



Prologue

(A single spotlight reveals the figure of the professor, dressed in academic cap and gown behind a lecturn.)

Professor

Ladies and gentlemen I regret to announce that tonight's play has been cancelled due to an unexpected earth quake on the 7th floor of the Maths Science building. So that you will not be disappointed, I will give a lecture on the theoretical aspects of computer science play writing. Lock the doors please.

Computer Science plays are based on fundamental concepts such as, *jokes, puns, songs, chaos*, and special instantiations thereof. I have asked some of my colleagues to help demonstrate these concepts to you in a non deterministic finite play state ... I mean state play. Even though you may recognise these concepts when they occur, I will point out the salient points just in case you miss them. First the orchestra has an important part to play ...

(The orchestra strikes up Brahms Lullaby. The professor slowly falls asleep at his lecturn.)

Black Out.)

Inquisitor 2 Yes, there definitely seems to be a rot setting in these days. You know what? The other day I actually heard a man in the street arguing that the world is round? Unbelievable! Right there in public!

Inquisitor 1 Shocking! I'd have extracted his tongue on the spot!

Inquisitor 2 Well, I would have, but I'd left my pliers at home, and holding on to a tongue with your bare hands is hard.

(He demonstrates on himself.)

Inquisitor 1 Slippery little devils, aren't they? But we've got to stop this sort of thing, you know. We can't have people running about the place saying the Earth is round. Next thing you know they'll be saying it isn't the centre of the universe either.

Inquisitor 2 They've already said that.

Inquisitor 1 Worse than I thought. What can we do to stop them? A papal bull?

Inquisitor 2 No, there's too much papal bull already. How about we invoke the wrath of God in the form of hellfire and brimstone on anyone claiming to know more about the heavens than we do?

Inquisitor 1 Ah, you have to be careful how you word those things. It seems that God can be very literal minded. We once tried calling up boiling lava to engulf any who committed the sin of fornication, and Mother Superior never quite forgave me for the mess it made of her convent.

(There is a chord on the piano. The action freezes and a spot light hits the professor.)

Professor Here we see a rare phenomenon in computer science plays, it's what we in the trade call, a joke. The nuns are sisters of mercy, so you see the irreverent and not quite irrelevant reference to the sin of fornication could, under the right circumstances, such as inebriation of the audience raise another rare phenomenon, what we call laughter. As the play progresses there will be more examples of this thing, remember we have ways of making you laugh. Carry on please.

(The spotlight goes out and the professor returns to his slumbers.)

Inquisitor 2 Then that's out. I know! We could set up an experiment in the scientific fashion to prove once and for all that the Earth is flat!

Inquisitor 1 Hmm. It might work, but what happens if the experiment proves the Earth really is round?

Inquisitor 2 We will have to find the right man for the job. One who is incapable of making an original discovery to save his life...

Inquisitor 1 ...and who is open to - ah - suggestion as to the desired outcome...

Inquisitor 2 ...without the courage to defy our holy edicts...

Inquisitor 1 ...but with the means at his disposal to set things up without any obvious involvement by us. Where could we find such a man?

(The hand emerges from the cauldron again, and an inarticulate phrase is uttered.)

Inquisitor 2 What do you want now?

Inquisitor 3 *(another semi-articulate phrase)*

Inquisitor 1 What was that?

Inquisitor 2 He's dropped the soap.

(Both inquisitors beat at the cauldron with wooden spoons.)

Inquisitor 1 Wait a minute... what was it he said earlier on?

Inquisitor 2 Something about a lumberjack.

Inquisitor 1 No, before that. At the end of the rhyme.

Inquisitor 2 Oh - er - something about the pub down the road. Ah - were you, perchance, put in mind of one of the more frequent and well-known inhabitants of a certain sleazy dive hereabouts?

Inquisitor 1 Brother, God has shown us the man destined to fulfill this role. We must make haste to inform him of his good fortune.

Inquisitor 2 Indeed. Maybe we could volunteer to consecrate the wine cellar there at the same time.

(Exeunt, engaged in ecclesiastical mumbo jumbo.)

Scene Two

(*Columbus is out on the town getting into trouble. He is a dissolute, a waster and something of an artist. He is also a mad inventor. The lights come up to reveal a bar scene. Columbus, Galileo and the two sea captains, Cook and Bligh are slumped over the table.*)

Landlord See here Mr. Columbus, you can't stay all night, it's after closing time we'll have the inquisition round here saying the licencing hours were ordained by God.

Columbus (*Waking up*) What's that the inquisition, I thought this was a quiet respectable place, I wasn't expecting them.

Landlord Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition Mr. Columbus. Now then I hate to put an end to your evening of wild frolic ...

Galileo (*Waking up*) The Earth is the centre of the Univershe!

Landlord ...And doubtless the planets revolve around the sun too, but in your present condition, Sr. Galileo, I doubt if you could tell the difference.

Galileo My condishon is of no concern of yours landlord.

Landlord Oh yes it is, you're sitting on my daughter.

(*A large Miss Piggy doll is revealed.*)

Columbus (*Quickly, to calm the landlord*) She's ok, ...quite comfortable actually. (*Changing the subject back*) You're right about the planets landlord. All a zipping around the sun, zip, zip, zip, oooh! There, did you just see Mars zip around?

Landlord Mr. Columbus, as much as I have always wanted to see what the Inquisition keep in those dungeons, I would like to be able to choose my own viewing time, so will you kindly keep your scientific eccentricities between you and the chief inquisitor.

Galileo Be reasonable landlord. Why, I was just up on the tower of Pisa the other day ...

Landlord I suppose that gives you a new slant on life.

Galileo I'm inclined to agree with that.

Landlord You're inclined alright. Look, tell it to the inquisition, but don't tell me. I'm happy with a model of the universe which ignores the possibilities of evolution, revolution, gravitation and imagination.

Columbus Shhh... the inquisition are everywhere.

Landlord (anxious) Yeeees. Convince your Sr. Galileo of that!

(*Galileo colapses under the table with a noise that causes Bligh and Cook to wake up immediately.*)

Capt. Cook You know, I've always admired the tremendous dexterity with which you wield your mighty corkscrew, landlord. I don't suppose we could persuade you to demonstrate for us, could we?

