

A MORNING TELEVISION TALK SHOW

Dylan Kinnett

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SETTING

The set of a morning television talk show, with some seating, a fake window that seems to provide a view of a beautiful but obviously artificial morning landscape, some space to walk around. A separate area for the weather report contains a space for animated maps.

TIME

A Weekday Morning

CHARACTERS

HOST	clean-cut, bold personality
LOCAL METEOROLOGIST	a tempestuous malcontent
CHIEF METEOROLOGIST	an earthy free spirit
TICKER-TAPE	words describing other news

FADE IN:

Sitting on the uncomfortable furniture, we see a carefully selected assortment of people. They are benign physical manifestations of the demographics that the network has chosen to target. They are smiling. They take sips from well-designed cups, drinking what could be coffee. We are to believe that it is a beautiful morning.

HOST

And now for a look at the weather in your area, with our local affiliate's weather specialist.

The word "weather" begins to float above the host's head. He doesn't see it there. Gradually, the host disappears, still smiling. We see a dramatic image of a car drowning in water. That image is replaced with an image of a beach. That image is replaced with an image of an umbrella. Image of snow plow. Image of palm tree slanting in a hurricane. Time-lapse of clouds. Variety of clouds, moving, mutating, splitting, coming together to form storms and dissipating during the night and the day and the subsequent night. The word "weather" disappears from the screen now. The images disappear. Finally, there is someone in an cheap suit, standing in front of a map of the local metropolitan area.

LOCAL METEOROLOGIST

(ON A CELLPHONE)

I'm assuming they're not going to like the heat again, motherfucker! Leave me alone it's time to do the weather. What's that? What! You're fucking kidding me right now with this shit. God dammit!

HOST

(awkwardly)

That's all the time we have for the local weather! Now let's take a look at the national forecast, with our Chief Meteorologist.

Now we see another person, in a nicer suit, standing in front of a map of the entire continent. Large red areas cover most of the map, emblazoned with words like "heat" and "hot" and "scorching"

CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

It's time for the national weather.

(touching an ear piece)

but first I'd like to say a few words to our viewers of the affiliate stations. The words and actions of our local affiliates do not necessarily reflect those of the network as a whole. The network has no religious affiliations or discriminations and would never call upon a deity of any kind to bring damnation upon the weather.

(looking at the map)

On a personal note, I would like to add that it is my belief that the weather is purely an act of a benevolent God, who doesn't ever want us to feel chilly.

A scrolling ticker-tape appears below the meteorologist. It says...

TICKER-TAPE

AT 224 PM EDT...DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED ISOLATED SHOWERS AND THUNDERSTORMS... OVER THE CENTRAL LAKESHORE AND NORTH CENTRAL OHIO WITH HEAVIEST SHOWER NEAR FREMONT AND WAS SLOWLY MOVING EAST. ISOLATED SHOWERS AND THUNDERSTORMS SOME WITH LOCALLY HEAVY RAIN AND OCCASIONAL LIGHTNING STRIKES WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THROUGH 4PM.

HOST (V.O.)

Nobody wants to be chilly!

CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

That's exactly right!

The scrolling ticker-tape appears to be malfunctioning. Its text moves very quickly now and it says:

TICKER-TAPE

Humidity. Montreal, Quebec City,
 Canada moon one of April is
 extremely possible showers miles
 south of religion or purge; dot
 formation, severe like the lighting
 in bed, is it is okay I traveled
 Miles North of your little league
 scandal with locally Heavy rains.
 Snow accumulations less than inches
 from explosion. HAIL HAIL HAIL and
 for the next three days we will help
 you with what you should wear. rain
 in high winds will never actually
 fall. The doorknob turns and I'm
 waiting for the person. You see a
 line extending from the freezer to
 the table. The HEAVIEST Thunderstorm
 is over. The rules of your face.
 The human imagination. HALF GUSTY
 Winds Gusting to the North it is The
 Weather Service CLEVELAND Oh PM EDT
 WED SEP ERIE OTTAWA HURON SANDUSKY
 PM EDT. You to of shoes in the sink
 how the Spirit tries To DEVELOP
 Through the cold. Working Naked for
 us is to be alive? Other parts are
 measured in parts per million.
 Winds SE At Mph. Sunrise at dawn.

CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

To continue with the weather, and on
 a personal note, I have always
 wondered about something in my long
 career as a meteorologist for the
 network.

HOST

What's that?

CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

Why so many obvious details and
 never any interesting ones?

HOST

Say we turn the weather into
 something more interesting, then!
 Nobody needs to hear about the heat
 again anyway, right?

CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

Why doesn't the weather forecast offer up the likelihood of rainbows, or conjecture about the beauty of the sunset each day? The television weather report suggests when to bring an umbrella, but never when to wear your hair such that it might get caught in a pleasant breeze. There's a report on the likelihood of rain, but never how long the puddles might last. When it snows: will it be the kind of snow that's good for making snowballs? or snow forts? There's a report of the record heights and lows for temperature, but not kites.

HOST

We'll be back with the traffic report, after these messages.

We hear the start of the commercials. The host's mic is off. The camera is off. He sighs, stands up and then...

HOST (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you talking about?!

CHIEF METEOROLOGIST

(calmly, after a pause.)

Possibilities. I'm a meteorologist!
It's all I ever talk about.
Possibilities.

THUMBBOOK

Dylan Kinnett

To be performed in the manner of an advertisement, by a single person.

