

PARADOX PATROL

Written by

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INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE - NIGHT

MASON, 10, in a dashing captain's uniform, commands the crew. Laser blasts SFX <EXPLODE> outside the windows. The ship shakes with enemy fire. But Captain Mason keeps cool.

MASON

Laser cannons, FIRE! Blaster bombs,
FIRE TOO! Status report!

FEMALE CREW MEMBER

Captain Mason! It's working! You're
the greatest leader!

MALE CREW MEMBER

And mobile game player!

FEMALE CREW MEMBER

And rockstar guitarist, even though
you've never had a lesson!

MALE CREW MEMBER hands Mason a guitar. He windmills it. SFX
<GUITAR HIT>

MASON

Let's hear it for me!

CREW

MASON! MASON! MASON!

PUSH to Mason's smugly smiling face.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLASSROOM (PRESENT) - DAY

ANGLE ON a huge movie poster. PULL back from the hero's
chiseled face gleaming smile, above which reads: "Custodians
of the Cosmos." PULL back through a school window and into
the classroom, where Mason stares at the same poster smiling,
lost in space thought. Teacher MISS INGLINK shouts at him.

MISS INGLINK

MASON! MASON! MASON!

MASON

Huh!?

MISS INGLINK

Mason, science class might not be a
video game star battle, or whatever
you were dreaming of this time--

MASON

I was focused on the lesson, ma'am.

MRS. INGLINK

Then if you can tell me one
electrical insulator, I won't send
you to visit the Principal.

Board behind her reads "Insulators: rubber, glass, wood."
PUSH to Mason screwing up his face in concentration.

INT. HALLWAY (PRESENT) - MOMENT LATER

MASON grumpily stomps down the hall muttering to himself.

MASON

Stupid rubber insulators. Don't
know why nothin' exciting ever
happens in this school--

SFX <CRACKLE!> A flash of blue light appears and SKYLAR, 10,
drops down in front of Mason, as if out of the sky. She has
blue hair and is in futuristic attire. He's dumbfounded.

SKYLAR

Hello ... What you just witnessed
was not me materializing out of
nowhere. You are hallucinating--

MASON

You just, like, teleported in? Is
that an app or something? What
generation is your phone--

She glances at a wall to see a "Join Computer Club" poster.

SKYLAR

Angry Anachronisms! I'm missed my
target year by almost a century!
Who are you?

MASON

Mason. Now when you say target year--

SKYLAR

I'm in big trouble.

PRINCIPAL MALVOLTIO

(stepping out of office door)
You certainly are.

MALVOLTIO is an imposing Latino gent in a three-piece suit,
complete with leather gloves. He pulls both kids into...

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE (PRESENT) - MOMENTS LATER

Principal Malvoltio sits behind a principal's desk with a globe on it. Mason and Skylar sit at chairs opposite him. There are two doors in the back of the room.

PRINCIPAL MALVOLTIO
Where's your hall pass, young lady?

Skylar looks uncomfortable. Mason produces his hall pass.

MASON
She gave it to me ... because I
forgot to request a pass ... and I
had to go.

Mason makes an uncomfortable face and fakes having to go.

PRINCIPAL MALVOLTIO
You can go to the bathroom now.
It's the door back there.

MASON
I don't actually have to go any
more. Say, isn't Principal James
supposed to be here? Are there
substitute princip--

PRINCIPAL MALVOLTIO
(Getting angry)
Skylar, I want answers and I want
them now. What do you know about
Operation: Paperboy!

Malvoltio slams his fist down on the globe, crushing it.
Mason jumps out of his seat.

MASON
Now I have to go! Back here, was
it!?

Mason opens a door to find -- the REAL Principal, PRINCIPAL JAMES, tied and gagged in the closet. Mason is stunned.

MASON (CONT'D)
Principal James? But who is...

MALVOLTIO (O.S.)
I meant the *other* door.

Mason turns to find a very angry Malvoltio right behind him. Skylar takes this opportunity to head to the actual bathroom. She grabs Mason on the way and pulls him with her.

