

DYSTOPIAPIPIA

A comedy in one act

By Alex Coulombe

Synopsis:

A Dickensian space adventure
of puppy-bourne revenge.

Running Time:

20 minutes

Contact:

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MINSTREL, our singing narrator

MILEY, a female miner

CYRUS, a male miner

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE, a deranged warlord

COLONEL GOTYE, his henchman

PRIVATE STING, a handsome trainee

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN, a mysterious trainee

PRIVATE MICHAEL JACKSON, an extra trainee

SETTINGS

Jupiter Diamond Mine

Secret Technology Cave

Virgin Galactic Space Academy

Outer Space

PRODUCTION NOTES

Although this play contains numerous characters, locations, and is set in the future, it's intended as a fast-paced, minimally-designed production. For example, rolling chairs may represent all spacecraft, and stagehands may carry anyone floating through space. Ideally, the final 'outer space' sequence would have as many extras as possible to enhance the sense of bumper-car-like chaos, but this is not crucial.

The minstrel may be male or female. The actor who plays Colonel Gotye may also play Private Sting. The actor who plays Cyrus should also play Private Bob Dylan.

SCENE 1

Alone stands MILEY. She is crying and swinging her pickaxe into a rock, becoming progressively more upset with each swing. MINSTREL enters, singing over guitar. Everything echoes.

MINSTREL

(singing)

Here... in... Dystopia... pia... pia. Where your mother has died and your father has died and your children, well, they have all died. The lowest of the low in Jupiter's diamond mines, where they work and work until they all die. Here... in... Dystopia... pia... pia.

(During the above, CYRUS, also a miner, starts offstage, but uses the follow-through of each of his swings to move closer to MILEY until finally, he's right next to her. MINSTREL recedes into the background and continues to play ambient music throughout the show.)

CYRUS

Hi Miley.

MILEY

Cyrus.

CYRUS

Miley, why do you cry as you cry?

MILEY

I cry for a great many reasons Cyrus. I cry because my back hurts. I cry because my mother was killed for baking unauthorized bread. I cry because my father was hung for forming a Sunday book club. I cry because now we have neither bread nor books.

CYRUS

Oh Miley. I wish I--

MILEY

I cry because out of all the castes we could have been born to, we came into this world the lowest of the low: The Miley Cyruses, while at the top the Elvis Presleys and David Bowies rule over us with naught but a tear for our plight. Is this the future? I ask, is this the future humanity envisioned?!

CYRUS

Hey hey it's okay. You'll always have me...

(He does a little dance, a kiss,
and pulls out of his coat...)

And this puppy!

(Real or stuffed, the puppy is the
definition of cuteness.)

MILEY

Whaaat are you thinking?! You'll get us killed.

CYRUS

Psha! The Miley Cyruses in Techno Quadrant have a pet giraffe-

MILEY

It's a work giraffe!

CYRUS

There's not a lot of things to be happy about here in Dystopiapiapia, so we're gonna take this adorable puppy and raise it like the child we can never have, and we're gonna teach it tricks, yeh? And it'll run errands for us with its little floppy ears, and we'll make a little money on the side- just enough so that one day, maybe in twenty years, we'll buy our own cave.

MILEY

(wistful)

Our own cave...

CYRUS

Maybe with its own pool of stagnant water! Miley, with this dog at our side, we may yet retire by age seventy. What hope he brings! Us, and this puppy, together, forever-

MILEY

-can we name him Ethan Hawke, after the hero of Olde Earth?

CYRUS

Of course dear! And we can take him out at night when no one's looking, and hold him up over the great lead canyons and say the great mining prayer--

MILEY & CYRUS & MINSTREL

Sun, you are in our dreams. Son, you are our dreams. Son--

(A gunshot, and Cyrus with the puppy fall into Miley's arms. A moment, then GENERAL DAVID BOWIE enters with COLONEL GOTYE. They both wear an eyepatch.)

COLONEL GOTYE

Good shot sir.

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Twelve points to me.

CYRUS

(cold)

You'll see... you'll see me again. Soon. Miley...

MILEY

Cyrus...

