

FLASH GORDON
— The New Planet —

SCENE 1 – To the New Planet

ANNC: And now from the Golden Gate of California and that beautiful City by the Bay, San Francisco, The One Act Players present The Amazing Interplanetary Adventures of Flash Gordon.

NARR: Racing high above the earth, seated in a giant airliner, Flash Gordon, world famous athlete, glances across the aisle at Dale Arden, a lovely young woman sharing this air voyage. The minds of both are intent on the danger which for many months has been approaching the Earth with terrific speed. This terrible peril is a new and unknown planet, hurtling through space directly into the path of the Earth. Suddenly there's a violent jar.

The plane lurches into a spinning nose dive. Flash Gordon's trained muscles carry him across the aisle to the frightened girl, to gather her in his arms and then leap free of the falling plane. And pulling the ripcord of his parachute, they glide to Earth.

Flash: Don't be frightened, Miss Arden. The plane has crashed, but we're safe.

Dale: Yes, thanks to you.

Flash: Hold fast, we're landing now...careful...easy...

Flash: Are you all right, Miss Arden?

Dale: Yes, yes I am. Please, call me Dale.

Flash: All right – Dale. Please call me Flash.

Dale: It would be my pleasure. Oh, Flash ... look through there! A large steel door has opened!

Flash: Why, that can only be the laboratory of the great scientist, Dr. Hans Zarkov. Follow me Dale, we can get him to help us! Dr. Zarkov! Look, Dale, he's coming out of the lab. Dr. Zarkov!

Zarkov: Stop where you are!

Flash: Do not be alarmed, doctor, and pardon us for dropping in on you uninvited, but as you can see, we had to bail out.

Zarkov: Yes, I heard the plane overhead searching for my laboratory. I see you for what you are – spies! Come to steal my secrets! But I have the answer for that. You will come with me!

Flash: Put that gun away, Professor Zarkov. The man is mad, Dale. We'll have to humor him. All right, Professor, all right. We will come with you.

Zarkov: Get down this ladder, into the chamber below.

Dale: Flash?

Zarkov: Down I tell you!

Flash: All right, all right. We're going.

Zarkov: There now. We are in my rocket ship, and in ten seconds we will be on our way to the new planet. We may all die – but we will die for science!

Dale: Oh, Flash! The doctor IS mad! (Pause) This rocketship is breaking away from the Earth. And look, we are headed right into the path of the new planet!

Flash: Hold tight, Dale. We'll escape somewhere.

Zarkov: To the new planet! The new planet! We three will save the Earth!

Flash: Dr. Zarkov, there's still time to swing your rocketship out of danger.

Zarkov: No! No!

Flash: What will you gain for science if we are all killed in the crash?

Zarkov: I know who you are, Flash Gordon! The world's greatest athlete! But your trained strength will not save you. Only my mind -- the mind of Zarkov The Scientist can save you, or any of the poor souls upon the Earth!

Flash: Your desire to save the Earth is commendable, Professor. But even with this amazing rocketship, you cannot succeed.

Zarkov: Balderdash. I am the only one who CAN succeed. And you will help me.

Dale: He's reaching for the controls!

Flash: The turbo drive! Stand aside, Dr. Zarkov.

Zarkov: No, Flash Gordon, it is too late! Do you feel it! The gravitation pull of the new planet! We arrive in five seconds!

Dale: Flash! The planet!

Flash: Brace yourself!

Zarkov: Ahhh, look ... it ... is ...beautiful.

SCENE 2 – Brought to Ming's Court

NARR: The rocketship hits the planet! Dr. Zarkov and Dale are thrown from the rocketship to the ground. Flash is thrown clear of the wreckage and lands on his feet, uninjured.

He rushes to the side of the unconscious girl, picks her up, and carries her toward the distant towers of a city on this strange, new planet.

Suddenly, strange soldiers armed with ray guns appear, and capturing Dale and Flash, march them to the throne room of Ming the Merciless, Emperor of Mongo and supreme ruler of the universe.

Slave: Oh, thou indulgent Ming, most merciless majesty of Mongo, supreme ruler of all the peoples of the universe, thy slaves salute thee.

Ming: Good. Ming shall want the Earth people.

Slave: Thy slaves obey, oh Ming the Merciless.

Flash: Get your hands off me! I'm no slave. I will meet your emperor as a free man and an equal.

Ming: So, Earthman, you are a free man, and MY equal.