Capt. Bligh My compatriate, Cptn. Crunch, er.. Cptn. Cook means, give us another bottle of that wine landlord.

Capt. Cook Columbus lad, tell us another of your jests.

Capt. Bligh The other day he told us that the world is round! I laughed so much I forgot to kick the crew of my good ship Pinta.

Capt. Cook Where does he get his ideas from, Cptn. Bligh?

Capt. Bligh From the good professor no doubt. (*Galileo pokes his head up from below the table*) Galileo, how good to see you, I suppose it was you who told Columbus that the Earth was not flat?

Galileo Indeed Captain Bligh, it was I.

Capt. Cook Come Professor, what other inventions do you have for this week?

Galileo Oh nothing much, quiet week for me, you know, let me see, Monday I invented a flying machine, Thursday, a jumbo jet and on Friday I put together my first MX missile. What about you Columbus?

Columbus (*rather proudly*) Well as matter of fact I invented this inclined plane.

Capt. Cook What's it for?

Columbus What's it for?!? Why does it need a use? I am doing basic research here, it doesn't need a use, the military will probably be very keen. As long as I can publish my results in a refereed journal, who cares?

(*There is a chord on the piano. The action freezes and a spot light hits the professor.*)

Professor Here we have another typical example of the data structure, *joke*. It demonstrates fundamental facts about the academic professor of computer science. Even if essentially useless, Basic or Fortran research attracts money, even from the Navy, to make better maps or hardtack, who cares as long as the results are published in a refereed journal. Carry on now please.

Galileo Splendid Christopher my boy. by the way I just remembered what I did on Saturday.

Landlord Mr. Galileo, if you please, it's after closing time.

Capt. Cook (*ignoring landlord*) It is Saturday - you were drunk like the rest of us.

Galileo No, no this morning. I invented a thing I call a PC.

Capt. Bligh A PC. Let me see a Perfumed Cabinboy?

Capt. Cook How about a Pint of Cider.

Columbus A Pink Camasol! (*the others turn to look at him for a beat*)

Galileo (*clearing his throat to get their attention*) No, um, actually, it's a Piloting Computer.

Capt. Bligh What does it do?

Galileo It will enable me to take a round the world cruise!

Capt. Bligh Don't you mean a flat the world cruise?

Capt. Cook Your not going on about this world being round nonsense again.

Galileo Well not quite. It's a bit squished at the top and bottom. Like that cauldron over there in the corner.

Columbus Cauldron? Where did that come from?

Landlord I didn't expect to see that old cauldron there.

(*From out of the cauldron leap the inquisitors. (Sound Effects)*)

Inquisitor 1 Nobody ever expects the Spanish Inquisition!

(*The inn keeper and the inn mates fall to the floor to pray.*)

Columbus What do you want?

Inquisitor 2 We ask the questions Mr. Columbus.

Inquisitor 1 What shape is the world?

Inquisitor 2 Flat.

Inquisitor 1 Round.

Inquisitor 2 Square.

Galileo More than one of the above but not all.

Columbus Errr ... round?

Inquisitor 2 Warm up the boiling oil my cruel comrade, we have a customer for you.

Columbus No it's flat - like an orange I mean like an inclined plane that's it! It's a map of the of the world. I knew there would be a use for it.

Inquisitor 1 How would you like to prove this theory of yours?

Columbus Prove the world is an inclined plane?

Galileo Well it is steadily going downhill.

Inquisitor 2 You try our patience Mr. Columbus, we know what you really think.

Columbus You do?

Inquisitor 1 *(And Inquisitor 2) We ask the questions!*

Inquisitor 2 We want to offer you a deal.

Inquisitor 1 We are really your friends you know.

Inquisitor 2 We want you to perform a simple task.

Inquisitor 1 You mount an expedition to prove the world is round and ..

Columbus You pay me money?

Inquisitor 2 and we don't burn you alive over a slow fire.

Columbus It's a deal.

Inquisitor 1 Good. Leave at once.

Columbus I need a ship ... money

Inquisitor 2 Apply to the king - get a grant.

(They walk off talking.)

Landlord

Well thank christ they have gone. Now for you lot, out, before the
inquisition return for me.

(They exit complaining. The lights go down.)

Scene Three

(The lights come up on Ferdinand's throne room, or wherever he held audiences with the great unwashed public. Ferdinand is slumped on his throne, his crown hung on a nearby hatstand. It has been a rough day. He speaks to his keeper of the rolls, or chamberlain or whatever. The queen sits at his side.)

Queen Isabella Come along Ferdi, do get on with it.

King Ferdinand Don't call me that in front of the plebs, I mean subjects.

Queen Isabella On with the petitions, there may be some bright young men out there.

King Ferdinand Chamberlain, there can't be many more people on that damned list of yours.

Rolantando Just one, your highness.

King Ferdinand Thank god for that. Who is it?

Rolantando Senor Columbus, your highness.

King Ferdinand Columbus! He's as bad as five of anyone else. Saving the worst for last, were you?

Queen Isabella Do be charitable Ferdi, he can't help being high spirited.

King Ferdinand He's high all right. Last time he came in he claimed to have invented smoking. Said he was going to make a fortune for all the chest doctors in the realm.

Queen Isabella Well what's wrong with that?

King Ferdinand He had neglected to invent an ash tray. Set fire to me royal throne.

Queen Isabella It was an accident dear.

King Ferdinand He's a walking accident. Well, let's get it over with.

(The chamberlain gestures, and Columbus comes in with an ice pack on his head, staggering, and bows to the hatstand....)

Columbus Your highness

(drops ice pack, trips over cloak, generally klutzy stuff)

King Ferdinand Over here, fool!

Columbus I beg your pardon, your majesty. I am a little indisposed today.

King Ferdinand We can soon arrange to have you disposed of, if that would help?

Queen Isabella Ferdi be gentle, he's rather cute.

Columbus Ah - your majesty is most generous. Unfortunately there is some other business I would like to discuss first.

Queen Isabella (*seductively*) Would you like to discuss it with me deary?

Columbus Jesus Christ.

King Ferdinand He's not here - the inquisition are checking his past, something about a carpenters union.

Queen Isabella Don't you think he's rather cute, Ferdi?

King Ferdinand We were discussing his disposal ...

