty sad when you say it that way.

JEN: I see this ending badly for you.

FRANCENE: I'm willing to take that risk.

JEN: I respect that even though I'm not sure I would do it myself.

FRANCENE: You might surprise yourself.

JEN: Here. (*hands FRANCENE a lanyard*) This will get you past security without having to use laser eyes, questionable dance moves, or eleven-dollar pastries.

FRANCENE: Thanks. You could be the next Gallactica.

JEN: What? That's ridiculous. You think so? I don't know. Not me though. I'm no Gallactica.

GALLACTICA calls from offstage.

GALLACTICA: Jen, I can't find my mask or my cape. Maybe I left them at home? I don't know.

JEN: (*to FRANCENE*) You better go. Come back in a few minutes.

FRANCENE: Thank you.

FRANCENE exits quickly.

GALLACTICA: Did that cosplay football freak leave?

JEN: Yes, Gallactica.

GALLACTICA: Can you call me Susan when no one else is around?

JEN: Remember, your contract states that once you are at a public appearance you are Gallactica.

GALLACTICA: No, I don't remember and I don't like being reminded of things I don't like.

JEN: Sorry.

GALLACTICA: Oh, it's alright. I just want to eat a cheeseburger and watch bad reality television. Did you know it's been six years since I've had a slice of bread?

JEN: Your abs thank you every flex.

GALLACTICA: I left my mask and cape at home, can we leave?

JEN: I brought extras.

GALLACTICA: Naturally.

JEN: You should have something to eat before you meet your fans.

GALLACTICA: I had an energy drink and some celery, Mom. I'm good.

JEN: You know how you get when you don't eat.

GALLACTICA: How do I get?

JEN: Don't make me say it.

GALLACTICA: What have I become?

JEN: You're a star.

GALLACTICA: I mean underneath that?

JEN: You're that same delightful person you always have been.

GALLACTICA: I don't believe you.

JEN: I still see you that way.

GALLACTICA: I don't deserve how good you are to me.

JEN: Save the sentimental sappy stuff for later. Are you ready for your fans?

GALLACTICA: Can I say no?

JEN: No.

GALLACTICA: Alright, but underneath the mask I'm a mess.

JEN: I know.

GALLACTICA: Bring on the nerds!

Blackout.

Scene 5 – Behind the Mask

GALLACTICA's signing area. Same setup as the previous scene. GALLACTICA is alone on stage when the lights come up. JEN enters.

JEN: You're making dreams come true. Your fans are floating out of here. The last lady said that she wants to add your face to Mount Rushmore.

GALLACTICA: Creepy but endearing.

JEN: That cosplay football freak is next. He bought the platinum package. Do you need me to stay with you?

GALLACTICA: I'm Gallactica, a goddess from another galaxy. I save solar systems before lunch. Speaking of which, could you get me some crushed ice and sushi that isn't purchased at a snack bar.

JEN: Got it. Sushi, crushed ice. I'll have it delivered.

GALLACTICA: I want you to know I realize what a diva I sound like.

JEN: You sound like someone who has saved the world forty-two times.

GALLACTICA: Forty-three.

JEN: Really?

GALLACTICA: If I knew how many times Gallactica has saved the world I would really be a diva.

JEN: You ready?

GALLACTICA: Bring on the cosplay football freak!

JEN: His name is Craig Conrad but he wants to be called Captain.

JEN shows CAPTAIN in and then exits quickly.

GALLACTICA: Greetings, Captain.

CAPTAIN: This is the greatest moment of my life. Darn. I promised I wouldn't do that, at least not until it was over.

GALLACTICA: What should I write on the picture?

CAPTAIN: "I want to live in a universe where brave is never spoken as a word but only shown in actions." I love that quote. Your quote.

GALLACTICA: The writers' quote really.

CAPTAIN: I know, but, you bring it to life.

GALLACTICA: Should I make it out to Captain?

CAPTAIN: Could you write To My Captain.

GALLACTICA: Not the weirdest request I've ever had. But weird.

CAPTAIN: Can we take a picture together?

GALLACTICA: Sure.

CAPTAIN: This is a dream come true.

