

Flanagan's Running Club – Issue 25

Introduction

The first rule of Flanagan's Running Club is everyone should be telling everyone they know about Flanagan's Running Club! After all, sharing is caring.

Feel free to forward on to anyone you want, tell people about it the works, and just get them to sign up. It's quick and easy at the website homepage of <http://www.onetruekev.co.uk/> enter the e-mail address and select whether you want Flanagan's Running Club or blog post updates or both and then hit submit.

Can I ask you all a favour, please can you review my book on Inkitt, and the link is below. Even if you don't take time to read it properly, please flick through a few chapters, give it ratings and a review and vote for it please. It may help me get it published.

<https://www.inkitt.com/stories/thriller/201530>

On This Day – 21st August

1770 – James Cook formally claims eastern Australia for Great Britain, naming it New South Wales.

1911 – The Mona Lisa is stolen by Vincenzo Perugia, a Louvre employee.

1961 – Motown releases what would be its first #1 hit (in America), "Please Mr. Postman" by The Marvelettes.

It's Ninoy Aquino Day in the Philippines, and Youth Day in Morocco.

365 Reasons To Be Proud To Be A Londoner - Magical Moments in London's History

The Noblest Of Nibbles

In the wee hours of this night in 1762, the 4th Earl of Sandwich was ensconced at the gaming table of the Shakespeare's Head pub in Covent Garden. Too busy to bother with a formal dinner, he demanded of the waiter: 'Just bring me a piece of meat between two bits of bread.' His chums thought the snack looked dandy and said: 'Bring us what Sandwich is having.' And so the world got its favourite multi-decker lunchtime delicacy. Someone probably had eaten such a thing before, but they weren't an earl and so no one paid any attention.

Chuck D Presents This Day In Rap And Hip-Hop History

2002 - Clipse release their debut studio album "Lord Willin" on Arista.

The Virginia Beach hip-hop duo Malice and Pusha T's gold-selling debut highlighted their hustler past and featured appearances from Jermaine Dupri, Fabolous, Jadakiss, and Styles P.

Produced by mentors The Neptunes, the album spawned the summer smash "Grindin'", which reached #30 on the billboard Hot 100 and #8 on the Rap chart; "When the Last Time", which topped the R&B/Hip-Hop and Rap charts; "Ma, I Don't Love Her", featuring Faith Evans; and "Cot Damn," which featured Ab-Liva and Rosco P. Coldchain.

Births

1952 – Joe Strummer

1967 – Carrie-Anne Moss

Deaths

1940 – Leon Trotsky

Number 1's

Number 1 single in 1978 - The Commodores - Three Times A Lady

Number 1 album in 1995 - Black Grape - It's Great When You're Straight...Yeah

Number 1 compilation album in 2005 - Various - Now 61

Drabble

A drabble is a complete story that is exactly one hundred words long.

Whitey Part 2

Whitey stopped at the phone box just outside the school, saying he had an important phone call to make, and that he'd see me later.

The good old red telephone boxes being the only way to make phone calls whilst on the move back then; none of this mobile phone malarkey you get nowadays.

I carried on walking and got into school and wandered to my form room, surprised to find that I had arrived before my form teacher.

I soon found out why when our head of year walked in a few moments later slamming the door behind him.

Joke

A couple attending an art exhibition at the National Gallery were staring at a portrait that had them completely confused. The painting depicted three very black and totally naked men sitting on a park bench. Two of the figures had black penises, but the one in the middle had a pink penis. The curator of the gallery realized that they were having trouble interpreting the painting and offered his assessment. He went on for nearly half an hour explaining how it depicted the sexual emasculation of African Americans in a predominately white, patriarchal society. In fact, he pointed out, "Some serious critics believe that the pink penis also reflects the cultural and sociological oppression experienced by gay men in contemporary society." After the curator left, a Scottish man approached the couple and said "Would you like to know what the painting is really about?" "Now why would you claim to be more of an expert than the curator of the gallery?" asked the couple. "Because I'm the guy who painted it," he replied. "In fact, there's no African Americans depicted at all. They're just three Scottish coal-miners. The guy in the middle went home for lunch."

Random Items

Facts

Mel Blanc (the voice of Bugs Bunny) was allergic to carrots.

The term "the whole 9 yards" came from WWII fighter pilots in the South Pacific. When arming their airplanes on the ground, the .50 calibre machine gun ammo belts measured exactly 27 feet, before being loaded into the fuselage. If the pilots fired all their ammo at a target, it got "the whole 9 yards."

Thoughts

Why is lemon juice mostly artificial ingredients but dishwashing liquid contains real lemons?

Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?

Forgotten English

Blavers

When a cow or other ruminating animal hastily fills the stomach with certain foods, for example rank, wet clover, gases are generated which distend the stomach almost to the point of bursting. In such a case, the animal is said to have taken the blavers.

Words You Should Know

Laconic

Laconia was the province of Ancient Greece whose capital was Sparta and its people were famous for the terseness of their speech. The story goes that Philip of Macedon, having conquered other parts of Greece, sent a message, 'If I enter Laconia, I shall raze Sparta to the ground'. In reply, he received the single word 'If'. It's a perfect example of laconic speech: brief, to the point, laid back, with just a touch of wit.

Popular Expressions – What They Mean And Where We Got Them

To See A Man About A Dog

This is a very shifty turn of phrase and suggests a desire to cover up one's real actions. It is the excuse offered if one wishes to be discreet and avoid giving the true reason for leaving the room, the meeting or whatever social gathering.

The phrase is sometimes used as a euphemism for some unmentionable activity such as going to the lavatory - or worse, going to do something or meet someone one shouldn't.

The phrase originally referred to betting on dog racing, about going to see a bookmaker.

Flash Fiction

Something between the 100 word shortness of a Drabble, and the short story, these are works of fiction somewhere between five hundred and seven hundred words.

The Surprise

It was meant to be a lovely surprise. I had been planning this little trip for month now. I had booked the little boutique hotel with only the three rooms, sat in the middle of the Lake District overlooking Ullswater. I had packed the car up with gifts for her birthday, and driven the three hundred odd miles up to Cumbria from our home near the south coast.

She had started looking sulky when we pulled off the M6 at Keswick and started driving into the lakes. She hadn't said a word since we had pulled up at the hotel. We had checked in and taken some bags up to the room.

The view out of the window was spectacular. The room overlooked Ullswater, and as we looked out of the window the sun was setting in a gap between the mountains. It was a deep orange colour in a cloudless crystal blue sky. The sunlight reflected off the surface of the lake and I could feel myself bathed in a magnificent golden glow. The hillsides leading up to the mountains were covered in the most lustrous shade of green I had ever seen, and sheep could be seen wandering around quite happily, stopping to nibble on the grass and moss on the slopes.

Across the lake from us sat a gorgeous looking Victorian boathouse, made from the same stone as the hotel we were in, and that of most of the buildings and walls in the surrounding area. On the lake in front of the boathouse sat an array of different crafts. Small sailboats, painted in a variety of colours bobbed on the gently lapping waters close to the shore. A couple of small luxury powerboats were moored to a pier that jutted out in to the lake. At the end of the pier sat the Ullswater ferry, with steam rising from one of its chimneys, ready to set off on its last journey of the day along the lake.

I went to take a photo of the glorious scene in front of me, knowing that no simple photo could possibly do justice to the feast my eyes were partaking in. As I turned around to get the camera, there she sat, on the end of the bed, tears streaming down her face.

Initially I thought that she was overcome with emotion at the picturesque vista that surrounded us, but no, how wrong could I be? When she spoke there could be no mistaking her words for anything approaching joy. When the words started it felt like the largest darkest cloud had entered the room, blocking out all of the light, and sucking out all the happiness from the world around me.

"Why the hell are we here?"

I was taken aback at the ferocity of the statement.

"Because I thought it would be somewhere nice to take you for your birthday."

The tone got darker.

