

THE MONAD

by Xentos Fray Bentos

SLOWLY FADE UP INTO...

THE OPENING SOUNDSCAPE.

A COMPLEX LOW PITCHED THRUMMING. IN THE DISTANCE, REVERBERANT, THE SOUND OF INCALCULABLY VAST INFERNAL MACHINES AT WORK.  
(THIS PLAYS FOR ONE MINUTE)

AFTER A LANGUID GLISSANDO FROM HIGH TO LOW PITCH, THE SOUNDSCAPE REDUCES TO A LOW VOLUME AND THE MONAD STARTS TO SPEAK.

M: I am now seated and have before me the instructions.

SFX - PAPER SHUFFLING

M: Ach.

Who wrote this? Who wrote this?  
The pages are all mixed up.  
The list of contents are incomplete.

(PAUSE)

SFX - MORE SHUFFLING OF PAPERS

M: Let's see.  
OK.  
This appears to be a table of contents.  
Or is it the index?  
Some of it is obviously missing.  
There's no numerical series.

(MONAD SIGHS LOUDLY)

M: This is very frustrating.

SFX - TAPE BOXES BEING MOVED AROUND

M: Let me tell you. There is no more incendiary mix than paper and office clerks. 'Paper pushers', they call them. I prefer 'Idiots'.

They are like the dogs who trot up to you. Eyes bright. Tails wagging. Enchanted, you bend down to stroke them. As you do, they seize the moment and leap onto your leg, clinging tight as limpets. Before you can brush them off they have stained your legs in that revolting doggy manner.

(PAUSE)

M:     Alright.  
          This appears to be...  
          Oh. Look at this.  
          Why an I even surprised.  
          Typical. Typical..

SFX - PAPER SHUFFLE

M:     I've located the index and - wouldn't you know it. Water damage. Completely illegible.  
          This is what happens when idiots are handed the baton.  
          Massive free-wheeling incompetence on an industrial scale. Typical. Typical.  
          I can see that I'll have to impose a sense of order on this mess.

LOUD THUMP FOLLOWED BY ECHOES

(PAUSE)

(MONAD SIGHS LOUDLY. BREATHS IN AND OUT THREE TIMES)

M:     Bear with me. Bear with me.

SFX - SORTING AND SHUFFLING

(MONAD SIGHS)

M:     Order. Order. It's a terrible, dangerous thing until you find you have none of it. Have you ever walked right past that dirty smelly broken down old tramp who sleeps on the shit pile behind your housing block? The instant you spot him, you turn your head away rapidly, pretending he's not there. After that, every time you leave for work and come home again, you deliberately take the long way round - just to avoid him.

BURST OF EERIE FOOTSTEPS. DOGS HOWL. TRASHCANS ARE DISTURBED. AN OWL HOOTS. (20 SECONDS)

(THE MONAD CONTINUES AFTER THE FOOTSTEPS FADE)

M: There is a certain unpleasantness in associating with the destitute, isn't there. We like to keep them at a safe distance, just in case some of that contagious penury rubs off on us. Then, one day, you discover the tramp is a crazy eccentric. Not only is he filthy rich. He owns the entire housing block you live in. On a whim, he's decided to demolish it and throw the whole stinking lot of you - all you holier-than-the-saints rat-faced residents - out on your ear.

Ha! How quickly you reform your ideas. Rushing round to visit him carrying a warm flask of soup. 'Here', you say, 'delightful old man. I've some gifts for you. Stylish new clothing. A fat bag of money. Here are the keys to my car. Take it for a spin.'

CAR SOUND CROSSFADE INTO MUZAK. END ON CAR CRASH(40 SECONDS)

M: I may not remember what a gift-horse looks like.. but that's not to say I have any intention of sticking my head between it's jaws.

GALLOPING SOUNDS (10 SECONDS)

M: You know, I'd almost forgotten you were there. Sitting quiet as mice. Listening to me. No wonder you're feeling a little lost. You're thinking. 'Who is this person with the tramps and the paper and the boxes?'

Alright. I ought to explain before we go any further.  
The lay of the land.

I am seated at a table.

In front of me sits the pile of papers. It will take too long to place them in any sort of order right now.

I hope to tackle them as time goes on.

(PAUSE)

M: Obviously, there is nothing I can do the remedy the fact of missing pages. Serious omissions. Hmm... the ravages of time.

PAPER NOISE

M: As you can see, time has taken a toll on these papers. Hardly surprising. it has been...

a very long time.

