

# **All in the Mind**

*an opera in one act*

**Words and Music**

**by**

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**LIBRETTO**

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# ***Characters***

## **The Brain**

*Employees of Clever Clones:*

**Dr Neuron**, Chief Scientist

**Scientists**

**Telepathists**

**Bureaucrats**

**Engineers**

**Clones**, newly manufactured

*The Court:*

**Mighty Rich, the Emperor (Empress)** of The White Moon

**Ministers**

**Courtiers**

**Guards**

**Ancient Earthlings**, resurrected from the Past

**Press Corps**

*In the Black Hole:*

**Bouncers**

**Nic Night**, a prisoner

**Waitresses**

**Partygoers**: witches, demons, fiends, and monsters of many kinds

**Celestial Voice** off-stage

The action takes place far in the future.

Prologue: The Museum of Ancient Science

Scene One: The Laboratory of Clever Clones

Interlude: A Wasteland

Scene Two: The Black Hole

Scene Three: The Laboratory of Clever Clones

Epilogue: The Museum of Ancient Science

# All in the Mind

## Prologue

*(Time: the future. In a Museum of Ancient Science, a giant, artificial Brain is exhibited.)*

### **BRAIN**

It was some millennia ago that these events took place,  
But I remember them well.  
The idea of creating a Brain like me  
Was not altogether new.  
They had computers in the Old Days,  
But these were primitive by comparison,  
For into me was poured all knowledge  
At that time known to humankind.  
More than that, I could make connections  
In ways that no mere mortal could have dreamt of,  
Pathways to ideas that were totally new:  
Original thought, it was.  
I was held in great esteem  
And consulted on many important matters.  
Being the first Brain was a great privilege  
But I was huge...

*(Some visitors enter, remark on the Brain, and, after a few moments, leave)*

I became obsolete. So I'm on show now  
In the Museum of Ancient Science:  
Ah! The future is not what it used to be.  
But it gives me time to think,  
And I've even been known to joke with the visitors - sometimes.  
Telling this story never tires me, because I was there.  
It began on The White Moon,  
The planet with two suns,  
Where the suns never set,  
Where it was always day and never night,  
All that time ago...

## **Scene One**

*Some time earlier. In a laboratory, the Chief Scientist of Clever Clones is examining test tubes containing solutions of 'knowledge'. In other corners of the lab are Engineers gathered around a large incubator which produces human clones, and Telepathists taking calls from customers and the press. They are watched over by the Bureaucrats. In the centre is a giant artificial Brain which the Scientists are attending to.*

### **TELEPATHISTS**

Good day! You're through to Clever Clones, how can I help you, please?  
You'd like to order a child? A female? Would there be anything more?  
We have your gene map on our files; we have *everyone's* genes on file.  
Who could believe that humans were once borne by women! What a chore!

### **SCIENTISTS**

What a piece of work is a brain!  
Thinking is a fantastic thing,  
If you think about it again,  
It passes beyond our understanding,  
For how can we probe our own thoughts?  
But that's what we're doing now:  
Are we probing more than we ought?

### **TELEPATHISTS**

Good day! You're through to Clever Clones, how can I help you, dear?  
We can recommend our latest design – they get cleverer every year!

### **DR NEURON**

Here's learning, not pictures or patterns in the mind,  
But as pure living cells, worth more than anything else you could find  
In this day and age! Hail, Neuronium!

*(The 'knowledge' is passed to the Engineers, who incubate the mixture)*

### **TELEPATHISTS**

We've been trained to answer enquiries from people near and far;  
We only have to think of them to be connected wherever they are.

### **ENGINEERS & BUREAUCRATS**

The demand for clones never ceases!  
Without infancy, a child that's free from hassle and diseases,  
Modified to order, always pleases!

### **TELEPATHISTS**

Good day! You're through to Clever Clones, how can I help you, please?  
You've got a complaint? He doesn't work? Or do as he is told?  
Teenagers - always the same! A faulty one for sure!  
I'll put you through to Service and Spares: it's engaged at the present, please hold!

*(Child-clones emerge)*

## **CLONES**

Designed to delight our donors, suppliers of their cells to us,  
Being clever, attentive, content and convenient, we bring blessings to our benefactors!

## **BUREAUCRATS** *(To the Engineers)*

This order is for export. Keep at it! Work!

## **ALL EMPLOYEES**

We work all hours there are!  
On bright White Moon,  
Where suns never set,  
we've never stopped yet!

Here is no night or day,  
No rest or play,  
Only anxiety.  
We work for corporation, country  
And society.  
No music sounds,  
No books, no art are found,  
Only industry.

The exiled king he used to sing  
Joyfully.  
We miss him!  
Where did they leave him?  
Sadly we grieve for him,  
Our kindly king!

