

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



# Humpty Dumpty: The Egg's Files

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by Tony Nicholls

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EXTRACT

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# HUMPTY DUMPTY

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## THE EGG'S FILES

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE:

#### THE EMPIRE:

PANGEA – USURPING QUEEN OF EQUILIBRIA  
KNOTT – HER SON  
WATT – HER OTHER SON  
DAFT ADA – THE QUEEN'S EVIL GENIUS, OR IS SHE?

#### THE REBELS:

PRINCE JAYWALKER – REBEL LEADER  
CHEWCRACKER – HIS HAIRY COMPANION  
GLENDA, REBEL WITH A TORCH  
ESPION

#### ON PLANET PANTOMIME:

DELILAH SCARAWAY – THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVES IN A SHOE  
ADELE – ONE OF HER ADOPTED CHILDREN  
HUMPTY DUMPTY – A DROID EGG  
THE KNAVE OF HEARTS – A GREEDY LANDLORD  
HUGO – HIS SON  
CONSTABLE DULL  
CONSTABLE PAINTING  
GERTIE

#### OTHER CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

CAPTAIN HAN SANDWICH  
LIEUTENANT LAWNMOWER  
ANGELS  
CITIZENS AND CHILDREN OF PLANET PANTOMIME  
A KNIGHT  
DAWN  
SON OF DAWN  
CINDERELLA  
FAIRY GODMOTHER  
ALADDIN  
GENIE  
WOLF  
QUEEN'S GUARDS  
MONSTERS  
PIZZA THE HUTT  
CRONES

# HUMPTY DUMPTY: THE EGG'S FILES

## PART ONE:

### ONE:           SOMEWHERE IN SPACE

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IN THE DARKNESS, WE HEAR THE DEEPLY PRETENTIOUS VOICE OF THAT PAIN WHO DOES ALL THE AMERICAN FILM TRAILERS:

V/OVER:       Long, long ago in a galaxy far, far away - !

THE VOICE IS OVERTAKEN BY SUDDEN STIRRING THEME MUSIC. THIS MINGLES WITH SOUNDS OF A GUN BATTLE AS THE CURTAINS OPEN ON THE BRIDGE OF A SMALL SPACE SHIP, WHERE A TATTERED AND HARASSED CAPTAIN HAN SANDWICH IS STRUGGLING WITH THE CONTROLS.

LIEUTENANT LAWNMOWER, BOTH ARMS IN SLINGS, LIMPS ABOUT ON CRUTCHES CHECKING STUFF. SMOKE AND FLAME IS EVERYWHERE AS THE SHIP ROLLS FROM SIDE TO SIDE.

LIEUT:         They're closing in, Captain – let's get out of here!

CAPTAIN:      We can't – their last shot smashed the main Lucas drive!

LIEUT:         Then we're finished –

CAPTAIN:      There's no such word as finished, Lieutenant –

LIEUT:         I think you'll find there is, Captain -

LIEUTENANT HOLDS UP FLASHCARD WITH WORD 'FINISHED' ON IT.

CAPTAIN:      Look out!

A LOUD EXPLOSION NEAR BY. THE MUSIC RUNS DOWN.

LIEUT:         What was that?

CAPTAIN:      The devils! They've hit the main title theme generator!

LIEUT:         Try the emergency soundtrack of bad songs by bands nobody's heard of!

CAPTAIN:      No good – all we have is (NAME OF MOST-HATED CURRENT POP ARTIST)

LIEUT:         Then we really are finished.

CAPTAIN:      But what about our passenger? If he and the information he carries are destroyed, our mission will have failed and our lovely planet of Equilibria will remain forever in the hands of that evil demon, Queen Pangea. We cannot allow that to happen!

LIEUT:         But how can we prevent it?

CAPTAIN:      Lieutenant, take the bridge.

HANDS HIM A CUT-OUT OF SYDNEY HARBOUR BRIDGE or LOCAL EQUIVALENT.

LIEUT:         Where are you going?

CAPTAIN: I'm going to prepare our ship's only lifeboat.

LIEUT: You mean you're running away like a cowardly custard?

CAPTAIN: No, I mean to save our passenger!

LIEUT: But those lifeboats are notoriously unreliable - who knows where he'll end up!

CAPTAIN: At least he'll have a chance. It's certain death if he stays here.

LIEUT: Good thinking, Captain.