DRIPPING WATER FADES INTO MUSICAL SEQUENCE 001 (ONE MINUTE)

(MONAD EXHALES SLOWLY)

M: I am seated in an extremely large space. How large? Put it this way. When I look to the right - which I do by rotating my head to the left - the walls are too far away to make out. When I glance to the left - which I achieve by twisting my head to the right - I see nothing but vague blurs. Distant blurs.

Mountains? Could be.

Paintings of mountains? That's also possible.

Perhaps it's some atrocious stain? Jagged. Precipitous.

(MONAD LAUGHS GENTLY TO ITSELF)

M: Stains. This reminds me of something. The way you lot view stains. Interesting. Always, you see them as a blemish. An affront to the visual cortex that must be expunged. You rush off and return with various cleaning products.  
'There will be no compromise,' you say, 'The stain must be removed.'

(PAUSE)

M: To me, the stain will always possess a certain undeniable beauty. It is the elegant hand-writing of happenstance.

WASHING MACHINE MONTAGE (30 SECONDS)

A HUGE PIECE OF METAL FALLS TO THE GROUND - DISTANT, REVERBERANT.

M: This... structure... surrounding me. I would estimate it to have been empty for countless years. And, in all honesty, I can't remember when I took possession of it - possession being nine tenths of whatever remains of the law.

I admit it. Despite the damp smells, the decay of the underlying fabric, the evidence of mass infestation, I have a deep regard for wide open spaces. Think about it. If you had to spend the rest of your life in a cramped cupboard, sharing your bed with a mop and a broomstick... or see out your days in a spacious capacious cavern - which would you choose?

This is what that most brain-dead of species - The Americans - call 'a no-brainer'.

## ANOTHER HUGE PIECE OF METAL FALLS

M: This area - where I'm seated - is in relatively good shape but you only have to walk fifty three kilometres up that way, in the direction of the corridor, to experience serious health and safety issues.

The main space - you could perhaps call it a warehouse space, a storage space - large parts of the superstructure have collapsed. I agree. It's a disgrace. Letting a fine old edifice like this rot away while artists and homeless types are outside... sleeping under the stars... with only the stone cold floor of the streets for their bed.

Not that any of you lot would last a minute in here. The temperature is just a few molecules above absolute zero and as for that oxygen stuff you are so fond of breathing.. there isn't any.

## MUSICAL SEQUENCE 002 (30 SECONDS)

M: Somewhere behind me and to my left - or off to the right as the crow flies - are some stairs. I can't say I've explored them. One section leads to the higher areas but these are almost completely blocked with abstract debris.

(PAUSE)

M: I did squeeze past once - a long time ago you understand - but even I had to turn back after a short time. Some life form or other, perhaps long extinct, had used them as toilets. Disgusting. You'd be amazed how long that stench lingers. Even *my* nose, which has a deserved reputation for forbearance, found the odours hard to get around.

Still, it's ridiculous for me to single out one area or object for consideration. Each and every thing within this structure has been soiled with the taint of contamination. So it is with these endless infuriating papers.

## PAPER SHUFFLE NOISE

M: As a consequence of having been stored here for some time, the papers are mostly soiled.. and stained a disturbing shade of yellow. Yellow paper. It conjures the most depressing associations. Damp as well. Unpleasant to the touch.

Ach.

## SFX - TAPE BOXES BEING MOVED AROUND

M: Still, let's not dwell on that we cannot change. To my right, heaped up on the table, is a pile of boxes. Old cassette tapes. The cassette was an audio storage medium that was popular in the latter half of the previous century. The manufacturers - well aware of how you like enjoy a good moan - decided from the word go that the quality would have to be extremely poor.

They took great pains to add ridiculous amounts of hiss to each cassette. They developed complex chemical formulations to ensure that these cassettes didn't age well. It's the same with footballers. Have you ever noticed that the moment they retire, their hair turns grey and all their teeth drop out?

STADIUM NOISE

FANFARES (30 SECONDS) CROSS FADE INTO...

SFX - TAPE BOXES BEING MOVED AROUND

M: Cassette tapes. Hundreds and thousands of them. What am I supposed to do with them?

(MONAD SIGHS LOUDLY)

M: See for yourself. Not one of them has any markings. Typical. Typical. This is so typical of the archive. They leave you a mountainous pile of information stored in some medium or other but with no means of playing them back.

This is so typical of your civilisation - not that that would be my first choice of word to describe you. You have absolutely no sense of the nature of longevity. I'll prove it to you.