We have no choice now,  
People have no voice now,  
Just complacency.  
There's no disease, no want:  
No ups or downs,  
No smiles or frowns.  
We're ruled by those who have  
No piety.

## **CLONES**

Who has ordered us,  
Paid for our nurturing  
In a factory?  
Who will parent us?  
But we don't think  
Or ask too much:  
We accept this world  
Gratefully.

*(They are packed and sent off)*

**TELEPATHISTS**

Good day! You're through to Clever Clones, how can I help you, please?  
We cannot respond to rumours flying around...no comment!

**SCIENTISTS**

*(Activating the Brain)*

Here is saved the wide world's knowledge,  
The web spun into teeming tissue.  
Nothing is known that is not contained here.  
Brain - now speak to us!

**BRAIN**

*(Starting up)*

Hi, there, Doctors! How are you today?

**SCIENTISTS**

It speaks!

*(Everyone stops to listen)*

**ALL**

Amazing! Wonderful! A Brain that's alive!

**BRAIN**

IT said how are you?

**SCIENTISTS**

What does IT feel like to be a brain?

**BRAIN**

Oh IT don't feel anything! IT have no soul, no feeling,  
Don't feel hot or cold, hungry or thirsty,  
Clean or dirty, lonely or sad, happy or cross...  
How about you?

**SCIENTISTS**

Oh yes, we feel things! Can we ask you some questions?

**BRAIN**

Do they have any meaning?  
Questions come with being alive,  
The answers come with being dead!

**ALL**

It seems to be witty, too!

**TELEPATHISTS** *(taking a call)*

What did you say? Heaven's above! Catastrophe! Doom! Gone bust?

**BUREAUCRATS**

What's all the fuss?

**TELEPATHISTS**

The company's shares have plummeted!

**BUREAUCRATS & ENGINEERS**

Don't they know about the Brain?

The shares should be rising, not falling.

**SCIENTISTS**

What's going on?

**ENGINEERS**

You realise what this means for us?

**ALL**

The company will go bust, we'll all be out of our jobs!

**TELEPATHISTS**

The research has taken too long.

**SCIENTISTS**

Making a Brain takes time!

**BUREAUCRATS**

We need results!

**ALL**

Something commercial to grab the headlines!

**ENGINEERS**

The Brain's the thing! Ask it!

**SCIENTISTS**

Brain, tell us what to do!

**BRAIN**

Ah, tricky one, that!

*(Thinks)*

What was the question again?

**EMPLOYEES**

We need to save the Corporation:

A new discovery, a great invention!

## **BRAIN**

Have you come to the end of the road?  
Has everything been found that can be found?  
A myriad of particles, the mysteries of space,  
Grand theories formulated, all learning embraced:  
What is there left for humans to do? What great barrier remains?

## **DR NEURON**

You're meant to provide the answer, Brain!

*(Commotion in the distance)*

## **TELEPATHISTS**

The Emperor's on his way!

## **BUREAUCRATS**

And the Ministers are here too!

*(The Emperor enters with his Ministers and Guards; in contrast to the Employees they are dressed extravagantly and behave flamboyantly. With them comes a crowd of Courtiers.)*

## **ALL**

*Because he loves us all and we love the Emperor  
We all live together in perfect harmony, yeah.  
Sing hip hip for the White Moon, come come sing hip for the Moon,  
Come come uhha sing hip the Emperor yeah yeah sing hip!*

## **EMPEROR**

Hail, everyone here at Clever Clones!  
My Ministers here, with their strident tones,  
Promise profit and power to those who shine  
For me, Mighty Rich the Divine!

## **MINISTERS**

*Do-be-do, do-be-do! The State exists just for you!  
Hi-de-ho, hi-de-hi! Not for you to question why!*

## **COURTIERS & GUARDS**

They used to call it Utopia, a heavenly ideal, but we have  
Got it right here in black and white, yeah it's real!  
For no one gets sick here, old age comes on slow  
And when it's time to go they kill us off before we know.

## **EMPEROR**

Listen! All here at Clever Clones!  
I can sense it in my bones:  
There's a future ahead in working together.  
We ought to be known as birds of a feather!



## **COURTIERS & GUARDS**

No-one's out of work here, no, our leisure time is sorted,  
No education, stress, promotion or desires thwarted,  
Because the Ministers of Thought control our dreams and thinking,  
We haven't got an inkling of any other life...

## **EMPEROR**

I heard the company was in big trouble:  
How can that be with such talent as yours?  
I've come to offer help.

## **MINISTERS**

Caring and sharing, that's the Ministry of Thought!

## **BUREAUCRATS**

How, Mighty Emperor, could you save the company?

## **TELEPATHISTS**

Shares are suspended!

