

The Greatest Storm

CHARACTERS

Barnum - Kris Boykin - (52 lines)
Maarten - Linda (6 lines)
Narrator/Laura - Natalie Ratcliffe (16 lines)
Misfit Helen - Izzy - (16 lines)
Misfit Pete - Hannah - (13 lines)
Misfit Javier - Max - (16 lines)
Misfit Tom - Brian - (23 lines)
Philip Carlyle - Alex - (24 lines) **Cute**
Michael Fish - Devon - (5 lines)
Tomasz Schafernaker - Brian - (2 lines)
Elephant -
Duick - Max - (3 lines)
Boris - Sophie Cuckow - (4 lines)
Covid baddy 1 - Meg Stretton - (4 (short) lines)
Covid baddy 2 - Alec Vessey - (4 (short) lines) **Cute**
Nicky - Devon - (2 line)
(~~Waitstaff???~~ - nonspeaking)
NWS1 - Harriet - (6 lines)
NWS2 - Lauren - (2 (+ 1 mouthing!) lines)
NWS3 - George - (1 line)
John Methven - Devon - (1 line)
Jenny Lind - Linda - (5 lines)
Heckler - Max - (1 line)

Act 1

Scene 1

CHARACTERS:

Maarten
Barnum
Narrator
Michael Fish
Thomas Schafernaker
Elephant (nonspeaking)
Duick

Pete Inness
Heckler

(Great storm facts:

Hit south of England in 1987 early hours of 16 Oct

Michael Fish hurricane line

Sevenoaks lost six of the trees that gave it its name

Loss of 18 lives in UK, 4 in France

Worst storm since 1703

15 million trees lost

£1 billion in damages

In the months and years that followed, debate raged about whether the storm had been a hurricane.

Experts agreed it was not by definition, because it had not originated in the tropics.

After an internal inquiry, the Met Office improved its forecasting technology amid allegations it had failed to alert the nation.

)

**open with very dramatic news report after the passing of damage caused by Great Storm - potential green screen - period attire* breaking news jingle/bbc jingle*

Michael Fish: Tonight we have breaking news of the latest unprecedented storm to hit the UK. Although yesterday forecasters predicted that we would have sunny weather, with no clouds in sight, I am now reporting from the devastated town of Sandwich, home of the Earl of Sandwich, name-sake of the humble sandwich, where we see a scene of extensive catastrophic devastation. Last night, trees had blown down and damage was caused on a scale greater than any experienced in living memory.

0:49

PC Barnum: Wow this is truly horrible! There must be a way to make forecasting of storms like this better so we can warn people in advance. I can't believe it's not better (*Some sort of butter joke - insert still image of 'can't believe it's not butter' during pause for laughs*)

0:58

Michael Fish: Yes, indeed the wind speed is enough to argue this was even a hurricane...

Duick : Oh no it isn't!

Michael Fish: Oh yes it is!

Duick: Oh no it isn't!

Michael Fish: Well there is definitely some controversy here!

Duick: Oh no there isn't!

Michael Fish: Get off the stage first year PhD student Duick Young! Go and finish painting that cream wall of yours (*boots 'Duick' from stage*). Right well anyway, the damage is considerable and raises the question: what more can be done to avoid such a catastrophe occurring in the future.

1:35

PC Barnum: This sounds like a job for me, Sue Gray Barnum (*adds as an afterthought, terms and conditions style*) one day I'll be Professor Gray Barnum, or PG Barnum for short
1:42

Time skip - something on screen to say how long (spongebob 10? Years later (heavy french accent))

1:46

PC Barnum: Now that I've got my degree, I really think I could make a difference helping improve storm forecasts! (*looks thoughtful*) Hmm but where do I begin? Maybe watching the news might offer some timely inspiration (and plot)? (*Remote click*)

2:05

Maarten holding tv screen prop; Narrator is interviewing Maarten on tv

Narrator: *Subtitles with Laura Kuennsberg - BBC News style* Good evening, (Big Brother voice) it's day 1054 of the Brexit negotiations. (*Starts coughing in a new and persistent manner*) Oh sorry that was last year, ahem, excuse me. I'm joined here by Maarten Ambaum introducing us to ...

Maarten: The Reading Meteorology department! Come and join us for a fair and ample salary! Make your fortune!

2:47

PC Barnum: Make my fortune, that sounds great! I could join the Met Office, but I'd never make my fortune working at a government organisation.

2:53

Heckler (heckle off screen): You'll never make a fortune working at a university either, unless you're the VC, Bobbo van de Noot Noot. (*Pingu style - Alex wtf if 'pingu style'? This is the most important line in the panto. Dont let me do it then XD. Noot Nooooot*)

Flash pengu with robert van de noot noot photoshopped

3:03

PC Barnum: Ah well, I'll do it anyway. It's either that or drinking tea for the rest of my life. (*PG tips throw over his shoulder?*)

3:11

Narrator: Maarten, can you tell us more about meteorology?