Columbus You mean "disposition", your majesty?

King Ferdinand I know what I mean,so! State your business. My temper grows thin.

Columbus At once, majesty.

(*Sweeps low bow, drops icepack etc. A cauldron sneaks onto the stage out of sight of the king.*)

Columbus Your majesty, I wish to undertake a voyage of scientific exploration...

King Ferdinand You're going away? Oh, frabjous day! Calooh! Calay!

Columbus ... and I was wondering if you would finance it

King Ferdinand Me? What makes you think I've got any money?

Columbus You're the king! You must be rich!

King Ferdinand A common misconception, but in any case, what makes you think I've got any money I would give to you, even if I could get rid of you for a while?

Columbus Well, strictly speaking I wish to apply for a grant from the Northern Spanish Exploration Research Council, and I thought that as chairman you would be the logical person to ask.

King Ferdinand Pass me my NSERC hat.

Queen Isabella Here it is dear.

King Ferdinand What's happened - it's too small?

Queen Isabella Sorry dear it's the cuts. Everything was reduced by 10%

King Ferdinand Can't trust anybody these days. Well, just so long as it's not my own money you want to spend, I'll consider it. What is this voyage in aid of anyway?

Columbus I am going to show that the world is round. You go one way then poof! You come back the other way.

King Ferdinand Lot of nonsense.

Columbus Allow me to demonstrate. Your majesty, please observe.

(Columbus takes a football from behind his back he throws it off stage right. He watches the ball circle behind the stage, turns and catches it from stage left. It is now covered with travel stickers.)

Columbus How would you explain that, your majesty?

King Ferdinand Witchcraft?

Queen Isabella Have you considered joining the circus Christopher?

King Ferdinand Or perhaps an act of God.

Columbus Why would he want to act?

King Ferdinand Maybe he needs the money too. Look, stop trying to change the subject. How do you intend to pursue this ridiculous inquiry?

Columbus Your majesty, I wish to travel west to Japan, thus proving the world is round.

Queen Isabella Give him the money Ferdi, I would look divine in a Kimono.

King Ferdinand The only way you would look divine is six feet underground in a concrete coffin. Have you no more convincing an argument to present for this hairbrained project?

Columbus Well, I have, but you're not going to like it, your majesty.

King Ferdinand Sr. Columbus, if you don't stop wasting my time you're going to like it even less.

Columbus Very well, your majesty, allow me to introduce to you the contents of this cauldron.

(The inquisitors leap from the cauldron, which has crawled into a position nearby.)

Inquisitor 1 Greetings,

Inquisitor 2 and felicitations, your majesty.

King Ferdinand Oh my God I didn't expect this.

Inquisitor 1 Nobody ever expects the Spanish inquisition.

King Ferdinand Wonderful! Welcome to our court, loyal inquisitors. In what manner can we be of service?

Inquisitor 1 Your majesty, we wish you to consider Sr. Columbus' application most carefully. We believe it to be not without redeeming social virtue.

Inquisitor 2 We are most anxious to - ah - persuade you, your majesty.

(*The king leaps from his throne, imbued with a new enthusiasm*)

King Ferdinand Why didn't someone tell me this before? Sr. Columbus - may I call you Christopher? Christopher, the entire resources of NSERC are at your immediate disposal. What do you need that we can provide?

Columbus Well, I suppose I'll need a ship...

King Ferdinand A ship! Brilliant! It will be so much quicker than walking - in fact, take three, they're small. What else?

Inquisitor 1 A cauldron

Inquisitor 2 Just in case, you know...

King Ferdinand I'm not sure I want to know. Anything else?

Columbus Someone to sail the ships, and navigate.

King Ferdinand Have you anyone in mind?

Inquisitor 2 With your permission, your majesty, we are of the opinion that Sr. Galileo might be a suitable navigator.

Inquisitor 1 Merely a suggestion, however.

King Ferdinand A most worthy suggestion (maybe we can get rid of him at the same time...)

Columbus I believe he is without, your majesty.

King Ferdinand Without what? Oh, I see! Chamberlain, summon him hence.

(*Enter Galileo, complete with PC. Makes great to-do of setting it up.*)

King Ferdinand

Thank Christ they are gone. Pass that bottle over, will you?

(*Fade to black.*)

Scene 4

(The Crew stand on the deck swaying from side to side in unision as ships creaking and wave sounds are heard. This goes on in silence for some time until:)

Capt. Cook All right I can't stand it any longer, take me home, I never wanted to go to sea anyway, I get sea sick, I'm not a sailor, that's my great great great grandson James, I'm Thomas. I want to be a ... a Travel Agent yes that's it, a worldwide chain of travel agencies, stretching from Barcelona to Buenos Aires ... just get me off this ship I can't stand the rocking ... Oh mother

Capt. Bligh Ready to cast off.

Capt. Cook What do you mean cast off, aren't we at sea yet?

Capt. Bligh Don't be ridiculous we've merely been putting the crew through their drill.

Capt. Cook Why do I feel so confounded sea sick?

Columbus Perhaps it was the 5 litres of rum you had last night.

Capt. Bligh Don't you want to go on this voyage?

Capt. Cook Of course I don't want to go. I was press ganged, while inebriated. The inquisition caught me driving my horse the wrong way down a one way bridle path.

Columbus So why did you go to sea?

Capt. Cook They were extremely unpleasant and asked me if I wouldn't mind blowing into a cauldron, it turned blue, so did I, and here I am.

Capt. Bligh Enough of this drooling, cast off fore and aft.

Capt. Cook Oh all right. You heard him. Loop your nucket pinion.

(Everybody starts shouting orders. Only Scotty is obeying them. He runs madly about the stage.)

Columbus Staunch fast your mizzen whelpen grummion

Capt. Kirk Splice the main brace.

Capt. Cook Keel haul the poop deck

Capt. Bligh Double cleat your main tops'l halliards and jumble holme your stench knots.

Scotty Do what??

Capt. Bligh Tie a bit of string 'round that nail.

Capt. Kirk and don't forget to keep splicing the mainbrace

Columbus Weigh the Anchor.

Scotty Would that be in pounds or kilos?

Capt. Bligh Keel haul that landlubber.

Scotty Aye aye sir.

Capt. Bligh Flog him first.