## **EMPEROR**

... That's it then. What to do? The company - broken up;  
You - out of your jobs; the Brain - on the scrap heap.

## **MINISTERS**

No more is there value in Clever Clones.  
What you need now are gigantic loans!

## **ENGINEERS**

Sounds like a sell out!

## **MINISTERS**

When workers here are full of moans  
They'll go bust at Clever Clones!

## **SCIENTISTS**

We need independence!

## **BUREAUCRATS**

We have no life outside!

## **TELEPATHISTS**

What future with no company?

## **MINISTERS**

We'll make you an offer you cannot refuse  
And here are the terms for you to peruse!

**EMPEROR**

When will you see sense? You need new ideas:  
Think ahead, think creatively!

**ALL**

What's he up to? What's in store for us?

**EMPEROR**

Patience! Hear what I say!  
Several millennia ago, people inhabited a planet called Earth.  
But their lives were short; their bodies didn't last.  
Some wanted longer lives, life after death, eternal life, who knows?  
So, while they lived, they saved on computers  
Their thoughts, ideas, their memories and dreams,  
Everything that made them the people that they were.  
After they had died they wanted these files, the contents of their minds,  
To be transferred to new brains in fresh bodies, if and when science could do it:  
These people hoped to live again!  
Here are those machines!

*(A cart full of computers is wheeled in.)*

Here are the lives of Ancient Earthlings, who lived all that time ago!  
So - let them enjoy a new life!  
Mix these digital files here with your intelligent clones,  
And those vintage Earthling folk will rise up on their thrones!  
What do you say?

**BUREAUCRATS & ENGINEERS**

It would be huge!

**TELEPATHISTS**

Headlines all over the galaxy!

**SCIENTISTS**

We'll have created eternal life!

**ALL**

Immortality for us, and for the Ancient Earthlings!

**TELEPATHISTS**

Eternal life – is that possible? Can it be true?

**ENGINEERS**

We're not sure what to think!

**GUARDS**

Give it a try, why not?

## **BUREAUCRATS**

With these you can save Clever Clones?

## **ENGINEERS**

A load of old boxes?

## **EMPEROR**

Genuine antiques! Do it, I say, it's your only chance!  
Take this priceless material. Make the Ancient Clones!  
People will go mad for them. I guarantee satisfaction:  
Trust and believe in me! Yes or no?

*(The Employees look to the Brain)*

## **BRAIN**

It has to be said: it seems a magnificent plan, a stroke of genius!

## **MINISTERS**

We love it!

## **COURTIERS & GUARDS**

Go on then!

## **EMPLOYEES**

Let's do it!

## **SCIENTISTS**

"What is there left for humans to do?  
What great barrier remains?"

*There is frenetic activity as they prepare the files for 'incubation'.  
When all is ready, there is a moment of suspense.*

## **ALL**

Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one...

*The 'incubator' pings and a group of Ancient Earthlings emerge.*

## **ALL**

Astonishing - the past reappears before our eyes!  
Ancient earthlings from death arise!  
We've given these folk afterlives! Hush! Listen!

## **EARTHLINGS** *(to one another)*

What strange surroundings! Where are we?  
Have we died? This must be the afterlife!  
Don't be silly! How can it be? We're still alive!  
Hey, don't I know you? Didn't we live in the same street?  
Where was it we used to meet? Who are these people around us?

What happens to us now?

**DR NEURON**

This is The White Moon.

You died long ago -

But everything that you were, everything that made you

Has now been revived in these new bodies:

Your minds are restored to life!

You have travelled to the future

And we are proud to welcome you here.

**EARTHLINGS**

So we defeated death!

We've come alive as we intended:

Science worked as we predicted!

**EMPLOYEES**

You're right, Mighty Emperor, we believe you now.

**EMPEROR**

A deal then?

**BUREAUCRATS**

A deal!

**EMPEROR**

*(Producing a contract)*

Sign here!

**EMPLOYEES**

We don't trust the Emperor.

But an uncertain future is better than certain doom!

*(They sign)*

**EMPEROR**

Champagne! A toast to the Ancient Earthlings!

A toast to the future of Clever Clones...Eternal life!

**ALL**

Eternal life!

**TELEPATHISTS**

The share price has rocketed!

**EARTHLINGS**

We suppose now we're here we might as well enjoy it! Cheers everybody!

*(There is a loud cheer as everybody applauds the Ancient Earthlings;  
by now the Press has arrived.)*

## **EARTHLINGS**

What fun all this attention! Fulfilment of our dreams!  
The afterlife that we desired is heavenly bliss, it seems!  
We've come alive again! It's hard to see the truth -  
That we've been born a second time to find a second youth.

