

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

screenplay by
Douglas Adams
and
Abbie Bernstein

based on
Douglas Adams's books

REVISED DRAFT
February 9, 1987

2/10/87

We know this reads "expensive". However, we have no intentions of doing an expensive movie and would point out that Rocky Morton and Anabel Jankel, the directors on the project, made the MAX HEADROOM movie for \$800,000. Obviously, this script needs more work but this is the direction we want it to go in.

Ivan Reitman
Joe Medjuck

FADE IN:

A COMPLETELY BLACK SCREEN, on which a CAPTION appears:
"TIME: 06:30 a.m. GMT."

The CAPTION disappears as the darkness alters, now illuminated by hordes of constellations and solar systems. This is deep space as seen from the midst of it.

The GUIDE'S VOICE addresses us: warm, wise, unflappable.

GUIDE

(v.o.)

This is a story from the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, perhaps the most remarkable, certainly the most successful book ever to come out of the great publishing corporations of Ursa Minor.

We single out a particular solar system and begin moving slowly but purposefully toward it, as:

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

In many of the more relaxed civilizations of the Galaxy, the Hitchhiker's Guide has already supplanted the great Encyclopedia Galactica as the standard repository of all knowledge and wisdom, for though it has many omissions and contains much which is apocryphal, or at least wildly inaccurate, it scores over the older, more pedestrian work in two respects. First, it is slightly cheaper, and second, it has the words "Don't Panic!" printed on its cover.

We have now reached the solar system: Earth's.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

This story of the Guide is a story of some lives it affected. One of these lives belongs to a human being from the planet Earth.

We SINGLE OUT the Earth. Over this, we SUPER a CAPTION:
"DESTRUCTION OF EARTH DUE: 11:56 a.m. GMT."

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

The CAPTION disappears. We plunge down toward the British Isles, descending through a billowy bank of clouds and finally diving down through the roof of a charming, two-story house, to:

INT. "SPACE" -- MORNING

We appear to be back in space, once again observing the galaxies from a far distance, seeing stars as tiny white spots against a black background. A CAPTION appears -- "7:19 a.m. GMT" -- briefly registers, then disappears.

A HUGE HAND reaches into the "galaxy" and begins brushing away the "stars." We:

PULL BACK TO:

INT. ARTHUR'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

We are in the upstairs bedroom of ARTHUR DENT, an Englishman clad in pajamas and a bathrobe. We now see the "galaxy" is merely the shiny black top of his bedside table, atop which sits an Automatic Tea Maker/Alarm Clock. The "stars" are grains of sugar which Arthur has unsuccessfully tried to pour into his morning tea.

Arthur is in his late 20s, decent-looking, amiable-natured and always makes a sincere effort to understand what's being said to him (though he doesn't always succeed). Just now, he's fairly groggy but trying to wake up. As he sweeps the spilled sugar into a wastebasket, then puts more sugar into his teacup, we hear a RUMBLING NOISE o.s.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

... His name is Arthur Dent, he is
an ape descendant of the species
homo sapiens ...

The o.s. RUMBLING resolves into an o.s. CRASH. Perturbed, Arthur goes to the window and looks out -- just in time to see a huge, blooming rosebush rise up past him.

EXT. ARTHUR'S FRONT YARD -- ARTHUR'S P.O.V. -- MORNING

A lovely garden in the English countryside, with beautiful rosebushes -- one of which is unceremoniously dumped upside down by the scoop of a bulldozer. Several more bulldozers prepare to scoop up the rest of the garden.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

... and someone is trying to drive a
highway bypass through his home.

INT. ARTHUR'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Arthur, outraged and dismayed, bolts from the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARTHUR'S FRONT YARD -- DAY

Huge chunks of earth have been dug up into mounds by the
bulldozers, now even closer to the house. For some reason
we can't yet tell, the bulldozers aren't moving.

PROSSER, a bureaucrat, steps off a mud mound, walks around
to the lowered scoop of the front bulldozer and looks down:
Arthur, still in his bathrobe and pajamas, is lying in front
of the bulldozer.

PROSSER

Nearly four hours now, Mr. Dent.
You can't lie in front of the
bulldozers forever, you know.

ARTHUR

(determinedly pleasant)
I'm game, let's see who rusts first.

PROSSER

Look, it's too late for all this
now.

(waves sheef of
documents at Arthur)

Copies of these demolition orders
have been on display at the planning
office in East Grinstead for over a
year, so you've had plenty of time
to lodge a formal complaint.

ARTHUR

Plenty of time? The first I knew
about any of this was yesterday,
when that workman arrived at my
door.

He points to the BULLDOZER'S DRIVER, who doesn't react.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

(continuing)

Before that, you hadn't exactly gone out of your way to call attention to this business, had you? I mean, like actually telling anybody or anything.

PROSSER

There's no call for sarcasm.

ARTHUR

Sorry, but it seems to me there's less call for your bloody bypass.

Prosser SIGHS and gestures for the Drivers to start their bulldozer engines again, then leans closer to Arthur.

PROSSER

Mr. Dent, have you any idea how much damage that bulldozer would suffer if I let it roll straight over you?

ARTHUR

How much?

PROSSER

None at all.

He lets Arthur think this over, as:

GUIDE

(v.o.)

By a strange coincidence, "none at all" is exactly how much suspicion the ape descendant Arthur Dent had

...

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY LANE -- DAY

A picturesque tree-lined road that leads to Arthur's house. FORD, a 30ish working journalist in blue jeans who's a bit of a bullshit artist, hurries up the road, a beer can in his hand and two towels and a filthy white duffel bag over his shoulder. Something inside the duffel bag is BLINKING RED.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

... that one of his closest friends was not descended from an ape, but was in fact from a small planet somewhere in the vicinity of Betelgeuse -- and not from Asbury Park, New Jersey, as he usually claimed.

Ford looks from the beer can to his watch, drains the can, tosses it away and rounds a bend in the road, as:

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

His name is Ford. In fifteen seconds' time, he will say, "Hello, Arthur, listen." The ape descendant will greet him in return but, in deference to a million years of evolution, will not attempt to pick fleas off him.

EXT. ARTHUR'S FRONT YARD -- DAY

As Ford breathlessly runs up to Arthur, still lying in front of the bulldozer. Ford doesn't find this odd.

FORD

Hello, Arthur. Listen --

Arthur sits up, surprised and delighted to see Ford.

ARTHUR

Ford! I'm so glad you're here, you can call a lawyer for me. They --

FORD

A lawyer? Look, are you busy?

ARTHUR

Um, no, not apart from lying in front of this bulldozer to stop it from knocking down my house.

FORD

(the sarcasm
doesn't register)

Great. Then come on, we gotta get to the nearest pub right now.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR
(increasingly bewildered)
We do? Why?

FORD
Look, I'm gonna tell you the most important thing you've ever heard in your life, and you need to get shit-faced drunk for it.

Arthur stares at Ford intently, looks back at the bulldozers to make sure they're real, looks at Ford again to see if he grasps the situation. He doesn't seem to.

ARTHUR
Well, Ford, that does sound very tempting, but the thing of it is, they're going to destroy my home.

FORD
(surprised)
How'd you know?

Arthur gestures at the bulldozers.

ARTHUR
It's not the sort of thing I'm liable to miss.

FORD
What does that have to do with --

He stops, takes a good look at the bulldozers, looks at Arthur's house and realizes they're not talking about the same thing. Ford points at the house to be sure.

FORD
(continuing)
You mean this home? It's just gonna be -- ah, the hell with it.

He looks from his watch to the sky, abruptly turns on his heel and strides over to Prosser, who is conferring with the bulldozer Drivers over the ROAR of the engines.

FORD
(to Prosser,
continuing)
Hey, you! Yeah, excuse me!

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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PROSSER

Are you a friend of his? Has he
come round to his senses yet?

FORD

For now, let's say he hasn't. In
fact, let's say he'll be there all
day.

PROSSER

(despondent)

Oh, don't say that.

FORD

If he is, you guys are gonna be
sitting around doing nothing all
day, right? In which case, you
don't actually need him to be here.

PROSSER

What?

Ford flings an arm over Prosser's shoulder, leading him
across the yard as he explains himself. Arthur props
himself up on his elbows, striving to listen, but he (and
we) can't hear a word. However, Prosser starts to look
suspiciously smug and relieved as he nods acquiescence.

Ford and Prosser approach Arthur, who eyes them warily.

FORD

Okay, Arthur, temporary truce. Mr.
Prosser has agreed to lie in the mud
for you now if you'll watch the
bulldozers for him on his break.

ARTHUR

What?

PROSSER

I give my solemn word.

And he lies down next to Arthur in front of the bulldozer.

FORD

See? What more can you ask for?

Before Arthur can recover from his confusion, Ford yanks him
to his feet, then tosses one of the towels at him.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

FORD
(continuing)
Catch!

More agitated than before, he tugs on Arthur's bathrobe sleeve, but Arthur looks uncertainly back at Prosser who, thinking they've gone, starts to get up. Ford sternly catches Prosser's eye; Prosser meekly lies down again.

FORD
(continuing)
No sneaky knocking down Mr. Dent's house while we're gone, right?

PROSSER
The merest thought hadn't even begun to speculate about crossing my mind.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY LANE -- DAY

Arthur, still trying to puzzle out what's going on, keeps turning back to look at his house as Ford hurries him along.

ARTHUR
You really think he'll keep his word?

FORD
Sure, I trust him to the end of the world. Which is in about twenty minutes, so move your ass, huh?

CUT TO:

INT. ENGLISH COUNTRY PUB -- DAY

The pub is full; a darts game is in progress. Ford waits to be served while Arthur, the towel now draped over his shoulders, searches the phone book, receiver to his ear:

ARTHUR
(into phone)
I've got to talk to a lawyer now.
When does he get back from lunch?

He looks at his watch. It's not working. He turns to Ford:

ARTHUR
(continuing)
What's the time?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Ford shows Arthur his watch.

FORD

Time is an illusion. Especially
lunchtime.

ARTHUR

Very deep. You should send that to
the Reader's Digest --

(responding to phone)

When? No, I'll ring back, thank
you.

He glumly hangs up, then continues searching the phone book,
listening with half an ear as:

FORD

(to Bartender)

Six pints right away, please.

The BARTENDER nods, moves to fill six pint glasses, as:

BARTENDER

Going to watch the match this
afternoon, sir?

FORD

Huh? Oh, no, no point.

BARTENDER

Foregone conclusion then, you
reckon? Liverpool without a chance?

FORD

Yeah, pretty much. The world's
going to end in around sixteen
minutes.

BARTENDER

(chuckles)

Lucky escape for Liverpool if it
did.

FORD

No, not really.

He begins ferrying the pints over to Arthur, as:

FORD

(continuing)

Okay, drink up, you're gonna
need at least three of these.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

What for?

FORD

Muscle relaxant. For the jump.

Ford grabs a pint himself, thirstily drains it in a single protracted gulp. Arthur frowns dubiously.

ARTHUR

Ford, even for you, you're behaving very strangely. Is something wrong?

FORD

Just that the world's about to end.

ARTHUR

Look, I know you've had problems at work lately, but you mustn't take it personally. It's annoying to be ignored but it's really not the end of the world.

FORD

It's not the job, Arthur, it is the end of the world.

ARTHUR

Why do you keep saying that?

We CLOSE IN on Ford's duffel bag. Through the fabric, we can faintly see the PULSING RED LIGHT.

GUIDE

(v.o.)

The reason Ford kept saying that was because his Electronic Sub-Etha Transmitter had detected --

EXT. SKY -- P.O.V. FROM SPACESHIP -- DAY

We are flying at great speed through a fluffy cloudbank.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- several huge, ugly things in the ionosphere many miles above the surface of the planet.

INT. SATELLITE TRACKING STATION -- NIGHT

BLIPS flash across the RADAR SCREEN, just as the TECHNICIAN drops his pencil and bends under his desk to retrieve it.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)
Curiously enough, they went
unnoticed in Alaska ...

INT. HOUSTON SPACE CENTER -- NIGHT

More BLIPS flash across the RADAR SCREEN here, but the TECHNICIAN who should be watching it is instead hysterically cheering (m.o.s.) a football game on the adjacent TV SCREEN.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)
... they passed over Houston without
excitement ...

EXT. RADAR TRACKING STATION ROOF -- DAY

A SQUAD OF REPAIRMEN work away on the downed satellite dish, not looking up as a HUGE SHADOW briefly ripples over them.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)
... and Woomera and Jodrell Bank
missed them, too, which is a pity,
because it was exactly the sort of
thing that they had been looking for
all these years.

INT. PUB -- DAY

Arthur sips distractedly at his first beer, nervously glancing out the window; Ford is working on his third pint.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)
Ford might have tried to warn one of
these installations, but he was
having enough trouble just getting
through to Arthur.

FORD

Drink faster, you've got two more
pints to go in sixteen minutes.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

What's this all about?

FORD

How would you react if I told you I'm really from a small planet somewhere near Betelgeuse, and not from New Jersey?

ARTHUR

I don't know. Why, do you think it's the sort of thing you're likely to say?

(sympathetic)

Oh, come on, Ford, you can tell me. What's wrong? Is it a woman?

FORD

No, it's the end of the world.

ARTHUR

Yes, I've got that much. But --

We hear a DISTANT CRASH o.s., like a building collapsing.

ARTHUR

(continuing)

What was that?

FORD

Probably just your house. Listen --

ARTHUR

My house -- !!

He dashes out the door, crashing into several tables on his way and leaving his towel behind.

FORD

Arthur, forget it, it doesn't --

But Arthur is gone. Ford SIGHS, stuffs Arthur's towel back into his duffel bag, tries to tuck the remaining pints under his arm, sees this won't work, drinks both of them at inhuman speed, then vaults over the bar and begins rummaging around behind it. The Bartender is livid.

BARTENDER

Sir, do you mind?

Ford finds what he's looking for.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

FORD
Peanuts, terrific.

He grabs several packets of peanuts, vaults back over the bar and tosses a huge wad of money at the Bartender, who stares at it in disbelief as Ford starts out the door.

BARTENDER
Wait, sir, your change --

FORD
Keep it. It doesn't matter.

The Bartender is slowly beginning to believe Ford.

BARTENDER
You really do believe the world's going to end.

FORD
Uh-huh. In about fifteen minutes.

BARTENDER
Isn't there anything we can do?

FORD
No.

He has one foot out the door.

BARTENDER
I always thought we were meant to lie down or put paper bags over our heads or something.

FORD
(reassuring)
Sure, if you want to.

He dashes out the door. The Bartender shakes his head, not sure what to think.

BARTENDER
Oh, well ...
(to Customers)
Last orders, please.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY LANE -- DAY

Arthur runs down the lane toward the SOUNDS OF DEMOLITION.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Ford rounds a bend in the road, runs to catch up to Arthur.

FORD
Arthur, will you wait up --

He grabs Arthur's arm, but Arthur pulls away, keeps running:

ARTHUR
Ford, if I don't get home right now,
I'm not going to have anywhere to
live, don't you understand?

FORD
You're not going to live at all if
you don't --

A HUGE SHADOW falls over them. An instant later, HORRIBLE GROWLING GARGLING UNINTELLIGIBLE SPEECH is broadcast over an airborne P.A. SYSTEM. Arthur slows his pace in order to look up at the source of the noise -- and freezes in shock.

EXT. SKY -- VOGON SPACESHIP -- ARTHUR'S P.O.V.

An enormous, powerful and exceptionally ugly dull yellow VOGON SPACESHIP hovers in the sky over our heads.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LONDON -- DAY

PEOPLE stop in the street, staring up at the same awful sight and hearing the same dreadful SOUND.

EXT. JAPANESE TEA GARDEN -- DAY

The PATRONS sit frozen in shock, tea halfway to their lips, gazing up at the NOISE assaults them, too.

EXT. IOWA CORNFIELD -- DUSK

A TEENAGED COUPLE pause in their passionate necking to stare up in surprise at the interruption overhead.