Scotty Begging your pardon and bowin' and scrapin' your honour.

Capt. Bligh What is it?

(Cuffs him cruelly.)

Scotty I dinna ken how to keel haul mysel'.

Capt. Cook Where are the rest of the crew?

Scotty Bligh's crew mutinied while we were still in dock. Our own crew is on the Enterprise and as for Cook's crew ...

Columbus *(Waves a bottle)* Oh good I need a corkscrew to open this bottle.

(Freeze. Spotlight on the Professor.)

Professor An interesting example of the type joke instantiated as the PUN. The pun is the very lowest form of wit and it is typical to see such jokes in productions such as this one. Carry on please.

(The professor returns to sleep.)

Capt. Bligh So we have no crew.

Capt. Cook I say Bligh I found this on the quarter deck.

(Cook drags on the stumbling body of the landlord.)

Columbus What was it doing to get like that?

Capt. Cook Drinking. He's drunk.

Columbus Drunk? What shall we do with him?

Capt. Kirk I'll tell you I borrowed a book on the subject.

Capt. Cook Well? What does it say?

Capt. Kirk Let me see, what to do with, drugs, drums, here it is drunks. What to do with a drunken sailor.

Capt. Bligh Do we get to keel haul the landlubber?

Columbus Give him the cat o nine tails?

Capt. Cook Tear out his liver?

Capt. Kirk No. we sing a song.

Landlord OH no! For the love of God! Not a song!!!!

Capt. Bligh Ships pianist.

Ships Pianist Aye aye sir.

*(A sea shanty - courtesy Rambling Syd Rumpo.
(to the tune of "What shall we do with the drunken sailor)*

*What shall we do with the drunken landlord,
What shall we do with the drunken landlord,
What shall we do with the drunken landlord,
He's bending his cordwangle.*

*Hit him in the nadgers with the bosun's plunger,
Slap him in the grummit with a wrought iron lunger,
Cuff him in the moulies with the Captain's grunger
'Til his bodgers dangle.*

*Heave ho and up she rises,
Heave ho and up she rises,
Heave ho and up she rises,
He's broken his cordwangle.*

)

Columbus Nevertheless we still have the problem of sailing the ship, with one admiral, three captains, an engineer and a drunk.

Capt. Kirk I'll do it. Warp factor 5 Scotty.

Scotty The sails canna take it any longer captain. I'm blowing full blast.

Capt. Kirk What shall we do.

Columbus Easy we create some hot air to fill the sails.

Capt. Bligh Not another song.

Columbus Ships pianist.

Ships Pianist Aye, aye sir.

Capt. Bligh Cast off the grand piano.

(They all sing)

All Loud roar'd the dreadful thunder,
The rain a deluge shows,
The clouds were rent asunder,
By lightning's vivid pow'rs.
The night was drear and dark,
Our poor, devoted bark,
Till next day, there she lay,
In the Bay of Biscay O!

Now dash'd upon the billow,
Her op'ning timbers

(The Professor emerges in his usual way.)

Professor I think we have enough hot air now. This is an example of a theatrical device called a SONG, say it after me, SONG. Good. It serves no purpose other than to keep the pianist employed and fill in time since the authors couldn't think what to do at this moment in the play. It looks bad just to have silence. We turn now to page one hundred and twenty eight in the script missing out the most boring part of the play. They have been at sea for thirty three days.

(Lights up.)

Capt. Kirk Captain's log, stardate 25985.843204, approximately. Transporter and communications still jammed. 33 days at sea with this lot. Me captain James Kirk, captain of a ship capable of travelling across the universe in a micro second, and here I am on a prehistoric barge doing four miles per fortnight across the Atlantic!

Scotty Well at least the food is good captain - I chose it myself.

Capt. Kirk *(He grabs him)* Listen you Northern transvestite, the hold contains nothing but porridge!

Scotty You have to look on the bright side sir, there's plenty of it!

Columbus Mr. Scot your watch.

Scotty Aye aye, sir, but there's nothing out there to be seen.

Columbus Use this. *(He hands Scotty a telescope)*

Scotty *(He looks through the telescope)* Ah, that's much better.

Capt. Kirk What can you see?

Scotty *(He turns the telescope round the right way)* Nothing, but it's much clearer now. Wait a moment though! Sail Ho!

Capt. Bligh What flag are they flying?

Scotty It looks like an X with something above it.

Capt. Cook The skull and crossbones! Pirates!

Scotty It's no' a skull, but I canna make it out

Capt. Kirk Let me see, Scotty. You're right, it's not a skull; it's a floppy disk. and crossed laser printers - software pirates!

Columbus They must be after the Piloting Computer.

Capt. Bligh Give em a broadside with all canons Mr. Scot.

Scotty I canna do it sir, they are filled with porridge, I ran out of space in the hold.

Capt. Bligh Well fire the lumps at them then.

Scotty Aye aye sir. Fire one.

(The sound of a cannon full of porridge is heard.)

Capt. Cook *(with the telescope)* They are firing back. Quick duck.

(A large lump of porridge hits Scotty between the eyes.)

Capt. Kirk Scotty!

Scotty I'm done for captain. Save yourself.

Capt. Bligh Quick pour the milk on before he goes cold.

Columbus They are coming aboard - every man for himself.

Capt. Bligh Man the lifeboats - captains and cabin boys first.

(The pirates board. Enter How Not and How So. How Not wears an obvious false leg, an eye patch, a parrot (preferably dead), a striped jersey and a bandanna. How So carries a brief case and wears a suit and tie.)

How So Ah So.

How What Ha ha Jim lad.

How So So sorry, this my ship now. We want your software.

Capt. Bligh You filthy swine!

How What Ha ha Jim lad.

Capt. Bligh And who sir, are you?

How So How So.

Capt. Cook How what?

How So No that my companion, I How So.

How What Ha ha Jim lad.

Capt. Cook How who?

How So No that my cousin, How Who, I How So.

Capt. Kirk Who's on next?

Columbus From whence cometh you scurvey knave?

How So I Japanese business man - I come to steal computer software. Give me your computer or How What will eat the ship.

How What *(He waves his cutlass)* Ha ha Jim lad!

Capt. Kirk Does he like porridge?

How So I show I not to be joked with! How What, throw that wok overboard.