## **PRESS & MINISTERS**

We're fascinated, curious! The Earthlings are entrancing!  
This news throughout the Galaxy will be life-enhancing!  
Sing Hip hip for the White Moon!

## **SCIENTISTS**

What a curious thing is science, brings us fame and glory:  
The making of eternal life. Or is it just a story?  
The White Moon's Empire stretches forth as far as Man can go  
And Clever Clones always maintains its peoples' status quo:  
That's why they love us so!

## **TELEPATHISTS**

*(Communicating)*

Good day, you're through to Clever Clones! Yes, their resurrection's real:  
The Ancient Earthlings we've just cloned have great antique appeal!

## **BUREAUCRATS & ENGINEERS**

A new dawn for the company: the shares are now sky high!  
Exceeding targets – that's our goal! Is it all a lie?  
While we work our lives fly by.

## **COURTIERS & GUARDS**

We are amazed and full of awe for Rich's daring plan!  
Such leaps of faith and thought will fuel the ascent of man!  
Enjoy life while we can!  
Because he loves us all and we worship his dear face  
Perfect harmony reigns supreme in this white place.

## **EMPEROR**

The shares are up one thousand-fold; together with the Brain,  
The takeover of Clever Clones will add zest to my reign!  
Let life begin again!

## **ALL**

Sing Long Live the Empire; come sing the Emperor's praise,  
Come, sing Hooray eternally the Brightness of our Days.  
Long may live the Empire! Long may the Emperor reign!  
Now Death is dead and Life will live again!

*(All leave, pursued by members of the Press; the Emperor remains for a moment)*

**A TELEPATHIST** *(entering)*

Mighty Emperor, sir, you're wanted!

**EMPEROR**

I'm called away – through space!

The Earthlings will come with me

And learn the things they cannot dream about!

They'll come to my Party Spectacular!

*(The Emperor leaves; the continuing celebrations are heard in the distance;  
Dr Neuron enters with the Scientists.)*

**DR NEURON**

And what of science, Brain?

The search was once so exciting: to understand the world,

Make it a better place. Yet one question haunts me still:

What is true and what is false?

**BRAIN**

That's not a question; it's a fact of life!

**DR NEURON**

Good and evil: think Brain! What do you know of them?

**BRAIN**

IT will try to think, IT really will!

IT know all there is to know, but retrieving it is hard!

**SCIENTISTS**

Are these real lives that we have reproduced?

Onto files, into digits, can a person be reduced?

What makes Somebody: cells in the brain

Registering impulses, no two the same?

Neurons, billions of them; is that what it takes

To make us alive? Or are the Earthlings just fakes?

**BRAIN** *(to the Scientists)*

You must venture to find the truth,

The answer must be sought.

You will experience on your journey through life

Things that cannot else be taught.

As you go you will surely encounter

War, injustice, disease and disaster,

But also wonderful things of beauty,

Like kindness, art, invention and music.

Just as there always has been, and just as there always will be.

Now go undercover in search of night

And in the darkness find what is right.

**DR NEURON** *(departing)*

Goodbye for now, we'll not be gone long!

**BRAIN**

Oh dear, IT hope they find what is wrong!

*(The Scene fades)*

**Interlude**

*(A wasteland, which is deserted except for a team of bouncers outside a gate; celestial sounds are heard in the background. It is night.)*

**BOUNCER 1**

It's quiet tonight!

**BOUNCER 2**

Quiet every night!

**BOUNCER 3**

Blooming cold, too!

**BOUNCER 4**

When was the last time we had any customers?

**BOUNCER 1**

Can't remember, really.

**BOUNCER 3**

Have we ever had any customers?

**BOUNCER 2**

Can't remember.

**BOUNCER 1**

Me neither.

**BOUNCER 4**

Depressing, isn't it?

**BOUNCER 2**

Yeah, depressing.

**BOUNCER 3** *(After a pause)*

What shall we do tonight?

**BOUNCER 1**

What we do every night, I suppose.

**BOUNCER 4**

What's that?

**BOUNCER 2**

Can't remember.

**BOUNCER 1**

Me neither.

**BOUNCER 4**

Depressing, isn't it?

**BOUNCER 2**

Yeah, depressing.

**BOUNCER 1** (*After another pause*)

You know what?

**BOUNCER 2**

What?

**BOUNCER 1**

Yeah, you know what?

**BOUNCER 2**

Oh, what! Yeah.

**BOUNCER 3**

Well?

**BOUNCER 1**

Dun no. Can't remember.

**BOUNCER 4**

Me neither.

*(A spacecraft is heard as it lands nearby)*

**BOUNCERS**

Blimey! What was that?

**BOUNCER 4**

Dunno. What was it?

**BOUNCER 1**

Can't be!

**BOUNCER 3**

No, can't be!



**BOUNCER 4**

Can't be what?