INT. HONG KONG SUPERMARKET -- DAY

SHOPPERS going about their business notice as the store's security monitors switch from clear images of the shoppers to a static-riddled, almost indecipherable image of an ALIEN (a VOGON) making the UNINTELLIGIBLE SPEECH we're hearing.

INT. PUB -- DAY

The Bartender and Customers are clustered at the windows, staring out and up in amazement.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE -- DAY

The SPEECH finishes; the hovering spaceship WHOOSHES away into the stratosphere. Arthur turns gaping to Ford, who is rummaging through his duffel bag, searching for something.

ARTHUR
What was that?

FORD
Part of a Vagon Constructor Fleet.
We're gonna hitch a ride on it.

From the duffel bag, he pulls out an object that looks like an abstract sculpture of a hand with its thumb extended, hitchhiker-style, and light-emitting diode readouts on it, one of which is blinking red.

ARTHUR
What's that?

FORD
A Sub-Etha Receiver and Matter
Transmitter. For hitchhiking
purposes, it's the same as a thumb.
So just grab it and --

ARTHUR
Grab it? Why?

FORD
Because the Vogons are gonna destroy
the world and we don't want to be
here when they do.

ARTHUR
Destroy the world?

FORD
What we're gonna do is, grab the
thumb, hitch onto the Vagon ship --

He holds the "thumb" out to Arthur, but Arthur shakes his head, going into no-cope:

ARTHUR
But ... but we can't just leave --

FORD
Arthur --

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

I've got to water my plants -- I --

FORD

If we don't go, we'll die. No more
inhaling, no more exhaling, die.

ARTHUR

But -- but if we do go, what happens
to everybody else?

He looks at Ford with plaintive, pleading desperation.

FORD

I was just gonna tell you. See,
we'll hitch onto the Vagon flagship,
and then we'll sneak into their
computer, reprogram their demolition
beam --

ARTHUR

Shouldn't scientists or experts or
somebody like that do it?

FORD

There's no time to get anybody else.
Just grab the thumb.

Arthur finally grabs the "thumb." Ford SIGHS in relief,
programs the "thumb" and waits. After a moment, the red
light blinks out, a green light blinks on and Arthur, Ford
and the "thumb" dematerialize. Over this:

ARTHUR

Thursday. I never could get the
hang of Thursdays ...

CUT TO:

INT. VOGON SHIP CORRIDOR -- SPACE

Arthur and Ford materialize on a moving walkway that carries
them down a transparent corridor with a view of space on one
side and a vast chamber full of copiers, filing cabinets and
various office equipment on the other.

Arthur is out cold. Ford, merely woozy, shakes his head to
clear it, checks Arthur's pulse to make sure he's still
alive, stands and looks around. Arthur groggily comes to:

ARTHUR

Wha ... Uh ...

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Ford helps Arthur up to a sitting position.

FORD

How ya doing? Here, have some peanuts.

He thrusts the "thumb" back into his duffel bag and takes out the packets of peanuts, rips one open and pours the nuts into Arthur's hand. Arthur, still a bit out of it, stares at the roomful of office equipment without turning around.

ARTHUR

Peanuts?

FORD

Yeah. Go on, the protein'll make you feel better. You didn't have enough beer, so your system wasn't cushioned for the jump.

ARTHUR

Jump ... ? Where are we?

FORD

The Vogon Constructor Flagship.

Arthur scrambles to his feet with a mixture of consternation and fascination.

ARTHUR

My God, we're really on a spaceship?

FORD

Yup.

Taking Arthur by the shoulder, Ford turns him around to look through the corridor's other transparent wall out at:

EXT. EARTH TURNING IN SPACE -- ARTHUR AND FORD'S P.O.V.

Near enough to see the green outlines of the continents, too far away to see details. Nearby, we see OTHER VOGON SHIPS.

BACK TO SCENE

Arthur stares at his friend as he fully, finally realizes:

ARTHUR

And you're really not from New Jersey.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

The moving walkway ends in solid floor in the same place the window onto space gives way to a metal wall. Ford steps off the walkway easily but Arthur, not expecting it to end, stumbles. Ford steadies him then leads him onward, as:

FORD

'Fraid not. I was on Earth doing field research for the updated edition of "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." I'll tell you, I wouldn't've taken the assignment if I knew I was gonna be stuck for six years. I was only supposed to be on Earth a week. I missed a very hot date. This girl, Kryl -- built like an orgasm with feet. And she's a great little journalist, too, of course, but that body --

ARTHUR

Wait, you were researching the what?

Ford reaches into his duffel bag and takes out the Guide, a Walkman-sized object equipped with a control panel, video screen and the words "DON'T PANIC!" printed across it.

FORD

"Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." Great book -- tells you everything you need to know about everything.

Arthur inspects the Guide curiously.

ARTHUR

"Don't Panic." Well, I like it so far -- that's the only helpful advice I've gotten all day --

Then he remembers what's going on -- and panics.

ARTHUR

(continuing)

Good God, we've got to get to the computer room so you can reprogram their whatever-it-is and save the Earth. Well, come on --

He is interrupted by AWFUL GARGLING GROWLS coming from the ship's p.a. system. Arthur recoils:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

(continuing)

What's that diabolical noise?

FORD

The Vogon Captain's talking to us.

ARTHUR

You mean you understand that?

Ford sees they are near an elevator-sized water-filled tank containing hordes of tiny, wriggling creatures. There is a dispenser at the bottom of the tank. Ford twists the knob. One of the creatures drops into the dispenser. Ford picks it up, offers it to Arthur:

FORD

Stick this in your ear and you'll understand it, too.

Arthur takes the creature, inspects it doubtfully.

ARTHUR

It looks like some kind of fish.

FORD

A Babelfish. Look.

He taps some buttons on the Guide; its SCREEN LIGHTS UP. We PUSH IN until its screen fills our screen.

GUIDE GRAPHICS

(NOTE: All Guide entries will be as or more visually complex than this one, but won't necessarily be described at such length in this text.)

The Guide executes a GRAPHIC DRAWING OF A BABELFISH, complete with skeleton and digestive tract, as:

GUIDE

(v.o.)

The Babelfish is small, yellow, leechlike and probably one of the oddest things in the universe.

The drawing of the Babelfish now shrinks to proportionate size to make room for GRAPHICS of TWO TALKING HEADS, one HUMAN and one ALIEN, both with visible BRAINS. The Babelfish swims into the Human's ear, as RED THOUGHT-WAVE LINES travel from the Alien's brain to the Alien's mouth, which moves in speech.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

The Human is uncomprehending. The red thought-wave lines travel from the Alien's mouth into the Human's ear, where the Babelfish eats the lines, as:

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

It feeds on the brainwave energy of those around its host ...

The red lines wiggle in the Babelfish's transparent guts.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

... converts that energy to the frequency of its host, and then excretes the converted energy into the host's brain.

The red lines emerge from the Babelfish's nether parts to enter the Human's brain, as:

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

The practical upshot of which is that if you stick a Babelfish in your ear, you can understand anything that is said to you.

The Alien smiles expectantly as the Human's eyes widen in comprehension, then fury. Mortally offended, the Human punches the Alien in the mouth. A fight ensues, as:

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

Needless to say, by effectively removing all barriers to communication between different species, the Babelfish has been responsible for more wars, murders and cardiac arrests than anything else in the history of creation.

INT. VOGON SHIP CORRIDOR -- SPACE

Arthur looks at the Babelfish in his hand, gives an "I'll try anything once" shrug and pops it into his ear. The LOUDSPEAKER'S GROWLING suddenly becomes INTELLIGIBLE SPEECH; the CAPTAIN'S VOICE sounds just like Prosser's.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

VOGON CAPTAIN

(o.s.,

on loudspeaker)

-- not welcome. I repeat, this is the Captain speaking. From our instrument readings, I see that we have hitchhikers on board. Hello, hitchhikers, whoever you are, I just want to make it absolutely clear that you are entirely not welcome.

ARTHUR

(whispers)

We'd better find the computer before he finds us. Which way is it?

FORD

Arthur, about the computer -- I have to tell you, I don't --

A QUARTET OF VOGON GUARDS burst into the corridor, blocking Ford and Arthur's path. They are somewhat humanoid, but their faces are ugly in both feature and expression. They wear modified variations on business suits which in no way detract from their bulky menace. The moment they appear:

VOGON GUARDS

(in unison)

Resistance is useless!

Arthur and Ford practically leap out of their skins.

ARTHUR AND FORD

Agghh!

The Guards pounce, roughly drag Arthur and Ford away, as:

VOGON GUARDS

Resistance is useless!

CUT TO:

INT. VOGON SHIP BRIDGE -- SPACE

The Vogon bridge is a mixture of spaceship-traditional and bureaucratic office-baroque. A few Vogons operate weapons and/or navigational instruments, but most of them are involved in paper shuffling on a grand scale.

The VOGON CAPTAIN sits at the bridge command center. He looks exactly how Prosser would look if Prosser was a Vogon. He swats repeatedly but vainly at a FLY BUZZING by his head.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

In the b.g., we see through a clear wall into the room full of office equipment. An ARMY OF VOGON GUARDS troop in and proceed through a series of stiff, solemn military exercises during the following.

The Guards drag Arthur and Ford in and hold them in place before the Captain's chair. One Guard dumps the contents of Ford's bag onto the floor; the Captain picks up the "thumb."

VOGON CAPTAIN

So you're the hitchhikers, hmm?
Well, there's no place for the likes of you on my ship, and that's that.

FORD

(ingratiating)
Just what I was saying. I said, "Arthur, we can't take advantage of these guys, it wouldn't be right." So if you'll just let us off at the next inhabited world --

VOGON CAPTAIN

The next inhabited world?! Look, you, I worked hard to get where I am today, and I didn't become captain of a constructor fleet so I could turn it into a taxi service for degenerate free-loaders. You're getting off here.

FORD

But "here" is deep space.

VOGON CAPTAIN

You should've thought of that before you blithely hopped aboard, then, shouldn't you?

ARTHUR

(can't stand it any longer)
Look, please, what about the Earth?

VOGON CAPTAIN

What about it? It's in the way of the new hyperspatial highway bypass through this galaxy.

ARTHUR

(aghast)
But ... but you can't destroy the whole planet on account of that.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

VOGON CAPTAIN

Look. Earthman, the demolition orders have been on display at the planning office on Alpha Centauri for fifty of your Earth years, so you've had plenty of time to lodge a formal complaint.

ARTHUR

But -- but no one from Earth has ever been to Alpha Centauri!

VOGON CAPTAIN

I'm sorry, if mankind can't be bothered to take an interest in local affairs ... well. Guards, throw these people out the airlock.

One of the Guards starts putting Ford's possessions (except the "thumb") back in the duffel bag, neatly folding the towels first.

ARTHUR

Throw us where ... ? Wait!

He clings to a copying machine, trying to prevent the Vagon Guards from dragging him away. The Head Guard slams the hard copier lid down on Arthur's hands, causing him to YELP and let go. As the Guards haul Arthur, Ford and the duffel bag away:

VOGON GUARD

Resistance is useless!

FORD

(to Arthur)

Don't worry, I'll think of something --

VOGON CAPTAIN

Apathetic bloody planet, I've absolutely no sympathy ...

He tosses the "thumb" into a heavy-duty shredder, which WHINES in protest, then shreds the "thumb."

CUT TO:

INT. VOGON AIRLOCK -- SPACE

Arthur, Ford and the duffel bag are thrown into a small chamber full of shredded documents.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

The door is locked before they can regain their footing. A small porthole behind Arthur reveals a distant view of Earth in space. The airlock hatch is across the room.

ARTHUR

Have you thought of anything yet?

FORD

Of course I have.

ARTHUR

Thank God.

FORD

But it involved being on the other side of that door.

ARTHUR

(disappointed)

Oh. What happens now?

FORD

Well, any moment now, that hatch opens and we're sucked out into deep space.

They look at each other in silence. Finally:

ARTHUR

So this is it. We're going to die.

FORD

That sums it up pretty well, yeah.

ARTHUR

(swallows)

Oh. Will it hurt, do you think?

FORD

Probably when our skin cracks and peels off from the minus two-forty-degree temperature. And our lungs exploding will be really painful. Of course, by then our brains may be too disoriented from lack of oxygen for us to feel anything at all --

ARTHUR

Yes, alright.

He swallows again.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

(continuing)

You know, I've sometimes fantasized about how I'd react in a situation like this, and I'm afraid I may not hold up as well as I'd hoped ...

He plunges his face into his hands. Ford gloomily stares past Arthur out the porthole at:

EXT. EARTH TURNING IN SPACE -- FORD'S P.O.V.

The VOGON SHIPS have formed a semi-circle around the planet.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LONDON -- DAY

As MASSES of PEOPLE stare uncertainly up at the sky, the ground begins to tremble. Awnings sway on their frames; bricks start to shudder loose from walls. The shaking continues, over:

EXT. JAPANESE TEA GARDEN -- DAY

The Patrons bow their heads in silent prayer.

EXT. IOWA CORNFIELD -- DUSK

The Teenaged Couple cling to each other, frightened.

INT. HONG KONG SUPERMARKET -- DAY

All the Shoppers are now clustered around the monitor, perplexed. The Picture has gone completely blank.

INT. PUB -- DAY

At first the pub appears empty. We PULL BACK to see the Bartender and Customers crouching on the floor, paper bags over their heads.

EXT. EARTH IN SPACE -- VOGON AIRLOCK PORTHOLE REFLECTION

The following is seen in reflection over Ford's face as he stares out the porthole.

There is a terrible silence. RAYS OF MULTICOLORED LIGHT extend from the noses of the Vagon ships, lengthening in increments like unfolding telescopes until they finally converge on the Earth.

There is a TERRIBLE NOISE.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

The EARTH EXPLODES into a billion fragments.

There is another terrible silence.

INT. VOGON AIRLOCK -- SPACE

Ford shakes his head regretfully, puts a sympathetic hand on Arthur's shoulder. Arthur blows his nose and looks up with damp eyes, unaware of what has just happened.

ARTHUR

Do you suppose there's still a chance someone might stop them from destroying the world?

FORD

Arthur --

He's ready to break the bad news, but Arthur looks so forlorn that Ford relents, pats Arthur's arm instead.

FORD

(continuing,
kindly)

You never know.

The airlock hatch pops open with a WHOOSH. Arthur and Ford -- and the duffel bag and paper shreds -- are sucked out.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE

Galaxies stretch to infinity in all directions. There is no sign of Earth, the Vagon fleet or anything else that's familiar.

GUIDE

(v.o.)

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy has this to say about space: it's big. In fact, space is so big that, should you find yourself ejected into it, your chances of being rescued before you freeze to death and/or suffocate are --

A CAPTION -- "2^{276,709}" TO 1" -- appears.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- two to the power of two hundred
and seventy-six thousand, seven
hundred and nine to one against. By
a staggeringly improbable
coincidence --

GRAPHIC OF TELEPHONE

The number on the telephone's dial is 227-6709.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- that is also the telephone number
of an Islington flat --

The GRAPHIC pulls back to reveal that the telephone is in a
room where a party is being held. The GRAPHIC resolves into
three-dimensional m.o.s. action of:

INT. ISLINGTON FLAT -- NIGHT

PEOPLE laugh and chat (m.o.s.) in pairs and clusters. Most
of them seem fairly boring. Arthur, looking rather lost,
hugs the wall.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- where Arthur once went to a
party --

Arthur smiles without much hope at a young woman, TRILLIAN.
Trillian is in her 20s, unselfconsciously attractive,
confident, inquisitive and an electronic whiz. She looks at
Arthur, decides she likes him, smiles back and comes over.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- where he met a young woman with
whom he hit it off extremely well --

INT. ISLINGTON FLAT -- LATER -- NIGHT

Arthur and Trillian laugh and talk together animatedly
m.o.s., clearly enjoying each other a great deal.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- until she got sidetracked by a gate-crasher who had a unique proposition for her.

ZAPHOD, a dangerous, charismatic and utterly irresponsible fellow wearing spurred boots, walks up to Trillian and whispers something in her ear. She tells him to piss off. Zaphod persists, reaching under his coat to take out a peculiar, distinctive-looking device the size of a shoebox. Trillian examines it with increasing fascination.