(Cyrus dies.)

COLONEL GOTYE

You there. Was that somebody that you used to know?

(Miley shakes her head
in disbelief.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Colonel Gotye, bring me that puppy.

COLONEL GOTYE

What puppy?

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

The puppy with the power.

(Miley realizes what's happening and grabs the puppy, but Colonel Gotye wrestles it out of her hands, slapping her away. The puppy yips and he slaps the puppy multiple times. He presents it to General David Bowie.)

I shall name him Ziggy Stardust The Motion Picture Part Two.

MILEY

(to herself)

His name... is Ethan Hawke.

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Pardon me?

(Pause.)

MILEY

Nothing.

COLONEL GOTYE

Do you know who you're talking to? That's General David Bowie-- the hero who will lead us to glorious victory in the Diamond Wars against the Neptunians!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

At ease, Colonel Gotye-- these people know not of what we do. The sacrifices we make.

(Miley makes eye contact with him. He bends down close to her.)

Don't be cruel to me. I'll be cruel to you.

(He pats her on the head.)

Good girl.

(He exits with Colonel Gotye. Miley continues to hold Cyrus' dead body as Minstrel's volume increases.)

MINSTREL

(singing)

Here in Dystopia... pia... pia. Where your mother has died,
and your lover has died and your puppies--

MILEY

(rising, to Minstrel)

Uncle/Aunt! I need your help.

MINSTREL

Anything for you, little Miley.

(Minstrel continues to play, but now builds a more rock-infused melody.)

MILEY

Are you still in league with the rebel forces?

MINSTREL

Of course.

MILEY

I quest to kill General David Bowie. I should've done it right then and there-

MINSTREL

You did have two pickaxes.

MILEY

Now I know what I must do.

MINSTREL

Are you ready? To train like no Miley Cyrus has ever trained before? To shape your body and your mind into one of the greatest soldiers ever to have lived?

MILEY

Oh, I thought I'd wait 'til he returns at next inspection?

MINSTREL

No, you must infiltrate his ranks as a HighStar-- at least a Michael Jackson or a John Lennon.

MILEY

But alas, I was born a Miley Cyrus and can be only a Miley Cyrus.

MINSTREL

Follow me.

(They walk in a big circle. Cyrus rolls offstage. Minstrel plays some notes and we hear a giant door open.)

MILEY

(looking up)

Wow.

MINSTREL

Right? I've been building this facility in secret for years, using stolen technology from HighStars.

MILEY

To what end?

MINSTREL

The prophecy foretold this day would come. A day when a young Miley Cyrus with a birthmark shaped like a blob would have sufficient motive to bring down Virgin Galactic's oppressive regime. I wanted the tools to be ready. To craft someone able to pose as a HighStar-- look like them, walk like them, become them. I'm so glad it's you, my dear dear Miley Cyrus.

MILEY

Well I don't want to change the world or anything-- just avenge my husband and get sweet little Ethan Hawke back.

MINSTREL

Sure. Fine. Are you ready to begin your training?

MILEY

I am.

(She stretches, hops up and down,
performs breathing exercises.)

MINSTREL

First, we pick your caste. Remember, it needs to be a birth level that could believably rise to the top of the Virgin Galactic Army. And I'm sorry, but you know how they feel about... women, so--

MILEY

Mark McGrath.

MINSTREL

Fleck no.

MILEY

Ozzy Osbourne.

MINSTREL

Pluto-based.

MILEY

Jack Johnson.

MINSTREL

Not the warlord type.

MILEY

Rick Astley.

MINSTREL

There's only one Rick Astley.

MILEY

Dave Matthews.

MINSTREL

Who?

MILEY

Justin Beiber.

MINSTREL

Too crazy.

MILEY

Billy Joel.

MINSTREL

Too mainstream.

MILEY

Billy Idol.

MINSTREL

Too gaystream.

MILEY

Franz Ferdinand.

MINSTREL

Good enough. Right along to body...

(Minstrel reaches behind his/her back and places a simple beard and eyepatch over an oblivious Miley.)