**BOUNCER 1**

Whatever it was!

**BOUNCER 2**

What was that?

**BOUNCER 3**

Dunno. Ah...

*(The Earthlings enter and cough politely)*

**EARTHLINGS**

Hello! We're Earthlings! Just arrived from The White Moon:  
Can you tell us where we are, exactly? We seem to have lost our guide.

**BOUNCERS** *(to each other)*

Are they mad, or what?

**EARTHLINGS**

We're not exactly mad; we're kind of reborn.

**BOUNCERS**

They might be dangerous.

**EARTHLINGS**

We're on our way to the terminus of the universe  
Where we're supposed to meet up with the Emperor.  
Turn right four times out of the station, he said,  
And you'll find The Black Hole.

**BOUNCERS**

...the end of nowhere.

**EARTHLINGS**

Where is that?

**BOUNCERS**

...Or the start of somewhere.  
Depends where you're at.

**EARTHLINGS**

Well where are we, exactly?

**BOUNCERS**

It depends on where you want to get.

**EARTHLINGS**

What will we find there?

**BOUNCERS**

It depends on what you're looking for.

**EARTHLINGS**

Why don't we do what the Emperor said?

Turn right four times. Come on!

Left, right, left, right...*right turn!*

***Descent into the Black Hole***

*As the Earthlings march, the stage is gradually transformed into the interior of a Black Hole that is filled with devils, witches, fiends, sprites, monsters and mythological creatures of all kinds. These are 'Partygoers', as if the inhabitants of the White Moon were attending a grotesque masquerade.*

**PARTYGOERS**

The total depravity of infinite gravity!

We travesty the world in this orbital cavity!

*(They screech with laughter)*

**Scene Two**

*The Black Hole: the Emperor greets the Earthlings as they enter.*

*Waitresses in attendance.*

**EMPEROR**

Hi there, guys! You made it!

Welcome, make yourselves at home!

**EARTHLINGS**

Why, Mighty Emperor! We've caught up with you at last!

**EMPEROR**

Hey, I've brought along some special visitors,

Earthlings from the Past!

**EARTHLINGS**

We're curious about this Black Hole.

**PARTYGOERS**

A dumping ground on the edge of infinity,

Where souls are sorted for recycling!

**EARTHLINGS**

We're happy as we are for the moment, thank you.

**PARTYGOERS**

Know what? We're invisible!

No one can see us beyond the horizon.

**EARTHLINGS**

That's obvious! Have you been here long?

**PARTYGOERS**

It's always night here, time stops still.  
In limbo-land, everything lasts forever!

**EARTHLINGS**

We're starving! What's on the menu?

**WAITRESSES**

Particle soup!

**EARTHLINGS**

Particle soup?

**WAITRESSES**

Some blown-up energy is virtually fried,  
Add massive wimps, and set aside.  
Quarks are crushed and leptons sliced,  
Boil some bosons finely diced.  
Gluon gravy, gravitons stir in chopped,  
Monopoles peeled, messengers topped,  
A sprig of photons seasons the mix.  
Simple! Only a moment to fix!

**EARTHLINGS**

It all sounds very odd!.

*(The clock strikes eleven)*

**NIC NIGHT**

*(Coming forward; he is evidently a prisoner)*

It is all very queer. God only knows  
It's queerer than we can suppose.

Before Time was born  
There was nothing and nowhere.  
A speck appeared  
And Space was created. A singular state!  
Everything was there that there is  
And will be.

The Beginning had formed  
A huge wave of energy  
Which surged so fast  
That matter sped away from the fray.  
Everything was there that there is  
And will be.

Forces struggled,  
Stars took shape,  
Islands rose up in a sea of particles.  
How did chaos give birth to life?  
From where does the knowing come?  
Everything was there but the word,  
Which was no thing  
Nor ever will be.

All will expand  
And cool forever:  
A lingering death!  
Or maybe melt in a fiery crunch.  
Everything ends that there has been  
And will be.

### **EMPEROR**

That was our very own – the once and lonely - Nic Night, with his particular brand of musical Dark Waves! King of the Hasbeens! Thanks, Nic!

### **PARTYGOERS** (*shouting*)

What about the Earthlings? Let them do a turn! Give us a song!

### **EARTHLINGS**

But what can we sing about?

### **PARTYGOERS**

Tell us about yourselves.  
We want to hear what life was like on Earth!

### **EARTHLINGS**

We were very fortunate:  
The Blue Planet was a special place  
which humans had learned to make their own.

Our world was beautiful: we knew how to tame nature.  
Civilisation offered all the comforts we could wish for:  
Boats in the air and pictures on the wind,  
Computing machines and a lot more besides.  
So why did they think we needed more and more?