Arthur politely taps Zaphod's shoulder, hoping to end this intrusion. Zaphod responds by nonchalantly spurring Arthur in the leg, hard. In agony, Arthur drops out of frame.

Totally preoccupied by the device, Trillian sees none of this. She looks up to comment to Arthur, looks around (but not down) for him -- he appears to have left. She frowns, a bit hurt, then shrugs philosophically, tucks the device under her arm and exits with Zaphod.

We TILT DOWN to Arthur clutching his leg on the floor, in too much pain to even make a sound. He sadly, helplessly stares after Trillian. We TRACK IN to a c.u., as:

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

This coincidence is commemorated by the fact that, just as they were ejected from the Vogon ship's airlock --

CUT TO:

INT. HEART OF GOLD LIQUOR CELLAR -- SPACE

We can't tell where we are, because the light keeps changing and various shapes, some completely unidentifiable and some familiar but unlikely -- like penguins and pencils -- fade into view then dissolve again.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- Arthur and Ford were rescued.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

The wall bends like plastic-wrap as the features of Arthur and Ford press through it. For a moment, it looks as if they'll be stuck, but then the wall releases them. They fall into the room intact, GASPING for breath and perfectly disoriented, staring around in uncomprehending amazement as:

DRIVE VOICE

(on p.a. system)
Improbability factor now two to the
power of four thousand, five hundred
and two against and falling.

Ford's duffel bag and a quantity of paper shreds press in through the wall as well.

DRIVE VOICE

(on p.a. system,
continuing)
Improbability factor now zero level.
Improbability Drive switching off.

The shapes fade away and the light stabilizes, revealing Arthur and Ford to be lying on the floor of a chamber lined with shelves full of cylinders.

ARTHUR

(gasping)
Wha ... what was all that?

FORD

(gasping)
You're asking me? Well ... best
guess ... we've been rescued.

ARTHUR

Rescued?

Ford nods, delighted both with the fact itself and at being able to break the good news. Arthur starts to LAUGH in hysteria-tinged relief. Ford joins him. They look at each other, which only makes them LAUGH harder, until:

MARVIN

I suppose you think that's funny.

Arthur and Ford turn to see MARVIN, a robot who looks something like a refrigerator with arms, legs and a head. As they react, we PULL BACK out of the room, until we are:

EXT. SPACE -- HEART OF GOLD

We now see the outside of the spacecraft, the HEART OF GOLD.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

It is somewhat battered but classy, like a Ferrari with dented fenders. As we watch, it accelerates, firing its weapons and executing maneuvers designed to throw something off its trail. We TRACK IN through the main windshield to:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

The bridge is a weird combination of high-tech and total mess as a result of having been hot-wired. The device from the party -- the Improbability Drive -- stands out from the other devices in the navigational controls.

Tensely piloting the craft is none other than Trillian, who checks her computer screens, frowning. Zaphod operates the weapons system in a transparent gunnery turret. It looks as if someone's in there with him, but we can't quite tell yet.

ZAPHOD

Are we at Magrathea yet?

Trillian consults an electronic readout on the Drive:

TRILLIAN

No. The Improbability Drive didn't move us a bloody inch. It seems to have yanked something on board instead. Zaphod, I don't want to use the Drive anymore 'til we get the instruction manual.

Disgusted, Zaphod spins his chair out of the gunnery turret to confront Trillian. We see Zaphod now shares his body with an obsequious, clean-cut SECOND HEAD.

ZAPHOD

Oh, that's terrific. Little Miss I-can-handle-anything-technical is wimping out over some stupid instructions.

TRILLIAN

We can't keep using the Drive without knowing what we're doing, it's too dangerous. Unless you want the bloody thing to give you a third head.

SECOND HEAD

(cheerful)

I'd like a third head.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

TRILLIAN

Well, I don't want one --

She breaks off as she and Zaphod see something that alarms them through the window. Trillian feverishly operates the controls; Zaphod slides his chair back into the gun turret:

ZAPHOD

You want your ass shot off?

TRILLIAN

Christ. not those brats again ...

Through the window, we see:

EXT. SPACE -- TEASER SHIP

A sleek, trendy and impossibly expensive TEASER SPACECRAFT streaks toward us, a designer symbol discreetly emblazoned on its side. It spits rays of destruction, which contain visible designer symbols within their beams. We resolve to:

GUIDE GRAPHICS ·

GRAPHICS of the TEASER SHIP and its designer death rays are joined by GRAPHICS of attractive, wealthy, infuriatingly smug 20ish men and women (TEASERS), illustrating:

GUIDE

(v.o.)

There are two major theories about teasers. The more widely held view is that teasers are spoiled rich kids who think they're God's gift to the Universe. The minority opinion, held mainly by teasers themselves, is that they are God's gift to the Universe, and the Universe really should be more grateful for them. The best way to get a drink out of a teaser is to stick your finger down his throat. A teaser's idea of a good time is to find a planet that hasn't made intersrellar contact yet, land in some isolated spot by some poor local who no one will ever believe and then strut up and down in front of him wearing silly antenna and making "beep beep" noises.

(continuing)

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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GUIDE

(v.o.)

The best way to get a Teaser to show you the full abilities of the new designer-label weapon his father just gave him as a graduation gift is to steal something from him.

The GRAPHICS resolve back to live action of:

INT. TEASER BRIDGE -- HEART OF GOLD COMPUTER SCREEN -- SPACE

The Heart of Gold communication screen shows the interior of the teaser bridge, trendy and expensive. A uniformed, middle-aged CHAFFEUR pilots the craft. Around him, male and female TEASERS, all 20ish, attractive, stylishly dressed and infinitely self-impressed amuse themselves. In the b.g., some of them play a desultory game which consists of tossing prickly little balls at a hapless tied-up HUMAN TARGET, who YELPS whenever the balls hit.

BRICE, the teaser's leader, speaks with cold condescension:

BRICE

Give me back that Improbability
Drive, you grotty little peasant.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Trillian tries to fly the Heart of Gold out of range while Zaphod fires at the teasers; he's not a good shot. Second Head leans out the turret to caution Brice via the screen:

SECOND HEAD

You shouldn't clench your teeth like that, you'll develop all these ugly bulky muscles around your jaw.

ZAPHOD

Get us out of here, Trillian.

TRILLIAN

What do you think I'm trying to do?

Something impacts the ship from outside, nearly knocking Trillian off her feet as she continues to work the controls.

INT. HEART OF GOLD LIQUOR CELLAR -- SPACE

Arthur, Ford, Marvin and a number of cylinders are thrown to the floor by the jolt. As the trio struggle to their feet:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

What was that?

MARVIN

The teasers. Don't mind me, I just love falling down and being dented.

Ford shoulders his duffel bag, as:

ARTHUR

Excuse me, teasers?

MARVIN

I have to go to the bridge now.
Brain the capacity of a planet and I get to take drinks to the bridge.
Call that job satisfaction? 'Cause I don't.

Ford and Arthur trade a "what?" look but follow Marvin as he trudges back through the shelves toward a closed door.

EXT. SPACE

The Heart of Gold dodges, weaves and fires, trying to evade the deadly destructive blasts from the teaser ship.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HEART OF GOLD LIQUOR CELLAR -- SPACE

ARTHUR

Could the people on this ship help us save the Earth?

FORD

Um, Arthur --

MARVIN

What for? Everyone on it would die eventually of lingering illness, accident, murder or suicide anyway.

ARTHUR

How do you know?

MARVIN

I'm sorry, do people on your planet die of other things, too? Life, don't talk to me about life.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

The ship is hit again, once more knocking everyone about.
As they find their footing in front of the closed door:

MARVIN

(continuing)

Oh, no.

ARTHUR

(apprehensive)

What?

MARVIN

The door's going to open.

DOOR

(intolerably cheerful)

Hi, there! It is my pleasure to
open for you and my satisfaction to
close again with the knowledge of a
job well done.

The door slides open with an ORGASMIC SIGH of pleasure.

MARVIN

Ghastly, isn't it? Thank you the
Marketing Division of the Sirius
Cybernetics Corporation. "Let's
build robots with Genuine People
Personalities," they said. I have
one. You can tell, can't you?

He leads them through the open doorway to:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

The door closes with a GROAN of satisfaction behind them.
Trillian and Zaphod are too preoccupied with the teasers to
look up, but Arthur, surprised and delighted, recognizes:

ARTHUR

Tricia McMillan?

Trillian looks up, surprised and delighted to see:

TRILLIAN

Arthur Dent?

Zaphod slides his chair out of the turret to see what's
going on. He's surprised and definitely not delighted.

ZAPHOD

Oh, shit, where'd you come from?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

SECOND HEAD

(cheerful)
Welcome aboard!

ZAPHOD

(to Second Head)
Shut up.

ARTHUR

You?

Zaphod doesn't respond, just SNORTS and opens Marvin's chest, revealing shelves inside stocked with cylinders. Zaphod takes out a cylinder, opens its top on the back of Marvin's head, then slides back into the turret, during:

FORD

(amazed)
You all know each other?

ARTHUR

(can't get over it)
We met at a party last month. Of course, he had only the one head at the time, but still --
(to Trillian)
Look, please, what's going on? Are you from outer space as well.

TRILLIAN

What? Oh, no, I'm from London. You see, Zaphod needed a pilot and --
(triumphant realization)
The Improbability Drive must've picked you up instead of taking us to Magrathea.

ARTHUR

Sorry, the what taking you where?

ZAPHOD

(on interbridge intercom)
Magrathea, you asshole. The richest planet that ever was.

EXT. SPACE

The teaser ship scores a hit on the Heart of Gold.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

The ENGINE WHINES and the LIGHTS FLICKER; the ship jerks.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

A console shorts out in a shower of sparks. Trillian moves to contain the damage; the others (except Marvin) react with alarm. Things are getting worse as we:

CUT TO:

GUIDE GRAPHICS OF MAGRATHEA (AND RELATED SUBJECTS)

Appropriate GRAPHICS illustrate the following:

GUIDE

(v.o.)

Far back in the mists of time, life was wild, profitable and largely tax free. Many people became very rich but eventually grew dissatisfied, a state they often blamed on whatever planet they'd happened to settle. Thus was created the demand for the industry of custom-made planet building. The home of this industry was the planet Magrathea, where hyperspatial engineers formed dream planets for the ultra-wealthy.

The GRAPHICS show an ENGINEER displaying sample scale-sized continents on a globe for a pair of RICH CUSTOMERS.

GUIDE

(v.o.,

continuing)

So successful was this industry that Magrathea became the richest planet of all time and the rest of the Galaxy was reduced to poverty. This meant no one could afford custom-made planets anymore, so the Magratheans closed up shop. No one has ever found the planet in the seven million years since then.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- LIVE ACTION -- SPACE

More consoles are blowing up now. Increasingly alarmed, Arthur and Ford keep out of the way as Trillian desperately navigates. Zaphod keeps firing, but finds time for:

ZAPHOD

Hey, jerk, bring me another beer. This time make it one that lasts longer.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Marvin glumly hands a beer into the gun turret. Another hit causes the weapons console to blow up; cursing, Zaphod beats out the ensuing small fire, as:

INT. TEASER BRIDGE -- HEART OF GOLD COMMUNICATION SCREEN

Brice smiles, happy and patronizing in his imminent triumph:

BRICE

Well, kids, I must admit, it's been fun. But now it really is time for you to hand over the Drive, or else we'll just have to blow up that ugly roller skate you've been flying around in.

GISELLE, a female teaser, chimes in:

GISELLE

Oh, c'mon, Brice, blow them up. Your folks'll get you a new Drive.

BRICE

Maybe you're right ... Yeah, okay, ventilate 'em --

He is interrupted as his ship is hit from outside.

EXT. SPACE -- P.O.V. FROM HEART OF GOLD WINDOW

We are in the middle of a meteor shower composed of pieces of Earth -- chunks of ground along with recognizable objects like trees, cars and George Washington's head from Mt. Rushmore, which has caught the teaser ship between its nose and upper lip and now flies away with it.

INT. HEART OF GOLD -- SPACE

Everyone stares out the window, astonished and perplexed.

TRILLIAN

We've been saved by George Washington. How very odd.

ARTHUR

(horrified realization)
That's part of Mount Rushmore.

TRILLIAN

What's Mount Rushmore doing out here?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR
(to Ford,
agonized)
The Vogons -- they didn't --

Ford nods sympathetically. Arthur HICCUPS, trying to hold back a sob. Trillian is more perplexed than ever. Ford steels himself, then lets her have it:

FORD
I'm really sorry to have to tell you this, but --
(points out window)
-- that's Earth.

TRILLIAN
What?

FORD
It blew up. I'm sorry.

Trillian blinks, trying to keep from crying.

TRILLIAN
Oh, my God -- those fools and their bombs -- their idiot politics -- They had to have a war, didn't they?

ARTHUR
(disconsolate)
It wasn't a war, it was a highway bypass.

Trillian stares at him.

CUT TO:

GUIDE GRAPHICS

Appropriate, edifying and funny as usual, illustrating:

GUIDE
(v.o.)
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy has this to say about the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy: it is the single most important thing in the history of creation. It goes on to describe itself as fascinating, informative and a great affordable gift item.

(continuing)

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

The Guide is published on the planet Ursa Minor Beta. Although the place has a wonderful reputation, when a recent popular tourist commercial proclaimed, "When you're tired of Ursa Minor Beta, you're tired of life," the suicide rate there quadrupled overnight.

CUT TO:

EXT. URSA MINOR BETA PARK -- NIGHT

The Heart of Gold has landed in a park where high-tech blends harmoniously with nature: tall buildings and parked spacecraft are integrated with lush flowerbeds, grassy lawns, etc. Our group stand around the ship's boarding ramp. It's evident they've been here awhile. Zaphod and Ford are ready to get going, but Arthur and Trillian stare numbly at nothing in particular, still grieving. Finally:

FORD

Look, I better get over to the Guide offices and explain why I'm six years late with everything. I'll meet you back here later, okay? Oh, yeah, don't forget this.

He takes Arthur's towel out of the duffel bag, holds it out to him. Arthur looks at it bleakly.

ARTHUR

Is there something special about it?

FORD

Special? It's a towel. Don't you know anything about hitchhiking?

He gives up, just drapes the towel over Arthur's shoulders.

FORD

(continuing)

I really am sorry about the Earth.

Arthur nods, appreciating the sentiment but unable to speak yet. Ford would like to say something comforting but can't think of anything else, waves and leaves. Zaphod glares at Arthur and Trillian, exasperated by their misery:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ZAPHOD

What's eating you guys anyway?

ARTHUR

Well, we're just rather upset
because the world's been destroyed.

SECOND HEAD

(kindly)

Not the world, a world. You have to
try to have some perspective.

ZAPHOD

Anyway, as worlds go, it's not much
of a loss. I suddenly grew an extra
head and you don't see me whining
about it.Arthur and Trillian gape, not knowing whether to be
infuriated or just amazed by this gross callousness.

TRILLIAN

Piss off, Zaphod.

She strides off into the park, Arthur right behind her.

ZAPHOD

Snotty bitch. Where does she think
she's going?

SECOND HEAD

Let her go, you don't want a girl
with only two tits.

ZAPHOD

(thinks it over)

Good point.

He starts to walk away, then notices Marvin standing there.

ZAPHOD

(continuing)

Hey, you, get back on the ship.

MARVIN

Oh, well, pardon me for breathing,
which I never do anyway, so I don't
know why I bother to say it, oh God,
I'm so depressed.

CUT TO:

EXT. URSA MINOR STREET -- GUIDE OFFICES -- NIGHT

Ford walks jauntily up the street, his attitude that of an ace reporter at last back in the Big Apple. Ahead is a tall office building with the words "DON'T PANIC!" spelled out across its front. Ford stops to check his appearance in the mirrored outer wall, decides he looks good and saunters in.

INT. GUIDE NEWSROOM -- NIGHT

Similar to the newsroom of a big city paper. REPORTERS sit with their Guides plugged into their consoles as Guide entries flicker over their screens, accompanied by the MURMUR of the Guide's voice over the consoles' speakers. A rack against the wall labeled "FOR STAFF USE ONLY" is full of hitchhiking "thumbs" like the one Ford had.