"Are you joking? Are you totally insane? Do you not even know me in the slightest? Why, of all the places on Earth, would I want to be here? I hate nature; I thought I'd been clear on this. We're miles away from the nearest excuse for civilisation. I can't even see the nearest proper building or road. I don't like being this near to large bodies of water. Why do you think I never go to the beach despite living a five minute drive from one? If you were looking to take me to hell then I doubt you could have picked a better place to come."

I stood there in a state of shock. I was totally crestfallen, and it would have shown on my face, but that didn't deter her, she continued on.

"I can't stay here. I can't be with a man who would even consider taking me to a place like this, so far away from normal life, would be a "nice" surprise. I'm going home, I'll take the car and leave now, and you can have this nightmare little room, in this tin pot excuse for a hotel, sat on the edge of this stupid lake all to yourself, and you can then find your own way back home. When you get back I will have moved out, and you won't see me again, and thankfully I won't have to see you again."

And with that she got up off the bed, picked up her bags and left the room slamming the door behind her.

I didn't go after her, I was too shell shocked to be able to move or say anything.

This trip had been a surprise all right, just not the one that I had been expecting to give to her.

Leicester

Random Historic Item

Market Harborough Old Grammar School

Standing in the shadow of St. Dionysius church is the old grammar school of Market Harborough. It was built in 1614 due to the generosity of Robert Smyth.

It is built on 'stilts', due to the fact that the site still housed the butter market, and this was to continue under the building, on the ground floor. When it was opened it taught Latin, Greek and Hebrew to local boys.

In 1751 the Reverend George Periam brought in the study of reading, writing and computation, arguing that this would have been in line with the original wishes of Robert Smyth.

By 1860 the school was in serious decline due to the opening of the National and British schools, and the building itself needed restoring, which it was in 1869, when a brick portion was added to the school. In the same year the modern grammar school syllabus was introduced.

The 'school' itself expanded in 1892, with a new building on Coventry road, and again in 1910 with a third building being added on Burnmill Road. Now days the school is the home to over 100 pupils, and is called the Robert Smyth school after its founder.

The old building itself was restored in 1977, and is used now for all kinds of meetings.

A Leicestershire Church

St Margaret's

The original church was built on this site in Saxon times in 737, and may have been the first church in Leicester, although it would have stood outside of the town walls, and was never a part of any Leicester diocese, and in fact always belonged to the Lincoln diocese. It was called St. Margaret's from its inception.

It was rebuilt during the 10th century, but by 1110 it was in a dilapidated condition. In 1120 Robert le Bossu, 2nd Earl of Leicester, decided to pull it down and start work on a new structure. This continued until his death in 1168, when building stopped for a while, and it is this that explains the peculiar fact that only the east bay of the nave is in a Norman style. It was completed in 1232, in an early English stately style.

During the 15th century the church was largely rebuilt and redecorated both inside and out. The tower was built in 1444, and stands at 108 feet high, and the porch and chancel were added. The tower currently has ten bells in it, of which six were installed in 1570, these were recast in 1633, and one of them again in 1739. Two more were added in 1711, and the final two were added in 1738. It also has a four dial clock.

The organ was erected by subscription in 1773, and would have been one of the first to play in Leicester since the reformation. It has been enlarged and improved since. From 1862 to 1865 the north aisle was restored, and two new windows were put in, and in 1881, a new open work roof was placed on the nave and the aisles. The church was replastered and new tower windows were put in.

St. Margaret

Little is known about St. Margaret. Tradition states that she was born the daughter of the Heathen priest Edessius of Antioch in Pisidia. She was however brought up as a Christian by her nurse. When her father found out, he was furious and refused to let her back into the house, or speak to her. She then went and lived with the nurse, and minded the sheep.

She was seen by Olybrius, the prefect of Pisidia, who was smitten with her, and asked her to marry him, if she was free born. She replied that she was free born, but that she was a servant of Jesus Christ. Olybrius cast her into prison, where it is said that the devil appeared in the form of a dragon, but she was unafraid. Olybrius tortured her in many a way, and eventually decapitated her, on 20th July 306.

Top Ten

The First Ten stories published in the James Bond universe.

| No | Story | Date Published |
|----|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Casino Royale | April 13th, 1953 |
| 2 | Live and Let Die | April 5th, 1954 |
| 3 | Moonraker | April 5th, 1955 |
| 4 | Diamonds Are Forever | March 26th, 1956 |
| 5 | From Russia With Love | April 8th, 1957 |
| 6 | Dr. No | March 31st, 1958 |
| 7 | Goldfinger | March 23rd, 1959 |
| 8 | Quantum Of Solace | May 1st, 1959 |
| 9 | From A View To A Kill | September 21st, 1959 |
| 10 | The Hildenbrand Rarity | March 1st, 1960 |

Poetry Corner

You Can Smell It

There is nothing quite as remarkable as a smell.
 Whether sweet, pungent, pleasant or from hell.
 Flowers in bloom, or flour in fresh baked bread.
 The smells from them easily invade your head.
 The Crawley council lawnmower regiment has been out.
 And pollen laden fresh cut grass odours are in my snout.
 Triple dosage of anti-histamines can't quite quell.
 The ill side effects that are caused by that smell.
 The hard boiled herbal sweet takes the edge off.
 The faint camphor smell stops the urge to cough.
 I remember back to chemistry lessons of old.
 Doing experiments with camphor, doing as we were told.
 Lumps of it the size of a small meatball
 One of which into my bag did accidentally fall.
 I put it in a tin on the shelf above my bed.
 I would open the corner of it when I wanted to clear my head.
 Then I opened the tin one day to a surprise.
 The tin was empty I couldn't believe my eyes.
 The camphor had evaporated, just the smell remained.
 The odour of it had in the tin been engrained.
 Camphor could be replaced, my favourite smell couldn't
 I had asked for it to be bottled but the shop just wouldn't
 How to describe this smell that I always love?
 I just can't pin it down when push comes to shove.
 The old hardware store on the corner of the street.
 The two old ladies in there that I would always greet.
 I didn't want to buy anything they would sell.
 I just wanted to stand there and inhale the smell.
 A cornucopia of smells combined into one.
 That when you stepped outside was suddenly gone.
 The little hardware shop sadly is there no more.
 Oh how I wish I could find a similar store.
 Piled high with items you might never need.
 A single light bulb or a peppermint seed.
 A garden fork or two dozen screws.
 The memory of the shop's smell I will never lose.
 Eighty years it took for the odour to embed.
 Modern stores can't replicate this in my head.
 If only I could have bottled it all then.
 So now I could smell it over and over again.

Cathedral Fact Files

| | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Cathedral | St Albans Cathedral |
| Dedicated To | St Alban |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|-------------------|---------|
| Type | Medieval | Architecture | Norman |
| Religion | COE | Tower / Spire | 1 Tower |
| Site Founded | 730 | Height (External) | 144ft |
| Church Founded | 1077 | Height (Internal) | 70ft |
| Bishopric Founded | 1877 | Length | 550ft |
| Current Bishopric Founded | 1877 | Width | 191ft |

Thirty-Three And One Third Revolutions Per Minute

Various Artists – Electro 13



If it wasn't for The Jam, and my previous well documented obsession with all things Weller, then the fairly obscure Hip Hop compilation album "*Electro 13*" would be my favourite album of all time. If I were to look at it from a purely plays perspective then this would win hands down, even now, thirty-three years on from its original release, it still gets play on a regular basis.

Street Sounds Hip Hop Electro 13 was the thirteenth compilation album in a series and was released 1986 on the Street Sounds label. The album was released on LP and cassette and contained twenty-one electro music and old-school hip-hop tracks mixed by Herbie Laidley (known as Mastermind).

Morgan Khan's Street Sounds label was set up in the early 1980's and brought an eager UK market Hip Hop, Dance, Disco, Soul, and House music for the rest of the decade. The original run of the Electro series brought twenty seven albums in total, starting out in old school electro style hip hop and running into the golden era of the late 1980's. Alongside this it had its Street Sounds series with twenty four albums of the latest dance, hip hop and house tunes. The Anthems series of Soul sounds and a brief Houstrax series of Chicago House. It also brought together some great re-release material, including the four-album set of Enjoy Records, and the fourteen-album behemoth of the Philadelphia International label. The black and yellow Street Sounds icon on the cover of a record was a quality mark. Over the course of a decade they curated the greatest collection of compilation albums ever released.

