

# ASHTON TOWERS

By Rob Frankel

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## CHARACTERS

### The Good Guys

ASHTON TOWERS secret agent resurrected from the 1970s (M)  
SECRETARY #1 and #2 secretaries assigned to assist Ashton (2F)  
FEARLESS ARLICE karate expert sidekick to Ashton (F)

### The Bad Guys

DR. NOGOOD evil villain bent on destroying the world (M)  
NUMBER THREE/FOUR Nogood's sidekick assistant (M)  
RALPH Nogood's cool daughter (F)  
RITA Nogood's cheerleading daughter (F)  
RHODA Nogood's other cheerleading daughter (F)  
FREDDY invisible frog friend of Ralph (E)

### The Cabinet

SECRETARY OF STATE emotional cabinet member (F)  
SENATOR politico presidential advisor (F)  
GENERAL PANIC a man of action (M)  
PRESIDENT very politically correct (F)  
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR no-nonsense Henry Kissinger-like cabinet member (M)

### Evil Villains

BREAKDANCE notorious pea shooter (E)  
SLIPSTREAM notorious practical joker (F)  
TOADIE notorious squirt gunner (E)  
COOL just like his name (M)  
REQUESTER #1-3 people asking for favors from Dr. Nogood (E)  
MINI-YOU a small, evil karate expert; played by two actresses (2F)

### Others

IMA GONNATELLYA novice TV reporter (F)  
BETTY NOSY senior TV reporter (F)  
ANCHORPERSON anchors the news at six (E)  
BIRD similar to Big Bird on Sesame Street  
STAGEHANDS used in variety of on-stage help situations for Dr. Nogood (E)  
GUARDS Dr. Nogood's guards (E)  
GOLDIE LOCKS the one in the stories and who Ashton once helped (F)  
NEWSPAPER PERSON person who Ashton once helped (E)  
LADIES WITH BIG EARRINGS CLUB ladies who have had "hula hoops" stolen (F)

SCOTTIE, STEVIE, MOM, GUARD, WARDEN characters which can be double-cast for last scene (E)

## PROP LIST

A dozen hula hoops  
White stuffed cat  
Knife-comb  
Super soaker or other large squirt gun  
Pea shooter  
Two cans of whipped cream  
Bucket and paint brush  
Clipboard  
Calculator  
Small TV and tray table  
Two large remote control boxes with large red buttons  
Toothbrush  
Three containers labeled "Gold," "Frankincense," and "Myrrh"  
Container of talcum powder  
Lipstick, compact mirror and bottle of nail polish  
Wrench  
Handheld mike  
Can of Silly String  
(Optional) One or two video cameras for TV newscasts

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

### Costumes

Anything from very simple, suggestive hats and accessories to outlandish, colorful costumes can be used for most characters. As this is a parody of the "Austin Powers" movies, particular characters call for some specific choices where possible. If you want to complete the parody, which is nice but not necessary, Ashton Towers would wear wild, 1960s colors and clothes and black glasses. Dr. Nogood would wear a balding wig, a monocle, and a nondescript, gray uniform. Fearless Arlice should wear an Afro wig. Ralph's garb should be very trendy-punk. Rita and Rhoda should wear cheerleader outfits and use pom poms. The cabinet members should be formally attired in suits, dresses, pants suits, etc. The characters of Bird and Freddy the Frog can use hats or light garb to suggest who and what they are.

### Set

The set has few major pieces - using multiple parts of the stage for different scenes, and suggested by tables, chairs, etc. Generally, the stage left area will be used for the good guy scenes and stage right for

the bad guy scenes. A coffin-like box of some sort is needed to wheel Ashton out for his first entrance. The other key set piece is a large set of doors representing the entrance to the time machine in the final scene. These may be sliding doors similar to a large closet, standard twin doors or a curtain which can be separated. An oversized time dial, perhaps mounted on something like a podium, is also needed to indicate the different time periods the characters are sent to in the last scene.

### **Sound/Light Effects**

There are many places in this script which would greatly benefit from music. This is often melodramatic suspenseful music or typical adventurous spy type (ala James Bond movies). As scenes shift, ideally music should play. A nice effect is to have a standard tune associated with the good guy scenes and another with those of the bad guys. There are also occasions where an old-fashioned trumpet fanfare is indicated. Several other sound effects are also indicated in the script.