MILEY

So I was thinking, I'm a crazy good miner, so maybe that can be my thing, y'know, my special skill, and we can use that to-

MINSTREL

Unnecessary.

MILEY

Wait, this is it? But... I've heard HighStars are super strong and actually missing an eye. Some kind of humility thing, yes?

MINSTREL

Right, gouged out with a spoon at age ten. But no one's gonna see your eyehole--that'd be considered rude--so you're fine.

MILEY

Fair enough, but the strength?

(Minstrel stabs her in the arm with a hypodermic needle. Then hands her a rock.)

MINSTREL

Crush this.

(Miley squeezes the rock and
it crumbles.)

Pow.

MILEY

Okay, but now I need to spend weeks learning everything they
learn. Military tactics. Thousands of years of law and
history.

(Minstrel uses the same hypodermic
needle to stab her in the head.)

Earth used to have glaciers?!

MINSTREL

Your papers are forged, classes start tomorrow, speak with
the correct accent, and off you go!

(A kick and Miley starts to run.)

Oh and Miley?

MILEY

Yes?

MINSTREL

You'll need this.

(Minstrel throws her a pickaxe.
Miley catches it, breaks off the
sharpest part, discards the rest.)

MILEY

For vengeance. And a puppy.

(She exits. End of scene.)

SCENE 2

At rise, a training session: choreographed fights and synchronized rituals. Everyone has a sharp tool held pointed in one of their hands. Miley follows suit with the tip of her pickaxe.

The same actor who played Cyrus plays Private Bob Dylan. Miley eyes the trainee and looks to Minstrel in disbelief, who shakes his/her head.

MINSTREL

(singing)

The Space Academy in... Dystopiapiapia. Miley wishing she were quiet and alone in Jupiter's diamond mines, but she must make General David Bowie die...

PRIVATE STING

Howdy, I'm Private Sting.

MILEY

Howdy, I'm Private Franz Ferdinand.

PRIVATE STING

What?!

MILEY

What?

PRIVATE STING

What! Just messing with yeh. Weird accent. Are you sure you belong here? Just kidding. Wanna be best friends?

MILEY

Yeah sure. I mean, affirmative. Yes.

PRIVATE STING

Goodie. Let's practice over here. You know EyeHaveYou?

(They stand facing each other. Private Sting holds her hands out, puts his hands under hers, stares into her eyes, then slaps her hands. Then he slaps her hands again then slaps her face. Variations on this continue until Miley finally grabs his slapping arm and throws him to the ground.)

MILEY

Um. Sorry.

PRIVATE STING

God you're pretty. I mean, I'm not gay or anything, but your skin is so soft and boy, it sure would be swell if we could get naked sometime and touch each other.

MILEY

Remind me how this works?

PRIVATE STING

Getting naked? You put your--

MILEY

EyeHaveYou.

PRIVATE STING

You know! We slap each other's hands, and once you miss, the other player has the chance to stab you through the eye with their handclaw! Just don't do it while we're practicing.

(They do this a few times, slapping the side of the face instead of eye-stabbing. Miley is not good.)

MILEY

How do you do this without depth perception?

PRIVATE STING

Haha Franz you're so dumb I could just kiss you.

(Miley turns to avoid the kiss, but also to stab small holes in her eyepatch with her pickaxe shard/handclaw. They resume practice: she's swell, winning every time.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

(entering with puppy)

Attention privates! There's been a change in curriculum. Instead of attending twelve years here at the Virgin Galactic Space Academy, those of you with high marks will be immediately deployed to battle. The Neptunians have attacked, and must be stopped at once! They're aliens or something. But first, we need a leader-

MILEY

I volunteer!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

A leader who must prove their worth to me by-

MILEY

I volunteer!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

By battling someone here--

MILEY

Ooh! Oh!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

To the death.

MILEY

ME! Pick me General David Bowie and let me fight you.

(Collective gasps.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

(singsongy)

Silly baby boy, you cannot pick me. That's like a mongoose picking a polopel tree.

PRIVATE MICHAEL JACKSON

(aside)

His analogies!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

You may choose anyone else.

MILEY

Fine, Colonel Gotye then.