"*Electro 13*" was a one off in the Electro/Hip Hop original main series 22 albums. With twenty-one tracks split over two mixes, and no complete tracks. All the other Electro/Hip Hop albums in the series had between seven and ten full length tracks with a brief mix overlap between them. The only other exceptions were in the larger Electro/Hip Hop series, as "*Electro Crucial 3*" featured two mixes containing a total of twenty tracks, and the "*NY vs LA beats*" which had two mixes totalling twenty-three tracks.

The departure from the usual format for this Electro album was due to UK Fresh '86, a single day Hip-Hop festival organised by Street Sounds in conjunction with Capital Radio and hosted by Mike Allen at Wembley Arena. (It formed part of the larger 'Capital Music Festival' that ran that year.) To date that day is still the biggest single Hip-Hop concert every seen in the UK. Fifteen of the twenty-one tracks included on *Electro 13* were by artists that appeared at UK Fresh '86. It is still a source of disappointment that I couldn't go to UK Fresh. Having only just turned sixteen, it was on the last Saturday of Leicester's July fortnight when all the hosiery firms went on holiday. As such I would have been travelling back from the family summer holiday on the day of UK Fresh, and once back out of range of getting tuned into Capital radio.

I had shown an interest in Hip Hop fairly early on. Buying "*The Message*" and playing it to death horrified my mother, who still to this day expresses her disgust at this "new rap music". Then a guy at school — Nick Starkey — lent me the

first of the Electro series on tape. I made a copy, and from then on was hooked, saving money to get the albums when I could afford them. I used to pretend I was scratching by trying to replicate the sound by me rubbing my fingernails on the black vinyl of my Griffin Savers holdall. I tried with some records as well, quickly finding out that trying to do so without a slip mat just made an utter mess of the B side of the record you were trying to scratch with. Early Hip Hop had been playing looped up-tempo (normally disco) tracks with MCs rapping over the top of them. The Electro phase saw a move towards artists creating their own beats with the rise of drum machines and samplers. Then there was the progression to sampling and layering of samples to create a base to rap over, as Hip Hop moved from Electro into its Golden Age. For me, this was the crossover point.

Up to 1986, Hip Hop and the charts were only passing acquaintances. Hits in the UK singles charts were few and far between. Grandmaster Flash, Melle Mel and The Furious Five accounted for half of the top forty hits. The Sugarhill Gang, Afrika Bambaataa and Mann Parish had “rap” hits. The Rock Steady Crew, Ollie & Jerry and Break Machine had the breakdancing hits, but outside of this there was very little. Even those breaking through in late 1985 and early 1986 were seen more as novelty hits (Doug E Fresh’s “*The Show*”, Whistle’s “*Just Bugging*”, Lovebug Starski and The Real Roxanne’s songs on this album, and DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince’s “*Girls Ain’t Nothing But Trouble*”). All that was about to change as this album was being mixed ready for release, Run-DMC were teaming up with Aerosmith to release “*Walk This Way*”. Within a year, top twenty hits were commonplace. Run-DMC, Eric B & Rakim, LL Cool J, Salt ‘n’ Pepa, The Fat Boys, Public Enemy, Mantronix and The Beastie Boys all had hits in 1987. By 1988, British Hip Hop Artists were having hits as well, even if they were looked down upon by the Americans. Wee Papa Girl Rappers, Derek B, The Cookie Crew and Monie Love all hit the top twenty. Yet so many more didn’t hit the charts, despite having better sounds, rhymes and overall songs than many who hit the charts today. There was a whole heap of artists who were born at least twenty years too early.

There are no full-length versions included on the album, and some of the tracks had quite short pieces used from them. Additionally, the mixes dipped back in time to use some tracks from before 1986 (and from previous Electro albums), whereas all the other Electro series were very much of the current time. I think that the release of Electro 13 can be seen as the point where the baton is handed over from Old School to Golden Age. It includes the first single from Eric B & Rakim who would change the game completely. And unknown to most non hip-hop heads, it saw Dr Dre and DJ Yella in their pre-NWA days as part of the World Class Wreckin’ Cru.

A common question asked, on forums and face to face, is what is your favourite Hip-Hop album of all time? Well, for me, this would have to be it. With some of the biggest names from the Old School on it (such as Grandmaster Flash and Afrika Bambaataa), and future giants, it is the ultimate hip-hop album. There is some inventive mixing between tracks. Some amazing samples and beats, and a gamut of great lyrics, and future giants (Rakim, Dre). There is a lot of fun, a bit of bragging, some silliness, and masses of social commentary included. This album should be the starting point for any newcomer to hip-hop to hear what can be done before the major labels choked the life out of it.

I think to date I’ve bought seven copies of this album. I’ve lost two to house moves, two to lending to (ex) friends and one to being worn out and scratched to hell; and so, keep two copies of it now, just in case. Having the time and money to do it, I went about getting all the original 12" singles for the tracks from the album. I started in 2003 and it took me four years and hundreds of pounds before I completed the set with the last two as they came onto Discogs at the same time. “*UK Fresh ‘86 (The Anthem)*” by Hashim featuring MC Devon and “*The State We’re In (Vocal)*” by Easy Mike featuring M.C. Sure Shot, the latter of which I’d been (un)reliably informed had never been released. Plus, one I’d been told had been released as a single never had, as M.C. Chill’s “*The Prophecy*” was only ever released on his eponymous album.

Track listing



Side one

1. — “*Style (Peter Gunn Theme)*” — Grandmaster Flash.

Flash, now without the original Furious Five after alleged drug related and contractual issues, comes back with this single from his second album on the Elektra label. The main bassline from the song is from Henry Mancini's “*Peter Gunn Theme*”, but he adds in samples from Freedom “*Get Up and Dance*”, Cameo “*Single Life*”, Maze feat Frankie Beverly “*Before I Let Go*”, and Afrika Bambaataa and The Jazzy 5 “*Jazzy Sensation*” to great effect. Released as a single in the UK, it didn't chart. Was sampled in Prince Shahem Beloved's “*I Can Go Freestyle*”. My favourite post Sugarhill Grandmaster Flash track, there are definite overtones of this being a diss record, lines like “you thought you had style, you thought you had grace, but you wouldn't know class if it hit you in the face” suggest that there was some hangover of enmity from the split from Sugarhill. Flash (real name Joseph Saddler) faded away in the late eighties and nineties, but now nearly forty years on from his initial release “*Superrapping*”, he is touring the globe wowing audiences and gathering new fans. He really was the original superstar DJ.

Released on Elektra — EKR 39 T in 1986 with edited and instrumental versions on the B side.

2. — “*Bambaataa's Theme (Assault On Precinct 13)*” — Afrika Bambaataa and Family.

Sampling the theme from John Carpenter's original “*Assault On Precinct 13*” from 1986, this single, released on Tommy Boy was the first single release from his fourth album. Released as a single in the UK, this didn't chart, but I did try and help it. Bambaataa was the founding father of the Zulu Nation. As such he was one of the forefathers of Hip Hop, as the Zulu Nation and Grandmasters helped to transform the gangs of seventies New York into the Hip Hop crews to lead them into the eighties. There is an elegant simplicity in this largely instrumental track. Yes, the music is borrowed, but it is used to great effect, and shows that Electro was about far more than just rapping

Released on WEA in the UK — U8663(T) in 1986 with “*Tension*” as the B Side.

3. — “*UK Fresh '86 (The Anthem)*” — Hashim featuring MC Devon.