Flash: All men of Earth are equal, and one day they will all be free.

Ming: Is that so?

Flash: Yes, if a catastrophe can be averted.

Ming: A catastrophe?

Flash: Your planet is about to collide with the Earth, Emperor Ming. The mad scientist who perished bringing us here was seeking a way to avoid our destruction. I ask you to help us.

Ming: Earthman, there will be no collision. I control the path of Mongo and I have directed my world at yours to create panic and despair. Oh, I will spare your puny planet from destruction, Flash Gordon, but only to serve me. You and all Earthmen will become my slaves.

Flash: You fiend!

Ming: Throw him to the red monkey-men in the arena.

Slave: THERE is thy freedom, Earth man. Now you go into the arena to meet the red monkey-men of Mongo.

Dale: No!

Flash: Don't worry, Dale. Emperor Ming, I will show you that I, a free man from the Earth, are more than a match for your brainless red monkey-men.

Ming: Brave words, Earthman. None before you have proven a match for the red monkey-men. Go now to the arena ...and meet thy doom.

NARR: As Flash reaches the bottom step leading to the arena, he leaps and swings at the nearest red monkey-man. Then grasping the fallen man-beast by the arm, Flash whirls him around in a flail, knocking the others in all directions. Emperor Ming, fearing that his monkey-men will all be destroyed, orders his guards to kill Flash with their ray guns.

Ming: Destroy the Earthman!

SCENE 3 – Aura Rescues Flash

NARR: In the midst of the confusion, Princess Aura, the beautiful young daughter of Emperor Ming, calls to Flash.

Aura: Quick brave Earthman, this way! Here to my balcony!

NARR: Flash leaps to the royal balcony and joins the gorgeously jeweled princess, who commands the guards to keep back. She takes Flash through a secret door and into a passage leading to a private elevator. The two get in, then Aura closes the door and presses the switch.

Flash: Who are you, beautiful maiden?

Aura: I am the Princess Aura, only daughter of Ming the Merciless.

Flash: Princess, I owe you my life.

Aura: You are brave and handsome, and strong. I have never seen anyone like you, Earthman. You must not end so young.

Flash: Where I come from, Princess, there are many stronger men and better looking. But tell me, Princess, where are you taking me?

Aura: I am taking you to my private rocketship. There you will be safe.

Flash: My safety is not an issue --

Aura: We have arrived, Earthman! No one can harm you here.

Flash: But Princess, I don't --

Aura: Hurry, hurry!

Flash: But Princess Aura, how am I to rescue the Earthgirl, Dale Arden?

Aura: That is no longer a concern. You will be safe in my private rocketship, Earthman.

Flash: No longer a concern? What do you mean?

Aura: Dale Arden can never be rescued by you.

Flash: But princess, I --

Aura: NEVER! And as for you, Earthman, you shall love me or die!

SCENE 4 – Ming’s Proposal

NARR: Meanwhile, back in the palace, Emperor Ming speaks with Dale Arden.

Ming: Your companion Flash Gordon has escaped. But not for long. My men will soon capture him.

Dale: What are you going to do with me, Emperor Ming?

Ming: You are pleasing to me, Earthwoman. You will become my wife.

Dale: Never! I don’t love you!

Ming: We men of Mongo have no human traits. No love, no mercy, no kindness. Whether you love me or not makes no difference. You shall become my wife as soon as the ceremony can be arranged.

088 Ming: What was that?!

Slave: Your majesty, look into the space-o-graph. Our city is being bombarded by the space gyros of the Lionmen!

Ming: The Lionmen. The Lionmen! Order the entire space fleet to the attack!

SCENE 5 – Flash Befriends Thun

NARR: In the terrific battle which takes place between Emperor Ming’s space fleet and the gyroships of the Lionmen, Princess Aura’s rocketship is disabled and crashes. The cabin fills with smoke, choking Flash, who stumbles to the door and falls to the ground, unconscious. He opens his eyes to find himself staring into the great bearded face of Thun, Prince of the Lionmen. Thun lets his great sword fall as he sees Flash Gordon’s golden hair.

Thun: Who art thou, yellow-headed youth? Art thou a new kind of soldier of Ming the Merciless? Speak! Answer me before I cleave thy pale body in pieces!

Flash: Wait! I am the sworn enemy of that fiend Emperor Ming of Mongo. He holds captive a girl who is from the Earth, like myself. I live only to rescue her.

