

Lojban Kids' Show (Working Title)

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Pilot Episode Plot Outline

Act 1, Scene 1

Opening scene, camera flying over Earth's surface, turns upwards through atmosphere to starry space, fades to twisting/panning shots of whirlpool nebula, crab nebula, various nebulae.

"Guy!"

"Huh, wha?"

Shot zooms out, shows space imagery on a computer screen, in front of which sits a young boy sat with elbow on desk, his chin cupped in his hand, dreamily watching the swirling starscapes of the screensaver. A young girl sits beside him. A moose stuffy toy sticks out of his backpack on the floor.

"Guy, in 1 minute you'll be on your summer vacation, and all you can think about is outer space?!"

"Yeah, sorry Beta, I was lost in thought. I can't believe your month's stay is up already and you have to go."

Bell rings, teacher walks over to Guy and Beta. "Well, Guy, you have a great vacation - think of us here sometimes, won't you?"

Guy: "But my family's not even leaving town for the school break. I'm really going to miss Beta too, it's going to be so boring without her."

Teacher: "Beta, I hope you've enjoyed your stay as an exchange student and have learnt a lot about our country. Thank you for teaching our class so much Lojban too."

Beta: "Yes, it's been amazing!"

The kids leave the classroom and walk out of the school, a car pulls up and they get in.

Act 1, Scene 2

Guy and Beta are having dinner with Guy's family, Guy is hardly touching his food.

"Guy, why are you so down?" asks Guy's mum, touching his shoulder.

"Beta and I have been e-mail friends for years and she's only stayed with us for a month, but now she has to go back to Lobgugde, and our family is doing *nothing* this summer break!"

"Actually, Guy, there's something we need to tell you," interjects Guy's dad, "yes Beta is going back to Lobgugde tomorrow. And you are going with her."

"*REALLY?*" shouts Guy, beaming, "I'm going away to Lobgugde for the whole summer?! I'd better pack my snorkel gear and Hawaiian shirts!" Camera cuts to under the table, the moose stuffy is reaching out of Guy's bag and tugging on his leg. Guy quickly snatches him up with a slight look of alarm on his face, "And Chocolate, he's coming too, right?"

"That's right," says Beta, "first thing tomorrow we'll be flying to the Pacific islands of Lobgugde together!"

"OK, that's enough excitement for today," says Guy's mum, "there are plenty more surprises for you coming up. Now eat your dinner, and let's see what you can name in Lojban."

[... Lojban vocabulary lesson here ...]

Scene changes to that of the sun setting over Guy's house, night falls.

Act 1 Scene 3

Guy's parents are in the living room. The telephone rings, Guy's mum answers, "Hello?"

Guy's mum looks intently at Guy's dad, saying nothing on the telephone, and hangs up after 5 seconds.

"They know," says Guy's mum.

Scene change: Chocolate is on Guy's bed, holding a teddy bear out on front of himself by the waist and dancing around conga style: "We're going to Lob-gug-de! Da-da da-da da-da, *heh!*" kicking his legs out to howls of laughter from Guy.

Suddenly there's a knock on the door and Guy jumps on top of Chocolate, pinning him down.

"Sounds like you're happy, Guy," calls Guy's mum.

"Shhh, quiet, Chocolate - Mum can't know you can talk!" Guy whispers to the stuffy, who's still wriggling around. "Yes mum, I'm just really excited," he shouts back to his mum, as the door opens.

"You are silly, Guy," says Guy's mum seeing him piled on top of his toys, "you don't need to squash poor Chocolate and Baffy flat to get them into your suitcase, dad's lending you his and there's plenty of room."

"Oh OK, mum," says Guy coolly, now Chocolate has reverted to being his still calm self, "thanks, but Chocolate's riding in my carry-on bag."

"Now get in bed and get to sleep, you and Beta have a very long journey ahead of you."

"Tell me about Lobgugde, pleeeaaase," pleads Guy, "it'll help me rest."

"OK, although I'm sure you know all this from Beta and your kindergarten books," replies Guy's mum. "A long time ago a new island was discovered in the Pacific Ocean, somewhere between New Zealand and Peru." Scene cuts to a kiddy hand drawn style, with little crayon backgrounds and stick men illustrating the explorers and their ship.

[... history of Lobgugde discovery and populating thereof here ...]

Camera cuts to Guy, tucked up asleep, with Chocolate next to him; his eyes watchful and caring. Guy's mum kisses him lightly on the forehead and leaves quietly.

Act 2, Scene 1

Guy flying through clouds, his arms outstretched, a moose stuffy in one hand, Beta beside him, heading for a tropical island, shouting excitedly. Guy shouts to Beta over the whipping wind, "Wow, it's more beautiful than I thought! We're almost to Lobgugde!"

Scene cuts to close up of boy's face, eyes closed, big grin, shot zooms out showing he's actually in a plane seat next to Beta, his stuffed moose toy in his lap.

Boy opens his eyes and excitedly sits up to look out of the window, "I can't believe we're both going, Beta!"

