

Cogheart by Peter Bunzel

Adapted for stage by Miriam Lambe

John Middle-aged man wearing old fashioned flight suit (hat and goggles)

Malkin Fox costume

The word “prologue” appears on a black screen, then a robotic voice speaks.

Mechanical narrator: Famous mechanist John Hartman and his mech-animal Malkin are returning home on their airship, Dragonfly, but an unknow airship chases them.

Then, the whoosh and purr of the propellers can be heard loudly through the auditorium as all lights flick on revealing the left side of an airship with a silver airship with sharp metal spikes on the hull in pursuit. After a harpoon hits Dragonfly, the side rises into the ceiling as Malkin barks alarmed and John locks the wheel and engages autopilot then opens the cockpit door and dashes to the engine room. John stares at a massive metal egg-shaped pod in among the tangle of pipes

John: No room for both of us Malkin, you go

Malkin: *[snort of disapproval]* No John, you go, humans over mechanicals

John shakes his head laughing half-heartedly

John: I can't leave my ship, I can't; I Have to try and guide her down safely – besides you've no opposable thumbs!

John gives another half-hearted laugh and withdraws a battered envelope from his pocket, crouching down he stuffs into a leather pouch around Malkin's neck

John: That Malkin, is for my Lily, make sure she gets it.

Malkin: What's in there?

John: Secrets. Tell her to keep them safe and she mustn't tell anyone about them, not EVER. Can you remember that Malkin?

Malkin: Um, I think so.

Malkin prods the pouch sniffing it with his nose.

John: Good, Make for Brackenbridge, that's where she'll be. If I survive, I'll come find her.

Malkin: Anything else?

John: Tell her I love her

John ruffles Malkin's ears one last time

John: Have you got enough clicks?

Malkin nods

John: Take your winder key anyway, though I'm not sure who'll wind it if I'm not there.

John produces a tarnished key on a shining silver chain and hangs it round Malkin's neck

Malkin: Thank you, John,

Malkin steps into the pod and curls on the seat

Malkin: By all that ticks, I hope I see you again John

John: So do I old friend

John shuts the door and with a clatter and a hum the pod was off. Another harpoon hits the Dragonfly's hull. Then there's a jagged screech and two silhouetted figures with silver eyes appeared. Then cut to a black screen with the words end of prologue on which fade.

End of Prologue