Maarten: Well, it's the study of improving your British small talk, which is the weather of course! If you want to know more, take a look at my textbook, soon to be a second edition. (*wearing t-shirt with copy of his book on it*) Or maybe something lighter, like 100 years of Reading weather. Or something **even** lighter than that, like the list of MSc students that will pass my Atmospheric Physics course (*holds up blank sheet of paper*)

Pete Inness: (*Entering suddenly and intrusively*) I am in DISBELIEF that you have not read my famous book "Understand the Weather", rated 4.7 stars on amazon, although sadly out of stock for the moment due to exceedingly high demand. I can sign it if you like, for you and all your extended family.

Maarten: You don't know who you're dealing with Pete. I could make things... very very difficult for you. (*Pete leaves, muttering something about cumulus shaped doggos*) Anyway, where was I, ah yes, telling you all about meteorology.

4:25

PC Barnum: Oh I love it. What's more, storms are the best! Tornadoes and hurricanes, blizzards, you name it! Stormzy's great too!

4:33

Maarten: And if convection is your thing then you should join mesoscale group!

4:39

PC Barnum: Oh, that sounds exciting, I wonder what kind of research is presented at mesoscale?

4:45

Maarten: Mesoscale covers pretty much everything to be honest - they've made the definition of mesoscale so broad that it can be applied to almost everyone. Everyone except SPATE.

4:57

PC Barnum: Oh, so definitely storms then! That's grand.

5:01

Maarten: And of course mesoscale has storms, but there's a lot more to meteorology than just storms! Like the thermodynamic laws, hydrostatic balance, entropy, running, coffee machines, not forgetting pantomimes of course, and...(*droning on*)

5:28

PC Barnum: Speaking of which, let's look at the weather forecast.

5:32

PC Barnum clicks away to watch a forecast. Make using remote control obvious

5:36

PC Barnum: Oh great! A storm is coming to the UK, let's give it a watch.

Tomasz Schafernaker (*Quite drunk, slurring his words*): Storm Aidan, oops Alex is expected to bring 60, 70, ... erm 80mm of rainfall to the > region. (*Rainfall plot in the shape of an elephant*) (*have name at bottom of screen like in news*)

PC Barnum: Wow, that's a lot of rain... UNPRECEDENTED some might even say!

Tomasz Schafernaker: However, this storm could have a potential sting jet! which would bring really powerful, potentially damaging winds. Keep a close eye on the forecasts, sting jets are really hard to predict.

PC Barnum: What if I could figure out a way to better predict sting jets? That's it! I can create an instrument to put into the storm to measure it, then all that data can be used to predict them better!

PC Barnum clicks back to the ad.

Maarten: (*Droning on still from before*)...and enstrophy, relative humidity... but as I was saying, you too can join the University of Reading Meteorology Department. Sign up today!

PC Barnum: This is amazing, I'm definitely going to join the University of Reading and become a professor! ~~right away!~~ I want to find the biggest storm I can and study it. I'm going to be the greatest weatherman of all time!

SONG HERE? *A Millions Storms is all it's gonna take!!!!* Montage of youngish Barnum joining UoR, Brexit happens, Covid happens, and then he gets his job at UoR.

Speed through Barnum growing up and joining Reading as a staff member. Brexit events occurring

Narrator: So we see that PC Barnum has gained a full staff position from the University of Reading. Back to you in the studio.

Scene 2

CHARACTERS

Filming ideas - maybe if zoom call have each persons background in scr for scr bit. Could have photos from different directions of scr.

Barnum
Narrator
Misfits (Helen, Pete, Javier, Tom)
Boris
Covid baddies (nonspeaking)
Nicki
~~Potential waitstaff (nonspeaking)~~

Narrator: Having successfully achieved his childhood dream of being awarded a staff position at the University of Reading, we now join PC Barnum on his first day! Unfortunately, we're in the midst of a pandemic! (*Narrator holds up a sign: Audience boos*) Whilst we're

waiting for updates on the rules, the staff at university are anxiously waiting for news about furloughs. Here are some of the senior professors joining us now...

SONG - Misfits come on screen to **Little Green Bag**. Filing into met one by one socially distanced Maybe short? Funny photoshop of Tom, Helen, Javier and Pete to introduce them

Misfit Tom: Oh no, how will I draw on my weather charts now that my weather systems lectures are all online!

Misfit Helen: Well, can't you draw on the Powerpoint presentations Tom? That's what I've been doing in Hazardous Weather Analysis.