SKYLAR

Oh good, 'cause now I've gotta go.
Come on, girls don't go alone.

Skylar pulls a stunned Mason into the bathroom and slams the door shut. Malvoltio snaps from shock to rage as he tries and fails to turn the knob. He then pounds on the door.

MALVOLTIO

OPEN UP RIGHT NOW! I'M WARNING YOU,
IF I HAVE TO COME IN THERE--

SFX <CRACKLE! FLUSH!> A flash of blue light shines from the bottom of the door. Malvoltio looks shocked, then immediately angry again. He winds up and punches the door with an SFX <RESOUNDING THUD> that blows the door off its hinges.

INT. BATHROOM (PRESENT) - MOMENTS LATER

Malvoltio rushes into the bathroom to see a flushing toilet that is emitting a dimming blue light. He plunges his hand into the bowl and fishes around. As the flush and blue light end, he yanks his arm out, which is missing a hand. He looks at the (bloodless) stump angrily, before laughing maniacally.

INT. STEAMPUNK LABORATORY (1895) - NIGHT

ANGLE ON Mason's face as he talks in his sleep.

MASON

Thank you, thank you, but I didn't
save the city alone. I couldn't have
done it with out my super friends:
Left Punch and Right Punch.

Sleeping Mason demonstrates fists with his hands. A purple tongue enters the frame and licks his face. Mason opens his eyes and sees PUCK, a purple panda. Mason screams!

SKYLAR

Mason, you're awake! Meet Puck, our
genetically modified panda.

MASON

Where am I?

SKYLAR

Welcome to Paradox Patrol.

Mason, mouth agape, looks around him at the steampunk laboratory and its shiny brass equipment. Enter DR. CHANG, a female scientist of Chinese descent, in a lab coat.

DR. CHANG

Skylar, I don't believe your mission involved bringing more slack-jawed youths back to headquarters.

MASON

We didn't bring any...

SKYLAR

Dr. Chang, the mission didn't go exactly as planned.

DR. CHANG

What did you achieve?

SKYLAR

I found a sample of local wildlife.

MASON

(Looking around)
I thought we came alone...

SKYLAR

Somehow, I materialized in the wrong year. I barely escaped from a homicidal 21st century principal.

MASON

He was an impostor. The real principal was tied up and--

DR. CHANG

Who are you?

MASON

Mason. Where am I?

DR. CHANG

Where isn't as important as when.

MASON

When am I?

DR. CHANG

Well, I don't like to give our secrets away ... but I do love to sing. So...

SONG: *PARADOX RAG* - Dr. Chang and Skylar sing, while holographic concepts are displayed on the brass machinery. Chang also preps two time portals by the end of the song.

DR. CHANG (CONT'D)
*Time runs in a timeline.
Or so you always thought.*

SKYLAR
*But time travel can fork that line,
or tie it in a knot.*

DR. CHANG
*The future can be altered,
should someone change the past.*

SKYLAR
This is called a paradox.

DR. CHANG
I'm saving that for last!

MASON
*I'm not sure I follow,
Just what it is you mean.*

DR. CHANG & SKYLAR
*Right. We must remember you're a
21st cen-tu-ry pre-teeeeen.*

SKYLAR
Who built the pyramids?

MASON
Aliens.

SKYLAR
Egyptians.

MASON
Egyptians.

DR. CHANG
*Then why did we find upon them,
Civil War inscriptions?*

SKYLAR
*Someone tried to fund the south,
with ancient Pharoahs' gold.*

DR. CHANG
*But we tracked down the culprit,
before a coin was sold.*

MASON
*History could be destroyed,
if these guys reach their goal.*

DR. CHANG & SKYLAR
*Unless the world is saved by us,
the Paradox Patrol!*

MASON
Bravo! Oh boy! I can't wait to
join! Where do I sign up!?

Dr. Chang and Skylar exchange uncomfortable looks.