How What Ha ha Jim lad!

(He obeys. As the cauldron proceeds rapidly towards offstage, the head of an inquisitor appears the edge, and screams... A splash is heard.)

How So You have inquisitor for dinner?

Columbus I think we better give him the PC, he looks serious.

How So Also I take one hostage to discourage pursuit - who is in charge here?

All *(pointing to Scotty)* He is.

How So In that case I will be kind and just take a deck hand, How What, seize this man!

How What Ha ha Jim lad.

Capt. Bligh Do something theyv'e got the admiral!

(They all start murmuring things like - "oh my foot - can't move - damn seem to have broken me leg, must go and iron the cat, etc. "

(

Capt. Bligh All right you landlubbers, leave this to me. How So.

How What *(Threatening)* Ha ha Jim lad.

Capt. Bligh Is that parrot alive?

How So Of course - I bought him not 5 minutes ago at local pet shop.

Capt. Kirk Looks dead to me.

How So No no he sleeping.

Capt. Cook Nice bird the Norwegian Blue ...

(The action freezes. Enter the Professor.)

Professor This is an example of the stochastic or random nature of computer science plays. By allowing a small random fluctuations and repetitive jokes we exploit self-similarity and stochastic brownian motion. Since the authors could think of no possible ending in this case, I represent such a random interruption. We shall turn to page 384, chosen at random, and continue with scene 5.

(Blackout)

Scene Five

(Scene: a beach someplace. The lights come up, and nothing is visible except an IKEA catalogue. Sound of waves crashing on the beach. Voices off cries: "Land Ahoy!" A rending crash, and cries of dismay are heard, followed by just the waves again. Captain Cook, Bligh, and Kirk stagger onto the stage.)

Capt. Cook It would be nice to have a bit more warning about things like that.

Capt. Bligh I'll say. I nearly did myself a serious injury, and my cabin boy may never be the same again.

Capt. Kirk Where are we anyway?

Capt. Cook Looks like a beach to me.

Capt. Kirk True, it does look like a beach. Uninhabited, yet.

Capt. Bligh Except for us. We're here.

Capt. Cook Where's here?

Capt. Bligh Looks like a beach to me.

Capt. Kirk What's this?

(Picks up IKEA catalogue)

Capt. Kirk IKEA 1305, prices guaranteed until August 23rd,1305. How did this get here?

Capt. Cook Bloody vikings beat us to it again. It doesn't matter where you go, they've always been there first.

Capt. Bligh Where?

Capt. Kirk Looks like a beach to me.

Capt. Cook Never mind all that. We'd better go and see if we can find some people.

Capt. Bligh I wouldn't bother.

Capt. Cook Why not?

Capt. Bligh It looks as though the people have found us.

(Enter Hiawatha, Pocahontas, MiniHah, and anyone else who tagged along.)

Hiawatha How!

Capt. Kirk What does he want to know?

Capt. Cook It's just his way of saying "hello". Let me handle this. Greeting, great warrior. Me white man from far across the seas. We come in piece. See, we bring um pretty beads as peace offering.

Hiawatha (*speaking to MiniHaha*) Have you ever noticed that these white people always treat us as though we were complete idiots?

Pocah. & Hiawatha Ha ha!

Hiawatha (*to Cook*) We aren't interested in your beads.

Capt. Bligh You can't have our cabin boys!

Pocahontas We aren't interested in your cabin boys either.

Hiawatha Speak for yourself, sweetheart.

Pocah. & Hiawatha (*significant*) Ha ha!

Hiawatha Have you brought our furniture?

Capt. Cook Your what?

Hiawatha Our furniture! IKEA promised six month delivery, and that was 187 years ago! The spirits of our ancestors are thoroughly pee'd off with the whole thing. What have you been doing? Growing the trees?

Capt. Cook I don't know what you're talking about! What have we got to do with your IKEA furniture?

Pocahontas C'mon! We're not that stupid. Do you really expect us to believe that the first white men to land here in 200 years clutching an IKEA catalogue don't know about our furniture?

Pocah. & Hiawatha (*derisive*) Ha! Ha!

Capt. Kirk We just found the catalogue here!

Pocahontas Where?

Hiawatha Looks like a beach to me.

Capt. Cook Oh, this is ridiculous! How can we convince you that we don't know anything about all this?

Hiawatha We don't want explanations. We either want our furniture, or our money back plus interest. Oh, and speaking of interest, you just might be interested to know that another white man is enjoying our hospitality right now.

All Who?

Pocah. & Hiawatha *(sort-of "gotcha" reaction)* Ha, ha!

Hiawatha He says he's called Jim Columbus, but we suspect it's a false name.

Capt. Bligh *(fascinated in the gory details)* What horrible, grisly, mystic rights have you been performing on him?

Capt. Cook Yes, I trust you have been making him comfortable?

Pocahontas How can we without any furniture?

Pocah. & Hiawatha *(actually amused, for once)* Ha Ha!

Hiawatha I'm warning you, if our demands aren't met....

Capt. Bligh Yes? Yes?!

Hiawatha We will deliberately withhold all the gory details of what we have done to him!

Capt. Bligh You sadistic fiends!

Capt. Cook I must confer with my associates. If you will excuse us for a few minutes?

Capt. Kirk *(shouts towards offstage)* Scotty, would you join us please?

(The groups separate, and the Indians fade into the background a bit. Scotty joins the group.)

Capt. Cook Any ideas, gentlemen?

Capt. Bligh We could have them all boiled in that cauldron over there.

Capt. Cook Where? I see no cauldron.

Capt. Bligh Well then, we could have them boiled in that cauldron which is not over there. I expected there to be a cauldron washed up here somewhere...

Capt. Cook I wouldn't expect too much of that cauldron. Any other ideas?

Capt. Kirk Maximum deflector shields and a quick phasor burst?

Scotty I'd have to build a phasor bank first, Captain.

Capt. Kirk How soon could you have it working?

Capt. Bligh What are they talking about?

Scotty Oh, a good two months, I'd say captain.

Capt. Cook I have no idea, but it sounds like a lot of old cobblers to me. Any ideas which aren't stupid?

Capt. Bligh We can trade something for the return of the admiral.

Scotty Och, we've nothing but a hold full of porridge to trade.