(Collective gasps.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Young man, I urge you to pick again. Colonel Gotye is undefeated in over four-hundred EyeHaveYou battles.

MILEY

My choice... remains unchanged.

(Miley and Colonel Gotye fight.
Miley stabs him horrifically
through the eye and he dies.)

MINSTREL

(singing)

And Miley Cyrus fought Gotye in the deathmatch, using her hand with the pickax, and she won because she was so very fast, and because she had depth perception. Here, in, Dystopia... pia... pia.

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

You have proven yourself worthy. Private Franz Ferdinand, I hereby award you the rank of Admiral, and wish you luck commanding my top starfighters in the battle against the evil Neptunians. They're aliens or something.

(Miley approaches General David Bowie, who pins a medal to her chest.)

MINSTREL

Ahem ahem...

MILEY

Ah.

(Miley tries to stab General David Bowie through the eye. His reflexes are too fast and he throws her to the ground. Everyone applauds.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

(rubbing his eye patch)

Oww... haha, good my little rumplesfiler of teakettles. The customary faux assassination attempt. Ow... my eyehole though. That really hurt. Ow. Brrrrr okay. Congratulations to all of our awarded graduates. Apologies to the graduates who will now be burned alive as food for the LowStar work giraffes. To war!

(Everyone, including Minstrel, and General David Bowie with puppy, put on helmets and sit down in their spaceships. They are now fighting in a space war. Rolling chairs, sounds, and perhaps projections aid this high-energy spectacle.)

PRIVATE STING

Woo-ee! What a rush. Just like shooting work giraffes in the lead canyons, eh? Boy I hate those LowStars... gross and dirty and stupid. Like to see one of them dumb miners do what we're doing, eh, Franz?

MILEY

Watch your six, Sting.

PRIVATE STING

Bob Dylan, careful! You almost hit me.

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Sorry.

MILEY

All right... where are my blasters again?

PRIVATE STING

Franz you sexy sexy man-- everyone knows an admiral only runs a commands ship. You tell your fleet what to shoot. I'm in your fleet so you can command me to shoot all you like.

(Miley tests her command powers. She waves one hand left and everyone moves left. She moves a hand down and everyone moves down. She makes guns with her hands and all ships fire.)

MILEY

Private Sting, we're best friends, right?

PRIVATE STING

With benefits!

MILEY

Can you do me a super secret awesome favor mission and assassinate General David Bowie?

PRIVATE STING

Um, all right.

(He moves to attack General David Bowie.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Time to test out my explosatron ejecta-blasters. Oh, look, something right in front of me. Pyoo pyoo! Ten points!

(He shoots and Private Sting is launched from his ship, which remains floating.)

PRIVATE STING

Noo!! I love you Franz... I love you for exactly who you are... whoever you are... ughhh.

(He dies.)

MILEY
(to herself)

You... bastard.

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE
Ah, was that one of ours? Shame shame shame. For the greater good I suppose.

MILEY
No it wasn't!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE
Admiral Franz Ferdinand! How goes it? Anything I can help with?

MILEY
Just confirming, my fleet will do anything I command?

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE
(singsongy)
As you command, they will obey, like two little ants bound for the city.

MILEY
Fleet: I have only one command: Kill General David Bowie.

(Collective gasps.)

PRIVATE MICHAEL JACKSON
What?

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE
What?

MILEY
You be cruel to me, I be cruel to you.

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE
Ohhh... you're the miner girl from this morning. That's the thing I said to you, and you're repeating it back to me. You realize this battle determines the fate of the human race?

MILEY

(gesturing wildly)

Fleet! Ergh. Fleet!! They're not doing anything... they're supposed to do as I say!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Within reason Admiral Ferdinand, within reason. If you told a snowball to unfurl itself back into the hillside now that wouldn't give you any cake at all now would it? Here is the true command: fleet, kill Franz Ferdinand. Let's help history repeat itself, shall we?

MILEY

No!!

(Miley ejects out of her ship right before it explodes, dodges other ships while she floats to Private Sting's abandoned ship, gets in.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

(singsongy)

Ah, you think you're clever but no, you're not so clever, ooo! I'll show you clever. La la la la.