And people found it difficult to live at peace.  
Progress invented new ways to kill  
For some believed in violence and power over others,  
Existence became fragile, wars wracked the planet;  
Why did humans huddle in the shadows of their past?

Yet – it was home!

Their thirst for discovery could never be satisfied.  
The art they created, the music they played,  
The books they wrote – were stupendous achievements!  
Trying to make sense of the world gave life a purpose  
There were so many things that were precious to us.

**PARTYGOERS** (*Jeering*)

Bravo, Earthlings!

*Nic Night is visibly moved*

**EARTHLINGS**

Let us visit the planet, our dear Mother Earth,  
To see what became of it!  
So much to tell of the wonders we've seen here!

**PARTYGOERS**

There's no leaving here!  
This Black Hole doesn't know what escape is!  
You have no chance against the forces of gravity:  
You are dispensable with everyone else!  
You're finished, done for, spaghettified, dead!  
Turned into anti-matter by a freak of time!

**EMPEROR** (*coming forward*)

I'm eager as always to strengthen my empire:  
The unholy might of the regions beyond!  
I need further souls – that's not much to barter:  
Rich's dreams just for dreams of riches -  
For that's what all stupid humans desire!  
What's in their hearts? Nothing at all!  
The Ancients, they're something special!  
These people from Earth have never failed:  
My business needs the Sublime!  
Souls of the Earthlings – they're mine!  
The Finale comes now: this is the Time.  
I command: Forces of Gravity descend!  
I summon Infinite Darkness without end!

*(Everyone laughs; the Bouncers enter and lock the doors)*

***Dance of Infinite Gravity***

*There follows a dance, which soon erupts into a frenzy.*

**PARTYGOERS** *(to the Earthlings)*

You demanded your resurrection:  
Now suffer eternal rejection!  
The Universe has no free lunch,  
All that cheats ends in a crunch!  
The end of nowhere was a lurking lair!  
Be devoured now by dread and despair!

**EARTHLINGS**

Let us out! You can't keep us here.

**EMPEROR**

What's wrong? You've had your second life!  
Enjoy the last few moments! Think of it like this:  
It's a gateway to a new world!

*On the stroke of midnight there is a blackout as the Hole implodes; screaming, the Partygoers scatter, leaving the Earthlings lifeless on the ground; only Nic Night remains, unseen for a moment. The Scientists enter and, shining torches, they look around.*

**SCIENTISTS** *(to one another)*

Hello! Anyone there? Looks like a meltdown has occurred!  
The atmosphere feels infinitely dense!  
The Laws of Nature violated by the forces of cosmic anarchy!  
We've searched throughout the Universe  
But our questions are unanswered.  
Wait! Are these the Earthlings we incarnated? The Ancient Earthlings?  
What were they doing here? Why did they have to perish?  
It's as if their shadows are alive.  
We'll never grasp the final truth now: uncertainty is all that remains.

*(Seeing Nic Night and leading him away)*

Ah! A survivor! Our mission had a purpose after all.  
Let's go back now. Curve space – gently... form a hollow!  
Antigravity on! Wormhole – open!

**DR NEURON** *(departing)*

That was another dimension, I suppose.

**Scene Three**

*In the laboratory of Clever Clones on The White Moon, as Scene One.  
As the lights come up, the Earthlings, waking, find themselves somewhat the worse for wear.*

**EARTHLINGS** *(to one another)*

That was one hell of a party! It seemed to last for years!  
Just like the old days! The dancing! The music!  
What happened at the end? The memory's fading already;  
All of a sudden...

**BRAIN**

IT just had a thought.

**EARTHLINGS**

Who are you?

**BRAIN**

I am IT!

**EARTHLINGS**

Well?

**BRAIN**

Well what?

**EARTHLINGS**

What was the thought?

**BRAIN**

Ah, that is the question: what was the thought?

**EARTHLINGS**

Get on with it!

**BRAIN**

The thinking made mankind move away

From its latent state

Forever.

Good and evil exist in the world.

You know it, that's why

You're clever!

'Was knowledge not natural?' is the question IT pose,

IT ask it, that's why

IT's clever!

For knowing was in the daring to ask

Of good and evil. Everyone knows

That the quest had been thought up to make

You clever,

And nature's answers were questions themselves,

And the asking meant that mankind moved further away

From its latent state

Forever.

**EARTHLINGS**

A Brain that talks? What is it saying anyway?

It's amazingly clever, but we can't understand a word it says!

You're unnatural, yourself, Brain!

**BRAIN**

Is progress bad? If so, nature is bad as well!

**TELEPATHISTS, ENGINEERS, BUREAUCRATS** *(Entering)*

Here you are, Earthlings, where have you been?

You caused us no end of grief!

**ENGINEERS**

Where have you been?