He positions himself next to GALLACTICA and takes a picture.

CAPTAIN: Thanks.

GALLACTICA: What's up with the jersey?

CAPTAIN: I'm a football player.

GALLACTICA: Not right now though. Is a game going to break out right now? I mean, at least you're not one of these people who dresses up as Gallactica to meet Gallactica. That means there are zero real people in the room for that encounter.

CAPTAIN: I guess. I mean people really love you. I know I do.

GALLACTICA: But you don't even know me.

CAPTAIN: I feel a deep connection to you.

GALLACTICA: I'm really pretty shallow.

CAPTAIN: See! We have that in common. People think I'm shallow too. Just football and popularity and football. But I'm so much more than that. And I want you to see it.

GALLACTICA: Easy.

CAPTAIN: Oh, it's nothing weird. I wrote you a letter. I'm not a great writer. I mean, I got a B – on my last composition about transcendentalists. I still don't completely get them. (*offering GALLACTICA the letter*) Here.

GALLACTICA: Listen, Captain. What's your real name?

CAPTAIN: Craig.

GALLACTICA: Craig, I'm not going to take your letter and give you some false sense that I will read it. Part of me wants to be able to do that for you and maybe even have feelings for you, the way you think you have feelings for me. But that breaks the main rule of these fantasy encounters. The couple of minutes we have together are like part of a show. You get to keep the memory and I get to keep the money. And that makes me uneasy and uncomfortable but it's the only thing I can do. I'm a celebrity. I can't build a table, program a computer, or even make a simple meal. This is what I do. It's a job. I don't want to be mean, Craig. But somewhere out there, there's a real person for you to have a real relationship with, someone who will see you for you and eventually love you for who you are. I'm only Gallactica when the

camera is rolling or the meter is running. And our time together has run out.

CAPTAIN looks crushed and leaves the letter on the floor.

GALLACTICA: Take your letter with you. Your dreams deserve better. You deserve better.

CAPTAIN: No one is better than you. You're my soulmate.

GALLACTICA: Craig, that's not true.

CAPTAIN: How can you know unless you give it, give me, a chance.

GALLACTICA: Do you know how many times I've heard that?

CAPTAIN: Millions and you deserve them all.

GALLACTICA: I don't want it all. Did you see that news story about the guy who found out where my parents lived and showed up to ask my dad for permission to marry me? There are boundaries, limits.

CAPTAIN: This is different.

GALLACTICA: Your time is up. There are other people in line.

CAPTAIN: I love you.

GALLACTICA: (*calling off*) Jen.

JEN enters promptly.

JEN: Craig, your time is up. Please follow me.

CAPTAIN follows JEN out, looking for one last moment of connection with GALLACTICA.

GALLACTICA: I'm in the dream crushing, heart breaking business.

JEN reenters.

JEN: Just to warn you, this next one is dressed like you.

GALLACTICA: Please no.

JEN: Her name is Sally.

GALLACTICA: I imagine that one of these doppelgangers will off me and assume my identity.

JEN: I hope not.

GALLACTICA: It's a fantasy I have.

JEN: A nightmare.

GALLACTICA: Any word on the ice and sushi?

JEN: Let me check on it.

GALLACTICA: You know how I get when I don't eat.

JEN: I do. I have a favor I need to ask you.

GALLACTICA: You want to ask me for a favor while I am in the throngs of hypoglycemia?

JEN: I know, poor timing but it is one of your fans who needs-

GALLACTICA: You do this every time. You know that, right? Every convention you find some sad soul to save. Who is it this time?

JEN: Francene. I think you'll really like her.

GALLACTICA: I doubt it, but okay. For you.

JEN: Thanks. Here's your next fan. And I'm on that sushi. I promise.

SALLY bursts in fully in character until she sees GALLACTICA.

SALLY: "Born from the powerful love of two distant stars that defied math and collided at such speed, with such volatility, and with the hand of destiny as their navigator, that the result could only be the most amazing creation... Gallactica!" (*seeing the real GALLACTICA*) Wow. I mean like WOW! Like W. O. W.

GALLACTICA: Who do I make it out to?

SALLY: Wow.

