

(The glamorous singer, Zadorable, enters, but Alagomar pulls her off the stage. We hear boos and jeers from an invisible crowd.)

ZADORABLE

Hey, what's the idea?

ALAGOMAR

This is important. We need to talk.

ZADORABLE

I'm working. I don't interrupt you when you're busy sucking the joy out of every waking moment.

ALAGOMAR

It's a living. And it's made Mars the most powerful planet in the universe. While you fritter away your life, in a bleakeasy, serving fun illegally.

DROPO

(As they all sit.) Powerful is favorable, because without power you have a lack of strength.

ZADORABLE

What is so pressing, you couldn't wait?

ALAOGMAR

I need to know what you found out about the...the small ones.

ZADORABLE

The small ones? Did you hear that, Droppo, he calls his own children "the small ones."

CELESTEROL

Our concern is with all children of Mars. Brunomar and Emanemar are just test subjects to determine what ails the youth throughout the planet.

ALAGOMAR

I trust you have completed your assignments. Zadorable, what did you find out in studying the minds of the children?

ZADORABLE

It is difficult to analyze brain activity while they are reading or learning in school or socializing with schoolmates.

CELESTEROL

And why is that?

ZADORABLE

Their brains are fresh, unscathed and pure. When the young brain is active, it moves rapidly and is thus difficult to monitor. I attempted an experiment, taking a sample of an available brain as a way of comparing.

ALAGOMAR

A sample?

ZADORABLE

More like a portion. A substantial portion, of...a brain similar in size to that of a child.

CELESTEROL

Where does one procure such a portion...that is of a brain with those specific qualities?

ZADORABLE

I have my sources.

ALAGOMAR

Dropo, were you part of this mission?

DROPO

Don't blame me, please, I was only following orders, of which there were none!

ZADORABLE

You weren't part of the mission, were you Dropo? I didn't need you, did I? Anyway, you were asleep the whole time, were you not, Dropo?

ALAGOMAR

Am I to understand that the brain you removed and studied...was...at hand?

ZADORABLE

Yes, you could say it was...at arm's length, at my fingertips. Proximity was not an issue.

CELESTEROL

We commissioned you to study the brain activity of two children, and you—

ZADORABLE

You have never understood scientific process!

CELESTEROL

You stole the brain of a—

ALAGOMAR

Dropo! Remember your assignment?

DROPO

I remember my assignment, like it was yesterday. I know my assignment like the back of my head. (*She makes a future attempt to examine the back of her own head.*) What's this gaping hole in the back of my head?

ALAGOMAR

Dropo, focus!

DROPO

My assignment--

ALAGOMAR

Was to bring us some appetizer pills. This is a place to eat, drink and be...miserable, isn't it!
So go to it, chop chop!

DROPO

Appetizer pills coming up right away, hold the mustard, and don't be stingy, baby! **(Exit)**

ALAGOMAR

You stole Dropo's brain!

ZADORABLE

Yes, I stole a portion of Dropo's brain! It was fast and easy, not unlike stealing a portion of *your* soul!

ALAGOMAR

I don't have to take this! You think you are the only two-bit chanteuse slash covert neurosurgeon on the planet? There are plenty of other amoeba in the craters, darling, plenty!

CELESTEROL

That's enough, both of you! Did this fool's errand yield anything useful?

ZADORABLE

It did. But clearly you've both lost faith in me. I didn't want to excise the poor slob's brain, I was after a sliver, a fraction, a paltry sum no one would miss. Well, this was no ordinary no one. Dropo was asleep. It was an unusually vacant slumber, much more than usual. I concocted my story, in case she woke up. I was performing a complimentary lobotomy, which I would convince Dropo was a good and valuable thing. I...gained access...Dropo did not awaken, and what I found was an expanse, a vast expanse, a vacuum you might say. I was so astonished, I said "How can this be?" and my words echoed in this hollow orb. Echoed!

CELESTEROL

We appreciate you falling on your laser, we do, but removing someone's brain...that's stepping over the line.

ZADORABLE

And isn't that what I am hired to do? Step over the line? Well, I stepped over it alright, and guess what I found. Nothing. Nothing in Dropo's head and nothing going on in the brains of the children, when they were engaged in their primary activity.

ALAGOMAR

Primary activity?

ZADORABLE

Yes, what do they spend most of their time doing?

CELESTEROL

Watching television?

ZADORABLE

Zingo! The boob tube, the idiot box, the plasma plate, the Marconi with pictures...

ALAGOMAR

Their brains were as inactive as Dropo's.

ZADORABLE

Healthier, more...absorbent...solid, yet pliable, but equally inactive.

CELESTEROL

Did these findings lead you to any other discoveries?

ZADORABLE

They did. In the past few weeks...brain activity has decreased.

ALAGOMAR

You mean in Dropo? It stands to reason, she's no longer got a smidgen, she's got a quarter-of-a-smidgen.

DROPO

(Entering with some boxes.) Did someone call my name? Here I come to save the night! Just what you ordered, assignment all done.

ALAGOMAR

Why are they serving appetizer pills in large boxes?

DROPO

(Proceeds to pull a snake out of each box.) Appetizer pills for all! Who's famished? *(Hands out the snakes)* Eeny meeny miney moe—

ALAGOMAR

(As Zadorable and Celesterol valiantly wrestle the snakes back into the boxes.) Dropo. Change of plans. Bring us some snakes. Please.

DROPO

Oooh, snakes, snakes are scary but not too scary for Dropo. Snakes coming up! *(Exit)*

ALAGOMAR

You were saying...

ZADORABLE

Brain activity has, in recent weeks, decreased in the children.

CELESTEROL

What could be the reason? A virus, perhaps, sending brain-deadening waves from the screen?

ZADORABLE

Possibly, but when away from the screens, I detected a type of brain activity I hadn't seen before.

ALAGOMAR

Of what sort?

ZADORABLE

Having to do with emotion.

ALAGOMAR

Ahhh, emotion! Your pet project! It always comes around to emotion, doesn't it?

ZADORABLE

In this case it did.

CELESTEROL

Alagomar, please keep your dispassion in check. Zadorable, what do you think is the cause of these...feelings?

ZADORABLE

I don't know. This is where my research hit a dead-end. I do, however, believe that, armed with my findings, we can consult with someone who'll get to the top of this entire dilemma.

CELESTEROL

Who?

ZADORABLE

Crochem.

ALAGOMAR

Crochem? I knew you would say that! Still propping up this mystic, this charlatan, this dried up mountebank!

ZADORABLE

Crochem is never wrong. Most of the time.

CELESTEROL