One fine day, your most brilliant scientists invent a storage medium that will last for three thousand years. 'Such genius,' you say. 'Let us store the entire archive on the new medium. Every word ever spoken. Every thought ever inscribed.'

'Hurry,' you say. 'Stick them all on the new medium. This way they will last forever.'

M: Then what happens? Within a hundred years, the only remaining machine that can play back the archive languishes inside a glass case in the forgotten wing of a dusty museum.

Another two hundred years after that, war breaks out. In the chaos, a looter snatches the machine from the bombed out museum. He rides into the desert where a sniper blows his head off. The machine tumbles off the saddle into a bottomless sandpit . It remains there, lost for over five thousand years.

The archaeologists who eventually discover it can only agree on one thing. They have no idea as to the purpose or operation of the machine.

MACHINE SFX (ONE MINUTE)

M: I did find a cassette machine here once. Buried under an authentic artificial tiger skin rug. I inserted a cassette and pressed the button marked 'PLAY'.

CASSETTE SFX

M: Can you guess what happened? That's right. Nothing happened. Nothing happened in great profusion. I examined the machine. The battery compartment was filled with a slimy corrosive goo. It had eaten half the mechanism away. I fetched my universal tool and opened the cassette player. The little rubber bands that drive the motors had rotted away. Yes, it's true that with a minimal effort I could have restored it to perfect working order. I would only have had to think it - and it would have been so.

(MONAD SIGHS WISTFULLY)

M: But I didn't. And I won't now. I won't be fixing anything anymore. I've had it with the whole creation game.

MUSICAL SEQUENCE 003 (FOUR MINUTES)

M: When it comes to foodstuffs, I'm invariably picky. I tend to concentrate on one foodstuff at a time. It's not as though I need to eat. Being the being I am, I have no nutritional requirements.

But I enjoy the act of eating. It has a universal significance - a linkage between all lifeforms. The food chain. Which is well named.

My current foodstuff is called Stroopwafels. Do you know them? They are a Dutch classic. A variety of biscuit made in the Netherlands. If you examine a Stroopwafel, you will discover that between two baked wafels there is a layer of caramel. Stroopwafels! Irresistible.



Before I became addicted to Stroopwafels, my chosen foodstuff was cheese. Not just any cheese. It had to be the cheese of the goat. This created a great difficulty for me. Cheese cannot be stored for any length of time. Frozen cheese? That's a no no! All the flavour of the cheese is lost. My only solution was to establish my own herd, here, within the structure. I created two magnificent pastures and imported one hundred of your finest goats. By manipulating their genetics, I was able to extend their life span beyond anything you can imagine. All went well for a great many years. Each day, I would gather in the goat milks and place them into a cheese making apparatus of my own design. I became intimately attached to my goats. In a show of affection, I built them the most magnificent climbing frame. It was the Taj Mahal of goat architecture.

One morning, shortly after I'd completed the construction, I wandered over to the goat pasture only to find my magnificent construction had been demolished. Who was to blame? None other than the goats. They were the culprits. Never before in my existence had I lost my temper, not once. But now I saw red. I can't really explain the murderous rage that came over me but by the time I had finished ninety-nine of the goats lay dead at my feet. One goat was still missing. In my blind rage - and determined to finish the job - I searched high and low. At last I found the wretched creature. The goat stood in a niche, shaking like a jelly, terrified. Quite obviously the goat was cognizant of my murderous intent. Who can say what signals of communication pass between animals of a low sentient level?

In a moment, my rage was gone. I felt a burning shame at what I'd done - and for this weak, helpless, solitary goat, an overwhelming compassion. Gently, I coaxed it from its niche and enfolded it in my arms. "Little goat" I soothed, "forgive me, forgive me". But the damage was done. All evening the creature's heart beat furiously, despite my efforts to calm it. By nightfall it's tiny heart had given out. I held on to the dead animal for a long long time, whether out of an act of contrition or a simple desire for absolution, I could not say. Eventually, the little goat rotted away, to the point where its head fell off. I stood watching the skull roll off into the distance. The floor of this structure is mildly canted, like a Victorian sewer. It approximates to a kind of gravity. I realised the time had come to free the dead goat from my embrace, cast its body aside and return to my eternal chore - the sorting of these damnable papers.

#### MUSICAL SEQUENCE 004 (ONE MINUTE)

M: When you're attempting to evaluate the correct order for a set of papers or journals, positively the worst thing you can do is to start reading them. You must retain a strict discipline - or the job will still be unfinished long after the most of the galactic stars have burnt out... and the wick of the last candle has vomited it's final curl of smoke.