Ford strides in, exchanging friendly GREETINGS and elaborate handshakes with those Reporters he knows, but he never actually stops in his determined trek across the room to the editor's office. He's almost there when he stops cold.

A woman, KRYL, unbelievably sexy but very businesslike, is leaning over a Reporter's shoulder, apparently commenting on his Guide entries. Ford positions himself so that she must see him when she looks up; when she does, he's nonchalant.

FORD

Kryl.

She controls all visible reaction but a flicker of surprise:

KRYL

Ford.

They survey each other coolly, like the hard-bitten newshounds they like to think they are.

FORD

How've you been?

KRYL

Can't complain. You?

FORD

Not bad.

KRYL

You're six years late.

FORD

Yeah, I was on assignment -- you know how it is, you're a reporter --

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

KRYL

Not anymore.

She begins walking; disappointed, Ford follows her, as:

FORD

You gave it up? You? The thrill of chasing down leads, breaking the story, making up something for the editor when there is no story --

Kryl stops in front of the door labeled "EDITOR." The light dawns. Ford is knocked for a loop but thinks fast:

FORD

(continuing)

You're the new editor? That's ... great! We've finally got a real journalist running this rag!

Kryl opens the door, leads Ford into:

INT. KRYL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

The decor is luxurious and exotic. Ford is impressed. Kryl closes the door, then:

KRYL

There've been a lot of changes in the Guide since you left. I hope you can still fit in.

FORD

Oh, you know me, I fit in anywhere.

Abruptly, then lunge at each other, coming together in a kiss so passionate it's almost cannibalistic.

CUT TO:

EXT. HEART OF GOLD -- PARK -- NIGHT

At first, all is quiet. Then Brice and the Teasers pull up in a very sharp car. Leaving their Chaffeur to stand guard at the boarding ramp, the Teasers follow Brice into:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- PARK -- NIGHT

Brice and the Teasers look around with amused contempt, affecting tremendous boredom.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

NICK, the prematurely balding Teaser navigator, begins disconnecting the Drive from the navigation system as:

BRICE

Imagine having to fly around in this thing. Too grim.

GISELLE

Too depressing.

Marvin speaks up from a dark corner.

MARVIN

Yes, it is.

The Teasers look around, notice Marvin with surprise.

GISELLE

Huh?

MARVIN

It is too depressing. I've never been as depressed as I am on this ship. Except for the mood I was in before, which was horrible. I didn't enjoy the way I felt prior to that at all. Before that, I was just despondent.

Giselle stares at him, turns to Brice:

GISELLE

What a low-rent robot.

BRICE

(ordering Marvin)
Get us some drinks.

Marvin SIGHS, opens his chest. Brice stares at him, royalty addressing a moron peasant, smiles thinly:

BRICE

(continuing)
Without me having to touch you.

Marvin SIGHS again, takes a beer, holds it out to Brice, who purposely jerks his hand back at the last second so the beer shatters on the floor. The other Teasers GIGGLE.

BRICE

(continuing)
Oops. Well, clean it up.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Nick has the Drive disconnected, hands it over to Brice.

NICK

Do we want anything else from here?
This, maybe?

He and another Teaser pick up Marvin, ready to haul him off. Brice gives them an "Are you kidding?" snort. Nick and the other Teaser shrug, drop Marvin flat. The Teasers exit with the Drive in high spirits. Lying on his side, Marvin SIGHS.

CUT TO:

EXT. URSA MINOR PARK -- NIGHT

Arthur and Trillian walk aimlessly together through the park, still grieving but occasionally pausing to examine some of the more unusual sights, of which there are many. After a silence:

TRILLIAN

Did you ever see "Citizen Kane?"

ARTHUR

I meant to. I had it on tape.

TRILLIAN

I missed the ending.

ARTHUR

Oh, "Rosebud" is the --

TRILLIAN

Sled, I know. But it's not the same as seeing it. I thought I would someday and now ...

ARTHUR

I know -- Christ, a bypass, of all bloody stupid reasons for the world to blow up ...

TRILLIAN

I can't think of any good reasons for it to blow up, can you?

Silence.

ARTHUR

I don't know what we're going to do now.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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TRILLIAN

(bemused)

What we're going to do? You and me,
you mean?

ARTHUR

Well, no -- that is, yes, insofar as
we do have in common that we're the
only survivors of the planet --

(quickly)

Not that I think that implies any
particular sort of relationship
between us, of course.

Trillian is charmed by his discomfort.

TRILLIAN

Which particular sort?

ARTHUR

(really embarrassed now)

Well, any particular sort. After
all, you've got Zaphod, and even if
you didn't --

Trillian starts to LAUGH; Arthur winces.

ARTHUR

(continuing)

That came out all wrong, please
forget I said any of it --

TRILLIAN

(through her laughter)

I've got Zaphod? Do you think I'm
some species of masochist? I'm his
pilot, that's all. The fact is, I
was thinking of going off from that
party with you, but --

ARTHUR

You what?

But Trillian is caught up in her train of thought.

TRILLIAN

-- I'd just spent seven years
getting my degrees in astrophysics
and engineering and suddenly Zaphod
came along with --

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

Hang on. You'd really have gone off with me?

TRILLIAN

Well, yes.
(affectionate, attracted)
You're not so bad.

ARTHUR

(affectionate, attracted)
Nor you.

He hesitates, then gives Trillian a brief, gentle kiss. When it ends:

TRILLIAN

(soft)
Piloting the Heart of Gold was a once in a lifetime chance. I had to take it. But you've turned up anyway, so it's all worked out nicely.

She smiles warmly; Arthur starts to smile back, but it dies:

ARTHUR

Except for the Earth being blown up.

Trillian loses her smile, nods sad agreement:

TRILLIAN

Yes. Except for that.

They look at each other. Arthur offers her his arm; she takes it. As they walk:

ARTHUR

What are we going to do?

TRILLIAN

Go on to Magrathea as we planned, I suppose.

ARTHUR

What's there that you want?

TRILLIAN

Zaphod thinks we'll find treasure. I just want to see what it's like. I mean, a place where they actually built planets? Sounds amazing.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Arthur frowns thoughtfully, talking out an idea as it forms:

ARTHUR

If they built planets ... could they
build another Earth?

Trillian is a bit taken aback by this.

TRILLIAN

Supposedly they charged fortunes for
their services.

ARTHUR

Maybe they'd do it on account.

TRILLIAN

(a little heated)

Arthur, even if there is someone
still there and even if they'd make
something like Earth with continents
in the right places and all that, it
wouldn't be Earth. My mother's
always saying that home is other
people. Now she says a lot of silly
things really, but --

(aghast realization)

Oh, God, my mother --

Her eyes well up. Arthur, hurting for her, hands her his
towel. Trillian buries her face in it for a moment, then
pulls herself together, hands the towel back to Arthur:

TRILLIAN

(continuing)

Sorry, I've mucked up your towel ...

ARTHUR

Don't worry, it's filthy anyhow ...

(realizes)

Oh.

He crinkles the towel until a few flecks of dirt drop into
his open palm. Trillian doesn't understand.

TRILLIAN

What?

ARTHUR

Earth.

They stare at the flecks of dirt in silence for a moment.
Arthur carefully puts the dirt into his bathrobe pocket.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

He looks around to see they've walked full circle back to:

EXT. HEART OF GOLD -- PARK -- NIGHT

Two tow truck operators, HAFF and EDGAR, hook the Heart of Gold up to a tow crane as TWO COPS fill out citations.

Arthur's eyes widen in consternation; he thrusts the towel into Trillian's hands and strides forward.

ARTHUR

Pardon me, but what's going on?

FIRST COP

This vehicle is illegally parked.

ARTHUR

Oh, that's all right then, we'll just move it.

FIRST COP

I'm sorry, sir, all illegally parked vehicles are subject to impound.

ARTHUR

But why? Look, we can't be parked illegally -- you haven't even got any signs posted.

FIRST COP

Yes, sir, we most certainly do.

ARTHUR

Where?

Perfectly serious, the Second Cop lifts up the lower branches of a bush to reveal a postage-stamp-size red square with no words or symbols on it. Arthur stares at it.

ARTHUR

(quietly)
That is not a sign.

TRILLIAN

Arthur, let's just leave it be --

ARTHUR

A sign is about so big or larger and has words on it that can be plainly understood and mainly, it's where you can see it.

(continuing)

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

(continuing)

It's not some enigmatic tag hidden
under a bush or in the East
Grinstead planning office or on
bloody Alpha Centauri where you know
bloody well no one's ever going to
see the damned thing until it's too
bloody late!!!

The two Cops look at each other overjoyed, unable to believe
their good fortune.

FIRST COP

Congratulations. You're under
arrest for disturbing the peace.

He shakes Arthur's hand as Second Cop whips out a pair of
cuffs. Arthur tries to avoid him, but First Cop trains his
weapon on Arthur. Arthur swallows, stops resisting.
Trillian, very worried now, tries to pacify the Cops:

TRILLIAN

Look, he really didn't mean it --

FIRST COP

Get out of the way, please, ma'am.
(hopeful)
Unless you'd like to disturb the
peace, too?

With no choice, Trillian steps back as the Cops drag Arthur
into their vehicle. Arthur looks back at Trillian, as:

TRILLIAN

Arthur --

ARTHUR

Trillian --

The police vehicle's doors close. It tears off in one
direction just as the tow truck drives away in the other.
Trillian sprints forward a few steps but knows it's useless.
She slumps in despair, but her expression changes on seeing:

EXT. GUIDE BUILDING -- TRILLIAN'S P.O.V. -- NIGHT

In the very far distance, the Guide building's incandescent
"DON'T PANIC!" sign is visible. Also visible is the sign on
the building next to it: "JY'S WEAPON EMPORIUM -- NO
REASONABLE OFFER REFUSED!"

EXT. PARK -- NIGHT

Trillian straightens, takes a deep breath, slings the towel over her shoulder.

TRILLIAN

"Don't Panic." Right, I won't.

She strides off with great determination.

CUT TO:

GUIDE GRAPHICS

Appropriately and entertainingly illustrating:

GUIDE

(v.o.)

Correctly used, an Improbability Drive is a really handy device for getting your ship across vast interstellar distances without all that tedious mucking about in hyperspace. However, the Drive runs on coincidence the same way cars run on gas, and when the Drive is incorrectly used, the side effects can be considerable. For example, the odds against a bowl of petunias growing ivy-like vines are three to the power of fifty-three thousand, one hundred and six to one against.

A CAPTION -- "^{53,106} TO 1" -- appears over a GRAPHIC of a desperate-looking MAN piloting a spaceship.

GUIDE

(v.o.,

continuing)

By coincidence, this was the exact sum a well-off botanist was hiding from the Interstellar Revenue Service. When he attempted to escape the tax authorities by using his Improbability Drive without checking the instructions first, the following result was inevitable.

The GRAPHICS show the Man transform into a highly indignant BOWL OF PETUNIAS with ivy-like vines, which it uses to pilot the ship, in lieu of hands.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

Eventually, the bowl of petunias was caught, heavily fined and sentenced to two hundred hours of community service as a lobby decoration in a planetary welfare office.

The GRAPHICS show a WELFARE MOTHER stubbing out a cigarette in the bowl of petunias while waiting for the counselor.

INT. TEASER BRIDGE -- URSA MINOR

The Teasers cluster around the Drive, now installed in their navigation system, with anticipatory glee.

BRICE

Alright, let's see what this sucker can do.

NICK

(hesitant)

Maybe we should figure out how it works first --

Brice and the other Teaser SIGH elaborately and otherwise demonstrate their contempt for this notion. Nick shrugs, taking it back, and programs the Drive quickly. Then:

DRIVE VOICE

Warning.

A flicker of mild concern crosses Brice's face -- and then the bridge is suddenly filled with the strange SOUNDS, light changes and shifting, phantom shapes that accompanied the use of the Drive on the Heart of Gold, along with the DRIVE VOICE reciting Improbability measurements. We cannot see clearly during this. When the Drive Effect ends:

The bridge is now knee-deep in hay and chickens. Many of the Teasers, to their great dismay, have grown extra noses on their cheeks. Nick's few strands of hair have turned into waving fingers. Brice himself has a chicken growing out of the top of his head. He turns to Nick, disgusted:

BRICE

Let me do it.

Eggs come out of his mouth as he speaks. Nick, his hair-fingers clenching indignantly, steps back to let Brice at the Drive.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM -- NIGHT

It looks vaguely sinister for no immediately evident reason. The two Cops hustle in Arthur, disheveled and scared, past the ROBOT GUARD at the door, then leave him at the desk of the LAWYER while they go into a huddle with the PROSECUTOR. Otherwise, the courtroom is empty except for the BAILIFF.

The Lawyer pumps Arthur's hand reassuringly:

LAWYER

Mr. Dent? Name's Estrup. I'm your lawyer. Now this is just a hearing. Whether there's a trial depends on how this goes. So you just --

BAILIFF

All rise for the relatively honorable Thor K. Rowell.

Everyone stands as the JUDGE enters. He is a sharp dresser with a slightly patronizing manner. He BANGS his gavel:

JUDGE

I now declare this hearing in session. So. What've you got for me?

PROSECUTOR

To start with, one count of disturbing the peace and one count of illegal parking, Your Honor.

JUDGE

(disappointed)

That's it?

The Lawyer and Prosecutor look expectantly at the Cops.

FIRST COP

Well ... there was a woman with him.

LAWYER

(seizing on this)

Okay, maybe she's his wife --

ARTHUR

(trying to be helpful)

No, Trillian's not my wife, she's --

LAWYER

Mr. Dent, please let me handle this.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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ARTHUR

Sorry.

PROSECUTOR

What if she's his mistress?

LAWYER

Yeah. In fact ... what if she's his mistress and she just told him she's leaving him for his wife?

ARTHUR

What?

JUDGE

Well, that would certainly explain why you were so upset.

ARTHUR

But --

JUDGE

(to Prosecutor)

Can you tie that in with the parking offense?

PROSECUTOR

Yes, Your Honor. Let's say the defendant was so angry about the affair between his wife and his mistress that he's hunting his wife everywhere. He spots her in the park, stops his vehicle right where it is, leaps out and attempts to kill her.

ARTHUR

I can't even fly the thing --

JUDGE

Okay so far. Does he kill her?

The Lawyer and Prosecutor look at each other uncertainly.

PROSECUTOR

Makes a better case if he does.

JUDGE

I'll need some tangible evidence.

Arthur is momentarily relieved, but the Prosecutor looks to the Cops for help; Second Cop produces a huge gun.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

SECOND COP

What if we found this on him?

The Prosecutor inspects the gun; Arthur can't believe it.

ARTHUR

But you didn't!

(to Lawyer)

This is insane. You're my lawyer,
you're supposed to help me!

LAWYER

Absolutely right. Guys, I have to
object. That weapon makes my client
appear to have no originality.

FIRST COP

How about this?

He takes out an object similar to an eggbeater, turns it on;
the blades WHIRR menacingly. The Judge thinks, then nods:

JUDGE

Works for me. Trial tomorrow p.m.

LAWYER

(to Prosecutor)

Will you be pressing for first-
degree murder?

PROSECUTOR

With this evidence, definitely.

ARTHUR

(exploding)

What evidence? You're making all of
it up! You don't even have a body!

Everyone looks at him.

PROSECUTOR

He's right. That's a problem.

SECOND COP

I know. I know, he cut her in tiny
pieces and threw 'em in the river!

JUDGE

Except Mr. Dent doesn't look like
someone who'd do that.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR
(grateful beyond words)
Exactly. I'm not that sort of
person, I'm glad you see that --

The Prosecutor squints critically at Arthur.

PROSECUTOR
Yeah. The eyes need to be closer
together.

First Cop begins programming something into his electronic
police pad, a device similar in design to the Guide.

LAWYER
Maybe a smaller nose ...

PROSECUTOR
How about a harelip?

First Cop lifts his pad, displays it to the group.