Misfit Pete: (Bobbing head up and down excessively) Well that's all well and good for lectures Helen, but a virtual MSc field trip - sorry - I should say VIRTUAL MSc field trip - no hang on, that's not right, the MSc students are real, I think, (*looking concerned*) although we have no way of really knowing... What I mean is the MSc virtual field trip, it just isn't quite the same you see. The field trip is all about getting outside, not sitting around, right Tom?

Tom hungover on field trip photo(s)

Misfit Tom: urmmmmm, yeah definitely...

Misfit Javier: What about furlough? We won't be doing any of these things if that happens.

Misfit Tom: Hold on, who's that? Is that a new professor? Why are we hiring if we're going to be furloughed?

Barnum: Oh hello, pleasure to meet you. I'm PG Barnum, a new member of staff.

Misfit Javier: Nice to meet you PT Barnum

Barnum: No, it's PG- Barnum, not PT. Rest assured, anything i write has been properly reviewed for parental guidance.

Misfit Tom: Oh, -PC- barnum you say? you were in the Police?! I loved Sting's vocals!!

Roxanne starts being played quietly in background

Misfit Javier: Oh yeah, didn't he once take a private flight to...

*Barnum interrupts **very sharply** because this is supposed to be a short joke goddamit*

Barnum: Yes, he did, and though reducing air miles is incredibly important to cutting our carbon footprint, that is **not** the kind of Sting Jet I am interested in! And it's **PG-** Barnum!!!

Stop playing Roxanne

Misfits quickly introduce themselves.

Misfit Helen: It's a pleasure to meet you, Barnum. What is your area of expertise?

Barnum: Well, it's storms, actually.

Misfit Pete: ...storms? Can you be more specific?

Misfit Javier: Nevermind that, what do you think about furlough? We won't be able to do anything if we're furloughed. I mean can we even play Met Football?

Nicki enters (maybe online in a corner of the screen?). [Flash Nicki Met football emails](#)

Nicki: May I ask how exactly you plan to play football when there are clear instructions from the government to remain 2m apart?

Misfit Javier: I thought you **should** remain 2m apart if you **can**, but **shouldn't** remain 2m apart if you **can't**?

Misfit Helen: No, no Javier, I'm pretty sure the guidelines say that you should remain 2m apart, unless you're outdoors, or running really fast, or you know them really well...?

Misfit Tom: What if I'm getting my eyes tested and I can't see how far 2m is anyway?

Nicki: Okay I think I'll pass on this conversation. Although it may be quite useful to help me fall asleep later... *(walks off and opens her book, would be great if the book was something strange and visible to the camera)*

Barnum: Look, we're getting off track, do we want to be famou- I mean, get out of Furlough or not? Well... I do have this one idea.

Misfit Tom: Is it about storms?

Barnum: Yes, it is!

Misfit Helen: Why don't we go down to the SCR for a pint and you can tell us all about it.

Narrator: And here we must interrupt with a special announcement from the prime minister!

Covid baddies either side of Boris with lecterns?

Boris: I am afraid that our country is at war once again. But this time the enemy is invisible. (dun dun duh) It will be a difficult time for us all, even more difficult than when I was Foreign Secretary, but we will pull through this together! ... *(reconsiders, shrugs)* ehh we will pull through this! Fear not we have put together a simple 4 step plan. The first three steps won't work so I won't bother with those, but the last step, this is the important step. There are 5... or maybe 3 levels to this step and they're all nicely colour coded and numbered. Remember, don't go to work. Keep the economy alive. No socialising but the pubs are open now! But not

after 10! Stay inside and stay alert. But also keep the economy alive. (*Lord Farquad voice*) Many of you will die, but that is a sacrifice I am willing to make.

Misfit Tom: Wait, is it still the rule of 6? Well, it's just the five of us and I guess they're still doing Eat out to Help Out. Sun's out, guns out (*pull up sleeves*). Let's go.

Narrator: So the met department staff all go down to the SCR for a pint to talk about "storms" and Barnum's idea for what they could get up to if they all end up furloughed.

barnum and misfits walking to pub? Then in pub:

Barnum: So in short..... Sting Jets! *waves hands magically/jazz hands*

Misfit Tom: ... andddd?'

Misfit Pete: I'm sure sting jets have been discussed in WCD before! Weren't you all diligently taking notes?

Misfit Helen: Absolutely Pete, but why don't we focus on cold conveyor belts instead? Don't they often produce the strongest winds?

Misfit Javier: Cold conveyor belt? Isn't that how they keep the fish fresh at Yo Sushi?

Barnum: No we need to do sting jets because they aren't well understood, so we should make an instrument to measure them inside the storm using some sort of airborne measuring instrument - it'll give us unprecedented accuracy. And we'll call it DOROTHY!

Misfit Javier: DOROTHY? That's a silly name. Pick something else.