Known for his Electro classic “*Al-Naafiysh (The Soul)*”, Hashim was one of several artists lined up for Capital Radio's UK Fresh '86. MC Devon had his only appearance on this track which was put together to promote the UK Fresh event. Hashim (Jerry Calliste) had started as a promoter of Hip-Hop gigs. He worked as a janitor at Tommy Boy records before going on to start his own label — Cutting Records, before leaving that to his business partners to go on and set up Precise Records. It isn't any surprise that MC Devon didn't go on to have much more of a career releasing tracks. The rhymes are almost childlike, and it sounds as if he was struggling over the delivery. He was just born thirty years too early; he'd be a maestro nowadays. Hashim had featured on previous Electro releases.

Released on Streetwave, a label also run by Morgan Khan, on label number MKHAN72 with another mix on the B side.

4. — “*Fast Life*” — Dr. Jeckyll & Mr. Hyde.

The full version was featured on “*Electro 5*”. Dr. Jeckyll & Mr. Hyde consisted of Andre “Dr. Jeckyll” Harrell and Alonzo “Mr. Hyde” Brown. The group was known for its corporate business image, wearing designer suits and ties while they rapped. The group first performed under the name Harlem World Crew. After the group's demise, Andre Harrell became the founder and chief executive officer of Uptown Records. He later went on to head Motown Records. The track is a quite serious and heavy social commentary about a teenage wannabe gangster. How the life attracts him, but how his peers eschew the lifestyle.

Released on Profile Records — PRO-7048 in 1984 with the track “*A.M.P.M.*” also on the A Side, and instrumentals of both on the B side. Wasn't released as a single in the UK.

5. — “*Get Loose*” — Aleem.

Aleem featured on other Electro releases. Just missed out on the UK charts proper, peaking at number 82 in January 1986. Sampled in “*Get Loose*” by L.A. Mix feat. Jazzi P, “*Band in a Box's Get Dynamite*” by Band In A Box, “*My Telephone*” by Mikey D & the LA Posse, “*Armed and Extremely Dangerous*” by London Rhyme Syndicate, and “*Who Am I?*” by K-Bee & Ceil-B. Aleem were twin brothers — Taharqua and Tunde-Ra Aleem, who had been doing studio work since the late sixties and had worked on Jimi Hendrix's “*Cry Of Love*” and “*Rainbow Bridge*”. They formed NIA records and produced several other early Hip Hop artists, including Captain Rock who also appears on “*Electro 13*”. A much more vocal release, with an electro backing track, and soulful singing from Leroy Burgess who is related to the Bell family of Kool & The Gang fame. It almost has the vibe of an early Chicago House track.

Releases in the US on their own NIA label in 1984, it was released on Streetwave in the UK — MKHAN61, with “*Get Loose / Release Yourself*” and a dub version on the B side.

6. — “(Solution To) The Problem (The DEFinitive Dance Mix)” — Masquerade.

Charted at number 64 in the UK singles chart in July 1986. Sampled Ronald Reagan’s “*We Begin Bombing in Five Minutes*” spoof speech, and “*Change the Beat (Female Version)*” by Beside. More social commentary, this time on getting nations getting dragged into overseas conflicts. Uses dialogue from then US President, Ronald Reagan, and UK Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher and the conflict with Libya and its leader Colonel Gaddafi as its base to bring together an anti-war message.

Released on Streetwave — MKHAN67 in 1986. This mix was the B Side, the A side was the Extended Vocal Mix.

7. — “Square Dance Rap (Power Mix)” — Sir Mix-A-Lot.

Way before his massive world-wide smash of “*Baby Got Back*”, this features some of the fastest rapping I had ever heard at that point. The full version was featured on “*Electro 12*”. Just missed out on the UK charts proper, peaking at number 81 in July 1986. Sampled “*Rock Me Baby*” by B.B. King, “*Get Out of My Mix*” by Dolby’s Cube, and “*Change the Beat (Female Version)*” by Beside. Sir Mix-A-Lot (Anthony Ray) was known for driving the streets of his native Seattle blasting out his new compositions to get them airplay due to the lack of other outlets for Hip Hop there. Cowboy rap, at the time I would have thought that this could have stood in its own category for eternity. Then came “*Country Mike’s Greatest Hits*”, the Beastie Boys in disguise, and of course Kid Rock. It was difficult to reconcile this with the style and pitch on “*Baby Got Back*”.

Another released on Streetwave — MKHAN69 in 1986. The mix was the second track on the B Side, which it shared with the Radio Edit. The A side featured the Rodeo Drive Mix and the US Original Version.

8. — “Return Of Captain Rock” — Captain Rock.

The full version was featured on “*Electro 1*” and “*Crucial Electro 1*”. Captain Rock (real name Ronnie Green) was an underground fixture in the early 80’s. His appearance at UK Fresh ‘86 saw him allegedly strip down to his thong on stage. The track had very laid-back vocals over sounds that made you think you were travelling with a spaceship Captain, very much in the style of George Clinton. Before being Captain Rock, he was Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde’s live DJ from their period in the Harlem World Crew. He was known as DJ Ronnie Green. He went on to referee for NCAA Division 3 basketball in the late 80’s and early 90’s and to run a youth program in New York City, for underprivileged kids. Sampled “*Change the Beat (Female Version)*” by Beside. Was sampled in “*Hyperspeed (G-Force Part 2)*” by The Prodigy, “*Dig Your Own Hole*” by The Chemical Brothers, “*Check It Out*” by Ferry Corsten, and “*Hyperspeed*” by Drumattic Twins.

Released on NIA Records (NI1236) in the US only in 1983. The B side was the instrumental.

9. — “Running (“The Nest” Remix)” — Information Society.

Also featured in a mix on “*Electro Crucial 3*”. Formed in 1982 in Minneapolis the Information Society had independently released two albums before moving to New York and getting a record deal and released this single in 1985. A very Electro sounding instrumental section of the track was used in the mix on this album. There was a vocal version, but it didn’t sound much like this one. They had been a very sparse electro sounding band at outset, and gradually changed style away from that over their career, with the different versions of this track probably marking the main turning point. Sampled “*Hot Pants Pt. 1 (She Got to Use What She Got to Get What She Wants)*” by James Brown. Sampled in “*Love You, Will You Love Me (Hard Love Mix)*” by Judy Torres, “*Emergency*” by Cha-os, “*Give It to Baby*” by Altern 8, “*Fallen Angel*” by Clear Touch, “*Freshmix Vol. 1*” by DJ EFX, “*Kamikaze (Took My Love)*” by 2 in a Room, “*Strange Mix Medley (007 Mix)*” by Depeche Mode, “*Paranoid Thugism*” by Genaside II, “*I’ll Be Loving You*” by Collage, “*A Night at the Edit Block*” by Blade to the Rhythm, and “*For All You Non-Believers (Have a Nice One)*” by Spacework.

Released on Tommy Boy (TB877) in the US only in 1986. This mix was the first track on Side B, which it shared with the Instrumental. The A Side had the Vocal Mix and Percappella.

10. — “Mission Possible” — World Class Wreckin’ Cru.

The World Class Wreckin’ Cru also featured on other Electro releases. World Class Wreckin’ Cru debuted in a club owned by one of the early West Coast DJs, Alonzo Williams. Before he opened “Eve After Dark” in 1979, Alonzo was one of the most popular DJs in the Los Angeles area. He began producing dances under the name of Disco Construction, named after funk group Brass Construction. Seeing the popularity of this new craze, he entered the market of running nightclub performances. The club opened with Detroit-born Andre Manuel aka Unknown DJ directing the music program. Disco Construction created a subgroup called the into Wreckin’ Cru which were the Lonzo roadies and later adding World Class it became the name of the recording group. Lonzo hired local DJs Antoine “Yella” Carraby and Andre “Dr. Dre” Young who later became the original Mix Masters for KDAY. Alonzo

Williams created the label “Kru-cut” which began releasing The Wreckin’ Cru music through the mid-1980s with very minimal resources through Macola Records. When this track came out, we knew nothing about Dr Dre or DJ Yella, within two years NWA were the biggest thing going. There is a big difference between this and “*Straight Outta Compton*”, and it was a few years before I made the connection. Dre in what looks suspiciously like make-up and shiny metallic outfits on the 12" and album covers is always good entertainment value for those who weren't aware. Sampled “*Dance to the Music*” by Sly & the Family Stone, and “*Mission: Impossible Theme*” by Lalo Schifrin.