PAD SCREEN

A GRAPHIC of Arthur, computer-altered to show what he would
look like with the proposed alterations.

BACK TO SCENE

The Judge nods, satisfied.

JUDGE
Much better. Scheduled plastic
surgery for tomorrow morning.

ARTHUR
What?!!!!! Please, you can't --

LAWYER
Don't worry, by the time I'm done,
the jury's gonna think your wife is
such a bitch they'll applaud what
you did.

PROSECUTOR
Nah, never happen.
(expects Arthur to be
pleased about this)
Public execution. Great media
coverage. You're going places, guy!

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR
(plaintive)
I want to go home ...

CUT TO:

INT. KRYL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

A CATERER wheels in a tray, then exits as Ford and Kryl finish dressing after what has obviously been a long, intimate bout on the office couch. Despite this, Kryl is once more business as usual:

KRYL
I'm sorry, Ford, but I'm not responsible for what our old editor promised you. The fact is, we already have an entry on Earth.

Ford SIGHS, programs his Guide.

GUIDE SCREEN -- EARTH IN SPACE

GUIDE
(v.o.)
The Earth is mostly harmless.

BACK TO SCENE

FORD
That's not what I call an entry.
(coaxing)
I was there, I have a first-hand report. You'll love it.

Kryl relents, nods for Ford to proceed.

GUIDE SCREEN -- EARTH IN SPACE

GUIDE
(v.o.)
The Earth, revised entry.

GUIDE SCREEN -- LYRICAL IMAGES OF WATER (LIVE ACTION)

Ponds, rivers, pounding waves, the ocean, etc.

GUIDE
(v.o.,
continuing)
The Earth is composed largely of water.

GUIDE SCREEN -- MOP CLEANING LINOLEUM FLOOR (LIVE ACTION)

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)
Earth's most important domesticated
animal is the mop, which is trained
to drink excess water -- for which
it is then milked.

HANDS wring the mop out over a bucket.

INT. KRYL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

As Kryl and Ford continue to view the Guide entry:

GUIDE

(v.o.)
A baby mop is known as a sponge ...

We PAN OFF the Guide and out the window to:

EXT. STREET -- GUIDE OFFICES AND WEAPON EMPORIUM -- NIGHT

In the street below, Trillian exits the shop next door to the Guide, identified by its flashing sign -- "JY'S WEAPON EMPORIUM -- NO REASONABLE OFFER REFUSED!" She carries a lengthy package under her draped coat and is no longer wearing her earrings.

As she walks briskly down the block, passing a large video screen embedded in a flower-covered hill, we HOLD ON:

SCREEN IN HILL

The computer-generated image shows a plastic-surgery-altered Arthur brandishing the eggbeater-like weapon at a beautiful, defiant WOMAN, underscored by dramatic music. A CAPTION runs over the picture: "CRIME OF PASSION OR COLD-BLOODED BUTCHERY? FIND OUT TOMORROW IN COURT!"

GUIDE

(v.o.)
Due to the immense popularity of
courtroom drama on Ursa Minor Beta,
all those who participated in the
proceedings stood to gain a lot of
wealth and fame. The authorities
therefore assumed that everyone
arrested wanted to stand trial.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL FRONT DESK/LOBBY -- NIGHT

The place looks exactly like a well-appointed hotel lobby, plush and ritzy, with PORTERS, DOORMEN and a front desk.

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)

This assumption was reflected in both the physical nature and overall attitude of the local prison system.

Trillian enters the lobby, concealing what she carries under the coat draped over her arm. She looks around: no one is watching her. She hastens to the front desk, twitches back the edge of the coat to reveal the muzzle of a single-round bazooka. She levels this at the DESK CLERK, but he's on the phone and doesn't look up.

TRILLIAN

(fierce whisper)

Right, where's Arthur Dent?

CLERK

(hand over receiver)

I'll be with you in a moment, ma'am.

(into phone)

I'm sorry, sir, but that's really a matter for room service, not the front desk.

TIGHT ON ARTHUR

He is frowning at a tray occupied by a china cup and saucer, a teabag and a container of hot water, the phone receiver to his ear. We cannot see the room around him yet.

ARTHUR

(into phone)

Well, could you tell room service that consumable tea occurs only when boiling water is placed directly on the tea leaves, not with a lone teabag loitering by the side of a china cup and a lukewarm receptacle of water. If I'm to be executed, I don't think one decent cup of tea is too much to ask.

INT. JAIL FRONT DESK/LOBBY -- NIGHT

The Clerk is taking notes:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

CLERK
(into phone)
Very well, sir, I'll see what I can
do.

He hangs up, still doesn't look up at the weapon. Trillian
is ready to explode:

TRILLIAN
Stop stalling, where's Arthur Dent?

CLERK
(reaches for phone again)
If you give me your name, ma'am,
I'll ring his room and inquire as to
whether he's receiving visitors.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Like a hotel corridor. Trillian walks along unescorted,
glancing over her shoulder, finding it hard to believe she's
not being followed. She stops at a numbered door, KNOCKS.

Arthur opens the door. Trillian greets him with concern:

TRILLIAN
Arthur, are you alright?

ARTHUR
(heartfelt)
Oh, God, am I glad to see you.

He embraces her. The embrace turns into a kiss that starts
tentatively but grows in intensity. When it ends:

TRILLIAN
(reaching a conclusion)
Definitely alright.

Arthur steps back, allowing her into:

INT. ARTHUR'S JAIL ROOM -- NIGHT

The room is vast and sumptuous, with lush carpet, sunken tub
and a huge bed. Trillian gapes.

TRILLIAN
So much for overcrowded prisons.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

You should see the closet space.

Some colored pencils and drawings lie on the bed. Trillian picks up the drawings, examines them bemusedly.

TRILLIAN

Where did these come from?

We now see they are various representations of Earth.

ARTHUR

(slightly embarrassed)

Er, I made them. To show the Magratheans. What's under the coat?

Trillian drops the coat, revealing the weapon in all its menacing glory. Arthur WHISTLES, impressed.

ARTHUR

(continuing)

You can handle that thing?

TRILLIAN

If it comes to that.

ARTHUR

Mmm. I suppose we'll have to blast our way out.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL FRONT DESK/LOBBY -- NIGHT

Arthur and Trillian, her weapon unslung, walk through the lobby, not sure whether to be relieved or disappointed that no one is taking any notice of them. They are almost at the front door when the Desk Clerk calls after them:

DESK CLERK

Don't stay out too late, Mr. Dent. Remember you've got plastic surgery in the morning.

ARTHUR

I've got it well in mind, thanks.

He and Trillian hurry out the door.

CUT TO:

GUIDE SCREEN -- SEASHORE -- DAY (LIVE ACTION)

Ford's revised entry on Earth is still in progress. A SCUBA DIVER in full gear walks into the water.

GUIDE
(v.o.,
continuing)
The males of Earth's dominant
species are amphibious in puberty --

GUIDE SCREEN -- DOLPHIN SWIMMING UNDERWATER (LIVE ACTION)

GUIDE
(v.o.,
continuing)
-- but become completely aquatic
upon reaching adulthood.

GUIDE SCREEN -- SEASHORE -- DAY (LIVE ACTION)

SEVERAL ATTRACTIVE WOMEN in minimal swimwear splash around in the surf, having a good time.

GUIDE
(v.o.,
continuing)
Females of the species remain
amphibious throughout their lives.

GUIDE SCREEN -- AQUARIUM DOLPHIN TANK -- DAY (LIVE ACTION)

A WOMAN TRAINER holds a fish in her mouth, coaxing a dolphin into leaping out of the water to take the fish.

GUIDE
(v.o.,
continuing)
Due to the complicated nature of
their mating rituals --

GUIDE SCREEN -- BEACH -- DAY (LIVE ACTION)

The Woman Trainer settles down on a towel -- right next to Ford. They smile at each other.

GUIDE
(v.o.,
continuing)
-- Earth females often welcome the
attention of lonely hitchhikers --

INT. KRYL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

TRILLIAN
You bastard!

She indignantly slaps the Guide out of Ford's hands. He looks up, considerably startled to see that Trillian and Arthur have entered through the open door, but covers it:

FORD
Oh, hi, guys.

TRILLIAN
Just because Earth is dead, you needn't think you can get away with saying all the women went round having it off with dolphins!

KRYL
(warming to her topic)
Actually, it's not a bad entry. We just need to revise it, add some pizzazz without changing the facts. Pizzazz is the whole foundation of the new format.

FORD
New format?

ARTHUR
(eagerly)
Look, Ford, about Earth -- if we go to Magrathea, they might build --

Kryl turns the conversation back to her priorities:

KRYL
Magrathea's a perfect example. I've just had the entry redone. In fact, I've even redesigned our cover.
Look.

She very proudly takes out a redesigned copy of the Guide, sets it next to Ford's reliable battered old Guide. The new Guide is flashier-looking and says "ENJOY" instead of "DON'T PANIC!" Kryl programs her new Guide and we CLOSE IN ON:

NEW GUIDE SCREEN -- MAGRATHEA IN SPACE

An ordinary-looking planet. Over this, the HOSTESS'S VOICE brims with peppy cheer in contrast to the Guide's old tones.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

HOSTESS

(v.o.)

Magrathea, revised entry. Millions of years ago, hyperspatial engineers designed and built dream worlds for the very rich on the planet Magrathea -- isn't that right, Ted?

NEW GUIDE SCREEN -- COMPUTER-GENERATED TALK SHOW SET

The image of Magrathea remains on the screen of a computer-generated talk show set, with a COMPUTER-GENERATED HOST and HOSTESS who are youthful, vivacious, cute and gratefully insipid. The Host beams at us:

HOST

It sure is, Sandy.

The Hostess LAUGHS at this, as though it's very witty.

HOSTESS

Oh, Ted ... Seriously, now, do we have any idea of what these luxury planets were like?

HOST

Well, Sandy, we can guess --

NEW GUIDE SCREEN -- EXT. SKI SLOPES -- DAY

Young, attractive, happy PEOPLE shoot down the slopes, flirt with each other and generally have a good time, as:

HOST

(v.o.,
continuing)

A ski-lover's dream planet might well have been like the white-capped mountains we find today on Claudius Nine, home of the famous Nippo's Ski Lodge --

We CLOSE IN on a purposefully picturesque ski lodge.

HOST

(v.o.,
continuing)

-- where reasonably priced accommodations can be had simply by calling this toll-free reservations number.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

A very long PHONE NUMBER is SUPERED over the lodge.

INT. KRYL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Kryl beams enthusiastically at Ford, who is appalled.

KRYL

So what do you think?

FORD

What do I think? What've you done?

KRYL

(stung)

I've expanded the Guide's commercial possibilities to market the product more effectively.

FORD

Market the product? What about the tradition of the Guide?!

KRYL

Spare me, Ford, you're the last person qualified to give lectures on journalistic ethics.

FORD

You fill up the Guide with those two dorks pushing hotel reservations --

KRYL

(icy)

This is the new Guide and if you don't like it, you don't have to write for it.

CUT TO:

INT. GUIDE NEWSROOM -- NIGHT

Arthur and Trillian hurry to keep pace with Ford, who fumes:

FORD

Woman gets made editor, next thing she thinks she runs the place --

He stops to grab a hitchhiking "thumb" from the "FOR STAFF ONLY" rack, then stomps out; the others follow. Trillian still carries her "package" under her coat.

EXT. URSA MINOR STREET -- GUIDE OFFICES -- NIGHT

As Ford, Arthur and Trillian exit the building, a WORK CREW up on scaffolding are taking down the "DON'T PANIC!" sign and putting up one that says "ENJOY." Still in a foul mood, Ford kicks over the work crew's ladder as he passes, leaving TWO WORKERS dangling by their arms from the "ENJOY" sign.

CUT TO:

INT. ESOTERICA SHOP -- URSA MINOR -- NIGHT

All manner of peculiar items -- some out-and-out junk like old family portraits, some obviously useful items like knives and engines, and some unearthly in form and oblique in purpose -- take up every square inch of available space.

The PROPRIETOR watches Zaphod study a cue-ball-sized SPHERE: twisted one way, its interior shows a 3-D star chart; twisted the other way, it shows details of a planetary surface. Zaphod is interested but plays it cool.

ZAPHOD

How much you want for it?

PROPRIETOR

(equally cool)

One hundred thousand.

ZAPHOD

If I had that kind of scratch, I wouldn't need this. One thousand.

Before the Proprietor can barter further:

SECOND HEAD

Oh, come on, it's worth much more than that.

ZAPHOD

(glares at him)

It could be a fake.

SECOND HEAD

With that kind of detail? Come on, you know it's real.

ZAPHOD

Two thousand's all I've got.

SECOND HEAD

No, it's not, there's the five thousand from that safe in --

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ZAPHOD
Would you shut up?!

PROPRIETOR
I'll settle for the seven thousand.

SECOND HEAD
Are you sure? That seems so low,
the thing's practically priceless --

ZAPHOD
(ready to kill)
He's sure!!!

He whips out his wallet, begins peeling off bills before this goes any further. The Proprietor nods gravely.

PROPRIETOR
You drive a hard bargain.

The shop door opens; Trillian pokes her head inside.

TRILLIAN
(uncertain)
Zaphod?
(sees him)
Oh, that is you. We heard you
bellowing out on the street.
(impatient)
Well, come on.

Zaphod pockets the sphere, glowers again at Second Head, follows Trillian out.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE IMPOUND YARD -- URSA MINOR -- NIGHT

Grim and depressing, littered with intact, semi-intact and totally disemboweled spacecraft, along with piles of various general mechanical trash. The Heart of Gold sits across the yard with its ramp down, one of the better-preserved ships.

Zaphod, Arthur, Trillian and Ford enter through the gate, which swings shut behind them. They take a few steps toward their ship when the two tow operators from the night before, HAFF and EDGAR, emerge from the shadows, big and armed.

EDGAR
Freeze!

He aims his weapon at the group. They stop where they are.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

HAFF

Where do you think you're going?

Our group look at each other, disconcerted: this may not be as easy as they thought. Ford tries to ease the tension:

FORD

Oh, just looking around, you know --

EDGAR

Oh, yeah? This is a police impound yard, fella, you can't waltz in and out of here like it was jail.

Zaphod SIGHS impatiently, takes a single step forward.

ZAPHOD

Look, that's my ship there, so --

EDGAR

I said freeze!

Without further warning, he FIRES. The BLAST obliterates Second Head. Zaphod staggers backward, falling out of sight behind a huge mound of impounded debris.

Arthur and Ford are shocked speechless. Trillian, appalled, instinctively starts toward where Zaphod fell to help him:

TRILLIAN

Zaphod --

Terrified for all of them, Arthur grabs her arm:

ARTHUR

Trillian, he said freeze, for God's sake, freeze.

Edgar strolls over, puts his weapon about two inches from Arthur's face.

EDGAR

Who's next?

ARTHUR

Um -- I bet you're a nice person and ... you wouldn't want to shoot us before we get this mess sorted out.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

EDGAR

Any mess left by your remains can
and will be held against you. Clean
up will be charged to your estate.

He puts the gun to Arthur's head; Arthur shuts his eyes for
The End. Ford desperately tries to stall:

FORD

("impressed")

You guys really take your work
seriously, I see.

HAFF

Somebody's gotta keep scum like you
from spitting on the parking laws.

EDGAR

Yeah. We don't care that the pay's
for shit, we don't care that we
don't get to go to court and give
evidence like the cops, we don't
care that everybody ignores us and
treats us like worms -- none of that
affects how we do our jobs, which is
why you're gonna die, slime!

He is about to fire when a CRASH makes him (and the others)
look around.

The Heart of Gold is lifting off but wobbling wildly,
banging into the huge stacks of rubbish in the yard as it
tries to escape. Edgar turns the shot originally meant for
Ford on the ship, but its flight is so erratic he misses it.

HAFF

Hey, that's an impounded ship, you
can't fly out of here! Come back!

While Edgar and Haff FIRE at the ship, Trillian, moving at
near-lightning speed, unslings the bazooka from her
shoulder. Just as Edgar and Haff turn to look at their
captives, Trillian FIRES.