DR. CHANG
I'm sorry Mason, but that spirited
number was not an invitation.
Though we do recruit children,
since only they can fit in the time
portals...

SKYLAR
We have an extensive vetting
process for new agents, so while
Puck and I need to go thwart an
evil undertaking in the 1920s,

Dr. Chang pulls levers so that two time portals (glowing
discs) light up on the floor. Puck hops into the left portal.

DR. CHANG
I'm sending you back to school in
your present time.

SKYLAR
Safe time travels!
(Hops into portal)

MASON
What!? But I want to join you guys!
I know I'd make a great member of--

As Mason babbles, Dr. Chang slides the time portal beneath
him. Still talking, he drops through the portal to...

INT. CLASSROOM (1928) - MOMENTS LATER

SFX <CRACKLE! ZAP!> Mason drops into a seat in the back of
the room. But something is wrong. The whiteboard is now a
blackboard. The students, all boys, wear 1920s attire.

MASON
Oh boy.

Out the window, instead of the "Custodians of the Cosmos"
poster, Mason sees a movie poster that reads "Mickey Mouse in
Steamboat Willie." There's a stack of newspapers in front of

him dated, "Oct. 15, 1928." He gasps, causing MS. BUSTLE, the matronly school teacher, to look his way.

MS. BUSTLE

You, in the back, making that ruckus, what number are you on?

MASON

Uh, me? Uh, I'm on page 1. Ahem.
"President Coolidge met with world--

All students and Ms. Bustle are aghast. She goes to him.

MS. BUSTLE

Young man, are you *reading*?

MASON

I thought that's what you wanted me--

MS. BUSTLE

I *wanted* to know how many newspapers you've rubber banded. This should help you remember that.

Ms. Bustle puts a rubber band on Mason's wrist and snaps it.

MS. BUSTLE (CONT'D)

Now, who taught you to *read*!?

MASON

Uh, I guess you did. I mean, this is *school*, isn't it--

MS. BUSTLE

Of course it is. Stuckinda School For Wayward Boys has always been an institution of learning. You're learning to stuff pamphlets into newspapers. 6000 times. The one thing you will *never* do, is *read* those pamphlets. Understood?

MASON

Perfectly. I won't read the death threatening information on voting demands that we're stuffing the newspapers with.

Ms. Bustle addresses two 12-year-old thugs.

MS. BUSTLE

Spike, Ike, escort our new student to the principal's office.

MASON

Not again.

MS. BUSTLE

Tell him, we've got a *reader* on our hands.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY (ALTERNATE PRESENT) - DAY

SFX <ZAP!>. With a flash, Skylar drops into the hallway.

SKYLAR

OK Puck, we're in 1928. Now where is this Principal we need to thwart? Puck?

Skylar heads down the hallway but stops in her tracks when she sees that the "Join Computer Club" poster has been replaced with "Join the Security Robot Repair Club."

SKYLAR (CONT'D)

Wait a nanosecond. Am I back in Mason's year?

V.O.

HALT!

Skylar looks left to see a robot with its laser aimed at her.

SKYLAR

With some changes. Oh no -- a *paradox* must have occurred!

Another robot appears at the other end of the hallway.

ROBOT

UNREGISTERED STUDENT. ARM LASERS.

Both robots fire up their lasers. Skylar's eyes widen. She whips a grappling hook gun from her backpack. Both robots aim at her, but she fires the hook into the ceiling and zooms up the rope just as the robots fire, blowing each other up.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE (1928) - DAY

Mason is being tied to a student's desk by two thugs. Before him, behind the teacher's desk, is the back of a big chair. Its occupant speaks initially as an O.S. voice. There's a purple plant in the corner.

O.S. VOICE

Thank you boys.
(The two thugs exit)
I was told I have a *reader* on my
hands, which is bad enough.
But I recognize *this* reader as...

Chair turns to reveal it's... Malvoltio!

MALVOLTIO

Paradox Patrol!

MASON

I wish-- Malvoltio! Are you the
reason I ended up in this time?

Malvoltio removes his robo-hand, with a spark of electricity.