Barnum: No no, DOROTHY, it stands for Doppler Omnidirectional Ranging with Oceanic Temperature and Height-sensitive Yardstick.

Flash each acronym and its meaning on the screen?

Misfit Helen: I think you'll find it's **actually** DRUFISSJEM - Data Recording Unit for In Situ Sting JEt Measurements

Flash acronym

Misfit Tom: Yeah (*dismissively*)... let's stick with DOROTHY for now. - How about Data recORding unit fOr in siTu sting jet measurements High in the skY

Flash acronym

Misfit Pete: Perfect! The ECMWF forecasts show a positive NAO regime for the coming month. Freely available now, I don't have to steal them from my wife. She's German you know. We can finally measure the greatest storm!

Barnum: If we can better predict sting jets, we'll become famous! *Aside:* I could become the greatest weatherman of all time!

Misfit Tom: Oh no oh no he's going into one of his weird "I'm going to be the greatest weatherman" trances again that usually leads directly into song. Brace yourselves.

SONG Respect - all about acronyms in meteorology; weather models, forecast centres DOROTHY, measure sting jets in the sky! (or something)

Nicki: **D-O-R-O-T-H-Y** everyone looks at her, she looks sad and leaves

Misfit Tom: Right well we better leave the SCR now, it's nearly 10 and i hear the 'rona gets rowdy after 10pm. *Clip of Covid baddies getting drunk*

Drag Javier kicking and screaming from pub

Glance over to covid baddies waiting outside pub, looking thuggish

Narrator: And so our noble band of meteorologists swiftly depart from the pub, and are therefore completely safe from infection by covid19: a virus with an incredibly strong diurnal cycle in the boundary layer of pubs only affecting patrons past 10pm.

Scene 3

CHARACTERS

Narrator

NWS presenters who seem to have a bad Met idea (NWS1, NWS2, NWS3)

Phillip Carlyle

Barnum

Misfits

Reviewer 1/Maarten

Reviewer 2/John

Jenny Lind

Elephant (nonspeaking)

Narrator: Here I am at the Department of Meteorology at the University of Reading. The misfits have been working on their instrument and are preparing their new, groundbreaking meteorological monitoring device to present to funders today in a virtual Zoom room.

NWS3: *On zoom call alone. Glances side to side. Looks sad and left out. Where is everyone?*

Narrator: Meanwhile, in the actual meeting... We have Philip Carlyle judging whether he would want to fund a few wacky meteorological experiments!

Switches to screen with lots of people in it. Elephant in zoom call. user named "Anonymous Elephant"

Carlyle: We seem to have lost a few people, someone's started another meeting, hopefully we'll be able to track and trace them (*badum tschh!*) so that we can start the meeting. *Pause for a few brief moments, awkwardly staring and smiling at nothing in particular.* Right, that's probably enough people, thank you all for coming. I'm Philip CarLyle, and these are my two fellow reviewers, Reviewer 1 Maarten Ambaum and Reviewer 2 John Methven. If our first speaker could share their screen, they can begin their presentation.

NWS1: Ok, where's the button to share my screen? Can you see my presentation?

CarLyle: Not yet.....

NWS1: How about now?

Carlyle: Umm.. we can just see you sharing Teams within your Teams screen.

NWS1: Ummmm oohh dearr um let me just try something a sec, uhoh what about nooooww. (*something personal/embarrassing pops up on screen. Maybe a funny photoshop in fashion of SAPPO*)

CarLyle: Umm...

****screen quickly changes to presentation****

Carlyle: (Getting increasingly annoyed) Uh hanggg on, um nothing yet. Ah there it is.

NSW1: And can you see my pointer?

Carlyle: Yep, and we can see your pointer. Please get started before I give up on everything. This is dreadful.

NWS2: (mouthing) Today, we present a novel state-of-the-art...

CarLyle: Sorry, we can't hear you, I think you accidentally muted yourself...

NWS2: TODAY, WE PRESENT A NOVEL state-of-the-art pain killer, curing forecasters suffering from issuing an immense number of weather warnings!

Carlyle: Um, sorry to interrupt again. I don't think your slides are moving. We're still seeing your title slide?

NWS1: Ah, nevermind! (*clears throat*) It's not cocaine! (*Ignoring slides and closing them*)

Carlyle raises arms. He is baffled.

NWS2: but stronger than novocaine...

NWS1: It's medicane! A topical, no I meant tropical ointment you apply on the advected areas...

(Narrator holds up Boo sign - Audience boos) Boots NWS people from meeting

Carlyle: Alright... next up. PG Barnum, is it?

Barnum: *(All overly theatrical and circussy.)* Yes, that's right, and I'm here with these fine misfits, I mean staff members. Ladies and Gentlemen, today we have for you the most wonderful instrument you ever will see. Why, it'll astound you, and it'll just take a few moments of your time to tell you all about it. *(Pauses like he's expecting applause, share screen.)*

Carlyle: ...alright, get on with it then.