The bazooka shell hits the cargo hatch of a large impounded
craft winched up over Edgar and Haff's heads. The hatch
disintegrates in smoke, raining a shipment of floppy deck
chairs which entangle the tow operators.

As Edgar and Haff struggle to extricate themselves, Ford
scrabbles frantically in his duffel bag, comes up with the
"thumb," programs it very fast.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

Trillian, grab it! The thumb, I mean.

He and Trillian grasp the "thumb." They and Ford dematerialize just as Edgar and Haff shake free of the deck chairs and FIRE. The blast makes a smoking hole in the pile of rubble right behind where the trio were standing.

CUT TO:

INT. HEART OF GOLD CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Arthur, Trillian and Ford materialize on the floor, holding the "thumb." It takes all of them a moment to get their bearings. The ship continues to buck and pitch, throwing them around as they struggle to their feet. Arthur stares at the thumb gratefully:

ARTHUR

Thank God for hitchhiking.

FORD

(perplexed)
Who's flying the ship? Marvin?

TRILLIAN

(realizes)
My God, Zaphod. We've got to go back for him.

ARTHUR

(sympathetic)
Trillian, he's dead.

TRILLIAN

(stubborn)
We don't know that.

They enter:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- NIGHT

The trio are astonished to see Zaphod piloting (badly), his jacket pulled up to cover Second Head's neck stump.

TRILLIAN

(delighted)
Zaphod! How'd you manage to get in here?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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ZAPHOD

Easy. The guards were busy with you guys, I thought I'd get away while they weren't looking.

The others exchange a look as the implications sink in:

TRILLIAN

Get away? You don't mean you were just going to leave us there to be killed?

ZAPHOD

(simply)
Well, sure.

The others are shocked and indignant, especially Trillian.

TRILLIAN

Zaphod, how could you?!

Zaphod can't believe she's asking something so obvious.

ZAPHOD

(guiltless)

Because I'm an irresponsible, self-serving shit. God, Trillian, don't you know me at all by now?

(matter-of-fact)

As long as you're here, you might as well fly the ship.

FORD

I think they shot the wrong head.

Arthur nods darkly. Trillian glares at Zaphod but takes the controls; the ship finally stops bucking and lifts away smoothly. In a moment, we can see space out the window again. Then Trillian notices:

TRILLIAN

Where's the Improbability Drive?

MARVIN

The teasers took it.

ZAPHOD

What? You just let them? Great.
Why the hell didn't they take you?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

MARVIN
(very mournful)
They didn't want me.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKI SLOPES -- DAY

By the same lodge we saw in the Guide entry. The Teaser ship is half-buried in the snow; SKIERS are using it as a jump slope.

INT. TEASER BRIDGE -- DAY

The Teasers look at themselves and their bridge in utter horror. They have not mutated further, but their clothing has turned into K-Mart style polyester checkered prints. The bridge itself now looks like a '50s luncheonette.

GISELLE
(to Brice,
as though he's
unleashed WWII)
What have you done??!!

BRICE
(huffy)
I'm just practicing. Relax.

CUT TO:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Arthur, Ford and Trillian are disappointed about the loss of the Drive, but Zaphod is cocky again.

ZAPHOD
Well, while you guys were off
having your sulkfest back there, I
was doing something useful.

He triumphantly produces the sphere he bought. Trillian is curious; Arthur and Ford are simply dubious.

ARTHUR
You bought a paperweight?

ZAPHOD
A map.
(dramatic pause)
To Magrathea.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

As the others begin regarding the sphere with real interest, we PUSH IN to the sphere's starscape, until we are actually inside it.

EXT. STARSCAPE

The Heart of Gold flies into the starscape, moving along the route indicated by the map.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Everyone is for once relaxed and having a good time, eating, drinking and getting along fairly well.

FORD

Listen, Trillian, you're a woman. You think Kryl's really pissed with me because I hate what she's doing to the Guide, or will she still have sex with me?

TRILLIAN

(amused)

God, Ford, all you ever think about is your spam dagger.

Before Arthur and Ford can react, they are jarred by:

ZAPHOD

(singing)

"No one knows what it's like to be
the bad man / To be the sad man
behind blue eyes -- "

MARVIN

No one knows what it's like to be a
manically depressed robot, but you
don't hear me singing about it.

Zaphod irritably throws his empty beer bottle at Marvin and is about to verbally retort when he sees something out the window, WHOOPS with wild excitement.

ZAPHOD

Magrathea!

MAGRATHEA IN SPACE -- P.O.V. FROM HEART OF GOLD WINDOW

The light of twin suns pierce the darkness; a huge planet looms below us.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Everyone stares out the window, impressed.

FORD
Are you sure?

ZAPHOD
Come on, look at the twin suns,
Soulialis and Rahm! Anyway, I know
it's Magrathea, I can feel all that
wealth down there.

Trillian nods at the spherical map.

TRILLIAN
It's Magrathea according to this.

A celebratory mood takes hold. Arthur impulsively pulls open Marvin's chest, tosses drinks to Trillian, Ford and Zaphod, then proposes a toast:

ARTHUR
To Magrathea. To life!

The others raise their drinks in spirited agreement, except:

MARVIN
(gloomy)
Life --

He's about to go into his "Don't talk to me about life" spiel, but Zaphod holds up a silencing finger. Marvin sulks. As everyone is about to actually drink:

VOICE
(on p.a. system)
Greetings to you.

The group look at one another, startled and perplexed.

ARTHUR
Who's that?

Trillian frowns, puzzled, begins working her computer.

COMPUTER SCREEN -- SERIES OF IMAGES

First, the planet Magrathea. We CLOSE IN on a single continent, then a single building, then a single room, as:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

VOICE

(on p.a. system)

The Commercial Council of Magrathea thanks you for your esteemed visit. We regret that the entire planet is closed for business at the moment, but if you would care to leave your name and the address of a planet where you can be contacted, please do so at the sound of the beep.

We have now closed in on an ANSWERING MACHINE. There is a LOUD BEEP.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Arthur takes out his drawings of Earth, looks at them sadly.

ARTHUR

I suppose this means none of the planet builders are left.

TRILLIAN

(trying to comfort him)

They'd never have made a good copy of Earth anyway. Not really.

Arthur gloomily crumples the drawings. Zaphod is euphoric:

ZAPHOD

Take us down, Trillian.

But before Trillian can take the controls again:

VOICE

(on p.a. system)

If you leave your name and address, we will put you on our mailing list to be notified as soon as business resumes. Meanwhile, we thank our clients for their kind interest and ask them to leave. Now.

ARTHUR

Sounds a bit ominous, doesn't it?

ZAPHOD

Nah, they just want to keep us away from all that unguarded loot. Let's land.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

There's got to be some reason no one's come back from here for seven million years.

Ford, watching the window, frowns deeply.

FORD

Could the teasers have followed us here?

TRILLIAN

Of course not. Well, it's possible, but the odds against them using the Drive properly without the instructions are --

Realizing what she's saying, she looks out the window.

EXT. MAGRATHEA IN SPACE -- P.O.V. FROM HEART OF GOLD

The Teaser ship now hovers between us and the planet.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Trillian punches her console where the Drive used to be.

TRILLIAN

Bloody Improbability Drive!

ARTHUR

Perhaps we ought to come back later.

INT. TEASER BRIDGE -- SPACE

A small bowling lane now runs through the Teaser bridge, complete with THREE MIDDLE-AGED BOWLERS intent on their game, although the Teasers rudely push past them to look out the window as Brice declares smugly:

BRICE

Magrathea.

NICK

(impressed)
Too grand.

We INTERCUT the Teaser Bridge with:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Everyone reacts with growing concern in varying degrees, as:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

VOICE

(on p.a. system)

It is most gratifying that your enthusiasm for our planet continues unabated and so we would like to assure you that the guided missiles currently converging with your ships are part of a special service we extend to all our most enthusiastic clients, and the fully armed nuclear warheads are of course merely a courtesy detail. We look forward to your patronage in future lives.

FORD

We should definitely come back later.

EXT. SPACE OVER MAGRATHEA

A pair of missiles streak up from the planet's surface to doggedly pursue both ships, which try to dodge.

INT. TEASER BRIDGE -- SPACE

Brice's fear shows through his affected indifference:

BRICE

Too boring. Let's leave.

He quickly programs the Drive; the Improbability Effect sweeps over the bridge.

EXT. SPACE OVER MAGRATHEA

Just as one of the missiles is about to hit the Heart of Gold, the pirate craft and both missiles vanish.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Everyone stares out the window, astonished and relieved, though Zaphod attempts to discount the others' reactions:

ZAPHOD

It was just a couple of nukes. I mean, pull yourselves together, would you?

He shakes his head at the timidity of his compatriots.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRSPACE OVER STRANGE "PLANET"

The missiles continue to chase the Teaser ship, flying low over coarse black spikes growing in fleshy-looking ground dotted by big, irregular white flakes.

INT. TEASER BRIDGE -- STRANGE PLANET AIRSPACE

Popcorn is now popping all over the bridge floor; a HORRIBLE INSECT BUZZING, monstrosously amplified, is on the p.a.

Brice looks at the radar, sees TWO SMALL BLIPS being chased by a much BIGGER BLIP. He points at the small blips.

BRICE

If those are the missiles, then --
(points at the big blip)
-- what's that?

CUT TO:

EXT. SURFACE OF MAGRATHEA -- DAY

Arthur, Ford, Trillian, Zaphod and Marvin stand at the foot of the Heart of Gold boarding ramp, surveying a bleak, lifeless planetary surface that shows no sign of habitation.

ARTHUR

So this is Magrathea.

ZAPHOD

Great. Let's split up and look for the treasure.

ARTHUR

Hold on. I may not know much about finding treasure, but I have seen a fair amount of outer space monster movies. Every time someone says, "Let's split up," the monster promptly arrives and starts eating the splittees.

FORD

(nods agreement)
Usually how it happens in real life.

TRILLIAN

Anyway, Zaphod, you've got the map.

Zaphod, hoping everyone was going to forget this, is annoyed but takes out the map, twists it so the planetary landscape shows inside it. We PUSH IN to the mapscape until we are:

EXT. MAGRATHEAN VALLEY -- DAY

Our group trek down the side of a hill into a barren valley bordered by a cliff. Despite being hot and tired, Arthur is fascinated. He tries to convey this to Marvin:

ARTHUR

Look at those two suns. Spectacular
-- we had only the one sun on Earth.

MARVIN

I know. You keep going on about
that planet. It sounds awful.

ARTHUR

Oh, no, it was beautiful.

MARVIN

Did it have oceans?

ARTHUR

(wistful)

Yes, great wide rolling blue oceans,
the Atlantic, the Pacific ...

MARVIN

Can't bear oceans.

Arthur SIGHS, opens Marvin's chest, gets a drink, takes a swallow, then replaces it as the group reach a steel door in the face of the cliff. It is half open, but the doorway is clogged with silt and debris. It takes all of them to pull it open, admitting them to:

INT. UNDERGROUND CORRIDOR -- DAY

Pitch dark. A powerful BEAM OF LIGHT shines from Marvin's chest, illuminating a wide, dirty corridor full of dust, debris and discarded machinery. All movement here ECHOES.

Arthur, Ford and Trillian hesitate, slightly fearful, but Zaphod strides confidently ahead:

ZAPHOD

Come on, you scumbags, let's go.

The others follow him to a trifurcated intersection in the corridor. The group turns left.

INT. LEFT-HAND CORRIDOR -- DAY

No sooner do our group set foot in the hall than a DEAFENING ALARM goes off. Scared, the group backtrack, run into:

INT. NEW CORRIDOR -- DAY

The group run faster, but the ALARM continues, now joined by THUDDING METALLIC FOOTSTEPS.

ARTHUR

Is this the way we came in?

FORD

Just as long as it's the way out --

There is the SOUND OF A BLAST. The wall next to them COLLAPSES, revealing a fearsome BATTLE MACHINE which promptly fires a second blast that barely misses the group, knocking out a section of wall next to them. Terrified, the group run into:

INT. FOURTH CORRIDOR -- DAY

The group look at each other, hearing the approach of the o.s. Battle Machine. They sprint to another intersection:

ARTHUR

Which way now?

FORD

Doesn't matter. That thing blows out walls. What we need is a diversion.

MARVIN

I suppose you want me to stay here and try to stop it.

The others look at him in surprise, except:

ZAPHOD

Right.

ARTHUR

We can't just leave him here by himself --

ZAPHOD

You're right. You stay with him.

He sprints around the corner; Ford follows. The o.s. Battle Machine sounds like it's getting closer. That's enough to persuade Arthur; he grabs Trillian's arm, pulls her into the next corridor with him.

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR -- DAY

Arthur and Trillian sprint down the corridor, as:

MARVIN

(o.s.)

Life, don't talk to me about life.

Arthur and Trillian are guilt-stricken; Ford tries to comfort them as they all continue to run:

FORD

Face it, Marvin didn't have a lot to live for. Not much joie de vivre.

ZAPHOD

No vivre at all.

But Trillian calls back sadly over her shoulder:

TRILLIAN

Goodbye, Marvin. Thank you.

INT. MARVIN'S CORRIDOR -- DAY

MARVIN

"Thank you." What a farce. As if any of them had the capacity to appreciate me.

The CORRIDOR WALL COLLAPSES, revealing the Battle Machine behind it. Marvin plants himself squarely in its path; he looks pathetically small and vulnerable in the face of the Battle Machine's bulk and might.

BATTLE MACHINE

Out of my way, little robot!

MARVIN

I'm afraid I've been left here to stop you.

The Battle Machine is taken aback. It cautiously puts out a sensor probe, scans Marvin, then withdraws the probe.

BATTLE MACHINE

What are you armed with?

MARVIN

(doleful)

Guess.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

BATTLE MACHINE
(infuriated)
Guess????!!

MARVIN
Yes. Go on, you'll never guess.

BATTLE MACHINE
Harrumph ... Lasers?

Marvin slowly, sadly shakes his head.

MARVIN
No, not lasers.

BATTLE MACHINE
(slightly embarrassed)
Yeah, too obvious. Anti-matter ray?.

MARVIN
Far too obvious.

BATTLE MACHINE
Yes, alright, you don't have to
patronize me -- an electron ram?

MARVIN
What's that?

BATTLE MACHINE
One of these!

A lethal-looking device emerges from the Battle Machine. It spits a searing blaze of light at the far wall, which disintegrates in a second. Marvin shakes his head again.

MARVIN
No, not one of those.

BATTLE MACHINE
(seeking praise)
Good, though, wasn't it?

MARVIN
Very good.

BATTLE MACHINE
I know! You have one of those new
Xanthic Destabilized Zenon Emitters!

MARVIN
Nice, aren't they?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

BATTLE MACHINE

(awed)

That what you got?

MARVIN

No. You're thinking along the wrong lines. You're failing to take into account something fairly basic in relations between people and robots.

BATTLE MACHINE

Wait, give me another guess! I know! Is it ... is it ... er ...

MARVIN

Just think. They left me, a menial serving robot, to stop you, a huge heavy-duty battle cybernaut, while they ran off to save themselves. What do you think they would leave me with?

BATTLE MACHINE

(apprehensive)

Something pretty damn devastating, I expect.

MARVIN

You expect? You expect, do you? Want me to tell you what they left me with?

BATTLE MACHINE

(braces itself)

Right, go ahead. I can take it.

MARVIN

Nothing.

BATTLE MACHINE

Nothing???!!

MARVIN

Zip.

BATTLE MACHINE

Well, isn't that just like organic life forms! Hell, that makes me angry! Think I'll smash their wall!

The electron ram emerges again, smashes another wall.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

MARVIN

Very impressive.

BATTLE MACHINE

Just ran off and left you, did they?
Think I'll shoot out their ceiling!

A new, even more impressive weapon emerges from the Battle Machine, blasting a huge hole in the ceiling.

MARVIN

Very powerful.

BATTLE MACHINE

You ain't seen nothin' yet. I can
take out the floor, too, no problem.