"Now we're this close, Guy, Chocolate has another surprise for you."

“What? How can my stuffy have a surprise?” he asks with a look of panic.

“She already knows, Guy,” says Chocolate, “and I have a message for you.”

“W-W-Wait, you can hear him, too?” stutters Guy. “How does...?”

“It’s simple,” says Chocolate, “It’s not magic, it’s science, but nevermind that. I have a message for you from your parents.” The tips of Chocolate’s antlers begin to glow, and a crackly black and white hologram appears right in front of Guy. The hologram is of Guy’s parents.

“Guy, your journey is only just begining,” says Guy’s mum with a wavering voice, a tear in her eye. “Take care of Chocolate, and have fun. What you will learn will teach you a new way of thinking.”

“See you later, son,” says Guy’s dad. “We didn’t tell you before, but Lobgugde is far more than just a few Pacific islands... Love you...” Hologram fizzles out.

“OK, that was different,” says Guy. “Anything else I should know?!”

“Oh yes, plenty,” says Beta with a wry smile, “what else do you want to know?”

“How about some more Lojban?” replies Guy, getting out a picture book of Lobgugde.

[... Lojban lesson, with Chocolate helping ...]

Something out of the window catches Guy’s eye. “What are they?” he asks, pointing to a honeycomb flotilla of huge black discs, all pointing skywards in the same direction such that as the ocean surface buffers them they bob up and down yet eerily remain perfectly perpendicular to the sun. The honeycomb network of discs reaches for miles, stretching into the distance until they are tiny black blobs at the foot of a lush volcanic island.

“Those are solar panels,” explains Beta, “they generate electricity to desalinate sea water and then split some of it into hydrogen and oxygen. We use a *lot* of solar power and hydrogen fuel in Lobgugde.”

“But what could use *that* much fuel?” asks Guy.

“You’ll soon see. They also have a secondary function as an antenna array for the world’s largest radio telescope.”

“A what now?” says Guy, looking blank.

"Never mind," replies Beta, "just keep looking out the window and it'll soon become clear."

At this point the plane is coming over the coral ringed rich beaches, their shores awash with sea turtles, hedged by steep red cliffs that rise like curtains mottled with large clumps of wild greenery. People can be seen walking among the peaks in islander gear, and further inland the vegetation rises higher to become thick rainforest in a crescendo of near-unbroken canopy.

Coming over a rise, the ground gives way to an enormous hollow, the empty remnant of a prehistoric volcano. The wide expanse of previously hidden land is home to two runways in a criss-cross pattern replete with hangars and a control tower at the far rim. Several grey-green buildings and silos of assorted shapes and sizes huddle at another edge, and there, right in the very centre, is a launch pad the size of a football pitch with a rocket sat proudly atop - glinting a brilliant white in the sunlight with a metallic painted Lojbanic flag glistening on its fuselage.

"*WHOAH!*" Guy exclaims, as the view of the shuttle-laden rocket fills the plane's side windows.

"What's that?" asks Chocolate, climbing onto Guy's shoulder for a better look.

"That, Chocolate, is a rocket and a shuttle, ready to go into space," says Guy, "I hope that's for us!"

"Well as your dad said, there is more to Lobgugde than just the Earth station," says Beta. "Up there," she points skywards, "up there is my home. You still want to go?"

"*DO I?!*" shouts Guy, unable to contain his excitement, "*try stopping me!*"

Act 3, Scene 1

Guy, Beta and Chocolate are aboard the shuttle at the point where the acceleration to escape velocity is easing off, camera zooms out and pans to the upper window, showing Earth rapidly vanishing behind. Perhaps use a reconstruction of that famous clip of a rocket stage falling away back to Earth, its inner edges still licked with flames <see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJIY4n5oXjc> at 2:14 and 5:10>.

"Heurgh, I can breathe again!" says Guy, panting, "but wow, what a ride!"

"You kind of get used to it," says Beta, red-faced as well, "after you've done the journey quite a few times."

A voice comes over the shuttle speakers, first in Lojban and then in English: "fi'i do le xy.ybu.zy.moi ke kensa nunvoi cu cliva le lobgugde tedytcana co pamoi .i ba za lo djedi be li

papiso'u bei le terdi be'o mi'o tolcliva le lobgugde keścana co pamoi .i zu'u .e'u do mojypei le lobgu'e javni pu le nu tolcliva .i zu'unai ko tolyla'a fo le ri'usri gi'e surla gi'e zanlifri lo skina ja zgike bene'i le rapxrukelkla. Welcome to space flight XYZ departing from Lobgugde Earth Station 1. In just over one Earth day's time we shall reach Lobgugde Space Station 1. You are invited to refresh yourselves with the rules of Lobgugde before arrival. Other than this please unbuckle, relax, and enjoy the in-shuttle entertainment."

A large screen in front of Guy and Beta's seats comes to life, showing computerised people demonstrating what Lobgugde inhabitants must and mustn't do.

Disembodied computer voice: "Always ensure air lock procedures are followed at all times when entering and leaving the docking ports... Do not walk on windows unless instructed to... Do not use any aid or device to jump too high into the air without permission..."