Misfit Helen: We present to you DOROTHY, the Data recORding unit fOr in siTu sting jet measurements High in the skY. *(show this acronym with the long-form on the screen, and drop once line is finished)*

Carlyle: *(unconvinced)* DOROTHY? okay. So how does it work then?

Misfit Pete: Well we have to put DOROTHY into the very top of the sting jet, so that-

Carlyle: WAIT WHAT? Into the sting jet?! And how do you propose to do that?!

Misfit Javier: Well, we'll use a drone which will then release lots of tiny sensors in the sting jet. These sensors will be carried by the sting jet back to the ground so that we can then review the data.

Carlyle: What do you make of this Reviewer 1?

Reviewer 1/Maarten: Putting it directly into the storm sounds highly unconventional. The high speed winds will surely be a disaster with such a fragile instrument. I usually try to be nice but this presentation has got to be one of the worst I have seen in a long time. The idea is so bad that I will have to leave work and go home immediately and then spend time wondering what life is about. Maybe I'll start a blog... *(Leaves call?) (if anyone wants to see <https://readingphysics19265874.wordpress.com/>)*

Carlyle: Oh dear. And what's your opinion Reviewer 2?

Flash email from Nicholas Klingaman to met-abs

Review 2/John: *(In the distinctive style of John)* This presentation could have been very dry, but it isn't. However, I fear we are entering a phase of repeating all of the studies carried out over the past 15 years and so cannot recommend that we continue with this project. If you'd like though, you could try and convince us through the power of song?

Jenny Lind joins zoom call and watches

SONG: Other Side - Barnum and the misfits on one side, Carlyle and the critics on the other side?

Barnum: Dear reviewers, thank you for retracting all of your concerns after I sang to you in a convincing and persuasive manner. CarLyle, welcome to the project! (*Go to hi-five, then realise it's Covid and do the elbow bump*)

Jenny on video call and invites Barnum to a breakout room

Jenny: Excuse me, Barnum is it? I accidentally just came into the meeting and happened to overhear a few things. If you wouldn't mind, I'd very much like to talk to you about an opportunity... (*Make it obvious who she is with clothing/background*)

Fade to black.

Act 2

Scene 4

CHARACTERS

Laura/Narrator

Jenny Lind

Barnum

Misfits

Carlyle

Boris

Covid baddies (nonspeaking)

Jenny Lind and Barnum in a video call together.

Laura the Narrator (live): Welcome back everyone to this... Worrying scenes for UK democracy as Boris Johnson gets himsel... Oh sorry, forgot where I was for a second there. (*changes tack*) Worrying scenes for this panto as **PG** Barnum gets **her**self into negotiations that she's not fully equipped to handle. Hereeeeeeeee's Jenny.

Jenny: I have an exciting opportunity for you, so that you no longer have to work with those sticky, salty, stinky, sting jets.

Barnum:(*genuinely perplexed*) But what could be more interesting than sting jets?

Jenny: Well Hurricanes of course! The very focus of the National Hurricane Centre, where I work. There's no shortage of them to study at the moment, and the symmetry is so attractive! No doubt this is the best topic to study, but only if you have a good 'eye' for these things (ba dum tsss).

Barnum: But my sting jets, I've just got a team together to test a radical new instrument to help measure them! Plus, we don't even get hurricanes over here!

Jenny: Pish posh, why would you want to waste your time with homemade instruments when you could harness the might of the NHC? We've got all the funding and equipment you could ever need; there'd be no picking up peanut shells for you! Also, we get clapped once a week on Thursdays at 8pm. It makes all the hard graft worth it.

Barnum: But my misfits? They'll be all alone, wandering without direction, swept up into an unpredictable chaos of tiered lockdown restrictions, circuit breakers and who knows what else? (*Quick change in mood.*) Though I suppose they managed without me before...

Jenny: That's the spirit, why not sign up to the NHC today with our ready to go app. (*Show NHS logo photoshopped with NHC in.*) You can simply track and trace the path of hurricanes along with severe weather outbreaks. With our unprecedented app, I think we saved two, maybe two and a half, maybe more than that lives. I really don't think so. I think we did a very good job. Come and visit us in America, the land of the great and free! No need to be worried about Covid here (*Trump tweet*).

Barnum: It does sound tempti.....

Misfits enter, Barnum quickly shuts down his laptop, interrupting Jenny

Carlyle: Oi Barnum, who was that?

Barnum: urmmmmm no one, nothing, just a, a, a work call.