Released on Epic — TA7281 in 1986 with “*World Class Freak*” as the B Side.



Side two

1. — “*Amityville*” — Lovebug Starski.

When Sylvia Robinson was setting up Sugarhill Records, it was Lovebug Starski (born Kevin Smith) she approached to record the first release for the label. He was the house DJ at the Bronx club Disco Fever and was known to MC over the records, and is credited with coming up with the term Hip-Hop — Starski claimed that he coined the phrase while trading the two words back and forth while improvising lines with Cowboy of the Furious Five at a farewell party for a friend who was headed into the Army. He turned Sylvia Robinson down, who went and found what became The Sugarhill Gang and released “*Rapper’s Delight*”. Starski did turn to a recording career starting in 1981. This release was his biggest chart hit in the UK and is unfortunately seen as more of a novelty record, one that should really have been issued around Halloween, as it covers several Halloween’s tropes. Hit number 12 in the UK singles chart in May and June 1986. Another one that I’d bought as a single and that got played nearly to death. He died in February 2018. No credited samples, but had an impersonator doing voices from Spock and Kirk from Star Trek amongst others.

Released on Epic — TA7182 in 1986. The B side was a Dub mix.

2. — “*Pee-Wee’s Dance*” — Joe Ski Love.

Just missed out on the UK charts proper, peaking at number 94 in July 1986. Sampled “*Tequila*” by The Champs, “*Synthetic Substitution*” by Melvin Bliss, “*Pump That Bass*” by Original Concept, and dialogue from two scenes (Mario’s Magic Shop and I Meant to Do That) from Pee-Wee’s Big Adventure. Has been sampled in 197 songs, including 2Pac’s “*Ambitionz Az a Ridah*”, The Chemical Brothers’ “*Hey Boy, Hey Girl*”, Public Enemy’s “*Rebel Without a Pause*”, Beastie Boys’ “*Posse in Effect*”, Eazy-E’s “*Boyz-N-The-Hood*”, Mr. Lee (Chicago House)’s “*Get Busy*”, LL Cool J’s “*You Better Watch Me*”, and De La Soul’s “*Area*” amongst a whole host of others. Proof that you could rap about absolutely anything in the mid-eighties. I can’t imagine Pee Wee Herman getting a track dedicated to a dance like his if such a film came out now.

Released on Vintertainment and Elektra in the US, it came out on Cooltempo (COOLX125) in the UK in 1986. B side had the Acappella Beat and Instrumental version.

3. — “*Latoya*” — Just-Ice.

Just Ice also featured on other Electro releases. Born Joseph Williams Jr. he was a former bouncer at punk clubs, he was the first of the New York rappers to embrace gangster rap, and when he burst out of the Castle Hill neighbourhood in the New York City borough of the Bronx as Just-Ice, he gained instant notoriety. Muscle-bound, tattooed, aggressive — he resembled Mike Tyson in more than just looks — and with a mouthful of gold teeth, he certainly stood out. His debut album Back to the Old School came out on the independent New York label Sleeping

Bag, and certainly sounded like no other hip-hop album, thanks to his fast and forceful rhymes, Ben "Human DMX" Paynes' beatboxing, as well as the distinctive production of Mantronix's Kurtis Mantronik. Not long after his appearance at UK Fresh '86 he was charged with the murder of drug dealer Ludlaw DeSouza, but later proven innocent. Sampled "Leaving on a Jet Plane" by Peter, Paul & Mary. Was sampled in 48 songs including Alicia Keys feat. Mos Def, Common and Damian Marley's "Love It or Leave It" Alone", Welcome to Jamrock, MF DOOM's "Kon Karne", The Prodigy's "Wind It Up", Funkdoobiest's "Rock On", KRS-One feat. Kid Capri's "Stop Frontin'", De La Soul's "D.A.I.S.Y. Age", and Nas, MC Shan, UTFO and Kool Moe Dee feat. Grandmaster Caz, Dana Dane and Just-Ice's "Where Are They Now (80's Remix)". Story of the song is basically; sees girl. Is nervous about talking to her. Mate tells him to stop being a chicken. Girl tries to brush him off before he starts. He raps to her anyway. She changed her mind. They get together. Like a Shakespeare tale four hundred years on.

Wasn't a main single release, it was the second track on Track A of the "Put That Record Back On" single releases in the US only on Fresh Records — FRE-003 in 1986. The B Side had the instrumental of "Put That Record Back On" and "That Girl Is A Slut".

4. — "The Prophecy, Part 1 (In The Beginning)" — M.C. Chill.

M.C. Chill also featured on other Electro releases. Never released as a single. Nice take on the Bible "in the beginning there was the word". M.C. Chill goes on to prophesize there will be greed and destruction of rap. a lot of which could be considered to have become true. However, as this was his first (and last) album, his claim that he was there at the beginning and will be at the end, does seem a little bit of a stretch.

It was only available on M.C. Chill's album "M.C. Chill", released on Fever Records — SFS001 in 1986. It was track 3 on Side 2. The other tracks were (side 1) "M.C. Story", "Downbeats" and "Chill-drens Rhymes", and (side b) "Open Your Eyes", "Jealousy" and "Bust This Rhyme"

5. — "Eric B. Is President" — Eric B. featuring Rakim.

Eric Barrier played trumpet and drums throughout high school, and later switched to experimenting with turntables prior to graduation. The newly dubbed "Eric B." soon began DJing for radio station WBLS in New York City. Barrier wound up meeting Alvin Toney, a promoter based in Queens. Eric B. had been looking for rappers and Toney recommended he use Freddie Foxxx, a Long Island MC. Toney took Eric B. to Foxxx's home, but Foxxx was not there, so Toney suggested another option: William Griffin, a.k.a. Rakim. Griffin had begun writing rhymes as a teenager in Wyandanch and had taken the name "Rakim" as a result of his conversion to The Nation of Gods and Earths. The various early pressings of this had the title printed as both Eric B is President and Eric B for President, and it saw the first release from the greatest MC of them all — Rakim. It is said to be a response to Janet Jackson's "What Have You Done For Me Lately?" responding to her verse of "Used to go to dinner almost every night, Dancin' 'til I thought I'd lose my breath, Now it seems your dancing feet are always on my couch, Good thing I cook or else we'd starve to death — Ain't that a shame? What have you done for me lately." with the third verse of "Go get a girl and get soft and warm, Don't get excited, you've been invited to a quiet storm, But now it's out of hand cause you told me you hate me, And then you ask what have I done lately, First you said all you want is love and affection, Let me be your angel and I'll be your protection, Take you out, buy you all kinds of things, I must have got you too hot and burned off your wings, You caught an attitude, you need food to eat up, I'm scheming like I'm dreaming on a couch with my feet up, You scream I'm lazy, you must be crazy, Thought I was a donut, you tried to glaze me". This was my first introduction to Eric B & Rakim, and so began the obsession with having everything recorded by them. In a time where numerous remixes came out for each single release, it means I have over thirty 12" inch singles by them. I consider Rakim to be the greatest MC of all time, and it is great to see him in such demand for collaborations from all kinds of artists today. Released as a single in the UK, didn't chart despite me buying two different versions of it. Sampled The Mohawks' "The Champ", Mountain's "Long Red", James Brown's "Get Up, Get Into It, Get Involved" and "Funky President (People It's Bad)", Fonda Rae's "Over Like a Fat Rat", and The Honey Drippers' "Impeach the President". Was sampled L.O.D.'s "I Feel It (Remix)", 8-Off Agallah's "Ghetto Girl", Sham & the Professor's "So-Low-Is!", The Troubleneck Brothers' "Back to the Hip-Hop", Tony D's "Buggin' on the Line", Da Beatminerz feat. Caron Wheeler and Pete Rock's "Open (Remix)", Facemob feat. Scarface's "Rivals", Urban Flow's "Just for You", Da 5 Footaz's "It All Got Start", T.W.D.Y. feat. Otis & Shug's "Out 2 Get Mo", Jackers' "It's Finna Be On" and a dozen other tracks.