Thun: An Earthman, thou sayest?

Flash: Yes.

Thun: And an enemy of Ming the Merciless?

Flash: That's right. Tell me, are you friend, or enemy?

Thun: I am Thun, Prince of the Lionmen. We are hereditary enemies of the men of Mongo. If thou would accept me as thy friend, Earthman, I will gladly join thee against Ming the Merciless.

Flash: Here's my hand on it, Prince Thun.

Thun: Good. What is thy name, Earthman?

Flash: I am called Flash Gordon, your highness.

Thun: Call me Thun, friend. And I will call thee, Flash. As to the Earthgirl, Emperor Ming is away pursuing my gyro fleet, so we may be able to rescue the Earthgirl before his return.

Flash: Thun, do you know how we can gain admittance to the palace?

Thun: Come to my gyroship. The thought projector may show thee a secret way into the palace. And once inside I will know the way.

Flash: Lead on!

SCENE 6 – Dale's Rescue

NARR: Flash Gordon and his powerful new-found friend go first to the space gyro of Prince Thun, and there they gaze intently into the "thought projector", in which they not only see Dale Arden captive, but also have revealed to them a secret way leading into the throne room.

The secret passage is known as the Tunnel of Terror because of the deadly beasts which lie within its gloomy walls. Fighting each step of the way, Flash and Prince Thun finally find themselves within the palace.

A door with great steel bolts stands before them.

Flash: Thun, this door must lead directly to the center of the palace.

Thun: From my memory of the palace, I should say that beyond this door is the great throne room of the Emperor Ming.

Flash: All right, then. Here we go!

Flash: Ah. There. You are right, Thun! It IS the throne room!

Thun: Yes. This great stone idol before us is Mord-ak, the god of death, which stands at the top of the altar steps, directly behind the throne of the Emperor.

Flash: Listen. Thun, what's that?

Thun: By the great god Pau-oo. It is the royal wedding procession. Ming the Merciless has returned and is taking another bride.

Zogi: Long Live Ming! Oh mighty Ming, ruler of Mongo and the universe, does your Supreme Intelligence take this Earthwoman to be your wife and Empress of Mongo?

Ming: I most certainly do.

Zogi: And you, Dale Arden, do you take this just and brilliant man to be your Lord and Master?

Ming: Of course she does, Priest.

Zogi: You will now ascend the altar steps and bow down before the idol. When the gong has struck for the 9th time representing the 9 Kingdoms of Mongo you will be wed.

Flash: Someone's coming up the altar steps, Thun. I'm going to look around the idol.

Thun: To look around the idol means death! Thou must not — Come back! Come back, Flash!

Dale: Let me go! Take your hands off me!

Flash: Dale? Thun! Save yourself! I'm going to rescue my Earth friend, Dale Arden! She's being forced into a marriage with Ming the Merciless!

Thun: Prince Thun of the Lionmen does not save himself at the expense of his friends. If thou must die – then I will die fighting with thee.

Flash: Dale! Up here!

Dale: Flash! I said LET ME GO!

Ming: Stop Earthwoman! Stop! I command you!

Flash: This way, Dale!

Thun: Down this passage, Earthlings, as fast as thou canst run!

Ming: After them!

Flash: Quick, Thun, they're swarming up the altar steps. Help me topple the idol over on them. Now! One...two...THREE!

SCENE 7 – Escape From the Palace

NARR: With a grinding crash, the giant statue topples over on the on-rushing soldiers of Ming the Merciless, killing those in front and throwing into confusion the whole company. Flash Gordon and Prince Thun, with Dale between them, dash into a secret passage beneath the idol. The way becomes steeper.

They slip — and fall. Down! Down! A hundred feet or more into a whirling underground river. They're swept along down a raging current and over a falls into a lake. With the powerful strokes of a champion swimmer, Flash sets out for the shore, towing Dale by the hair. They arrive at the shore, and as Flash reaches down to drag Dale to safety, she screams before disappearing beneath the calm surface of the lake, clutched in two powerful, scaly arms.

With no thought for his own safety, Flash Gordon dives to Dale's rescue and finds an adventure stranger than any which has gone before.

ANNC: What terrible creature has captured Dale Arden? And Can Flash save her from the watery depths of Mongo? Join The One Act Players next time for the continuing Amazing Interplanetary Adventures of Flash Gordon.