MALVOLTIO

My little friend arranged that.
You've failed to thwart my plan,
Patroller.

MASON

What plan?

MALVOLTIO

Don't play dumb.

MASON

I'm really not-

MALVOLTIO

It makes no difference now, as
there's no stopping it. Today's
newspapers will go out, complete
with the pamphlets our many good
boys have stuffed into them.
Pamphlets that kindly explain the
consequences of not voting for me
to be the new mayor.

MASON

You'll never get away with this!

MALVOLTIO

Oh but I will. My family will run
this city from this day forward.
Now, I'm off to give our paperboys
their final instructions.

Malvoltio picks the robotic hand up off the desk and re-
attaches it to his wrist. He heads to the door.

MALVOLTIO (CONT'D)
And when I return, we'll end the
Paradox Patrol once and for all.

Malvoltio releases a powerful SFX <CRACKLING!> electrical charge from his robotic hand. He laughs maniacally and exits.

INT. STEAMPUNK LABORATORY (1895) - NIGHT

Dr. Chang leaves her paperwork and rushes to a brass STEAMPUTER that suddenly flashes a red screen and repeats...

STEAMPUTER
PARADOX ALERT! PARADOX ALERT!

DR. CHANG
Oh no! A paradox has occurred!
Steamputer, where are the children?
Visual simulation, please.

The steamputer screen displays graphic icons of Skylar and Mason moving around on the timelines it describes.

STEAMPUTER
Mason went to 1928, where a paradox occurred that changed the future into an alternate, robo-heavy reality, where Skylar went.

DR. CHANG
The time portals must have been switched! How is that possible? I prepared them myself! Oh dear, I hope Skylar is wise enough to set things straight.

INT. SCHOOL KITCHEN (ALTERNATE PRESENT) - DAY

From a ceiling tile, Skylar clumsily drops onto a pile of dishes on the counter with an SFX <CRASH!> She pulls out a steampunk tracking device and examines it.

SKYLAR
Ow! OK, the portal is around here.

LUNCH LADY
Lunch time isn't for another hour, dear.

SKYLAR
Sorry ma'am, I've just got to find a...

LUNCH LADY
Time portal?

Skylar freezes, then looks at Lunch Lady, whose head slowly turns around to reveal she's -- a robot! Her eyes gleam red. MUSIC: Exciting music begins as Skylar and LUNCH LADY BOT battle. They shout dialogue and throw food, etc. at each other from their hiding places at either end of the kitchen.

SKYLAR
What do you want with me, Lunch Lady Bot!?

LUNCH LADY BOT
Why, I'm here to keep you from ruining our plans in 1928.

SKYLAR
But how did you people know I'd mistakenly end up in the wrong year -- twice?

LUNCH LADY BOT
Oh there were no mistakes. Malvoltio's robo-parts have been switching around the time portals. They're quite "handy."

INT. STEAMPUNK LABORATORY (1895) - DAY

FLASHBACK: While *The Paradox Rag* song wraps up, Malvoltio's severed robot hand stealthily crawls by their feet. It switches the two time portals, then hops into one.

INT. SCHOOL KITCHEN (ALTERNATE PRESENT) - MOMENTS LATER

The food battle escalates to throwing pots and pans.

SKYLAR
He switched the portals!?
That means that Mason is...

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE (1928) - DAY

Mason struggles to loosen his ropes. He notices the purple plant is wavering.

MASON
These ropes must be cutting off the oxygen to my brain. Because that plant is turning into a panda.

Sure enough, the purple plant morphs into Puck.

MASON (CONT'D)

Puck! Thank goodness you're here!
Can you chew through these ropes?

Puck gnaws through the ropes as Mason talks.

MASON (CONT'D)

I don't even care why no one told
me you can morph into a plant. I'm
free! Now let's go stop the press!

INT. SCHOOL KITCHEN (ALTERNATE PRESENT) - DAY

MUSIC builds to spooky suspense, as Lunch Lady Bot slowly
steps toward Skylar's half of the kitchen.