Released in the UK on Cooltempo (COOLX129) in 1986. It had the extended dub mix on the B Side. A second version on (COOLN129) had "My Melody" on the B Side. Was released on Zakia and Fourth & Broadway in the US.

6. — "Bring The Beat Back (Vocal)" — M.C. Boob A.K.A. Steady "B".

Warren McGlone known by the stage name Steady B, was a member (and de facto leader) of Philadelphia's Hilltop Hustlers crew. Steady B released five albums over the course of his career, with mixed success. He is currently serving a life sentence in a Pennsylvania state prison for his role in the murder of Philadelphia Police officer Lauretha Vaird, during a botched bank robbery in January 1996. Sampled The Headhunters feat. Pointer Sisters' "God Make Me Funky" and E.U.'s "Knock Him Out Sugar Ray". Sampled in Sublime's "Steady B Loop Dub", DJ Red Alert & Mike

Slammer's "*Just Wanna Hold U Tight*", EPMD and D.J. K La Boss's "*D.J. K La Boss*", and Vicious V's "*In Full Effect — Master Done It*". Includes some of the most off-beat rapping I'd heard. Well at least until Kanye West's first album.

Was the B Side of "*Yo Mutha*" on the US release on Pop Art Records. Its release in the UK on Streetwave (MKHAN75) had reversed the order, with an instrumental on the A side, and "*Yo Mutha*" and its instrumental on the B side.

7. — "*(Bang Zoom) Let's Go Go Go*" — The Real Roxanne with Hitman Howie Tee.

UTFO went out to get a female MC in response to a war of words with Roxanne Shante, and to name her The Real Roxanne. Their initial choice Elise Jack, who recorded the first single The Real Roxanne under the character's name, had bailed by the time they got to recording this to be replaced by Adelaida Martinez. A top twenty UK chart hit, again unfortunately seen as somewhat of a novelty hit with the Looney Tunes samples included. The track also featured backing singing from Full Force. Hit number 11 in the UK singles chart in June and July 1986, one of those sales would have been to me, as this was another that got a lot of playing time when it came out. Sampled The Isley Brothers' "*For the Love of You (Part 1 & 2)*", Malcolm McLaren's "*Buffalo Gals*", Funk, Inc.'s "*Kool Is Back*", Full Force's "*Alice, I Want You Just for Me*", John McLaughlin's "*Honky-Tonk Haven*", Billy Squier's "*The Big Beat*", Les Elgart's "*Bandstand Boogie*", and dialogue from Looney Tunes "The Wabbit Kicked the Bucket" and "That's All Folks". Has been sampled in 147 songs, including De La Soul feat. Jungle Brothers and Q-Tip's "*Buddy*", Eazy-E's "*Boyz-N-The-Hood*", Sir Mix-a-Lot's "*Flow Show*", DJ Kool's "*20 Minute Workout*", Bomb the Bass's "*Megablast (Hip Hop on Precinct 13)*", De La Soul's "*Cool Breeze on the Rocks*", 3-2 Get Funky's "*Too Funky*" and Rodney O and Joe Cooley's "*Supercuts (Yeah Boy)*" amongst all the others.

Released on Select records in the US, it was released on Cooltempo (COOLX124) in 1986 with "*Howie's Teed Off*" as the B Side.

8. — "*Queen Of Rox (Shante Rox On) (Street Version)*" — Roxanne Shante.

The full version was featured on "*Electro 7*". Born Lolita Shante Gooden she started rapping at the age of nine and changed her name from Lolita to Roxanne at fourteen. In 1984, the young rapper ran into Tyrone Williams, DJ Mr. Magic, and record producer Marley Marl outside the Queensbridge housing project. U.T.F.O. had recently released a single called "*Hanging Out*," which did not gain much critical acclaim; however, the B-side "*Roxanne, Roxanne*", about a woman who would not respond to their advances, became a hit. Shante was contracted to write a track in rebuttal to U.T.F.O.'s rap, posing as the Roxanne in the U.T.F.O. song. Marley Marl produced the song "*Roxanne's Revenge*" using the original beats from an instrumental version of "*Roxanne, Roxanne*". The track became an instant hit and made Shante, only 14 years old at the time, one of the first female MCs to become very popular. Sampled her own "*Roxanne's Revenge*", Bob James's "*Take Me to the Mardi Gras*" and The Gap Band's "*Burn Rubber on Me (Why You Wanna Hurt Me)*". Sampled in her own "*Runaway*" and "Funk Daddy feat. Dee-Lyrrious's "*Hoo-Ride*". The best Female MC of all time in a track that is a loose retelling of her story of how she was "discovered" and used to respond to U.T.F.O.'s "*Roxanne Roxanne*". Recorded with Rick James on "*Loosey's Rap*" and then kind of vanished from the scene for nearly ten years before coming back on Mekon's "*What's Going On*", showing she had lost none of her edge or delivery.

Released in the US only on Pop Art Records (PA1408) in 1985. This mix was the second track on the A Side with the Radio version; the B Side had the dub mix.

9. — "*The State We're In (Vocal)*" — Easy Mike featuring M.C. Sure Shot.

Sampled James Brown's "*Funky Drummer*" and Grandmaster Flash & The Furious Five's "*The Message*". It was one of three singles Easy Mike released on the label along with "*It's Easy*" and "*I Salute*", all three being released in 1986. Had another release "*Talk About Brotherhood*" on Unsilent Majority Records. M.C. Sure Shot only appearance on any track came on this record. Back to social commentary, touching on politics, war and the ghetto.

Released in the US only, with the only official version being a promo on The Future Records — TF003. The A side also had the instrumental on, and the B Side had "*It's Too Political*" vocal and instrumental versions on it.

10. — "*Ladies*" — Mantronix.

Mantronix also featured on other Electro releases. Hit number 55 in the UK singles chart in February 1986, the first of ten chart hits the group had over the next five years. Mantronix was formed by DJ Kurtis Mantronik (Kurtis el Khaleel) and rapper MC Tee (Touré Embden). They are primarily remembered for their pioneering blend of old school hip hop, electronic, and club music. They underwent several genre and line-up changes during its seven-year existence between 1984–91 and released five albums beginning with their 1985 debut "*Mantronix: The Album*". While working as the in-store DJ for Downtown Records in Manhattan, Kurtis Mantronik met MC Tee, a Haitian-born, Flatbush, Brooklyn-based rapper. The duo soon made a demo, "*Fresh Is The Word*," and signed with Sleeping Bag Records. Electro 13 used a lot of the instrumental part of the track before letting MC Tee into treatise on the fairer sex.

This was released on 10 Records (TEN116–12) in the UK in 1986 having had a US release on Sleeping Bag Records in 1985. It had another version and the instrumental on the B Side.

11. — *“Sleep Walking”* — Family Quest.

Established in 1983, Family Quest were one of the earliest UK rap groups but had only ever featured on 1984’s *“Outer Space ’84 Rap”* by Automation. The group Dirty Harry, E=Mix, Cheeko MC aka Daddy Hip Hop & Mystery (real names Zonya Sullivan, Hugh Christie, Barry Jacobs, Kim Arthurs and Mark Malcolm) were regular hosts alongside Tim Westwood & DJ Fingers at Spats club in London’s Oxford Street on a Saturday afternoon, and were produced by Paul Phillips, formerly of funk band Hi Tension. As the title suggests there are mentions of sleepwalking, both the physical sense (“I dreamt I was making love in the dark, when I woke up all alone in the Park”) and the metaphorical sense of people just sleepwalking through their lives every day (“Every morning, yawning, they only look half awake”). Also has a section of the track which calls out sexism at the time, both in general life and the music industry, as a female MC has the line before the fadeout of the album of “In their dreams, we don’t exist, so they can’t see us doing this.” In 1986 they entered a “King Of The Streets” competition on Mike Allen’s Capital Radio show and won. The prize was this track, their only group release, produced by David Toop who wrote the book *Rap Attack* and released on Morgan Khan’s Streetwave label. They were the only UK act to appear on stage at the legendary hip hop show UK Fresh 86 at Wembley Arena and appear on the accompanying Street Sounds *“Electro 13”* album. Sampled Mike Oldfield’s *“Blue Peter”*, The Crystals’ *“Do Ron Ron”*, and dialogue from Peter Seller’s *Inspector Clouseau* in *“A Shot In The Dark”*.