CAPTAIN RESUMES CONTROL.

CAPTAIN: Send a coded message on the secret channel that only we know about to Prince Jaywalker telling him what we're going to do. Then it's up to him - our work here is done.

LIEUT: Message sent, Captain!

CAPTAIN: Then prepare to launch the lifeboat!

LIEUT: Aye aye, sir.

CAPTAIN: I'm going to let them get a little closer and then fire the all-purpose confusion torpedo. While they're staggering about in badly acted bewilderment, I'll launch the lifeboat. With any luck they won't notice it.

LIEUT: And if they do?

CAPTAIN: Then the show could end right here.

LIEUT: Which would be terribly disappointing for all the many people who've put so much time and effort into -

CAPTAIN: Look out - !

THE ENEMY SPACE CRAFT DROPS INTO VIEW BEHIND THEM, GUNS FIRING.

Fire!

THERE'S AN EXPLOSION. THE ENEMY SHIP FLIES UP AND AWAY.

LIEUT: Torpedo away, Captain!

CAPTAIN: Then I'm launching the lifeboat - now!

AN EGGCUP-LIKE OBJECT (CUT-OUT) FLIES UP FROM BEHIND THE SPACE SHIP. AS IT HOVERS WE SEE THE STARTLED GOGGLES AND SCARF OF HUMPTY DUMPTY.

LIEUT: There he goes!

THEY COME TO ATTENTION AND SALUTE.

CAPTAIN/  
LIEUT: Good luck, Hum2Dum2!

HUMPTY: (ON MIKE) Thank you! Aaaaah!

THE LIFEBOAT ABRUPTLY FLIES UP OUT OF SIGHT. THE ENEMY SHIP REAPPEARS.

CAPTAIN: Here they come! Give 'em everything we've got!

LIEUT: But Captain, our guns have jammed, the power is failing, we've run out of torpedoes and all our shields are down!

CAPTAIN: All of them? Even those nice new ultra-thin ones with the little wings?

LIEUT: Yes, Captain.

CAPTAIN: Then I guess there's only one thing I can say, Lieutenant -

LIEUT: What's that, Captain?

**#1 CHEEK TO CHEEK (PETER SKELLERN)**

SPOTS SNAP UP ON EACH OF THEM AND STARS BEGIN TO SPIN AROUND THEM. THEY STEP OUT OF THE SPACESHIP AND MIME TO THE RECORD.

CAPTAIN/  
LIEUT: Heaven, I'm in heaven  
And my heart beats so that I can hardly speak  
And I seem to find the happiness I seek  
When we're out together dancing cheek to cheek

ANGELS COME OUT AND DANCE.

Dance with me  
I want my arms about you  
The charm about you will carry me through to

Heaven, I'm in heaven  
And my heart beats so that I can hardly speak -

THE SONG IS INTERRUPTED BY A HUGE EXPLOSION AND THE SPACE CRAFT BLOWS APART. THE ANGELS FLY THE CREW AWAY AS THE CURTAINS CLOSE.

**TWO: AT THE REBEL HEADQUARTERS**

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PRINCE JAYWALKER HUDDLES WITH GLENDA AND ESPION IN A SMALL SPOT.

GLENDA: And that's when we lost contact, Prince Jaywalker, just at the end of the chorus.

PRINCE: So, they got him. Our last chance to reclaim the planet from Queen Pangea blasted into a billion pieces!

GLENDA: I'm afraid so.

PRINCE: There's not the slightest doubt?

ESPION: None, sir. Here's the video, the digitally remastered reissue, the DVD and the final director's cut. (SPRUYKING TO AUDIENCE) The soundtrack CD is also available from all good -

PRINCE: But how did the Queen know about Hum2Dum2? Does she have a spy in our camp?

ESPION: A camp spy? That sounds very unlikely.

PRINCE: And, I wonder, did she also know about - ?

GLENDA: About what, sir? You've never told us why this droid is so important.

PRINCE: He wasn't important - it was what he was carrying.

ESPION: Look, it's not a ring, is it? About so big, with funny writing round the -

PRINCE: No, it's something else. Something that could destroy Pangea's claim to the throne for once and for all!

ESPION: What?

PRINCE: What does it matter now? It's gone – gone forever!

GLEENDA: Chin up, Your Highness.

SHE COMFORTS HIM. CHEWCRACKER ENTERS WITH A BREAKFAST TRAY.