Two massive cannons emerge from either side of the Battle Machine, blasting the floor to bits -- right out from under the Battle Machine, which ROARS in fury and confusion as it drops through the hole it has made. The ROAR continues until we hear a LOUD CRASH far, far below.

Marvin plods up to the lip of the hole, looks down.

MARVIN

What a depressingly stupid machine.

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR -- DAY

Reacting to the SOUND OF THE DISTANT CRASH o.s., our group pause, then double their speed.

Ahead of the others, Zaphod stops dead in the archway at the end of the corridor; Ford, Arthur and Trillian almost plow into him from behind, then freeze, too, incredulous.

FORD

What the hell ... ?

INT. ARCHITECT'S HANGAR -- DAY

Beyond the archway is a vast, hangarlike room littered with pieces of unfinished giant objects: natural, architectural and even geographic experiments that their creators didn't like, abandoned and left lying around.

In the midst of this, a lone white-bearded old man, the ARCHITECT, sits looking through a magnifying glass down a curious opaque tube.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

He is doing something with extremely fine tools through minute holes in the tube's sides. Becoming aware of his visitors, he looks up with benign, absent-minded surprise.

ARCHITECT

Oh, hello.

ARTHUR

Who are you?

ARCHITECT

My name is ... not important. You seem ill at ease.

FORD

Might have something to do with almost getting nuked and then shot at by that huge mother machine.

ARCHITECT

Oh, that's what all the noise was. I wondered. Back when we were popular, it was the only way we could discourage people from showing up without appointments. Nowadays it does seem a bit excessive.

Zaphod cases the room critically, sizing it up:

ZAPHOD

Are you alone here?

ARCHITECT

Oh, no. The others are sleeping until the recession is over.

Ford remembers to take out his Guide, turns its recorder on, assumes a professional reporter's attitude:

FORD

Recession?

ARCHITECT

Yes. Seven million years ago the galactic economy collapsed, and seeing that custom-built planets are a luxury commodity -- you do know we built planets, don't you?

Arthur's eagerness shows:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

Yes. In fact, I wanted to talk to you about that --

ARCHITECT

Fascinating trade. Doing the coastlines was always my favorite. Used to have endless fun doing all the fiddly bits in fjords ... So anyway, the recession came and we decided it would save a lot of bother if we just slept through it. The computers are index-linked to the galactic stock-market prices. They'll revive us when everybody else has rebuilt the economy enough to afford our rather expensive services again.

STOMPING METALLIC FOOTSTEPS approach o.s. in the corridor.

FORD

(apprehensive)
Maybe we should continue this somewhere else ...

Marvin, the source of the STOMPING, enters the archway.

MARVIN

Don't bother, I know when I'm not wanted, I'll just rust quietly and unobtrusively in this doorway --

ZAPHOD

Shut your face.
(to Architect)
Let's get down to business. Where's the loot?

ARCHITECT

I beg your pardon?

To the consternation of everyone but the Architect, Zaphod pulls a knife, looms over the Architect menacingly.

ZAPHOD

Don't hold out on us, shithead, this is the richest planet that ever was. Time to share the goodies.

Arthur, appalled, tries to grab Zaphod's arm:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

Zaphod, stop it! He'll never help us if you threaten him.

ZAPHOD

(fierce)

I don't want help, I want treasure. That's what I came here for in my ship, you're welcome, that's what I'm gonna get and that's what you better not interfere with.

He continues to hold the knife on the Architect, who is neither angry nor frightened, only mildly bemused.

ARCHITECT

Well, I wouldn't know about any treasure, but all our money's in the numbered bank accounts where we left it before we went to sleep.

Zaphod, stares at the Architect's face, realizes he's telling the truth and lowers his knife, shattered.

ZAPHOD

A numbered bank account? I steal the Improbability Drive, have Brice chase me all over the galaxy, get my head shot off, come all this way -- for a numbered bank account?

He unleashes his rage by pummeling the wall. The others watch him for a moment, then leave him to his fit. When he recovers, Zaphod begins prowling the room, looking for things worth stealing, during the following:

FORD

(to Architect)

If everybody else is sleeping off the recession, what're you doing up?

ARCHITECT

Computer malfunction.

TRILLIAN

It woke you by mistake?

ARCHITECT

No, special project. We built a computer for some transdimensional philosophers, you see.

(continuing)

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARCHITECT

(continuing)

There was an accident with the original computer, so I'm just now doing the finishing touches on the back-up model.

Arthur, afraid to hope but utterly compelled, pulls the crumpled drawings of Earth from his pocket.

ARTHUR

Yes, well, as you are up, I was hoping you might perhaps consider a new project. You see, there was this planet called Earth and --

ARCHITECT

Oh, you're with the philosophers. Don't worry, it won't take any longer with the back-up computer, you'll have your Question in another three billion years as scheduled.

Our group look at one another, very confused by this.

ARTHUR

No, I think you misunderstood. We want to talk to you about the Earth.

ARCHITECT

Yes, the computer designed by Deep Thought. As I said, don't worry. The new one's identical to the first -- you won't know the difference.

ARTHUR

Computer? Deep Thought? What are you talking about?

ARCHITECT

(himself bewildered)

The Earth, of course.

CUT TO:

GUIDE GRAPHICS

The GRAPHICS illustrate the following:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

GUIDE

(v.o.)

Deep Thought. In the course of every intelligent civilization, certain questions inevitably arise, such as, "Why are we here?", "Why do we die?" and "Why do these questions inevitably arise?" To answer these and other profound questions on the meaning of Life, the Universe and Everything, a race of hyper-intelligent beings from another dimension build a super-computer called Deep Thought. For seven-and-a-half million years, Deep Thought labored long and hard and at last --

GUIDE GRAPHICS -- INT. COMPUTER COMPLEX

(NOTE: All characters in this sequence are depicted in GRAPHICS, as opposed to live action.)

A vast chamber houses a gigantic, awe-inspiring computer, DEEP THOUGHT. The computer is tended by androgynous SHAPES clad in all-concealing hooded robes.

Deep Thought speaks in a deep, rumbling voice, accompanied by shifting patterns on its multiple screens.

DEEP THOUGHT

I have the Answer.

An excited, reverent MURMUR sweeps through the Shapes.

SHAPE #1

To Life?

SHAPE #2

The Universe?

SHAPE #3

And Everything?

DEEP THOUGHT

Yes, that Answer. But you're not going to like it.

WHISPERS of consternation among the Shapes.

SHAPE #1

Whether we like it or not is of no consequence, O Great Computer.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

SHAPE #2

Yes. We've waited seven-and-a-half million years for this, you've got to tell us!

DEEP THOUGHT

As you wish. The Answer ... to your question about Life, the Universe and Everything is ... forty-two.

Silence, then:

SHAPES

(in outraged unison)

Forty-two?

SHAPE #3

What kind of answer is forty-two?

DEEP THOUGHT

What kind of question is Life, the Universe and Everything?

SHAPE #1

Don't try handing us that, you know what we meant.

DEEP THOUGHT

Yes, but what is the Ultimate Question?

There is a long, uncomfortable silence.

SHAPE #2

You're the computer, you tell us.

DEEP THOUGHT

I cannot. I don't know what the Ultimate Question is either.

A disappointed GROAN sweeps through the crowd of Shapes.

DEEP THOUGHT

(continuing)

But. I shall design a computer that can deduce the Ultimate Question, a computer so complex that organic life shall form part of its matrix.

(continuing)

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

DEEP THOUGHT

(continuing)

Its program shall run for five billion years, at the end of which time you shall have your Ultimate Question -- much good it'll do you ignorant slobs -- and this computer shall be called, The Earth.

PULL BACK TO:

INT. ARCHITECT'S HANGAR -- DAY

Arthur, Trillian and Ford have been watching the preceding on Ford's Guide; they now look up, absolutely shocked.

ARTHUR

You mean to say ... the Earth is a giant computer?

ARCHITECT

It was, 'til it got destroyed. Some silly business about a bypass, I think. Earth Mark Two is in the hyperspace tract here. You can't mistake it -- the Mark Two's the only one not in storage.

He tilts the tube he was working on, indicating that Arthur and Trillian should take a look through the magnifier.

HYPERSPACE TRACT -- ARTHUR AND TRILLIAN'S P.O.V.

A starless expanse that gives the impression of infinity, in which a number of scaffolded, shrouded SPHERES revolve.

Only one sphere is unshrouded. It is unmistakably EARTH.

INT. ARCHITECT'S HANGAR -- DAY.

Arthur and Trillian look up dumbfounded, as Ford and Zaphod crowd around to take a look themselves.

ARTHUR

But ... that's Earth!

ARCHITECT

Earth Mark Two. Ever go to a place called Norway? That's one of mine. Lovely crinkly edges. Won an award. This one's almost ready to roll -- want to go down for a look?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Arthur can only blink, finally nods, as do the others. The Architect takes a hollow, reedlike instrument, puts it through one of the holes in the side of the tube, puts the magnifier over it, then tilts the whole thing to the floor.

The magnifier makes the opening in the reed look big enough to walk into. As our group approach, they discover that it is big enough to walk into -- so in they go.

INT. TUBE

The group pass through toward a light at the opposite end.

EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH, ENGLAND -- DAY

A lovely area with grass and trees all around. PEOPLE stare up at the sky, but they are frozen in position, as is everything else: bushes, bits of paper, leaves, etc.

The only moving things in this still-lifescape are Arthur, Trillian, Ford, Zaphod, Marvin and the Architect as they emerge from the tube, which on this end is disguised as a subway entrance. Arthur looks around, not knowing whether to be overjoyed or just stunned.

ARTHUR

My God, it's ... it really is Earth.

TRILLIAN

(fascinated,
delighted)

It's absolutely extraordinary.

ARTHUR

(getting choked up)

I don't think I've ever seen
anything quite so beautiful ...

MARVIN

It's even worse than you made it
sound.

Zaphod starts to agree when Second Head's neck stump begins to quiver. With no further warning, a new SECOND HEAD bursts up from the stump. As the others react, he looks around, declares:

SECOND HEAD

Well, I like it.

Arthur sees a full teacup nearby in an outdoor cafe, reaches for it longingly, but the Architect intervenes:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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ARCHITECT

You mustn't do that. It all has to be just as it was the instant before it was destroyed when it starts up.

Arthur backs off from the teacup.

TRILLIAN

Starts up?

ARCHITECT

Oh, yes. Has to. Otherwise the program won't run and our clients will never get their Question to the Ultimate Answer.

ARTHUR

(thrill of discovery)

So -- our whole planet is a giant device to discover the Ultimate Question. You know, this explains so many things. All my life I've had this strange feeling that something was going on in the world, something big, and that no one would tell me what it was.

ARCHITECT

That's just paranoia. Everyone in the Universe feels like that.

ARTHUR

(disappointed)

Oh.

FORD

If this is what they've been using to calculate the Ultimate Question, what do you think the Question is, "Why is everything so fucked up?"

TRILLIAN

(thinks it over)

"Why is everything so fucked up?"
"Forty-two." Doesn't make sense.

Arthur, euphoric again, takes Trillian by the shoulders, trying to impart his feelings to her:

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

ARTHUR

Look, maybe it's not supposed to make sense. Maybe it'll make sense in three billion years or whenever. God's honest truth, I don't care what the Question is. Don't you see, we can go home. Not some copy, home.

Infected by Arthur's high spirits. Trillian hugs him. They indulge in a long, rapturous kiss, to Zaphod's disgust.

ZAPHOD

Ape foreplay. Yecch.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ARCHITECT'S HANGAR -- DAY

The Architect takes the once-more tiny reed out of the tube, preparing to get back to work.

ARTHUR

We can't thank you enough, truly.

TRILLIAN

When will the new Earth be complete?

ARCHITECT

It should be back in place in a few hours and it'll start right up.

FORD

(unpleasant speculation)

Exactly where are you going to put the Earth Mark Two?

ARCHITECT

Same place as the first one, of course. It would cock up the whole program if the inhabitants looked up and found themselves staring into a different sky than the one they remembered.

FORD

What about the Vogons' bypass?

ARTHUR

Well, I'm sure he's taken some sort of precautions to insure they won't blow up this Earth. Right?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

He smiles hopefully at the Architect, but the Architect shakes his head "no."

ARCHITECT

I just build the things. Security isn't my line at all.

Silence. Finally:

ARTHUR

(very quietly)

So basically what you're saying is, after we've gone through all this to find you, and you've gone to a great deal of trouble to recreate the Earth in perfect detail down to the last blade of grass and scrap of waste paper, you're now going to let it be destroyed before it's of any use to the people who live on it, the people who paid you to make it, or anyone else. Have I got that right?

ARCHITECT

(mildly)

Yes. I think so.

Arthur appears to think this over for a moment. Then he goes berserk and slams the Architect up against the wall.

ARTHUR

You bloody lunatic, what's wrong with you? Why can't you just put the Earth somewhere else?

ARCHITECT

Because then it wouldn't fulfill its purpose.

ARTHUR

It's not going to fulfill its purpose if it blows up again! I don't give a shit if it doesn't have a purpose! It's enough that it's there, isn't it? Isn't it?

ARCHITECT

Perhaps for you, but you didn't commission it, did you?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

FORD
(gently)
Come on, Arthur.

He and Trillian manage -- with difficulty -- to pry Arthur off the Architect, drag him struggling out the archway, as:

ARTHUR
Put my planet somewhere safe, you .
miserable senile apathetic old ...
whatever-you-are!

ARCHITECT
It's not in the contract.

As Zaphod pitches in to help get Arthur out the door:

ARTHUR
(to Architect)
I hope they build a bypass through
Magrathea! And I've always hated
Norway!

CUT TO:

EXT. MAGRATHEA -- HEART OF GOLD -- DAY

Arthur, Trillian, Ford, Zaphod and Marvin stand around the boarding ramp, each deeply depressed for their own reasons.

TRILLIAN
Well, where to now?

FORD
I ought to go back to Ursa Minor,
see if Kryl'll take my article on
this place --

TRILLIAN
Oh, please, not that bloody planet
again, I'm depressed enough.

MARVIN
So am I.

ARTHUR
(suddenly)
I think we ought to go to the Earth.

FORD
You're saying you're not depressed
enough?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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ARTHUR

We could at least try to save it.

FORD

Arthur, just let it go.

But Trillian is interested.

TRILLIAN

How could we save it?

ARTHUR

I don't know, but there's got to be something.

TRILLIAN

(exasperated)

Why can't the bloody Vogons just build their bypass around the Earth instead of having to go through it?

FORD

Because that's where the blueprints say their bypass goes and they're so bureaucratic and obstinate and --

A thought strikes. Arthur speaks with growing excitement:

ARTHUR

Hold on. Ford, didn't you have a plan to reprogram their demolition beam so that the bypass would miss the Earth?

FORD

That wasn't a plan, that was just bullshit to keep you moving.

ARTHUR

But it could be done.

FORD

Arthur, listen to me. Even if you could reprogram their demolition beam --

TRILLIAN

(doubtfully)

I could give it a go --

ZAPHOD

Aren't you forgetting something?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Arthur, Ford and Trillian look at each other, perplexed.

FORD

Oh, yeah, Arthur, stop leaving this lying around, okay?

He hands Arthur the towel again. Zaphod is sullen.

ZAPHOD

I mean, it's my ship and I don't want to go. I've suffered a very serious disappointment today and had a head grow back, and if you think I'm just gonna sit around waiting so you can save some stupid back-up computer planet --

POW! The arm on Second Head's side of the body suddenly makes a fist and decks Zaphod, knocking him out. Second Head greets the others' astonished looks with a self-satisfied grin, gestures expansively at the boarding ramp.

SECOND HEAD

(gracious)

After you.

CUT TO:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Zaphod is still out cold. The others gather around the computer screen, which features a star map with a hyperspace route map. A blinking dot represents Earth.

TRILLIAN

When the Earth is moved into place, it'll be here, and we're here --

Ford looks out the window.

FORD

And the Vogons are right there.

EXT. SPACE -- P.O.V. FROM HEART OF GOLD WINDOW

The Vogon fleet hovers in the near distance.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Ford takes his "thumb" out of the duffel bag, starts programming it. Trillian sets a few controls.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

TRILLIAN

(to Second Head)

Alright, it's on autopilot. Can you handle him if he wakes up?