Lighting changes are helpful to move from one scene to the next. If you can separately control stage right and stage left lights, one set can come down as the other comes up during a given scene change. If not, full stage lights can go dim and then come back up. For more sophisticated theaters, dry ice or smoke effects can be used for both Ashton's dethawing first entrance, and the entrance to the time machine.

### **Casting/Style**

With minor pronoun manipulation, there is a lot of room for variable gender casting. There are also a large number of smaller parts which can be double-cast, or even triple-cast, depending on the number of actors available. And finally, this show is a farce and a parody. Your actors should play broadly, enthusiastically and melodramatically to achieve the most fun out of the script.

*To my son Tommy and his brave fight, with love.*

ACT I

SCENE 1

**Setting:** *Newscast desk on DSL of apron of stage, in front of the curtain, if possible. Possible news camera on off to the side filming.*

**At Rise:** *Lights up on apron only. ANCHORPERSON is delivering the Friday, six o'clock news to the television audience.*

ANCHORPERSON: *(holds script in hand, sits at desk and talks to the camera)* Well that's our national news. We'll be back in just a moment... *(STAGEHAND enters swiftly from SL, hands ANCHORPERSON a piece of paper, and exits quickly. Glancing down at paper.)* for our, uh, weather... *(pauses, frowns, reads)* Wait a minute! This report just in - the strange rash of hula hoop thefts continued only moments ago in <name of nearby city>. For the live report, we go to beat reporter, Betty Nosy. *(puts hand to microphone in ear)* Betty?

*(Lights up SR on REPORTER who stands with a microphone in hand, talking into audience as if they are the camera. Incidents are enacted CS as they are described by REPORTER.)*

BETTY: *(can't remember ANCHORPERSON's name)* Thank you, uh, Anchor... person. Well, the strange occurrences began exactly one month ago today when grade schoolers playing Ring Around the Rosie... *(played out CS)* suddenly found their hula hoops mysteriously magnetically drawn from their hands. *(Hula hoops in hands are simultaneously tossed off SR and SL to their surprise.)* The sniveling, whiny little snots gave police their only clue when they all reported seeing a "black gloved hand with a strange bracelet on it." *(Off CS, we see an arm in black with a black glove and reflecting bracelet on it.)* Since then, hoops have disappeared from basketball net makers... *(played out CS)* lion tamers... *(played out CS)* and even on children's television...

BIRD: *(wears a bird cap or yellow feather suit; appears CS holding a large letter O; enthusiastically speaks in high-pitched, nasal voice)* Today's program is brought to you by the letter O... *(letter flies from BIRD's hand SR)* Ohhh!

BETTY: And today, just moments ago, the entire collection of earrings from the Ladies with Big Earrings Club were mysteriously whisked off their ears. *(Offstage sounds of women shrieking. Several well-dressed WOMEN immediately enter SL shaking their heads,*

**looking around, touching their ears and having a low-pitched, fearful discussion as they walk across SR and exit. Music gets louder.)** Police believe this is the handiwork of one man. So, a country is left to wonder when will this bad person, this evil villain, this so-called “Doctor Nogood”... (***mispronounces this as “NAH-gud”***) strike again?!

**(Lights down on SL news desk. Curtain comes up, or lights up full, on CS. We see the profile of a large swivel chair, ottoman, and TV CS. After a moment, a black gloved hand with a bracelet is seen extending from the chair with a TV remote in it. It clicks the TV off brusquely.)**

DR. NOGOOD: (***unseen in the chair, angry***) The name is DOC-tor NO-good! Not “NAH-gud.” No! Good! (***Swivels chair to face audience. HE wears a bald wig and monocle and has a white stuffed cat on his lap. HE peers at the audience for a moment, eyebrow arched. Then to audience with a nod of sarcasm to TV.***) Come on, people. No... good. How much more obvious can I get, hmm? (***HE raises trademark pinky to corner of mouth, arches his eyebrow, peers quizzically at audience and chuckles. NUMBER THREE enters SR, wearing a patch over one eye.***) Ah, Number Three. Bring me some good news. The TV is full of mistakes and mispronunciations.

NUMBER THREE: Certainly, Dr. Nogood. Your ten a.m. is here, sir.