CHEW: Owoo!

PRINCE: Chewcracker, my old comrade, I'm afraid we're in a tight spot -

CHEW: No problem -

HE SNAPS HIS FINGERS AND THE SPOT OPENS OUT TO LIGHT THE WHOLE AREA.

I've brought your egg, sir, and a message that's just come through on the secret channel that only we know about.

PRINCE: Is it scrambled?

CHEW: Only the egg, sir.

GLEENDA/  
ESPION: Boom, boom.

PRINCE: Give me that –

HE READS.

'To Prince Jaywalker. Am under attack from Queen's fighters. Have launched Hum2Dum2 in emergency lifeboat. Expect to die shortly. Hope you are well, Captain Han Sandwich.' By the nineteen clockwise moons of Pluto - he's safe! Hum2Dum2 is safe! We must find him at once!

ESPION: But Your Highness, those lifeboats are notoriously unreliable. They were designed by a Qantas baggage handler, you never know where they're going to end up.

PRINCE: True! It's hopeless!

GLEENDA: No, it's not. It has to land somewhere.

PRINCE: True! And Chewie and I are going to find it!

CHEW: Are we?

PRINCE: Yes - the truth is out there!

CHEW: Owoo!

GLEENDA: Toast, sir?

OFFERS SLICE OF TOAST.

PRINCE: Good thinking – here's to a successful mission!

ALL: (RAISIN' TOAST) To a successful mission!

PRINCE: Now, logically, the lifeboat should seek out the planet that was nearest when the Queen's ships attacked, so that's where we'll start looking! But remember, this must all remain top secret; tell nobody what's happened or where we're going, is that understood?

ESPION/  
GLENDA: Yes, sir!

PRINCE: We wouldn't want that devil Queen Pangea finding out about this, would we?

ESPION/  
GLENDA: No, sir!

ALL GO OFF. ESPION REMAINS.

ESPION: Oh no, sir, we wouldn't want that at all! Hahaha!

OMINOUS MUSIC.

### **THREE: QUEEN PANGEA'S HEADQUARTERS**

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QUEEN PANGEA ENTERS.

QUEEN: Escaped? The droid escaped?

ESPION: Yes, your majesty. It came through on the secret channel that only they know about.

QUEEN: Curses, curses, curses! A thousand curses! After all these years that peevish boy and his ridiculous rebels still threaten me and my throne!

ESPION: Well, it's not your throne really, is it –

QUEEN: (OMINOUS) What?

ESPION: I mean, is the droid really that important?

QUEEN: Yes! Daft Ada, what do you think?

DAFT ADA ENTERS. SHE IS DRESSED IN A LONG COAT AND WEARS A BUCKET OVER HER HEAD WITH EYEHOLE IN IT. MUMMERMSET ACCENT PROBABLY.

DAFT ADA: What do I think? I think tis very hard to talk with a bucket over your head!

ESPION: Does she wear that to help her breathe?

QUEEN: No, she's just so ugly we can't bear to look at her.

DAFT ADA: Have ye any idea where this lifeboat could have landed?

ESPION: Jaywalker's going to start looking on the planet nearest to where the courier ship was destroyed.

QUEEN: Right, return to the rebel headquarters, find out the name of that planet and then call me.

ESPION: Yes, Your Majesty.

ESPION BOWS AND GOES OFF.

DAFT ADA: Your Majesty, why be this droid so important?

QUEEN: Because in its memory files it carries something which could destroy me!

DAFT ADA: Are you sure?

QUEEN: Why else should Jaywalker want it so much? I must find it before he does!

DAFT ADA: How be you going to do that then?

QUEEN: Someone will have to follow him and capture the droid before he does. But it has to be done secretly. What I really need is a couple of strong, brave, resourceful and intelligent men –

THE SOUND OF CHILDISH SQUABBLING COMES FROM THE REAR OF THE AUDITORIUM. THE QUEEN AND DAFT ADA LOOK UP.

QUEEN: But all I've got is these two idiots.

WATT AND KNOTT, THE QUEEN'S SONS, ENTER, STILL SQUABBLING.

WATT: Give it back!

KNOTT: Give what back?

WATT: My ray gun!

KNOTT: Haven't got your silly ray gun!

WATT: Yes, you have!

KNOTT: No, I haven't!

WATT: Have!