Carlyle: (Looking very suspicious) Okay if you say sooo

messages from Jenny pop up for Barnum - "I hope you'll consider my offer." "I believe you could be a key worker at the NHC" "This is your chance to be one of the greatest hurricane forecasters"

Misfit Pete: well never mind that, we need to get to work on DOROTHY! I hear there's a storm coming! It could rival the Great storm of 1987!

Misfit Helen: Barnum, wasn't the Great Storm your inspiration for working on sting jets?

Barnum: (*distracted, looking at phone*) Yes yes, sting jets and storms, all very interesting... Sorry guys, I've got an unprecedented opportunity at the NHC that'll prove once and for all my credentials as a meteorologist!

Misfit Tom: But we need you here Barnum!

Misfit Javier: You're the one who brought us all together in the pursuit of understanding sting jets.

Barnum: *(packing up random things: pencil, computer mouse, Maarten's book, mug, etc)*
You're all too kind. But I'm leaving you in the capable hands of Carlyle, he can manage things while I'm gone. Keep up the good work. Tata and farewell!!!

Carlyle: Damn **her** and **her** obsession with proving himself. Well, I guess there's nothing else for it but a training montage to get this instrument built!

Narrator (Live): Hi, it's me again, Laura, your favourite narrator. I really need a holiday, I'm very tired. Politics never stops, pantos never stop, news never stops. Riiightt anyway, time for a montage...

**banging hammers* *hit someone's (Javier? Make awareness course joke by Philip Craig) thumb and mime "oh sh*t" but subtitle "oh my goodness gracious me how terrible", or similar. (Channel inner Max) *turning around with a ladder joke* *opera singing thing that James suggested - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_uScCpAW4U* *slow-mo-(n)tage* with the ol' "ok going slow was fun, but let's speed things up a bit or this'll never get done" line. Have Misfit Tom sitting very laid back on a chair the whole time, maybe with the another field trip photo of him hungover.*

Carlyle: Well, that was some good work we did there gang.

Carlyle looks over at Tom still asleep. Get horn/phone alarm and plays next to Tom

Misfit Tom: whaaaaaaa!?!?!?

Carlyle: TOM, you have to STAY ALERT! The government made that, urm, very clear...

Narrator: WE INTERRUPT with another important COVID message from Boris Johnson! Ahem, next slide please. *(Strange slide of some sorts pops up)*. Uhhh that wasn't meant to be there, next slide please!

Boris giving a speech with Chris Whitty and Jenny Harries dressed up as Covid baddies either side of him.

Boris: It is now almost 27 months since the people of this country first dealt with the restrictions on their freedom by not travelling unnecessarily and attending eye tests only at tourist attractions, and although the tragedy has been immense, now is the time for everyone to take action. It is up to the common people to stand up against this virus, we are all in this together. From midnight tonight in England, midday on Wednesday in Wales, 2pm on Tuesday in Scotland and immediately in Northern Ireland, chefs, maids and nannies are required to go back to work because I'm fed up with my children. Unrelated we'll be sending school children back in groups of no less than 30. For those of you itching to get back to work, if you do not need to be in the labs, then you should avoid being in the labs, but if you feel your research is important, then of course you should go back to labs.

Narrator: Just a question for Covid Chris Whitty, I'm wondering what your stance is on political advisors travelling to Barnard Castle? Should they resign?

Covid Chris goes to answer but is interrupted by Boris

Boris: Laura, I think I have said quite enough on this matter already. We need to focus on the future!! Stop trying to run an inquiry into this and listen to the scientists!!!!!!!!!!

Narrator: Well as you can see, the situation is not looking promising, or is it? That was rather a confusing series of messages there. The misfits better hurry if they want to avoid Covid.

Misfit Helen: Oh no look! Covid's gotten into our lab! It's almost 10 o'clock, we need to get out of here before it gets even worse!

Screen flashes to a clock striking 10 o'clock. Fear stricken faces of the misfits! COVID Baddies misbehave at 10 o'clock, chase off the gang to Benny Hill music and destroy the DOROTHY. Covid baddies scurry off stage.

Javier sneaks back in to get his footballs.

Scene 5

CHARACTERS

Narrator

Misfits

Carlyle

Barnum

Lind (nonspeaking)

Covid baddy 1

Covid baddy 2

Boris

Dawn scene (Play Morning Mood by Edvard Grieg?)

Carlyle holds shreds of DOROTHY in his hands, misfits look sad. Narrator holds an awwwww sign up to the audience.

Narrator: After many long hours spent creating DOROTHY, the misfits have dejectedly found their instrument in ruins. Covid has finally got the better of them, how will they ever recover?

Misfits and Carlyle: *(together)* Oh no! DOROTHY has been destroyed!

Misfit Helen: COVID destroyed everything and we're not even allowed into the labs anymore, we can't work on DOROTHY from home. There's no place like home, there's no place like home, there's no place like home.