Capt. Cook No, that's a good idea! We can give them these!

Capt. Kirk What in the name of space are those.

Capt. Cook Travellers cheques!

All Travellers cheques?

Capt. Cook Travellers cheques!

Capt. Bligh They won't take those, they are just paper.

Capt. Cook Of course they will! They're Thomas Cooks travellers cheques.

Capt. Kirk If you think it's worth it, let's try them and see.

Capt. Cook All right then. Ahoy, there!

(The indians turn and move to meet the captains.)

Capt. Kirk We would like to make a bargain.

Pocah. & Hiawatha *(somewhat derisive)* Ha! Ha!

Hiawatha You said it. OK, what have you got for us?

Capt. Cook These.

Pocahontas They nothing but worthless scraps of paper.

Capt. Kirk They are travellers cheques.

Capt. Bligh Recognised the world over.

Capt. Cook Thomas Cook travellers cheques.

Pocahontas Sorry we only take American Express.

All Curse, We left home without them!

Capt. Cook Is there a bank near here somewhere?

Hiawatha We have no use for such things, but there may be one up the North East end of the island.

Capt. Bligh Are we likely to encounter any difficulties getting there?

Hiawatha Other than the fact that there's no road, no. We own the whole island.

Capt. Cook You own it?

Pocahontas Yes, our legends say that we bought it from another tribe for everything we had.

Capt. Kirk That must have been expensive.

Pocah. & Hiawatha Ha ha! (*laughing at Kirk*)

Hiawatha Not really. All we had at the time was a piece of brown string, elevenpence in notes, a mickey mouse watch, the remains of a small boiled chicken, and a key.

Capt. Cook What an incredible deal!

Pocahontas I don't know about that. Have you any idea how rare Mickey Mouse watches are in these parts?

Capt. Kirk About as rare as IKEA furniture I would imagine.

Pocah. & Hiawatha (*amused*) Haha!

Capt. Cook Well it looks as though we shall have to go to the bank.

Hiawatha Very well, but I should warn you that if you do not return in two days time...

Capt. Bligh Yes! Go on!!

Hiawatha You'll never know.

Pocahontas Also watch out for our gods they live in that general direction, and they tend to stomp on people who get too close.

Inquisitor 1

Damn!

Scene Six

(During this monologue, Kirk is highlighted, while the action he is describing is performed by Scotty, in the background.)

Capt. Kirk

Captain's Log, stardate 25985.9. Captain Cook and Captain Bligh have gone to the bank, leaving Scotty and myself free to try to contact the Enterprise without arousing their suspicions. Scotty first attempted delicate repairs to the communicator *(we see Scotty pounding the shit out of a communicator with an axe or something)* but to no avail *(Scotty hurls the thing to the floor and makes rude gestures at it)*. We thought of alternative signalling methods. I suggested sending up a pulsed cloud of steam which would trigger the heat sensors on board the Enterprise *(Scotty is trying to light a fire under the cauldron)*, but under the circumstances we were unable to raise enough steam pressure *(the inquisitor has stuck his head over the side of the cauldron, and is beating Scotty over the head with his wooden spoon)*. Scotty suggested creating enough noise to activate the ship's audio sensors *(Scotty is attempting to build a set of bagpipes with a brown paper bag and some odds and sods)* but this attempt suffered mechanical failure *(Scotty blows mightily and the bagpipes fall to pieces)*. After some other abortive attempts *(Scotty is jumping off a log, flapping his arms wildly)* Scotty eventually hit upon a partial solution by what he describes as a ballistic missile approach *(Scotty is throwing rocks at the sky; he looks for rocks, and after a few shots, wanders offstage still looking)*. Apparently it attracted the attention of the Enterprise, because Scotty got beamed up *(Captain Kirk practically breaks into tears)* leaving me all alone down here! *(he recovers his composure)* I can only hope he will be able to get me aboard again soon. Meanwhile, the Captains continue their journey.

(Lights fade, following Kirk and Scotty off, and rising again in a sort of wave to allow Bligh and Cook to enter elsewhere... They appear disheveled.)

Capt. Bligh

A pox on this undergrowth. Undergrowth always gets in the way.

Capt. Cook

You know, that explains a lot about you, Bligh. Let's take a breather in this clearing.

Capt. Bligh

Good idea.

(They sit down. On logs, maybe?)

Capt. Cook

Haven't seen anything of these gods the indians warned us about.

Capt. Bligh

Hah! Lot of superstitious nonsense. Gods who stomp on you if you get in their way, indeed!

Capt. Cook I suppose it is a bit ridiculous. I wonder what made this clearing.

Capt. Bligh Large animal of some kind. It looks as though the plants have been trampled flat.

Capt. Cook There must be a bunch of them about. There seem to be a lot of clearings like this along our route.

Capt. Bligh True, and at very regular intervals too. Odd we haven't seen the animals responsible...

(Enter two pygmies. They tower over the captains. who fall flat on their backs.)

Pygmy #1 Who are you calling animals?

Capt. Cook Ah! Uh, we, uh ah, oh er...

Pygmy #2 That's not the same language they were using a minute ago.

Pygmy #1 It certainly sounds different. At least they don't fall face down like those indians.

Pygmy #2 Let's try again. *(slowly and deliberately)* Who are you calling animals?

Capt. Bligh We - ah - wondered what had made this clearing.

Pygmy #1 For your information, it was our tribe, and we don't like being referred to as animals, especially by people smaller than us...

Pygmy #2 Which is almost everybody.

Pygmy #1 Right. What do you want here?

Capt. Cook We're trying to get to a bank.

Pygmy #1 Not today you won't, it's after 3 o'clock you know.

Capt. Bligh Curse the luck! And we have only one more day!

Pygmy #2 One more day to do what?

Capt. Cook It's a long story. We need to exchange some of my traveller's cheques for American Express ones to pay the indians to release Columbus who fell into their hands by a mischance, and who they won't release him until we give them the furniture which they seem to think they should have got two-hundred years ago and that we are supposed to know something about, but we don't and....

Pygmy #1 Ok, ok! I believe you.

Capt. Cook You do?

Pygmy #1 I believe it's a long story. Actually, it's what our tribe would call a tall story, by the sounds of things.