KNOTT: Haven't!

WATT: Have!

KNOTT: Haven't!

QUEEN: Shut up!

QUEEN TURNS TO THE AUDIENCE.

Let me introduce my two sons - Watt and Knott. And a whatnot is the best way to describe them.

WATT: Give it back!

KNOTT: He's mad. He just says the same thing over and over again like a parrot!

WATT: I don't, I don't, I don't!

KNOTT: You do, you do, you do! Who's a pretty boy then? Cheep-cheep!

THEY START TO CHASE EACH OTHER ROUND.

WATT: Cheep-cheep to you!

QUEEN: (TO AUDIENCE) I would get rid of them –

KNOTT: Cheep-cheep!

QUEEN: - if anyone would take them.

WATT: Cheep-cheep!

QUEEN: Anybody want them?

WATT/  
KNOTT: Cheep-cheep!

QUEEN: I've got two idiots going cheap!

DELILAH: But all the eggs aren't in one basket –

ALL: No!

DELILAH: There's one egg missing!

ALL: Yes!

PRINCE: Eggs-actly! I thought something like this might happen so I told Hum2 to lie low. He should be along any minute now.

HUMPTY ENTERS.

HUMPTY: Dada!

ALL: It's Humpty! Hurray!

KNAVE: Let us out!

PRINCESS: No – the bomb first! Turn off the bomb!

HUMPTY: A bomb, right! Where is it?

ALL: On the wall!

HUMPTY: On the wall?

ALL: Uh-oh!

HUMPTY: Don't worry. I can do it. One small step for man, one giant leap for eggs!

SLOW MOTION MODE.

HUMPTY STARTS TO CLIMB ALONG THE WALL TOWARDS THE BOMB. THE PRINCESS CONTINUES TO PICK THE LOCK. OTHERS ENCOURAGE HER AND WATCH HUMPTY FEARFULLY AS THE TICKING SOUND GROWS LOUDER.

It's just a matter of keeping one's eggilibrium.

HUMPTY REACHES THE BOMB, PICKS IT UP, STARES AT IT, SELECTS A BUTTON AND THEN PRESSES IT.

THE TICKING STOPS.

SILENCE.

ALL: He's done it!

ALL CHEER.

HUMPTY: No probs. Easy as falling off a – aaah!

HUMPTY FALLS BEHIND THE WALL. HUGE CRASH AND EXPLOSION AS BOMB GOES OFF. LUMPS OF ROCK FALL FROM THE ROOF.

ALL: Humpty!

PRINCESS: Done it!

THE CAGE OPENS AND ALL RUSH OUT, YELLING. THE PRINCE AND CHEWCRACKER BRING HUMPTY OUT FROM BEHIND THE WALL. DELILAH CRADLES HIM IN HER ARMS.

DELILAH: Humpty! Humpty!

ADELE: Is he - ?

DELILAH: I warned him - ! Oh Humpty - !

GERTIE: Quark!

KNAVE: Still, look on the bright side – he saved my life.

ADELE: We must do something!

DELILAH: All the king’s horses and all the king’s men couldn’t put Humpty together again...!

PRINCESS: Well, of course they couldn’t! What use would a horse be? They can’t even run round a circular track without someone to show them the way. And as for men - !

DELILAH: Quite!

PRINCESS: Besides Hum2 is actually a computer.

ALL: Yes!

PRINCESS: And who are the only people in the world who can ever fix computers?

ALL: (ALL THINK, THEN) Children!

PRINCE: Of course!

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS APPROACH THE AUDIENCE.

PRINCESS: Would you all like to help us fix Humpty?

THEY WOULD.

PRINCE: Jolly good!

DELILAH: I think a kiss might do it.

PRINCESS: Do you?

DELILAH: Always works for me.

PRINCESS: All right, I’m going to count to three and then we’ll all blow Humpty a kiss. One, two, three -

MAGIC MUSIC STING, TWINKLY LIGHTING, THEN:

He’s moving, I think you’ve done it! I think you’ve saved Humpty!

ALL: Hurray!

HUMPTY: Where am I? Did I - ?

DELILAH: Yes, you did – you saved us and all your friends have saved you!

HUMPTY: Did they? Thank you, everyone! But what about the Queen! Is she - ?

PRINCE: She and her sons got away I’m afraid –

GLENDA ENTERS.

GLENDA: Oh no, they didn’t!