Misfit Tom: What's the point in carrying on? No one believes in us, we might as well go back to our normal research, whatever that is.

Philip Carlyle: Damn that Barnum, I wish she was here to help.

Misfit Javier: Oooooohh dios mios, she is living it up with her amigos at the NHC. We could still rebuild DOROTHY if we had her inspiration and knowledge of sting jets!

Misfit Pete: The excitement of hurricanes has swept her off her feet, she's never coming back! Never, ever, not once!

Barnum walks in

Barnum: Hi I'm back! I heard we all had some problems with the new VPN, so I've returned early!

Misfits and Carlyle turn round in shock

Misfit Helen: Barnum! What the heck are you doing here bro?!

Misfit Tom: Wasn't the NHC your dream job to make a name for yourself?

Barnum: Urrmmm well things didn't quite pan out stateside. Firstly, Biden got elected, but Trump refused to leave office, and threw a bit of temper tantrum. And there was a rather unfortunate incident involving my employer Jenny and her app...

Flashback - Jenny Lind gets hit by 'Ginormous Teddy'-bear and show NHC/NOAA warning??? Elephant gets sucked round hurricane/(poor mans version) blown around screen back and forth???

Carlyle: Aren't the NHC meant to predict hurricanes with their state-of-the-art app? What happened?

Misfit Helen: Did she not mask up her arrays properly?

Misfit Tom: How about sanitising those input fields?

Misfit Pete: or testing properly for nasty bugs?

Barnum: Well actually (*acts sheepishly*), the app written in excel ran out of columns to properly track and trace the positions of storms and unfortunately she came into close contact with one that they consequently could no longer track. They've had so many they've run out of Greek letters, Hebrew characters and now they're categorising them using Egyptian hieroglyphics!

Misfit Tom: I did hear hurricane man-holding-loaf-on-mat caused some uproar. *Show hieroglyphics on screen.*

Misfit Helen: Wasn't that their *(singing if possible)* 24601st hurricane? *Like in les mis*

Misfit Javier: No, she got hit by a ginormous Teddy, which doesn't sound very scary actually, they should really rethink this naming process. *Teddy gets stretched/sheared across screen.*

Barnum: But that's all in the past now! *(In a singsong voice)* From now on these eyes will not be blinded by the light. From now on!

Carlyle: We don't have time for a song, Barnum, a big storm is forecast! We have to fix DOROTHY *(gets it wrong differently every time)* in time to be ready!

Misfit Tom: There's always time for a song. It starts tonight!

Misfit Helen: Especially when we need it for inspiration to get ready for the storm!

Misfit Pete: Come on guys, let's go to the lab!

Group starts to head towards lab and song (From Now On) starts to play, but stops suddenly when Covid baddies show up.

Covid baddy 1: Not so fast! You can't go into a lab, you can't socially distance there, you'll get the Corona! *Make scary sounds.*

Misfit Tom: Don't worry, I'm already on the Corona!

Carlyle: If you drink enough then you'll have to quarantine for 14 days anyway, it's a terrible beer! *(Show email chain before met pub crawl)* Your mission, if you choose to accept it-

Misfit Pete: There's no time for a pub crawl now!

Barnum: You can't stop us, Corona.

Covid baddies: Oh yes we can!

Barnum: Oh no you can't!

Covid baddies: OH YES WE CAN!

Barnum and misfits: OH NO YOU CAN'T!

Covid baddies: Phwoarr!!!! *(Covid baddies become even more infuriated)*

Boris appears

Boris: It is our absolute priority to keep the economy stable and key workers working, and that means universities will stay open. But no going home at Christmas for students ; unless you stay alert. And schools will open for half an hour before summer, but actually after summer will maybe possibly be either closed or open or somewhere in between, and school meals will not be available, except for when they are. Sidenote, we'll be breaking international law for brexit. Get a test if you think you have symptoms, but also don't waste the NHS' resources, but also we don't actually have enough tests. You can also go to the pub after 10pm now, we know you're just going somewhere else to continue drinking anyway! So to put it simply, stop everything you're doing, and remember to keep going as normal. We must not stop, we must stay at home. As always, we must remember to stay alert, control the virus and save lives. Anyway thank you for joining me today. Live happy rich peeps.

COVID Song Time warp? Lets do lockdownnnnn againnn

Misfit Javier: So we can go in the lab...?

Misfits all look at each other and shrug

Covid baddy 2: *(looking at the other covid baddy)* What!? I'm confused. Have we just lost our post-10pm superpowers?!

Barnum: Now is our chance! Take the dettol spray from the met kitchen and go get 'em! Make sure you follow the one way system though! And wear a MASK!