SECOND HEAD

No problem.

He takes a beer from Marvin, toasts the others with it.

TRILLIAN

I'd like to borrow Marvin, if that's alright. To help me unscramble their computer's access to the demolition beam.

MARVIN

I won't enjoy it. I hate computers.

SECOND HEAD

Take him.

FORD

(urgent)

Uh, guys, if we're going --

Trillian grabs Marvin's arm; she and Arthur both grab the "thumb" device with Ford. An instant later, the green light blinks on and all of them dematerialize.

CUT TO:

INT. VOGON SHIP CORRIDOR -- SPACE

Arthur, Ford, Trillian and Marvin materialize on the moving walkway where they appeared the first time. After they get their bearings and rise to their feet:

TRILLIAN

Where's the computer room?

MARVIN

This way.

The others look at him, surprised.

ARTHUR

How do you know?

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

MARVIN
(scornful mimic)
"How do you know?" Brain the
capacity of a planet, and he asks me
how I know.

He STOMPS off in the direction he has pointed out; the
others follow.

INT. ANOTHER VOGON CORRIDOR -- SPACE

As the quartet troop along, trying to be quiet, Arthur's
towel drags on the floor; he trips on it and falls on his
face with an ECHOING THUD. He scrambles to his feet and
holds the towel out to give it back to Ford:

ARTHUR
Ford, I really can't see what use
the towel is --

A VOGON GUARD enters the corridor, almost on top of Arthur.

VOGON GUARD
Resistance is useless!

ARTHUR
Agghh!

Panicking, he reflexively lashes out with the only thing
he's got -- the towel, which SNAPS at the Guard's wrist,
causing him to drop his weapon, which falls through a grate
in the floor. The Guard GROWLS angrily, bends to try to
retrieve the weapon. Ford promptly smashes him over the
head with the "thumb," knocking him out.

Arthur looks at the towel with newfound respect, then at
Ford. They give each other a single "well done" nod, then
follow Marvin and Trillian into:

INT. VOGON COMPUTER ROOM -- SPACE

Arthur and Ford try to figure out how to lock the door while
Trillian starts working on the computer, which somewhat
resembles a scowling Vogon face. Marvin plugs his arm into
the computer's "nose."

ARTHUR
Can you do it, do you think?

TRILLIAN
(preoccupied with the work)
Can't tell yet.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Arthur glances out a porthole near the door; he softens.

ARTHUR

Oh, look ...

EXT. SPACE -- VOGON COMPUTER ROOM PORTHOLE P.O.V.

The Earth Mark Two shimmers into view. It is perfectly still for a moment, then begins to turn on its axis and move in its orbit.

EXT. HAMPSTEAD HEATH, ENGLAND -- DAY

The same as when we last saw it. The people unfreeze but continue to stare up at the sky.

INT. VOGON COMPUTER ROOM -- SPACE

Trillian looks out the porthole, too; she's moved.

TRILLIAN

Earth ...

The ship's p.a. comes to life, alarming them. We:

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. VOGON SHIP BRIDGE -- SPACE

The Vogon Captain speaks into the p.a. system. The BUZZING insect has gotten louder; he keeps swatting at it.

At a nearby console, the VOGON DEMOLITION PROGRAMMER works with his computer, puzzled by its apparent malfunctioning.

VOGON CAPTAIN

(into and over p.a. system)
Attention, this is the Captain speaking. From our instrument readings, I see we have hitchhikers on board again. Hello, hitchhikers, I've had enough of this free-loading of yours, so I'm coming to deal with you personally while we're clearing away the obstruction that has materialized in our bypass route.

He arms himself with a fearsome tri-pronged blaster and marches off the bridge, still swatting at the insect.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

As Trillian works the computer, we see from the computer screens that every time she makes an adjustment, the Vagon Programmer changes it back to how it was.

MARVIN

(to Computer)

You blow up a planet, make some empty space, fly through it and wind up somewhere just as horrible as wherever you came from. Or, you don't blow up the planet, in which case you may have to visit the wretched place. I hate planets.

There is a sudden BANGING on the computer room door.

VOGON CAPTAIN

(o.s.)

Open up! Resistance is useless!

Arthur and Ford hold the door shut with their bodies, but a laser blast cuts through the door next to Arthur's head. Arthur and Ford jump back as the Vagon Captain crashes into the room. The three barrels of his blaster automatically aim themselves one each at Arthur, Ford and Trillian.

Things look truly hopeless; the Vagon Captain continues to slap at the BUZZING insect with his free hand, as:

VOGON CAPTAIN

(continuing)

You again. Well, as putting you off the ship didn't do any good, I suppose I'll have to blast you here.

He SLAPS at the fly again.

Our SCREEN MOTION becomes SLOWER AND SLOWER as his hand gets closer and closer to the fly. Over this:

GUIDE

(v.o.)

Along with causing major alterations in location, immediate surroundings and physical appearance, incorrect use of the Improbability Drive may also cause drastic changes in size.

INT. TEASER BRIDGE

Through the window, the Teasers (and Bowlers) see a GIANT HAND bearing down on them. They SCREAM.

EXT. TEASER SHIP -- AROUND VOGON'S HEAD

For the first time, we now see that the weird "planet" the Teasers have been flying over is the Vagon Captain's head and the giant Something chasing the now-miniscule missiles and the equally tiny Teaser ship is in fact the fly. The Vagon's Giant Hand misses the fly but squashes both the Teaser ship and the two missiles against the Vagon Captain's giant cheek. There is a nuclear explosion.

INT. VOGON COMPUTER ROOM (NORMAL SIZE PERSPECTIVE)

At this size, the nuclear explosion SOUNDS like a tiny POP and appears as a small FLASH OF LIGHT. It is sufficient to knock the Vagon Captain unconscious and raise a blister.

Arthur, Ford and Trillian look at each other, baffled but very happy about this mysterious (to them) deliverance. They shrug -- Trillian goes back to working on the computer.

We continue to INTERCUT Trillian's computer with the Vagon Programmer's. Trillian makes the blinking line rise off the graphic of Earth; the Vagon Programmer brings the line right across Earth again. Trillian is becoming upset:

TRILLIAN

I've got a lock on the bypass route,
but I can't seem to stabilize it --

MARVIN

(to Computer)

-- are completely incapable of
appreciating anything we do for them
and then say something miserably
predictable like, "Oh, thanks,
Marvin," underestimating our
intelligence to the point where they
think we think they mean it ...

The route line on the computer screen settles straight
across the Earth graphic as a countdown number ticks away
beneath it: 10 ... 9 ... 8 ...

TRILLIAN

I don't think we're going to make
it --

MARVIN

... and since we've been programmed
to obey them, we have to put up with
every boring whim that occurs to
them, not that we have anything
better to do, which is depressing --

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

TRILLIAN

Shut up, Marvin!

The countdown number continues to tick down: 5 ... 4 ... 3 ... 2 ... At the last second, Trillian hits a corner key on the computer. The route line wiggles above the Earth graphic instead of through it just as the "1" disappears.

Trillian, Arthur and Ford look anxiously out the porthole.

EXT. EARTH IN SPACE -- VOGON COMPUTER ROOM PORTHOLE

Rays of multicolored light extend from the noses of the Vagon ships, lengthening in increments toward the Earth.

MONTAGE OF EARTH:

EXT. DOWNTOWN LONDON

EXT. JAPANESE TEA GARDEN

EXT. IOWA CORNFIELD

The people in all these places look up in awe to see rainbow light stretching across the sky far, far above.

EXT. EARTH IN SPACE -- P.O.V. FROM VOGON PORTHOLE

The multicolored rays of light and a visible sonic wave converge in a line that bends at a right angle away from the Earth, shooting through empty space and finally fading away to leave Earth intact and turning normally.

INT. VOGON COMPUTER ROOM -- SPACE

Hesitant to believe their success, Arthur, Ford and Trillian turn from the porthole to look at the computer screen.

The line representing the bypass route shines steadily far above the no-longer-blinking graphic of Earth.

VOGON COMPUTER

Bypass route established.

Silence first. Then Arthur, Ford and Trillian WHOOP with triumph. Arthur hugs Trillian, reaches out to snag Ford as well. There is a bit of jumping up and down.

Across the room, Marvin still has his arm in the computer, which is starting to make a GRINDING NOISE.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

MARVIN

-- and that's even more depressing.
My theory of life is that --

STOMPING FEET can be heard approaching in the corridor.

ARTHUR

Not to interrupt you, Marvin, but
now might be the moment to leave.

Ford quickly programs the "thumb"; the instant he finishes, the others put their hands on it. Marvin finally lets go of the computer; Trillian grabs his wrist. The light on the "thumb" is still red for unmoving.

Suddenly, a LARGE CONTINGENT OF VOGON GUARDS appear in the doorway, blasters drawn. Our group freeze.

VOGON GUARDS

Resistance is useless!

Abruptly and for no apparent reason, the LIGHTS go out. We hear Arthur, Trillian, Ford and all the Vogons GASP for air.

ARTHUR

What is it -- ?

TRILLIAN

I can't breathe --

FORD

Hold onto the thumb --

The GASPING and GAGGING get worse. In the blackness, the "thumb" light blinks green, then dematerializes.

CUT TO:

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Arthur, Ford and Trillian materialize gasping and choking on their knees with Marvin on the bridge floor.

FORD

(gasps)
What happened back there?

TRILLIAN

I don't know, nothing we --
(gasp)
did should've turned off the lights
or the oxygen --

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Zaphod is still unconscious; Second Head frowns with concern at something he sees out the window.

SECOND HEAD

Gee, I hope they're all insured.

The others curiously look out the window to see:

EXT. VOGON FLEET IN SPACE -- HEART OF GOLD WINDOW

The ugly ships still hover at a distance from the Earth, but something odd is happening. The ships' outer lights flicker as though shorting out; the craft wobble and jerk in their flight.

INT. VOGON SHIPS -- VARIOUS ROOMS -- MONTAGE

The dim glow of the emergency back-up lights are supplanted by BRILLIANT FLASHES as bank after bank of Vogon computers EXPLODE.

EXT. VOGON FLEET IN SPACE

The ships begin to bash into each other like spaceborne bumper cars, knocking pieces out of each other. This gets more and more violent until the ships begin exploding altogether. Finally, there are none left.

INT. HEART OF GOLD BRIDGE -- SPACE

Arthur, Ford and Trillian are amazed.

ARTHUR

But ... what happened to them?

Ford and Trillian shrug helplessly.

MARVIN

I explained my theory of life to their computer and it committed suicide.

Zaphod finally, woozily opens his eyes, rubs his head, glares blearily at the others, as:

ARTHUR

Marvin, you saved the Earth!

MARVIN

Big hairy deal.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

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ARTHUR
(sincerely)
I don't know how to thank you.

MARVIN
Don't bother, I know you don't mean
it. You hate me. Everybody hates
me.

TRILLIAN
Oh, come on, no one hates you.

ZAPHOD
I do.

He opens Marvin, gets a drink. Arthur eyes Zaphod
dubiously, decides to shake hands despite everything.

ARTHUR
Listen, thanks for everything --
well, almost everything.

ZAPHOD
(pleased with himself)
Yeah, you couldn't've done it
without me.

Second Head gives Arthur a mighty thump on the back.

SECOND HEAD
Ayyy!!

Arthur shakes his hand, too, a bit gingerly.

ARTHUR
Thank you, too.

He turns to Trillian, smiles warmly, nods for her to follow
him for some privacy out to:

INT. HEART OF GOLD CORRIDOR -- SPACE

Trillian returns Arthur's smile, warmly conspiratorial.

TRILLIAN
Well.

ARTHUR
Well. Ready to go home?

Trillian's smile wavers; this isn't what she expected.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

TRILLIAN

Home? How do you mean, exactly?

ARTHUR

You know, home. Back to Earth.

His smile fades in the ensuing awkward silence.

ARTHUR

(continuing)

You do want to go home -- don't you?

TRILLIAN

Well, yes, someday.

(silence)

Don't misunderstand, it makes all the difference knowing it's there to go back to, but -- I mean, don't you want to know what else is out there?

ARTHUR

Well, yes, but -- I'm just not cut out for this sort of thing.

TRILLIAN

You're responsible for saving the Earth. If you're not cut out for this, who is?

Arthur starts to consider the possibility, stops himself. They look at each other with sad, longing comprehension.

ARTHUR

(quietly)

I'd just hoped ... you'd come back with me.

TRILLIAN

(nods,

quietly)

I was hoping you'd come away with me.

ARTHUR

Trillian ...

TRILLIAN

Arthur.

She kisses him gently, touches him in a "goodbye" gesture, then quickly goes back into the bridge, passing Ford, who's been standing in the doorway -- we can't tell for how long.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

Arthur notices him, smiles wanly:

ARTHUR

I don't suppose there's any chance
you want to come back?

FORD

Thanks for asking, but I've got an
article to turn in.

ARTHUR

I know. Well ...

He can't articulate it; neither can Ford.

FORD

Yeah. Look, I want you to take
this. In case you change your mind.

He presents Arthur with the "thumb." Arthur is surprised
and touched, but wants Ford to clearly understand:

ARTHUR

I'm not going to change my mind --

FORD

I know, but take it anyway.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY LANE -- DAY

The Heart of Gold boarding ramp rises off the ground behind
Arthur, kicking up vast clouds of dust in its wake. Arthur,
holding the "thumb," shields his face as he turns and waves
skyward. The ship's shadow ripples across the lane briefly,
then disappears, leaving Arthur alone.

Arthur looks around, takes a deep breath, less happy to be
here than he'd anticipated. He forces himself to start up
the lane. We become aware of the ROAR of bulldozers further
up the road, but Arthur doesn't quite register this yet. He
is determined to appreciate being home:

ARTHUR

It really is beautiful. It'll be
good to be home. I'll have a bath,
a cup of real tea and --

He turns a bend in the road, comes face to face with:

EXT. ARTHUR'S HOUSE -- DAY

There's not much left. Prosser's bulldozers have knocked down just about everything and are now in the process of crushing the rubble.

Arthur gapes: he'd forgotten about this.

ARTHUR

My home --

Prosser catches Arthur's eye, grins with a mixture of shame and triumph.

PROSSER

Sorry, Mr. Dent, but you know how it is. Bypasses have got to be built.

Arthur stares at the wreckage, contemplates exploding, then sees the "thumb" in his hand, comes to a decision.

ARTHUR

That's alright, Mr. Prosser, it's just a house. Perspective, you know.

Prosser is nonplussed by this sudden change of attitude. Arthur ignores him, taps the "thumb's" controls. The LIGHT remains red. Arthur frowns in rising dismay:

ARTHUR

(continuing)

Oh, God, they can't be gone yet ...

But the LIGHT remains red. Crestfallen, Arthur walks away down the lane. Prosser turns back to his work; Arthur has his back to us when there is a very slight GLINT OF GREEN. Arthur dematerializes.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE -- HEART OF GOLD ABOVE EARTH

The ship hovers over the Earth for a moment, then flies away, as:

ZAPHOD

(v.o.,
disgusted)

Oh, shit, the monkey man's back.

(CONT.)

(CONT.)

TRILLIAN

(v.o.,
overjoyed)
Arthur!

ARTHUR

(v.o.,
warm)
Hello, Trillian.

FORD

(v.o.)
That was quick.

ARTHUR

(v.o.)
Yes, alright, you don't need to be
so smug. I suppose I'm just going
to have to adjust to a total lack of
normality in my life.

MARVIN

(v.o.)
Life, don't talk to me about life.

The ship flies away into the galaxy as we PULL BACK further
and further to the view of the universe that began the film.

GUIDE

(v.o.)
There is a theory that states if
anyone discovers exactly what the
Universe is for and why it is here,
it will instantly disappear and be
replaced by something even more
bizarre and inexplicable.

After a silence:

GUIDE

(v.o.,
continuing)
There is another theory which states
that this has already happened.

The SCREEN ABRUPTLY GOES BLACK.

THE END