Capt. Bligh What right have you got to question us? The indians said they owned this whole island, and they didn't mention anything about you.

Pygmy #2 Oh, they own it all right. They bought it off us way back from our idiot ancestors.

Pygmy #1 We've been trying to get a more equitable arrangement set up ever since we realised how badly we got taken. Do you know what those skinflints paid us for this chunk of territory? They said they'd give us everything they owned, which sounded fair enough until it turned out that all they had was a piece of brown string, elevenpence in notes, a mickey mouse watch, the remains of a small boiled chicken, and a key.

Pygmy #2 And the to add insult to injury, the watch stopped.

Pygmy #1 One day there was Mickey waving his arms around (*he demonstrates*), and the next frozen permanently in position.

Pygmy #2 Most unfortunate. The only thing that makes us feel any sense of justice about the whole thing is that sometimes when the indians fall flat on their faces we accidentally stomp on them.

Pygmy #1 Yeah, you get some awfully flat people that way.

Capt. Bligh I don't beleive it! You may be tall, but you're not big enough to "accidentally" squash someone flat by standing on them.

Pygmy #1 We will be when we get older though.

Pygmy #2 Yeah, you should see his big brother. Actually, he should be coming this way soon. We should move over here a bit so he can see us...

(*They all shuffle across the stage a bit*)

Capt. Cook Bligh, do you suppose these fine and wonderful people could be the gods the indians were talking about?

Pygmy #1 What did you say? The indians said what about us?

Capt. Bligh Oh, they just recited some superstitious nonsense about some unfriendly gods along our route who might stomp on us if we were a nuisance; that's all.

Pygmy #2 Holy mother of Gichigumi! The indians...

Pygmy #1 ... think we're gods!

(They pause in raptured thought for a moment.)

Pygmy #2 Opens up a whole new world of possibilities, doesn't it?

Pygmy #1 Yeah! Just wait until Little Jim hears about this!

Capt. Cook Who's Little Jim?

Pygmy #1 My brother. *(shouts)* Little Jim! Little Jim, come over here! We've got something to tell you.

(Great crashings of undergrowth and shakings of stage ensue. The actors make like the ground is trembling in time to the rhythmic footsteps which approach, and end when a huge foot (maybe just a big toe) appears from the edge of the stage. Cook tries to leap into Bligh's arms for security. A huge voice booms out.)

Little Jim What'cha want, pipsqueak?

Pygmy #1 Little Jim, meet - ah - I didn't catch your names?

Capt. Cook Ggggaaahhhuhh!

Capt. Bligh Oooooohhhhhh!

Pygmy #1 Mr. Ggggaaahhhuhh and Mr. Oooooohhhhhh.

Little Jim Howdy.

Pygmy #2 Well, don't just stand there! Say something! He gets offended if people ignore him.

Pygmy #1 Tremendous inferiority complex, you know.

Capt. Cook Uh - er - Hello. What's the weather like up there?

Little Jim Scattered snow flurries on the upper slopes - or maybe it's just dandruff. Other than that, quite a nice day, thanks.

Pygmy #1 You know what these two fellas just told us, Little Jim? They told us the indians think we're gods!

Little Jim Gods? *(Laughs uproariously. The ground shakes)* Gods! That's pretty funny, aint it?

Pygmy #2 Yeah, I could fancy myself as a god. (*swaggers*) Now hear me people! I want all your first born daughters!

Capt. Bligh Gods usually want first born sons, don't they.

Pygmy #2 Whatever turns you on.

Pygmy #1 You know, you guys have done us a real favour today. I mean, this could make all the difference in dealing with those indians. Is there anything we can do to help you?

Capt. Cook Well, unless you just happen to know where we might come upon a shipload of IKEA furniture

Pygmy #2 Furniture? We have loads of useless furniture. It's been in the tribe for generations. Legend has it that it washed ashore after a Viking ship got wrecked on the coast. We can't find a use for it.

Capt. Bligh Why not?

Little Jim Much too small.

Capt. Cook Ah, yes I could see that. I wonder. Would it be too much of a coincidence if this turned out to be the very IKEA furniture that the indians were expecting?

Capt. Bligh The way this plot's been unfolding, I'd believe just about anything right now.

Capt. Cook OK then, I'll tell you what. If you could supply a few people to help carry the furniture to the indian's village, we will go on ahead and make sure they stay put long enough for you to come and talk to them.

Pygmy #1 Perfect! We'll take the whole tribe along!

Pygmy #2 That should shake things up a bit! Let's get with it then!

(*They all tromp off, including the big foot. The lights wave through again, and Kirk re-enters.*)

Capt. Kirk Captain's log, stardate -37. I think my Mickey mouse watch is giving me the wrong time. There has been no word from the Enterprise, and there is no sign yet of Captain Cook and Captain Bligh. I fear for their safety. There have been earth tremors and clouds of dust to the north east. Time is running out....

Scene Seven

(The lights come up to reveal Kirk looking distinctly depressed.)

Capt. Kirk Captains log stardate - damn this Mickey Mouse watch has stopped! Anyway Scotty still hasn't beamed me up and there are only a few more minutes left before the natives do unspeakably nasty things to Columbus and here they come.

Hiawatha How!

Capt. Kirk Err... Hi.

Pocahontas How!

Capt. Kirk I suppose youv'e come for your money.

Pocah. & Hiawatha Ha ha.

Pocahontas The two days are up, whiteman. You been to the bank yet?

Capt. Kirk Well - not exactly.

Hiawatha Ok lets go and start the sacrifice.

Capt. Kirk Sacrifice?

Pocahontas We have to keep the gods happy or they will flatten us all.

(She exits to get the scissors.)

Capt. Kirk Are there worse things than being flattened.

(Mini Haha and Pocahontas leave and return dragging Columbus. Columbus stands with his legss apart and his hands tied.)

Hiawatha Pocahontas - pass me the sacrificial scissors.

(The scissors are to be applied in the obvious place. Great ceremony is given to the handling of the scissors.)

Pocahontas Chippy choppy chippy choppy chop chop chop ...

Capt. Kirk How can you do that to your fellow man.

Pocahontas Oh we wouldn't do it to one of our own.

Hiawatha Not when we have your friend.

Columbus Captain Kirk - have you come to rescue me?