Spray bottles, sanitizer, masks, etc thrown at Covid baddies. Covid baddies melt like the wicked witch of the West. Barnum throws stuff - cut to Meg having things thrown at her and melting (One Down!) Carlyle throws stuff - cut to Alec having things thrown at him and melting as well.

Carlyle: Excellent, we can fix DOROTHY now.

Misfit Pete: And just in time, I hear there's a big storm coming our way!

Barnum: Yes and I've got a plot indicating a high probability of a sting jet being present!

Narrator: *(Looking increasingly decrepit)* Well it's been another fascinating day of storm developments. It looks like there might be some light at the end of the tunnel, or should I say, a sting at the end of the tail. *(Boo!)* They are finally able to get into the labs to fix DOROTHY, as soon as they go to the Teams Back to Offices meeting and fill in a permission form that is.

Scene 6

Narrator

Barnum

Carlyle
Misfits
BriaSea monster (non-speaking)

Narrator: *(Pretending to be in a storm)* I am reporting live from an undisclosed inconspicuous location... This explosive extra tropical cyclone battering the region with nearly hurricane force winds! *(Trips)* Wow, that's a wind gust right there! As you can see, I can hardly stand still... Really blown away by these winds! *(Debris thrown over to narrator)* Behind me are a group of storm chasers about to... *(More debris gets thrown to narrator)* ah stop it! *(Even more debris thrown towards narrator, until she can't continue reporting)* OK back to you!

Group carries DOROTHY next to the observatory/behind Agric (wherever as long as there's the name of the building in the background) and group around it.

EVERYONE WEAR RAINCOATS

Everyone acts like they're in a storm.

Barnum: Alright, this is it, this is our moment, folks. Everything is on the table, this is our one shot at greatness!

Misfit Javier: Well, technically more storms will happen, and statistically there will be other chances to measure a sting jet-

Barnum: NO, this is the greatest storm ever!

Misfit Javier: As Simon Lee would say, it's technically only the greatest storm *on record*, not the greatest storm *ever*.

Barnum: yes yes of course anywayyyyyy, we are one minute from liftoff and need a go/no go for launch! *(Imitates NASA)*

Barnum: Boosters...

Misfit Helen: Go!

Barnum: Recording unit

Misfit Pete: We are go!

Barnum: Weather

Misfit Tom: 64 knots at 270 degrees, gusting at 80 knots. Perfect! Go!

Misfit Pete: Quick, it's coming! RELEASE THE KRAKEN!

Everyone looks at Pete.

Misfit Javier: What...?

Sea serpent pops onto screen and shrugs.

Barnum: Excuse me? I think you'll find I'm in charge here. Release DOROTHY!

Misfit Tom: Wait no! Abort launch, there's a storm coming!

Everyone makes a loooooooooong pause. They all turn towards misfit Tom. Show News story of SpaceX cancelling rocket due to storm

Everyone else: But that's the idea!

Misfit Tom: Oh right yeah, go ahead then...

Barnum: Just release it already!

Carlye: Here we go!

Carlye hits the LAUNCH button and DOROTHY just opens up and a drone flies away, then it releases a bunch of little paper balls on strings/ping pong balls. Big storm happens and knocks down the URS - everyone shakes their cameras and pretends they're in strong winds, misfits twirling around.

Misfit Tom: Noooo! The storm has knocked down the URS building!

Everyone looks left.

Misfit Pete: *sarcastic reaction to building falling down* Oh noooo... what an absolute tragedy... *Is that zoology building still standing?*

Misfit Javier: It's ok, I'm sure they'll have a spare Master's student looking for a summer project. Plus it's the school of Architecture's building so I'm sure they know how to rebuild it.

Misfit Helen is looking at a computer screen and begins shouting to get their attention. Storm dies down.

Misfit Helen: Everyone look! The sensors worked, we're already getting data!

Code running down the screen in random languages that doesn't make any sense.

Misfits gather around and cheer.

Carlye: We've got so much to do, I'll need to get grant approval, and we'll need a bigger lab, and Barnum YOU have to start analyzing the data...

Barnum: / do?

Carlye: Well yes, we have to generate models, and I have to run the lab.

Barnum: No no, you do the analysis, I'll run the lab.

Carlyle: Oh, *you're* going to run the lab? I don't think so. The only lab you'll be running is Matlab. Lab is my middle name, and my favourite dog is the lab-rador.

Barnum: Do you always have to do things the hard way? Alright, I'll tell you what... we'll decide it after the song.

SONG - The Greatest Storm. *Barnum passes top hat to Carlyle during the song, passing off lab leadership to him. Carlyle is super happy to get to run the lab.*

Fade to black. Barnum and Carlyle come back on stage/screen.

Barnum: Shouldn't we address the elephant in the room?

Carlyle and Barnum shrug and walk off camera

Cuts to black/credits.