**EARTHLINGS**

A near thing, you might say.

**BUREAUCRATS**

Where did the Emperor take you?

**EARTHLINGS**

It was a nightmare! We were in a Black Hole...

**TELEPATHISTS**

He took you there?

**EARTHLINGS**

...It felt like a fiery furnace. Like moths to a flame,  
We were squashed in a chasm; doomed, like phantoms,  
Destined for darkness, crushed into atoms.

**TELEPATHISTS, ENGINEERS, BUREAUCRATS**

It's your souls he's after.

No wonder he bought the company:

He's got an endless supply!

Where is he now? You're special to him

For you have souls that are unique.

**EARTHLINGS**

Why?

*(The Emperor and Ministers enter with the Courtiers and Guards)*

**EMPEROR**

No one plays games with me: hand them over!

**MINISTERS**

We'll punish you all if we hear any groans:

All we want are the Earthling Clones!

**TELEPATHISTS, ENGINEERS, BUREAUCRATS**

They belong here!



**EMPEROR**

You signed them over to me!  
You signed the Company to me!

**TELEPATHISTS, ENGINEERS, BUREAUCRATS**

Well, Brain, tell us what to do!

**BRAIN**

It's obvious, easy! Eternal life, Laws of Nature, nothing's impossible!  
Reverse reality... wind time back a little... but not too far!

*(All move backwards, anti-clockwise)*

**COURTIERS & GUARDS**

That's cheating!

**TELEPATHISTS, ENGINEERS, BUREAUCRATS**

Well done, Brain. A good idea, at last!  
There! The contract is not yet valid  
Because it was signed in the future!

**MINISTERS**

The contract hasn't yet been signed?  
Give it here! We must be blind!

**TELEPATHISTS / ENGINEERS / BUREAUCRATS**

The Earthlings belong to Clever Clones –

**MINISTERS**

We've been tricked by new time zones!

*(The Emperor begins to get violent)*

**BRAIN**

Ah! IT might have the answer!

**TELEPATHISTS / ENGINEERS / BUREAUCRATS**

Not now, Brain!

**MINISTERS, COURTIERS & GUARDS**

How dare it? Shut up!

**BRAIN**

What's right and wrong: it's all about motives!  
Mighty Rich's machinations had evil intentions...

**EMPEROR**

When you've quite finished... Ministers, seize the Brain at once!

**MINISTERS**

Must we handle it?

**GUARDS**

Just come along quietly!

**EARTHLINGS**

We're going nowhere with you!

**BRAIN**

Did IT say something wrong?

**COURTIERS**

We've never had a crisis like this before!

**TELEPATHISTS / ENGINEERS / BUREAUCRATS**

Time is running out;  
we need... a miracle...

*(A noise is heard. A space capsule lands; Nic Night and the Scientists step out.)*

**NIC**

I'm back!

**SCIENTISTS**

We found him in just in time, brought him safely home.

**OTHERS**

It can't be! Look who has come! It's he! It's Nic, King Nic!

**EMPEROR**

How did *he* get here? Seize him, take him away!

**NIC** *(Continuing his song in a new vein)*

All seemed lost

In the Black Hole of gravity;

The future was nothingness,

An end to everything.

But this singular state

Was a fresh beginning.

Hope never dies for the whole of creation:

That's where the melodies come from!

Everything was singing that there is,

And everything sings that there is

And will be. Like infinity,

We never reach the future

Because there's always eternity beyond!

And everything sings that there was,

And everything there is will sing!

**ALL**

The Black Hole? The end?  
Have we all dreamed the same dream?

**NIC**

Sorry I've been so long!

**ALL**

He is our King, the rightful King of The White Moon!  
Our singing king! He's come back to us!

**BRAIN & SCIENTISTS**

He will serve you well!  
King Nic was banished and all he stood for was lost.

**ALL**

New life has come into view from the dream world,  
But what will happen now?

**EARTHLINGS**

We're sure things will work out!

*(Laughter, cheers and tears)*

**NIC**

Mighty Emperor: you are a stealer of souls.  
You have denied your people all that makes life good.  
It's time for us to decide our future!  
Whom do you choose as your leader?

**ALL**

Here comes the crunch!

**EMPEROR**

What can you offer them – vague aspirations,  
Uncertainty and want? It will all end unhappily  
On the garbage heap of disappointed hopes.

**MINISTERS / COURTIERS / GUARDS**

It's true we lack nothing – life is sanity.  
Nic in charge would be a calamity!  
Nic if king would only want to satisfy his vanity!

We are still determined to enforce complete conformity.  
Making clever clones means universal uniformity.  
Nic as king would do away with hard-won unanimity!

## **EMPLOYEES**

We must seize the opportunity  
To depose the authority  
That preaches amorality!  
... Atrocity! Brutality!