Hiawatha No he's dessert. *(They tie Kirk)* First the sacrificial song.

All
My furniture lies over the ocean
My furniture lies over the sea
It cost me just ten thousand kroner
Oh bring back my furniture to me.

Bring back, bring back,
Oh bring back my furniture to me.

Hiawatha That's good - shall we sing another verse?

Columbus No! Not another verse - sacrifice us now, please.

Capt. Kirk Are you ready for dessert?

Hiawatha Desert? Looks more like a beach to me.

Pocahontas Sacrifice them before they drive us to distraction.

Little Jim Stop! I have spoken.

(The natives throw themselves to the ground.)

Hiawatha It's the great flat God.

(Enter Bligh and Cook accompanied by the Pygmies)

Capt. Cook How do Blue.

Capt. Bligh Looks like we arrived in the nick of time.

Columbus Cook and Bligh!

Capt. Kirk Brother are we pleased to see you - I was expecting the inquisition.

All Nobody ever expects the Spanish Inquisition.

Pygmy #1 Who the hell are they?

Capt. Cook Careful cobber the inquisition have their cauldrons everywhere.

Hiawatha Oh great stomping god - what service can we perform?

Pocahontas Shall we sacrifice this whiteman oh great flattening fiend? Chippy choppy chippy choppy chop chop chop ...

(She grabs the scissors and waves them threateningly.)

Columbus For christs sake be careful think of my children.

Pygmy #1 The great god bids you a merry christmas.

Pygmy #2 You must perform two tasks.

Pygmy #1 First we bring you a gift.

Pygmy #2 You see those packing cases?

Pocahontas I see them oh little god.

Pygmy #1 They contain your lost furniture.

Hiawatha You are indeed gods! Pocahontas open them up.

(She runs off stage.)

Capt. Cook My throat's as dry as a kangaroos kisser - nobody got a tube of lager round here?

Columbus Is that all you can think about. Will somebody get me out of here?

(Pocohantas returns.)

Pocahontas The cases are locked Hiawatha.

Hiawatha Where is the key?

Pygmy #2 Don't look at me I don't have the key.

Pocahontas Who does?

(Sound of waves crashing on the beach. Voices off cries: "Land Ahoy!" A rending crash, and cries of dismay are heard, followed by just the waves again. How So and How What stagger onto the stage.)

How So So sorry. Our Piloting computer fell in sea, see.

Columbus Si, si, senior. Can you cut me loose?

How So Can we get service under warrantee?

How What Ha ha Jim lad.

Hiawatha This lot are crazy. Pocahontas make the sacrifice.

Pocahontas Chippy choppy chippy choppy chop chop chop ...

Capt. Kirk Wait!

Pocahontas Why?

Columbus Because you haven't yet got your furniture!

Hiawatha You got the key?

Capt. Cook No but these big buggers will flatten you if you cut old Columbus up.

Pocahontas Mighty one do you want the sacrifice to continue?

Pygmy #2 Maybe.

Pygmy #1 We might ask you to stop - if we get ownership of our island back.

Hiawatha You get the key to our furniture then you get back the island and these foreigners. No key then I tell Pocahontas here to slice the cake.

Pocahontas Chippy choppy chippy choppy chop chop chop ...

(*Scotty beams down amidst the usual effects*)

Scotty Don't do it!

Capt. Kirk Scotty! Get me out of here!

Scotty Sorry captain the transporter is no working to full capacity yet. But I have brought along a few hostages.

(*Enter the King and Queen and Galileo.*)

King Ferdinand What a truly remarkable way to travel. Did you notice that strange person with the pointed ears, Mr. Spick or something.

Queen Isabella He was quite dreamy my dear, but so hard to get! Sigh.

Galileo Ah captain Kirk, you have your warp drive but I have invented a weft drive, let me explain it to you.

Capt. Kirk Warp drive, shwarp drive, get us out of here?

King Ferdinand Ah Columbus, having a bit of trouble I see, don't let us interrupt.

Queen Isabella No we are just here for the final song you understand.

(*Normal chord for Professors interruption.*)

Professor At this point of the play it is essential that the entire cast is brought into the plot. There are now so many people on stage that we need to do some re-organisation so that we can tie up the last few loose ends. Come along please, move over there. That's better carry on.

King Ferdinand Right what seems to be the problem?

Capt. Cook They want to cut up Columbus.

Scotty And Captain Kirk.

Capt. Bligh Because we didn't get to the bank on time.

Pygmy #2 We want our island back.

Hiawatha We want our furniture.

Pocahontas But nobody has the key.

King Ferdinand This is all very confusing. What did the island cost?

Pygmy #1 We've told you once. A piece of brown string

Pygmy #2 Elevenpence in notes.

Pygmy #1 A mickey mouse watch

Pygmy #2 The remains of a small boiled chicken, and (*both pygmies together*) a key.

(*Everybody exchange looks.*)

Hiawatha The key!

How So I saw them in large wok heading West at 3 knots.

Columbus Perhaps that's the last we'll see of them.

Galileo I think this calls for a little celebration, ships pianist.

Ships Pianist Aye, aye sir.

Galileo A celebratory song.

All

My cauldron lies over the ocean
My cauldron lies over the sea
Its filled up with icky inquisitors
Don't bring back my cauldron to me.

Please leave, please leave,
Oh please leave the cauldron at sea, at sea. ...

(*While they sing the cauldron creeps on stage. The inquisitors jump out.*)

Inquisitor 1 Hold it.

Inquisitor 2 What are you celebrating.

Columbus We thought you weren't coming.

Both Inquisitors Nobody ever expects the Spanish Inquisition.

Inquisitor 1 Columbus you have failed to prove anything. You must continue with your voyage.

Inquisitor 2 We have a new ship for you, it's called the Marie Celeste.

Inquisitor 1 I was going to call it Titanic.

King Ferdinand Good idea - send them all off.

Queen Isabella No we won't do that at all, we'll sing the last song again.

Scotty (*and Kirk*) Beam us up Mr. Spock.

(*They sing the last verse again.*)

All

My cauldron lies over the ocean
My cauldron lies over the sea
Its filled up with icky inquisitors
Don't bring back my cauldron to me.

Please leave, please leave,

Oh please leave the cauldron at sea, at sea. ...

The End