Never-the-less, I can't help but bring your attention to this one.

#### MONAD FLOURISHES A PIECE OF PAPER

M: All this time... and I never noticed the connection. The belly. The belly.

(MONAD SIGHS)

M: This piece of writing concerns the art of ventriloquism. Originally, ventriloquism had nothing to do with a talking dummy sat upon some joker's knee.

'Gottle of Geer'...

Just as with all the wars you'd care to name, the whole trick began with some idiot claiming to speak on behalf of the dead. What utter crap. Do you not think if the dead could actually speak they'd cut out the middleman?

Anyway, that's how the whole shoddy practice began. Ventriloquism. With a necromancer lowering his or her voice and pretending the spirit of a dead person had hopped inside of their belly. Doubtless, they would have thoroughly milked their customers before putting on the sorry show.

I quote:

THE MONAD READS FROM THE PAPER

M: 'The necromancer - or Baalat-Obh - would crouch down low and feign a hollow voice that seemed to emanate from their lower regions or a hole in the ground. The ancient ventriloquists often used a resonant cavity in the ground to misdirect attention and confuse the location of the voice.'

Let me tell you. There's only one thing that pops into my mind when I crouch low over a hole in the ground and it has nothing to do with voices in my belly.

MECHANICAL INSTRUMENT PLAYS (ONE MINUTE)

M: Enough of these distractions. I was in the middle of explaining... attempting to explain... something of the nature of the place I currently find myself in. It may interest you to know that I'm not alone. If I rotate my head to the right - and look off toward the left - I can just about make out the figure of one of my companions in the middle distance. Mona. Completely immobile. Balanced perfectly atop her unicycle. Mona, you see, is a huge fan of stasis. Well.. not stasis to be exact. She is attracted by the idea of immortality. Admittedly, I can't offer her that. Even if it was permitted - which it isn't - it just wouldn't be possible. Even for me. So I've offered her the next best thing. In return for her company, I've slowed time down to the point where she ages one day every fifty seven years.. provided she keeps perfectly still. Such balance. Her cycle hasn't so much as wobbled in over a century.

CYCLING SFX (10 SECONDS)

M: I'm aware none of you are in possession of even half-decent eyesight. Blind as bats. Still, if you borrowed a pair of powerful binoculars from your local Peeping Tom and stood to the left of me - on the right - you might - if you screwed up your beady little eyes and squinted extremely hard - you might just be able to pick Mona out. There. You see? That insignificant dot on the horizon? That's Mona. Well spotted.

Mona. Ahhh. yes. If you're wondering how Mona got here, I came across her in a ramshackle spitball of a town. When was this? Hmm. Not long ago. Must of been... let's see... yes. The late Nineteenth century. Around the time that Karl Eisener invented the Swiss Army Knife. The town was called Strasbourg, if I remember rightly. Or perhaps.. Wuppertal.

#### THE MONAD SIGHS

M: Ach. The ridiculous names you give these places. They all sound the same to me.

(PAUSE)

M: Why can't you name them sensibly? With numbers.

(PAUSE)

M: Mona. She had a job as part of a *tableau vivant*. Do you know what that is? It's one of those living pictures formed by people standing completely still. I'm being polite here. Mona's field was actually what's known as 'poses plastiques'. A primitive form of pornography. Her boss was a creep. The pay was shit. Worst of all was the lack of central heating.

We got talking over a glass or three of *prunus spinosa* and, next thing... Mona.. and me..

(PAUSE)

M: Well, you know how these matters go.. I never could hold my drink.

#### MUSICAL SEQUENCE 005 (TWO MINUTES)

M: If you haven't already guessed, I have more than one companion aboard. If I twist my head so it's facing to the East - and look off in to the West - I can just make out a very long pair of legs. If you had access to a powerful telescope and looked to the East you might just be able to identify a long pair of legs covered in the most stupid trousers imaginable.

M: These are the legs that belong to Werner. Werner is a very tall chap. Born in a place with the lowest gravity imaginable.

I hasten to add. Werner is not his real name. It's a crude approximation, a simplified shorthand to enable you to form a picture of him in your mind. In actuality, Werner's name is several quintillion syllables in length.

If you started pronouncing Werner's real name at the age of six and continued until you'd had both hips replaced, you'd still have a hell of a long way to go.

Werner is the quiet type. It's often the way with the tall ones, You wouldn't even know he was there except for the apples. He's always dropping apples. He eats only the skins and drops the remainder onto the ground.