(Minstrel kicks into high gear as Miley runs around the stage pursued by everyone. General David Bowie gets a hit on her.)

MILEY

Fleck this!

(She takes off her eyepatch and now flies much better.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

How dare... I'll show you.

(He takes off his eyepatch. He also has both of his eyes.)

PRIVATE MICHAEL JACKSON

General! A man who has not followed our customs is no man.
You cannot lead and you are our general no more.

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Forget you. I'm going to swat down this bothersome fly, then
bring this war to a swift judicious end. By myself if I must!

(The rolley-chair space battle
continues as they chase each other
around, firing rapidly and pulling
off 'expert maneuvers.')

Give up Miley Cyrus! You cannot win. I have superior birth,
firepower, I'm covered in muscles, and history is on my side.
Surrender now and I will allow you to live as my personal
slave. You can be like Ziggy Stardust here, obedient, quiet,
and amenable to pats on the head.

MILEY

His name... is Ethan Hawke. After the hero of Olde Earth!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Ethan Hawke was nothing!

(He gets a lock on her.)

I have you now! Zap zap zap!

(Private Bob Dylan flies in out of
nowhere and shoots the back of
General David Bowie's ship.)

What?!

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

YEE-HOO!

(The ship explodes and both General
David Bowie and the puppy fly out.)

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Ziggy Stardust the Motion Picture Part Two! Also the war for
the human race!

(Miley ejects out of her ship and catches the puppy in space, has a moment where she floats next to General David Bowie, then is caught by Private Bob Dylan.)

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Gotcha kid!

GENERAL DAVID BOWIE

Space is cold... and I'm floating in the most peculiar way...

(He dies.)

MILEY

Cyrus you're alive! I knew it.

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Wait, no, I--

(Miley drowns out his protests with intense, passionate kisses. He struggles to hold onto the puppy.)

MILEY

I knew it all along!

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Miley, listen, I--

(More kissing. She pulls him down onto the stage floor. She starts to take off clothing, including her beard, when he manages to speak.)

I'm not Cyrus. I'm Cyrus' brother!

(Miley immediately rolls off of him and starts dry heaving and spitting onto the ground. A lot.)

Well, um, okay. Sorry.

MILEY

You're... you're *that* Cyrus? I didn't know you were twins.

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

You wouldn't. He worked in the diamond mines and I worked in the lead mines so he was always cleaner.

MILEY

What're you doing here?

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

I was just so angry after my brother died. I thought I was going to go crazy, I mean, he told me he was getting me a puppy but then I never saw him and I heard what happened and then this minstrel person took me to a crazy cool warehouse place and--

MILEY

I see... um, give me the puppy.

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Well the puppy's mine. His name is Mr. Snuffles.

MILEY

No, I--

MINSTREL

Hey! Great job guys... you know I just really wanted to make sure this happened properly and you know, Miley, you're a...

MILEY

What? A woman?

MINSTREL

Could you guys please just, you know, finish off the rebellion? Get back in your ships, command your fleet and all that? I mean if we lose this war then all of this--

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Wow. I didn't know Minstrel here was such a jazzakk. Look, I'm sorry Miley. You can have the puppy. I'm just glad David Bowie's dead.

(He hands the puppy over. They get up and start to wipe themselves off and ignore Minstrel.)

MINSTREL

We all are! Okay! Back to the ships, eh? Eh? Guys?

MILEY

So you picked the Bob Dylan caste, eh?

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Yeah, and you picked Franz Ferdinand? That's not a caste.

MILEY

Oh really?

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Haha whatever.

MILEY

Where are we even standing right now?

PRIVATE BOB DYLAN

Who knows?

(They playfully push each other as they walk offstage. We see Miley let the puppy lick his face, and a friendly shoulder squeeze. The sounds of battle start to grow louder as Minstrel struggles to sing over them.)

MINSTREL

(singing)

And the humans, well, they lost the Diamond War, and all the people they became slaves, to Neptunians who definitely were aliens, and the people, well they did all die. The End.

(Blackout. End of Play.)