LUNCH LADY BOT

You've had your fun, little Paradox
Patroller. But I'm afraid it's over.
You've thrown everything at me but
the kitchen sink.

She notices sees Skylar's blue hair poking out of the sink.

LUNCH LADY BOT (CONT'D)

But you *did* think it would be a
good place to hide.
You can NOT outsmart a BOT.

She tugs the hair, and pulls the lock right out. Confused,
she looks into the sink to view a glowing time portal.

LUNCH LADY BOT (CONT'D)

NOOOOO!!!

INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM (1928) - DAY

Malvoltio stands at a podium beneath the basketball hoop. A
sea of paperboys, some on bikes, all with bags of newspapers
on their shoulders, stand before him.

MALVOLTIO

...Paper boys, you may not know it,
but the deliveries you make today
will change the course of history!
Consider it your chance to pay me
back, for the food and shelter and
love I provide you.

Malvoltio presses a button and a large door opens. Sunlight shines in and fills the gym. The paperboys squint.

MALVOLTIO (CONT'D)

You will leave here paperboys,
but you will return paper men!

The paperboys cheer and head to the big door. Mason bursts into the gym through a hallway door and heads to the podium.

MASON

WAIT! He's lying! Delivering those
newspapers could destroy the world!

The paperboys are sneering in disbelief. Malvoltio is surprised by Mason's entrance, but regains his composure.

MALVOLTIO

It looks like we have a *reader* on
our hands. What do we do with
readers, boys?

Some of the toughest paperboys approach the podium.

MASON

No! Malvoltio is evil!

MALVOLTIO

Sorry kid. There's only two things
these boys are interested in --
fights and girls. And you're no
Betty Boop.

SFX <CRACKLE! ZAP!> The basketball hoop above them glows blue and down from it drops Skylar. Everyone is stunned.

MASON

Skylar! She's from the future,
guys! Your futures will be full of
girls like this too, if you put
down your paper bags, and bring
Malvoltio to justice!

The paperboys look at one another murmuring, conflicted.

SKYLAR

Malvoltio! But adults can't fit
through time portals--

MALVOLTIO

My bionic hands aren't the only
robotic part of me.

With visible mechanisms at work, Malvoltio's robotic body condenses to very thin, then expands to its normal size.

MASON
You're a robot!

MALVOLTIO
Cyborg, technically. My head is original Malvoltio.

Malvoltio fires up an alarming display of electricity, emanating from his cyborg body.

MALVOLTIO (CONT'D)
If any of you kids choose to defy me, you'll face my electric wrath!

The newsboys back away from the podium, panic-stricken.

MALVOLTIO (CONT'D)
Now to make an example. Say hello to my little friend.

Malvoltio slowly reaches an electrified hand toward Skylar. As the tension climaxes, Mason notices the rubber band on his wrist and recalls his science lesson. He mumbles to himself:

MASON
Rubber is an insulator...

He shoots it at the forehead of Malvoltio, who is momentarily stunned. MUSIC: DROPS OUT. Malvoltio then laughs maniacally.

MALVOLTIO
You think a rubber band can stop me!?

SKYLAR
No, but thousands of them can!

MASON
Paperboys, shoot every rubber band you've got at him!

All of the paperboys start pulling the rubber bands off their newspapers and shooting them at the now wailing Malvoltio. He is soon covered up to his neck in a barrage of rubber. The paperboys shout "HOORAY!" as we PUSH TO grumbling Malvoltio.

STEAMPUNK LABORATORY (1895) - NIGHT

PULL FROM Malvoltio's angry face, behind bars in the Steam-punk Laboratory. Dr. Chang addresses Skylar and Puck, while Mason stands near by.

DR. CHANG

We've got Malvoltio and history has been restored. You've done an exceptional job, Patrollers.

MASON

Hey, I helped too.

DR. CHANG

I was including you, Mason. Welcome to Paradox Patrol.

She hands a badge to Mason, who is overjoyed.

FADE OUT