#### APPLE DROP SEQUENCE (30 SECONDS)

M: On the whole, my environment is fairly predictable. Things coalesce and unravel. Vague shapes appear on top of boxes and then fade away. Probably the only really annoying thing here is the air conditioning system. Every time I switch it on, it makes the same horrible mechanical grating noise. That's not all. It also sings an easy listening song at the same time. The last time I used it, it sang Guantanamera. The time before that, an atrocious soul-destroying piece of bubblegum by 60's pop band With The Beatles. A song is called 'Yesterday'. I almost wept.

It's not as though I need air conditioning. To be perfectly honest, I'm not much of an air user. I prefer xenon - or snuff. However, it's been a long while since I had a bath. After a time, your body odours become noticeable. This is where the air conditioning unit proves useful. It helps to move the smells around, to redistribute them according to some obscure mathematical mean such as sigma compact - in topological terms, the union of a countable number of compact spaces.

#### MATHEMATICAL RANDOM SEQUENCE (ONE MINUTE)

M: There's something that has been lingering in my mind for quite a time. I'm wondering if I should take a bath. It's been... how long? Perhaps millennia since the last one. Don't get me wrong. I enjoy taking a bath.. but I'm lazy. Naturally lazy. Why do you think I don't do the creation act anymore? It's not for any philological or philosophical scruple. I just can't be bothered.

Look. I apologise for moaning but it's like this. Once you've created one universe, you've essentially created them all. Where's the challenge after that? There's not a lot left to do.

(PAUSE)

Did I ever tell you about the time I accidentally teleported into a New York bath house. This was.. hmmm.. let me check my notes..

## PAPER TURNING NOISE

M: Oh! Not as long ago as I thought. The 1970's. Ha! What a decade that was. Anyway... where was I? Ah.. yes. The air conditioning system.

## MUSICAL SEQUENCE 006 (TWO MINUTES)

M: The air conditioning unit. Ach. If it was just the horrible grating noise and the vile easy listening songs, I could put up with it. But.. you see... there's also the problem of the dog. The dog that follows us around. It follows us everywhere. It exists a short way outside of our dimension space. I have the distinct impression that it must be trapped in our wake - like a sea bass caught in the wake of a passing ship. Thankfully, the dog has no way of getting in here. It occasionally scratches at the doors and presses its muzzle against the windows but all entrances are barred. I'm glad. I'm somewhat allergic to the fur of wild animals.

The dog can hear every sound we make - including the singing of the air conditioning unit. Me? I can't stand easy listening songs. I hated them from the first time I heard one. 'Raindrops keep falling on my head'. What utter nonsense. Still, my hatred is nothing compared to that of the poor dog. Like all dogs, this one suffers from an acute sense of hearing. The singing drives it insane.

Why am I bothering to explain this to you. It's easier if I switch on the air conditioning unit. That way, you can see for yourselves.

THE MONAD SWITCHES ON THE AIR CONDITIONING UNIT. THE FANS START TO ROTATE AND AFTER A FEW SECONDS, THE UNIT BEGINS TO SING 'LOVE STORY'

ACU: Where do I begin...  
To tell the story of how great a love can be...

## THE DOG BARKS

ACU: Shut up you.  
The sweet love story that is older than the sea  
The simple truth about the love she brings to me  
Where do I start

## DOG BARKS

ACU: Shut up you.  
With her first hello..

## THE DOG BARKS

ACU: Shut up you.  
She gave new meaning to this empty world of mine

## DOG BARKS

ACU: Shut up you.  
There'd never be another love, another time  
She came into my life...

## DOG BARKS

ACU: Shut up you.  
....and made the living fine  
She fills my heart..

## THE AIR CONDITIONING UNIT IS SWITCHED OFF

M: I'm sure you get the idea.

## MUSICAL SEQUENCE 007 (ONE MINUTE)

M: The more astute among you will have picked up on that reference to Strasbourg. Or was it Wuppertal?

Anyway, you're right. From time to time I pay a visit to the Earth. It's true there's never much doing there but, provided you are a friend of tedium and enjoy the sound of chipped teacups being rinsed in dirty water, there is always a good reason to return.

However, if you imagine that I can simply snap my fingers and appear on the Earth, you couldn't be more wrong. There are intense trans-dimensional and computational difficulties to overcome. And that's just the beginning. My form would make little sense on the Earth. Instead, if I wish to pay a visit I am left with no option but to penetrate the consciousness of a living person. To force my way in, so to speak. Even then, I have no control over the person whose body I occupy. Try, for a moment, to image a huge whale attempting to make love to a ping pong ball. This image will give you a decent analogy of the problems I face when I visit the Earth.