*(The Guards come forward)*

## **NIC**

*(To the People)*

The Earthlings taught me to recognize our fate:  
To return to creativity before it is too late.  
We have lost what it is to be alive:  
With purpose and fun we will sing, we will thrive  
As the Earthlings once did,  
For life is best when you seek your humanity!  
Follow our destiny! Build a new community!

## **BRAIN**

While you have no soul your lives will not know the unknown,  
You will have everything you could need and the Emperor will leave you alone.  
Or, exercise your conscience; you can be free to choose,  
Acquire experience, risk everything there is to lose,  
Facing disappointments, express your hopes and fears,  
Like the Ancient Earthlings, learn to laugh and shed some tears.  
As a brain, IT's neutral, a thinking object with no soul,  
Nobody cares about IT!

## **EARTHLINGS**

Dear Brain, we do care, really we do!

**BRAIN** *(almost emotional, to the People)*

IT lives life in black and white –  
You on the other hand could see  
All the colours of life's rich tapestry  
If you dared to look!

## **PRESS**

Life is never dull on the White Moon!  
This is quite a coup, a tantalizing dilemma!  
But how will our story end?

## **MINISTERS / COURTIERS / GUARDS**

We feel safer with certainty.  
We should stay as we are.

## **EARTHLINGS**

Wait! We have something to say.

We hoped for eternity; this is not what we had in mind.  
We long to travel homewards, and see what we find.  
There is a dearth of earthly things here on the bright White Moon,  
So we would like to go back home where we can play *our* tune.  
We're grateful for the chance we've had to live life once again.  
We'll miss you all, we'll pray for you; our trip was not in vain.  
We need back our mortality, although we won't live long.  
We love life, laughter, come what may, and singing you this song!  
No matter where we are, our home is Earth, the Planet Blue!  
Be strong, be true! Our journey's not yet finished,  
We'll just sing - farewell to you...

*(They depart in the space capsule)*

#### **ALL**

Farewell!

#### **DR NEURON**

In truth, it's doubtful if they'll ever get there,  
It's a hazardous voyage to those parts,  
And nobody is quite sure whether Earth still exists now.

#### **MINISTERS, COURTIER & GUARDS** *(Turning to Nic)*

We'll make our choice then...

#### **BRAIN**

And so, King Nic came back to The White Moon.

#### **NIC**

Working all hours is banned! Making clones is so *not* cool!  
We must diversify!

#### **TELEPATHISTS**

We could make musical instruments!

#### **SCIENTISTS & ENGINEERS**

We've the technology to produce amazing sounds!

#### **BUREAUCRATS**

We'll call them Bio-Phones!

#### **MINISTERS**

When we work at Clever Phones  
We'll make lots of lovely drones!

#### **EMPEROR**

Believe it if you will: I'll catch up with their souls one day!  
After all, they're only human and there'll be other empires to prey on!

## **Finale**

*Nic is crowned King, the Brain is honoured, and the Emperor...*

### **ALL**

Where will science take us,  
Always asking questions?  
How will we go forwards,  
Searching for the answers?

We'll grapple with the problems,  
Improving the solutions,  
Learning what we can  
And passing knowledge on!

The marvels around us  
Are there to explore:  
The answers astound us!  
Think on for evermore!  
Dream on for evermore!  
Sing on for evermore!

The universal chatter  
Of all the things there are,  
From the smallest drop of matter  
To the largest, brightest star  
Creates a perfect consonance,  
An orchestra of waves,  
A harmony of resonance,  
A sound which is ablaze.

The spheres in their rotation  
Give us our every day  
A mighty oscillation  
Is the universal way.  
The world is in a constant spin,  
Its energy is rife.  
And from this constant din  
Emerge the melodies of life.

So night-time comes to day now,  
Then darkness yields to light,  
We live in nature's way now,  
That surely must be right:  
For the cycles in our lives,  
And the rhythms pounding strong,  
Signify mankind survives  
When IT knows right from wrong!

*(The scene suddenly fades)*

## **Epilogue**

*(In the Museum of Ancient Science, some time later)*

### **BRAIN**

So Clever Phones stopped making human beings,  
And instead created a new breed of musical instruments.  
King Nic was given a whole set, he loved them  
For the immense variety of sounds they could produce  
Just by the player thinking about it.  
They were instruments with a soul, he used to say,  
And he was always grateful to the telepathists whose idea they were.

And so I came here to the Museum.

*(Some visitors enter, but are more interested in other articles on display)*

I have to hand it to the human race...  
There's much to marvel at in these displays.  
Only I now have lived through those events  
Which happened all that time ago.  
If I tell anyone the story,  
They don't believe it:  
They think IT's all in the mind....