GALLACTICA: Do you want me to write something on the picture other than wow?

SALLY: Wow, this is finally happening.

GALLACTICA: To, what's your name?

SALLY: This is the greatest moment of my life.

GALLACTICA: I certainly hope not.

SALLY: I know exactly where I'm going to put it. Can you guess?

GALLACTICA: I know exactly where I want to put it.

SALLY: Burn on me. Classic Gallactica humor. I got burned by Gallactica! Say it with me, “you thought Los Angeles traffic was bad, try reentering the earth’s atmosphere after a long day of fighting intergalactic crime.”

GALLACTICA: Is that one of my lines?

SALLY: Is that one of your lines? Good one.

GALLACTICA: No, seriously. My lines are only part of my short-term memory.

SALLY: This show, your show, literally saved my life. I work out now. See. (*flexes*) I know I’m not at your level yet, but I’m getting there.

GALLACTICA: You shouldn’t compare yourself to me.

SALLY: I’m going to put this picture up where I work out. To remind me what I’m working toward.

GALLACTICA: You know I have a trainer, right? And a dietician, and physical therapist, and a life coach, and a smoothie barista, and I don’t know where she is with my sushi, but I also have a personal assistant. It’s terribly unfair for you to compare yourself to me. In many ways you are probably better.

SALLY: “There is no failure when you never give up.” I learned that from you.

GALLACTICA: Well, that’s Gallactica for you. Unrealistic. Where is my sushi and ice? (*calling off*) Jen, is my sushi and ice coming?

SALLY: I can get that for you. Sushi and crushed ice. Spicy tuna and dragon roll, right?

GALLACTICA: How did you know?

SALLY: Twins! No, I casually follow you with stalker-like fervency on all the social networks.

GALLACTICA: You know that’s not really me. I have someone who creates all that content.

SALLY: I will be back soon with your crushed ice, which is in smaller pieces than cubed and also softer, therefore less likely to crack your perfect teeth, and your sushi.

GALLACTICA: You don’t have to.

SALLY: Are you kidding? This is the kind of quest I’ve waited my whole life for.

GALLACTICA: I hope not.

SALLY: Yes. You put your faith in me. I won't let you down.

*SALLY awkwardly but with great commitment exits
and bumps into FRANCENE on the way out.*

FRANCENE: Gallactica, I need to have a word with you.

SALLY: I'm not... oh, wow. You think I'm (*referring reverently to GALLACTICA*) Gallactica. Wow! Thank you, thank you. (*exits then reenters.*) Second best moment of my life, being mistaken for Gallactica.

SALLY exits.

FRANCENE: (*turning to GALLACTICA*) You look different in person. Less spectacular. But more real. That's a good thing though, makes you more relatable.

GALLACTICA: You must be Francene.

FRANCENE: Now I feel like the famous one.

GALLACTICA: I would gladly switch places with you.

FRANCENE: No thanks. I'm more the behind-the-scenes type. And the show has lost something in recent seasons.

GALLACTICA: You're right, the first three seasons were edgy and fun. We weren't worried about popularity. Now we seem preoccupied with making everyone happy.

FRANCENE: I can see it on your face. You're not into it anymore.

GALLACTICA: You're different, Francene. I like that you aren't blindly praising Gallactica. It's refreshing. Now, what's your favor?

FRANCENE: My good friend, maybe my best friend, not sure about that, but a good, good friend, anyway, he really wants to meet you. It's hard to say how much. I know everyone uses superlatives to describe how their love is bigger, grander, greater than everyone else's. How you've cured a disease, changed a life in a way no one else could. It must start to seem commonplace to you. But to your most dedicated fans, you are more than a character on a show, you're a symbol of the possibilities that exist. And maybe one of your fans will never actually save the world, but that feeling could make the world a better, braver, more beautiful place.

GALLACTICA: If you send me a transcript of that, I will use it at the Kids' Choice Awards when I win best hero or heroine for the fifth year in a row. Now where's that sushi?

FRANCENE: What about Herman? Are you able to meet with him?

GALLACTICA: I'm not as perceptive as you are, but my superhero senses are telling me you're in love with him.