(PAUSE)

M: I still remember my very first visit. The exact date? I can't say but I have a feeling it was sometime around 33 AD. What a disaster. Naturally, when you teleport there is a moment of disorientation. A certain dizziness. You'll have come across that appalling bullshit about travelling back in time and shagging your own grandmother, yes? It's the same with teleportation. You'll find it's written into the code - the A to Z of Science Fiction tropes. Stars and stripes flash before you. Your ears buzz and hum. The very air crackles as you materialise. There is an intense and entirely enjoyable desire to relieve yourself.

Once I'd recovered from the insertion, I realised I was inhabiting the body of a soldier. A Roman soldier. My sergeant major was shouting at me in a loud voice, ordering me to punch the prisoner. Naturally, I obeyed. I punched and kicked the loser as hard as I could. I'm not unusually violent but if you want to fit in...

It turned out the prisoner was this mildly insane Jewish chap. He was a revolutionary and a complete nutter. All the time we were kicking the shit out of him he kept saying. 'Turn the other cheek.' Earlier, when I'd been enjoying a sandwich and having a quick rest from beating the guy, I'd noticed that outside the prison window was a blackthorn tree, covered with the nastiest thorns you could imagine. I grabbed the prisoner, dragged him to the window and yelled, 'See that blackthorn tree? If you utter that stupid phrase one more time, I'm going to chop a branch off that tree and wrap it round your stupid head.' And what do you think the idiot said next? He said, 'Turn the other cheek.' The cheek of it! I just flipped. Totally lost it. I ran outside, hacked down a branch with my broad sword, ran back inside and rammed it down hard onto the prisoner's head. The Sergeant Major was very pleased.

'Well done, Private,' he said.

#### MUSICAL SEQUENCE 008 (ONE MINUTE)

M: The next day things got even worse. I should explain. At that point in Earth's history, the Carpenter's Union was supremely powerful. Wood was the go-to material. Even though they were fantastically wealthy, like all greedy conglomerates, the Carpenter's Union was always looking to expand into new markets. Keep in mind, this was long before the wooden shelf or the Chippendale cabinet had been invented. Boats and beds. That's about all the carpenters manufactured - apart from a few wooden spoons. A couple of years before I arrived, some bright spark at the Carpenter's Union had a clever idea.

'What if, instead of stoning prisoners to death, we attach them to a big piece of wood and leave them in the hot sun to die?' he said.

The suggestion was enthusiastically received and soon the idea was expanded so two big pieces of wood were used in the executions. This provided a huge upsurge in work for the Carpenter's Union. Selecting and felling the right trees. Sawing them down and cutting them into planks. Then, the delicate job of planing them into flat smooth surfaces.

M: The Sergeant Major woke us early in the morning. He was hopping mad.  
‘I’ve had my fill of that stupid prisoner., ‘ he said. I told him - if I hear you say that line about turning cheeks one more time... just one more. He defied me so I stayed up all night whipping every last centimetre of flesh off his back. I whipped and whipped but still he kept saying it. I can’t stand it anymore. I’m off to Bethlehem to visit my wife now. When I return tomorrow afternoon, I’m going to ride past Execution Park. The first thing I want to see is that mouthy dickhead - hanging from two big pieces of wood. If he’s not there, I’m going to come back here, hack all your balls off and shove them up my camel’s arse.’

So, me and another soldier rushed round to the stores. They had plenty of wood but they’d run out of rope.

‘When’s the next delivery?’ I asked.

‘Two week on Tuesday,’ replied the store manager.

‘How are we supposed to hang up our prisoner? If he’s not hanging when our sergeant major gets back, he’s going to shove our balls up the arse of his camel.’

‘That’s easy,’ replied the store manager, and he walked to the back of the shop and returned with four of the biggest nails you’ve ever seen.

I should explain. At that point in the development of the ancient world, the Metal Worker’s Union was immensely powerful. Metal was the go-to material. Even though they were fantastically wealthy, like all greedy conglomerates, the Metal Worker’s Union was always looking to expand into new markets.

(PAUSE)

M: I’ve been thinking. I must do something about these cassettes. I may not be able to decipher their contents but I can rearrange their haphazard arrangement into a more pleasing form.

CASSETTE MOVEMENT SFX

CROSSFADE INTO OUTRO SEQUENCE (TWO MINUTES)

ENDE