Released on Streetwave (MKHAN74) in 1986. Had the Wake Mix on the A Side and the Alarm Mix on the B Side.



Label — Street Sounds

Catalog Number — ELCST 13 (Vinyl), ZCEL 13 (Cassette)

Artwork & Design — Federation

Sleeve Notes — Morgan Khan

Charts

UK Albums Chart — Entered the chart on 6th September 1986; it reached Number 23 and stayed in the charts for 5 weeks. This was back before compilation albums were split out into a separate chart.

Club Fact File

| Cleveland Browns | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Founded | 1944 |
| First Season Played | 1946 |
| First Season in NFL | 1950 |
| Ground | First Energy Stadium |
| Capacity | 67,895 |
| Previous Stadium(s) | Cleveland Stadium |
| Previous Names | None |
| Trophies | |
| AAFC Champions | 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949 |
| NFL Champions | 1950, 1954, 1955, 1964 |

| | |
|--|--|
| Superbowl Winners | None |
| AFC Champions | None |
| AFC Central Division Winners | 1971, 1980, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989 |
| AFC North Division Winners | None |
| NFL East Division Winners | 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1957, 1964, 1965 |
| NFL East (Century) Division Winners | 1967, 1968, 1969 |
| Wildcard Playoff Berths | 1958, 1972, 1982, 1988, 1994, 2002 |
| League Seasons | |
| Seasons in AAFC | 4 |
| Seasons in NFL/AFL | 66 |
| Seasons in AFC | 46 |
| Seasons in NFL Eastern Division | 17 |
| Seasons in NFL East (Century) Division | 3 |
| Seasons in NFC Central Division | 29 |
| Seasons in NFC North Division | 17 |

Story Time

Burning Issue Part 3

Courier Package

He handed the envelope to Mick and left the room. Mick looked at what was written on the envelope and then passed it over to Brian. Brian looked at the envelope and shrugged, and then opened the envelope and took out its contents. He ignored the voices of the men around the table asking him what it was as he read the first page. As he read it the expression on his face changed and the colour drained from it. He then flicked through the pages underneath shaking his head as he did so. When he finished he let the pages go flat and pushed himself up from his seat and took a deep breath.

“What I am about to read out and show you will have serious consequences. I don’t know who has sent these documents, but it is clear that they knew there was a meeting taking place here, tonight, and they knew who would be in attendance.”

“The envelope was addressed to ‘The Solicitor’ and had The Bader Room, Humberstone RBL, and 9pm on it. Inside the envelope were a covering letter, and a number of photographs and bank statements. I shall read out the covering letter, again made up of stuck together newsprint, and then pass the accompanying documents around the table.”

“It is good to see you have taken my previous correspondence seriously. Though I have to admit, even I was surprised at the speed you managed to pull one of your council meetings together. You have a dangerously unstable man in your midst, one driven by ego, envy and selfishness. He was definitely responsible for the burning out of the Alfa Romeo at the crematorium. Attached are pictures of him paying Danny Billups three grand to do the deed, along with pictures of the poor pawn Danny setting the fire, and copies of both of their bank statements showing the withdrawal of three grand by one of your own, and the paying in of nearly three grand by Danny.

There are other strange cash withdrawals made a month before from the same account that you may want to ask about. I will not say that they were payments to kill off George Taylor, but the timing of them does look suspect.

The burning down of George’s house however had nothing to do with him. Upon learning about the payment to torch the car, I took the opportunity to arrange for the house to be done at the same time. What better way to send a message.

Don’t forget, the clock is ticking, one day has gone already, and only thirty more remain in your month. Enjoy the rest of your meeting.”

There was a stunned silence in the room as Brian read the letter. Everyone else was looking around at the others, trying to make out who it was in their midst that was responsible for torching the car, and who may have had something to do with George’s death. Brian handed the documents to Cliff, and as he did Stan leant forward with his forehead resting on the table and retched. As Cliff looked at the documents he had a look of shock on his face. He passed them across to Bill, and they made their way around the table, and as they did so, Stan’s head never moved, there were just more retching sounds.

The documents got to Mark and he flicked through them, and wasn't surprised at what he saw, of all of them in the room, he would have picked the right one as the man to do something like this. The rest of those in the room probably wouldn't have thought so. When the documents had completed the circuit of the table all eyes turned to Stan. He had stopped retching and had sat back up. He didn't look a well man.

It was Bill that broke the silence.

"What have you got to say Stan, tell this isn't true? For the love of god man, how could you?"

"It's not all true; I swear on my life, I had nothing to do with George's death. I'd had a run in with one of the tarts at Pandora's massage parlour; her and her pimp were blackmailing me, that's what all the old cash withdrawals were for. I'll hold my hands up, yes; I paid that little scrote Danny Billups to torch the car. I couldn't bear to see that snivelling little shit there driving George's motor around. He's done nothing to deserve it. Yes, it was stupid, but I swear, I didn't have nothing to do with George's death or the house fire. Whoever sent those documents told you that, and it shows I've got nothing to do with the letters you've all received."

"No wonder you weren't as worried as everyone else," Thomas sneered, "You knew you had done the car, and that the house was nothing to do with you, so you thought it was someone chancing their arm. How could you do it to all of us, especially to Mark? He may not have been one of us, but he was still George's son. You should have respected that."

"Why? Why should this ungrateful little bastard get anything that George, and by extension, all of us, earned. He ran away from Leicester at the first opportunity, scared of our estate. He was too good for where he grew up. Then he comes back twenty years later and lives in a village away from us all. Turning his nose up at us, too high and mighty to mix with his own kind."

"I don't know about the others, but I never saw that. The kid had brains and he used them. I don't blame him for getting out. I wish my kids had been able to do the same. You're the one looking down your nose Stan, sneering at him for wanting to make something better of his life. I know George was disappointed, he wanted someone to follow his lead, to step into his shoes, but he understood. You never did get it Stan, as you never had the family."

"You were my family, all of you; you're all I've ever had. Losing George was a bitter pill, Mark couldn't replace him, and I couldn't bear to see that car running around, reminding me of George, me acknowledging the car only for it to have his kid in it instead. I didn't mean any of the rest of this shit to happen."

Joe butted in, "But it did, you arranging with that halfwit Billups to torch the car has now set a fire under everything. You've been an idiot, there's no doubting that. Why the hell didn't you come to us when the sneaky bastards at Pandora's put the squeeze on you? In fact, why the hell go all the way over town to Pandora's? You could have used any of the ones we've got interests in."

"I didn't want to be seen at any of ours, I didn't want anyone to know that I was having to resort to massage parlours to get serviced. Then when they did a number on me, I was too ashamed to say anything. What would you lot have thought of me, being taken that way?"

"You bloody fool, yes we'd have taken the piss for a bit, but we wouldn't have let you pay out all that money to the damn Romanians. We could have paid the three grand you paid that idiot Billups to torch Pandora's instead."

"I know, it just got out of control, and then in the middle of it all George got stabbed, I panicked, thinking it was the Romanians sending a message, and paid them some more. I wasn't thinking straight and when I saw the boy pick up George's car, and the look on his face, I just flipped."

"And now we're all paying the price for your stupidity. It makes me want to change my vote. I abstained, but in the light of things, and the fact that whoever is making the threats really has an inside line to us, I want out, and the sooner the better."

Mark had been quiet, but he leant forward, the others looked at him, and Stan resignedly nodded.