Camera shows Guy's face, his eyes drooping with tiredness, a small frown shapes a puzzled look. "Don't walk on windows? Don't jump too high?" At this Guy yawns and closes his eyes.

Beta: "You've had a long and tiring day, Guy. Just get some rest and don't worry about it."

Camera zooms right out through shuttle window again, until the shuttle is just a tiny dot speeding away from Earth.

Act 3, Scene 2

Outside Guy's family home on Earth, dawn is breaking. From silence a rumbling sound is heard getting louder and louder; the camera shakes with the vibrations. Four olive green Jeeps followed by two large black armoured vehicles grind menacingly into view and barricade the front of Guy's house. A black helicopter sweeps over the house and, as armed soldiers pile out of the armoured trucks and arrange themselves behind the Jeeps - their guns pointing at the house, the helicopter gracefully descends and alights delicately on Guy's front lawn.

Camera shows close up of a pair of shiny black shoes stepping out of the helicopter, and slowly pans up a highly decorated military uniform fitted tightly over a bulk of a man. Camera rests on man's face - battle scarred and drawing on a cigar through gritted teeth.

General strides to the house and reaches out to knock just as the front door opens. Guy's mum in her hastily wrapped dressing gown appears.

"So, this is where you've been hiding out all these years?" booms the General.

"What do you want, General?" demands Guy's mum, "We haven't hidden from anyone."

Guy's dad comes to the door, and protectively wraps his arms around Guy's mum. "We have nothing you want, General, we're hiding nothing," shouts Guy's dad, "leave us in peace."

"I rather think you do." states the General flatly. He pulls a pistol from his pocket, takes one step back, and fires three rounds right next to the doorway level with their heads; Guy's mum instinctively recoils and buries her face in Guy's dad's chest. The General peers at the undamaged brickwork, "I see this is how you've been suppressing its signal. We know it's here, we've been detecting activity from it for a while and finally traced it to this area. Hand it and the kid over. Now."

"Just leave us alone," says Guy's dad firmly again, "we have *nothing* you want here."

"If that's the way you want to play, then let's play," says the General, half smirking. "Boys, round 'em up. Let's see what's inside this house."

A unit of soldiers peels away from those behind the Jeeps and frogmarches Guy's protesting parents to one of the armoured vehicles, while another enters the house with several crates.

Act 3, Scene 3

Guy's squinting out of the shuttle window. "What's that thing?" he asks Beta, pointing to an enormous square black panel they're approaching, "Why is there a giant TV in space?". On its unimaginably humungous surface bright lights streak across from one side to the other, many of them blinding white, while others are a brilliant blue or golden yellow.

"That's just our cloaking panel," says Beta offhandedly, "it keeps our home invisible from Earth."

"Final approach to Lobgugde Space Station 1," interrupts the voice over the shuttle speakers, "please buckle up and sit tight."

The shuttle shoots past the edge of the panel, revealing the space station beyond. Guy's eyes widen with delight.

"Well here we are," says Beta as the shuttle docks, "home sweet home."

A hiss of air indicates the shuttle has connected with a docking arm on one of the beams connecting the two immense O'Neill cylinders of the station.

"Come on, Guy," says Beta, as they float out of their seats and she grabs him by the hand. He puts his rucksack on and they leave the shuttle by pulling themselves along a series of handrails

on the ceiling and walls of the shuttle and enter a spherical pod. "This takes us to the habitation tube," explains Beta.

The pod's hatch closes and immediately they are in motion, and just as quickly as the pod started it stops again. "Take a hold of this edge and just go with the spin," says Beta, as Guy and Beta float-drag themselves out of the pod and through a five-person-wide central rotating tunnel.

"This is freaking me out a little," says Guy, his eyes spinning.

"Relax, you're a natural, and we'll soon be on firmer ground," says Beta with a smile, "try to watch only your hands and forget what's in front of or behind us".

They emerge from the tunnel into one of the station's Sun-side endcaps. Guy, still looking back, sees that the tunnel doesn't seem to be rotating at all - but the pod they've just got out of is.

"My whole world keeps turning," says Guy with a chuckle, "can we do that journey again?"

"That's nothing," says Chocolate, with his head now poking out from Guy's backpack, "turn around and tell me this isn't going to be more fun!"

"Oh *WOW!* Just *look* at this place," says the boy in awe, his face against the inner glass of the endcap terminal.

Shot pans across Lobgugde and its busy populace.

<some back story and explanations: unknown to Guy, Guy's parents both had the chance to go to Lobgugde when they were his age, but for reasons unexplained they couldn't. Also unknown to Guy, Chocolate is an advanced lojbo toy containing a dense neural network AI brain, lasers capable of projecting plasma holograms, and slow-burn hydrogen fuel cells. Maybe some other funky stuff too, yet to be revealed.> (but how does chocolate stay cuddly? -Timo) (lots of the usual padding, these are all really small microcomponents - modular parts that fit inside the toy body - kozmikreis)