FRANCENE: Love Herman? Stick to beating up bad guys and saving the earth. Love Herman. Don't make me laugh (*she laughs unconvincingly*).

GALLACTICA: I have an idea that can get us both what we want. But it's illogical and probably goes against almost everything you believe in.

FRANCENE: Sure, a plan I know nothing about, that could be dangerous, and complicate my life. I'm in.

GALLACTICA: Sounds like the plot of an episode of one of my shows.

FRANCENE: If you mean, a poorly conceived plan that has no logic? Yes.

GALLACTICA: Well, at least we agree on that.

FRANCENE: "With the hand of destiny as their navigator..." (*coughs*)

FRANCENE and GALLACTICA: "... the result could only be the most amazing creation... Gallactica!

Blackout.

Scene 6 – The Encounter

GALLACTICA's signing area. Same setup as the previous two scenes. Lights up as HERMAN and LOUIS enter.

HERMAN: Where are you taking me?

LOUIS: Francene sent me a text to bring you here.

HERMAN: Did you bring me here to torture me? This has been a disappointing quest.

LOUIS: Sometimes the quest you want becomes the quest you need.

HERMAN: That's not from the show is it?

LOUIS: Does everything have to be from the show? I just thought of it myself.

FRANCENE dressed as GALLACTICA enters and stands behind her signing table.

LOUIS: There she is. I'll leave you two alone.

LOUIS looks at FRANCENE and exits.

HERMAN: It's really you.

FRANCENE: "With the hand of destiny..."

HERMAN: "...as their navigator..."

BOTH: "...the result could only be the most amazing creation."

HERMAN: Gallactica!

FRANCENE: Your friend Franny told me about you.

HERMAN: Francene, yeah.

FRANCENE: Your girlfriend, perhaps?

HERMAN: Oh, no, no. We're friends, just friends.

FRANCENE: Maybe she could be something more?

HERMAN: I like her, don't get me wrong. But now that I'm here with you everyone else fades into the background and becomes unimportant.

FRANCENE: Herman, sometimes you have to look more deeply at something, someone, to see the truth.

HERMAN: This is going to sound strange but I see you for who you really are.

FRANCENE moves closer to HERMAN.

FRANCENE: I actually think that's sweet.

HERMAN: Really?

FRANCENE: Yes. I see you for who you really are too.

HERMAN: *(at the same time as FRANCENE)* Could I take –

FRANCENE *(at the same time as HERMAN)*: Would you like –

BOTH: ...a picture.

*They get very close together to pose for the selfie.
HERMAN holds the camera out to take the picture.*

HERMAN: Not to be creepy but you even smell amazing. Like your scent could make flowers grow on Pluto. And actually, that did happen in...

BOTH: ...season three, episode nine.

HERMAN: *(at the same time as FRANCENE)* You're beautiful.

FRANCENE: *(at the same time as HERMAN)* I love you.

HERMAN: What did you say?

FRANCENE: It's been a long day. Do you ever do that on the phone, just like a kneejerk reaction, "I love you" to a telemarketer, or the receptionist from your dentist's office, or your biggest fan.

HERMAN: You said you loved me. Gallactica said she loved me. That's a contract, a binding oral contract. It's written in the stars in indelible celestial ink. Gallactica loves me.

SALLY enters out of breath with a container and a cup.

SALLY: I did it. One spicy tuna roll, one dragon roll, and one cup very precisely crushed ice. I oversaw the crushing myself. Very crushed, that ice. I actually accomplished something. I showed determination and did something no one, including myself, thought I could do. You were wrong, Mrs. Nelson – she was my second grade teacher – I did amount to something. I fed Gallactica. And more importantly, I feed my hunger for adventure. Sorry, did I interrupt something?

FRANCENE: Oh no, no. Our time is up.

HERMAN: You are the best of everything in one person. You are my dream come to life. Sometimes the quest you want becomes the quest you need.

FRANCENE: Is that from the show? "The quest you need?"

HERMAN: No, I just thought of it myself. For you.

FRANCENE: I can't do this to you, Herman. You don't know who I really am.

HERMAN: I do. I see the real you.

FRANCENE: You look disappointed.



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