"Stan, you are without a doubt an idiot. But I believe you when you say you had nothing to do with my father's death. I doubt this person threatening your association did either; they're just using it as a way in. If you'd have said something about the car I would have understood, I could have sold it, or swapped it for something else, it's just a means of transport, and I don't care for driving that much. I was going to vote to dissolve the association. Not because I want anything out of it, I don't care if I was a nominated heir; it wasn't as if I was going to join the rest of you. I was going to vote to dissolve it to save you all from yourselves. It was unsure how serious the threat was when I was about to vote. There is no doubt now that it is serious. I don't know how they did it, but they got close enough to film Stan setting up an arson attack. They knew when and where we were meeting and who would be here. They were able to

get copies of your bank accounts Stan. They are able to find out things that they shouldn't be able to. My advice to you all would be to get the hell out of Dodge whilst you're all still able to."

Stan looked as if he was going to speak, but then struggled to get anything out. The rest of the men were just nodding. Sat in silence with their thoughts. Brian was putting the documents back into the manila envelope, and when he had finished and no one else had spoken he did.

"Gentlemen, based on what has been said, would it be a correct assumption that we wish to redo the vote?"

Stan replied first. "I don't know if we have to go through the whole rigmarole of the ballot box again. I think a simple show of hands will do this time. I think it will be a clear cut decision this time."

And it was. Seven men put their hand up to dissolve the association. Cliff abstained. Brian told them he would draw up the required paperwork to dissolve the association first thing on Monday morning, and that they would be ready for signing soon after. Everyone agreed to make appointments to see Brian during the week. Most of them probably had other matters to discuss as well over their own affairs. The meeting was called to a close and Mark got up to leave. He walked out, ignoring Stan calling his name. He walked out of the Legion and across to the bus stop. From there he could see the others leaving. Some were remonstrating with Stan, there were raised voices and pointed fingers, but it didn't get any further than that. By the time they had all left to go to their cars, the bus turned up. As Mark got on the bus he could see Stan slowly walking to his car with slumped shoulders. He looked a broken man.

Moving Away

Mark already has an appointment at the solicitors arranged for the following Thursday. He didn't see the need to change it. When he did get to see Brian on the Thursday, he found that he was the last to sign the paperwork to dissolve the organisation. He got Brian to add an addendum to the paperwork to say that the proceeds from the dissolution should only be split seven ways. He signed to say he didn't want any of the money from the association.

He got to sign the paperwork from his father's will as well. The fact that the house had been burnt down actually worked in his favour. With the tax he needed to pay on the inheritance he would have needed to sell the house to make the payment. With it being burnt down, there would just be insurance money coming in, and the tax could just be paid direct from the inheritance. Even after tax, he was still going to clear £600k. He might upgrade from his flat and invest in his own car after all.

Brian told him that nearly everyone else had taken up advice on selling their houses and engaged him as their solicitor to sell their Leicester properties, and for buying wherever they ended up. Most of them were seaside bound. Cromer, Skegness, Yarmouth, Blackpool and Weston had been mentioned. A list of Leicester favourites. One of them was looking at moving abroad, completely getting away from it all, Greece had been mentioned. Although Brian didn't tell him who was aiming for where, Mark could probably make a good guess.

There was one who wasn't selling up. Mark knew it would be Stan. He had nowhere to go and no one to live with. Apparently his letter had turned up Monday morning after all. He was too set in his ways to run away. He had said that if something was going to happen then so be it.

The month came to an end, six houses had been put on the market, and five of them had had offers on them. All six of the association that lived in those houses received a letter.

"I see you have made plans to move. Congratulations on your sensible choice. Have a long, safe and happy rest of your live."

Stan got a totally different letter.

"I see that you are a stubborn old goat. Clinging on to whatever you think you have. If you will not move yourself then it looks as if I will have to move you. Keep your eyes peeled, you never can tell when you will be moving."

Stan read the letter and then tore it up and burned the pieces. Let them come, he would show them. He wasn't scared of what they might do, but they should be afraid of an old man with nothing to lose and loaded guns with plenty of spare bullets.

Even so he flinched when he was next in the chippy and someone rushed in his direction. He remembered what had happened to George, but the kid stopped in the queue behind Stan and let him be. He took his takeaway lunch to the park and sat on a bench watching the wildlife, pigeons gathered at his feet hoping to pick up some stray chips. He finished his lunch and screwed up the chip papers, and dropped them in the bin next to the bench. He saw the birds taking off and flying away, no longer interested in him now he had no food. He thought about the rest of the association, and their families, and how they would all be upping and leaving soon. He would be the only one left.

He made his way slowly through the estate to his cul-de-sac, seeing a removal van driving out as he approached. He didn't remember seeing any for sale signs down his little close, but it was the way of the world now that these things could be done on line without anyone else knowing.

He got to his front door and put his key in the lock. Well he tried, the key wouldn't fit. He tried his other keys but there was nothing that fitted. He looked through a window into the living room, only to find the room was empty. He rushed round to the rear of the house to the patio doors, only to find the dining room bare as well. He tried his keys in the back door, but none of them would fit. Whilst he was doing so he didn't hear the man walk up behind him. The first he knew of it was when the needle of the syringe plunged into his neck. Stan collapsed in a heap on the floor and blacked out.

He woke, what he found out was three days later, in his own bed. At first thought he'd been having a bad dream, as his bedroom was laid out exactly as it had been in his house. It became apparent it wasn't a dream when he walked out of the bedroom only to find a totally different layout compared to his house. He walked around looking in all the rooms. All his furniture, clothes and other belongings were in the house. He went downstairs and it was a similar story. A different layout, but all his stuff was here. He looked out of the front door and saw a close of 1970's semi-detached houses.

There was some post inside the front door, some of it addressed to him. One envelope bore the now familiar newsprint address. He opened it and read the contents with disbelief.

"Welcome to Milton Keynes, your new home. I found you a house of a similar size, and you have been moved. It is best for all if you stay here. Your Leicester privileges have been removed. If you attempt to come back to Leicester, it will be the last day of your life."

Stan broke down and wept.

Peace at Last

Mark met his old and somewhat unsavoury friend Alan in The Globe in the city centre. Mark had met Alan in a rough boozier on the edge of Moss Side in the late nineties. He had realised at the time that it was the kind of place his father would have loved. Mark had helped Alan out with a few "problems" over the years whilst he had been in Manchester. Alan had been repaying the favours for the last couple of months.

Once his father had been killed, Mark had decided it was time the rest of his father's association stopped being around him. When Danny Billups had mentioned to him what Stan was planning to do to the car, he had called Alan, and put him up in a bed and breakfast on the Humberstone Road. Alan had taken the photos of Stan paying Danny off. Danny had told Mark where they were meeting. They had gone to school together and Danny had always thought Mark was OK; he didn't act like he was better than anyone else, and didn't throw his father's weight around like some of the other kids had done to him.

Alan had gotten bank statements and other documents, and had been amazingly patient at cutting out words from the local paper and sticking them back to sheets of paper to send out. He had been the motorcycle courier the night of the council meeting. Mark had rang him to give him the time and venue, most of the documents had already been prepared. He had deliberately sent the letter to Stan a day later than the letters to the rest of the council.

When Mark walked over to the table Alan was sat at, Alan tore his eyes away from the screen showing the football and acknowledged Mark's approach.

"It's done, Stan is moved, lock stock and no smoking barrels, we've kept his guns. I doubt he'll be back. Losing three days and waking up in a strange house tend to change one's perspective."

"Thanks Al, I suppose this means that we're even now?"

"Well, we will be when you buy me a couple of pints."

Mark smiled; it had been a small price to pay to be free from his father's influence for once and for all.

Dilbert



22/10/2015

Epilogue

If you want to catch up on old issues, Drabbles I've had published, or the random scribbling from a bored mind on my blog then they are all available at <http://www.onetruekev.co.uk/> there are links to a number of older publications I have done in the past, with more of the old stuff being added as time goes by.

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