DR. NOGOOD: My ten a.m.?

NUMBER THREE: Yes, sir. It's your weekly “Requests from Evil Doers” session, sir.

DR. NOGOOD: Ah yes. (***sighs, sits back in seat, stroking cat***) Is there no rest for the wicked? (***immediately laughs at his joke***) No rest for the wary. No rest for the wicked! Ha ha! Get it? Ha ha... ha...

NUMBER THREE: (***no reaction***) Shall I bring them in?

DR. NOGOOD: (***sighs exasperated, puts chin on hand***) Yes, yes, bring them in. (***NUMBER THREE exits. HE turns to audience and arches eyebrows.***) And come back with a sense of humor, hmm? (***Music up similar to “Godfather” theme. Several REQUESTERS enter, in various motley garb, led by NUMBER THREE.***) Well?

**(NUMBER THREE urges REQUESTER #1 forward. HE inches SL toward NOGOOD, hat in hand, fearfully.)**

REQUESTER #1: M-may it p-please you, Doctor NAH-gud...

DR. NOGOOD: No! Good!

REQUESTER #1: (***aside to NUMBER THREE***) Already I did something wrong?

NUMBER THREE: It's Doctor No-good.

DR. NOGOOD: No good. No as in, "No way you get to eat your dessert if you didn't finish your peas!" and good as in "Goodbye, good riddance and go hunt down Mr. Goodwill!"

REQUESTER #1: But you see I -

DR. NOGOOD: Nope!

REQUESTER #2: He just wanted -

DR. NOGOOD: Nyet!

REQUESTER #3: But -

DR. NOGOOD: Shut it!

REQUESTER #1: Bb -

DR. NOGOOD: (*as REQUESTERS continually try to get in word edgewise and are shut down*) Nada! Zip it! Nip it in the bud and clip it! No more! Bupkis! (*Pauses, looks slowly at everyone with wide eyes to ensure they heard him. Then HE relaxes, fatigued. In child-like voice...*) Oh, Numbaw TwEE-ee?

NUMBER THREE: Yes?

DR. NOGOOD: Send dem away. And bwing in... my wittah walfie...

NUMBER THREE: Your "wittah walfie"?

DR. NOGOOD: Yes, Number Three. My wittah walfie. (*sees NUMBER THREE is not understanding so HE gets frustrated*) My wittah boy-chik!

NUMBER THREE: Your wittah...

DR. NOGOOD: (*tantrum, loudly*) My little boy! My little boy, Ralphie! Bring in my son, Number Three! When I say "my wittah walfie," I'm being endearing, you nimrod! (*smacks NUMBER THREE on the head*)

NUMBER THREE: (*timidly*) What about when you say your "wittah boy-chik"?

DR. NOGOOD: (*begins to answer in anger, then controls himself*) The - (*turns to REQUESTERS; as a school teacher*) When I say "my wittah boy-chik," what do I mean?

REQUESTERS: (*look at each other, then tentatively*) The same thing?

DR. NOGOOD: That's right. That's right! The same thing - my wittah boy-chik is my wittah walfie is my little boy Ralph. Very good. (*turns to NUMBER THREE and whacks his head again*) And very fricking endearing! Now get my little boy and get them all milk and cookies! (*REQUESTERS ooh and aah at milk and cookies.*) Bring MY SON to ME, Number THREE! (*smiles and claps his hands*) Ooh, I made a rhy-yme!

NUMBER THREE: Right away, Dr. Nogood!

(*NOGOOD shoos everyone out and strokes cat. Low talking, running around, occasional "I don't know where he is," etc. is heard*)

**off stage and continues during NOGOOD's next dialogue. After a pause, NOGOOD sighs, looks at audience as in "What can I do," readjusts, sighs again, pauses. Then to audience, upset that HE has to say this...)**

DR. NOGOOD: **(looking for sympathy)** It's hard, my friends, to be the supreme bad guy with intelligence you couldn't possibly imagine unless you watch a lot of Jeopardy on TV, but to be surrounded by this... **(as HE gestures to the wings, the shouts and running around grow momentarily then recede)** what you're hearing of course is Number Three and the others looking for... **(makes quotes with his fingers)** "my son." **(growing in intensity and volume so offstage actors will hear)** What they don't REALIZE is that this is a PLAY, a two-act FRICKING play, and though it MIGHT seem normal to spend say FIFTEEN MINUTES LOOKING for my son since they ostensibly DON'T know where he IS, since it's only a PLAY, that would be SIXTEEN POINT FIVE PERCENT of the ENTIRE TWO HOUR SHOW! **(Offstage talking changes to questioning sounds: "Mm," "What is he saying," etc.)** So there's REALLY NO POINT in waiting ANY LONGER. PEOPLE!! Just BRING ON my FRICKING SON!! **(Silence. Sounds of "Rock, Paper, Scissors," followed by "Noooo!" from the loser. Arms push the loser onstage. STAGEHAND, enters very subserviently and timidly, smiling with arm protecting head eventually makes it to NOGOOD who is shaking his head in disgust as HE examines his fingernails. STAGEHAND whispers in his ear, then exits rapidly. Silence. NOGOOD calmly speaks.)** Well. It seems they really can't find the actor who plays my son. So people... **(casually leaning back to look into the wings, then yelling)** FIND HIM! **(The shouts and commotion restart offstage. NOGOOD then looks up to the tech booth, and makes a shooing gesture.)** Well. Go on with the next scene. These twits'll be awhile. **(Nothing happens.)** GO ON!!!

**(Lights immediately fade on this scene and up on next scene.)**

ANCHORPERSON: Uh, meanwhile, sources tell us the FBI is holding a secret meeting to discuss plans to deal with the infamous Doctor Nah-gud...

DR. NOGOOD: **(from offstage, exasperated)** It's No Good!

**(End of Scene.)**

**SCENE 2**

**Setting: Presidential cabinet meeting room SR.**

**At Rise: Lights up on table and chairs where a meeting of the FOUR CABINET MEMBERS is in progress.**

GENERAL PANIC: (**angrily, full of bluster**) Hula hoops, good golly gosh, what's next? Apple pie?!

SECRETARY OF STATE: (**SHE has wild, unusual hair-do**) Settle down, General Panic.

GENERAL PANIC: I'm sorry, Secretary of State State.

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR: (**to SENATOR, with an accent like Henry Kissinger**) Senator Senator, vy is he repeating da last word?

SENATOR: (**in Southern drawl**) It's her name - Ms. Amanda State. Secretary of State State. You, of all people should understand that, National Security Advisor Advisor!

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR: (**confused**) Ahh. Vell, dees ees no time to panic, General Panic.

GENERAL PANIC: Good golly gosh, I'm not panicking. I'm just -

SECRETARY OF STATE: Advisor Advisor is right. This is not time to panic, Panic.

GENERAL PANIC: I'm sorry I got worked up into a state, State... but hula hoops, good golly! Can there be any question that Doctor Nahgud is behind this?

SECRETARY OF STATE: None, Panic, none. But the real question is: where is Dr. Nahgud?

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR: Vee know, Secretary of State State, that Dr. Nahgud resides in Hollywood, California - just a short plane trip from <name of city the play is being performed in>. No, the real question is: vy does he want hula hoops?

SENATOR: (**diplomatically**) Advisor Advisor, it is my belief he wants hula hoops because he's building some dastardly doomsday device and he's going to hold us hostage for some ridiculous amount of money. (**All look at SENATOR skeptically. HE's exasperated.**) That's what the bad guys ALWAYS do!

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR: Ya, Senator Senator makes a good point.

SENATOR: Gentlemen and ladies, I submit that we know who it is, where he is, and why he's doing this. The question we don't have an answer to is how to stop him.

SECRETARY OF STATE: (**ominously**) Yes, Senator Senator. Yes. We do. (**Stands authoritatively and whistles loudly. Several STAGEHANDS wheel in a gurney with a tomb-like box on it. Dry ice or other smoke machine can be used for effect here. With**

**growing bravado...**) We're dealing with the most insane, criminal mind of our time, who for some reason is bent on stealing these ancient artifacts - these "hula hoops" - from our nation's long distant past. And so people, one hour ago the president authorized me to authorize the Department of Defense to authorize the Bureau of Aging to authorize Icicles Are Us to perform the de-thawing, the de-icing, the dry-cleaning and re-activation of the only man I know who can stop Dr. Nah-gud...

ALL except SECRETARY: You don't mean?

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