SPEAKER

Hi there. Thanks for paying attention. Let's get to it! I want to tell you about an exciting new thing called ThumbBook. It's an interactive way to connect with your friends. Here's how it works.

Speaker produces a card that has a picture and some text on it.

SPEAKER

This a "card." As you can see, I put a picture on it. This is a picture of me having fun, but it could be a picture of anything. Some people love pictures of pets and animals, but I don't have any pets and animals, so I chose a different fun picture that people might like. I wrote a little caption, too. With ThumbBook, all I have to do is show this "card" to my friends.

Speaker shoves the card toward the camera, then pulls it away.

SPEAKER

And then, if my friends like it, they can show me their thumb.

Speaker does a "thumbs up" gesture.

SPEAKER

It's that easy. They show their thumb.

Speaker does a "thumbs up" gesture again.

SPEAKER

and I'll know that they like my "card." Like this.

Speaker does a "thumbs up" gesture, as though for the first time, right at the camera.

SPEAKER

or it could be like this.

Speaker gives a thumbs up to the camera with other hand.

SPEAKER

Some friends might not like your "card." Or they're too busy. That's okay. They can leave the "card" aside and someone else might show their thumb later. That's all there is to it, but there's more to do with ThumbBook once you get the hang of it.

You can do more than show your thumb. With ThumbBook 2.0, now you can also make faces! It's easy. I'll show you how. You can smile.

Speaker smiles.

SPEAKER

You can stick your tongue out.

Speaker sticks tongue out.

SPEAKER

We're also testing a beta feature that will allow you to raise one eyebrow without raising the other. It's still in Beta, though, so not everybody will be able to do it.

Speaker attempts to raise one eyebrow without raising the other.

Speaker produces another card, with a different picture on it, but no caption.

SPEAKER

You can interact with a "card" in other ways, too. Let's say your friend wanted to give a more elaborate response to this "card."

Speaker shows the card to the camera, giving time for contemplation.

SPEAKER

Or let's say you forgot to make a caption. One of your friends could! All you have to do is take a pen, like this.

Speaker produces a pen.

SPEAKER

And all you have to do is write on
it. Like this. You can write
whatever you want!

Speaker writes the phrase "whatever you want" on the card,
and shoves it toward the camera, smiles, and gives a thumbs
up gesture.

SPEAKER

That's all there is to it. Thanks
for paying attention!

PARTY PLANET

written by
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SETTING

A space ship, returning to Earth after a long, peaceful voyage to a distant planet. The inside of the spaceship contains an area where the astronauts sleep in stasis, with bed-like furnishings. There is also a command center, with the usual futuristic control panels, a porthole to see outside and an airlock doorway.

TIME

The future

SCENES

SCENE 1	The living quarters, inside the spaceship
SCENE 2	The command center, inside the spaceship
SCENE 3	Outside the spaceship
SCENE 4	The command center, inside the spaceship

CHARACTERS

CAPTAIN	grumpy captain of a spaceship
ENGINEER	dutiful technician
SCIENTIST	cynical exo-geologist
COMPUTER	talking computer
RADIO VOICE	party animal on Earth

SCENE 1

We see the interior of a futuristic spacecraft. It is approaching its destination, after a long journey. The crew is waking up.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
All cryogenic systems have been deactivated. Raising internal temperature. Raising lights. What is your input?

ENGINEER
Captain, what are your orders?

CAPTAIN
Computer: snooze...

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
Captain, the cryogenic systems are not equipped with snooze functionality. What is your input, Captain?

CAPTAIN
Oh. Right. Right, then. Where the hell are we?

ENGINEER
We are approaching Earth's solar system, Captain.

CAPTAIN
Ok, roll call.

ENGINEER
Chief Engineer on duty. You may take command, Captain.

CAPTAIN
Thank you. That was one hell of a nap, just now.

SCIENTIST
Chief Science Officer, reporting for duty. Hell of a nap indeed, Captain.

CAPTAIN
OK let's do a systems check and prepare to send data to Earth. Have they requested our status?

ENGINEER
Captain, they have not.

SCIENTIST

Have we heard anything else from Mission Control? I would like to know their response to the sample data we sent.

ENGINEER

We do have a transmission from them, but it's, well it's funny.

CAPTAIN

What do you mean, "it's funny"?

ENGINEER

It's, well Captain, listen to it.

The ENGINEER calls up a recording of the last transmission from Earth. A recording of laughter plays over the intercom. It resembles the recorded laughter used for television comedies.

CAPTAIN

Is that the whole thing? Play the previous transmission.

Laughter plays again.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Play the one before that.

More laughter.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Where the hell are they broadcasting all this laughter from, and why?

ENGINEER

It seems to be on every single one of Earth's communication channels. What do you think it is?

SCIENTIST

You haven't been home in a while, have you? It's called hilarity television.

Beat. The other two are incredulous.

It works like this: people hear fake laughter, then they laugh for real. It makes them feel better.

ENGINEER

When you hear someone else yawn, you yawn too, and you feel tired. It's like that, is it?

SCIENTIST

Oh, they have that channel, too.

laughter again.

CAPTAIN

We're hurdling towards the Earth at top speed. This ship hasn't done any manual communicating with Mission Control in years. Landing this ship will require complex calculations and coordination with the ground base, to avoid collisions, explosions or who knows what, and all our damn radio can do is to laugh at us! Play back the earliest transmission on file. And slow this ship down!

More laughter plays.

ENGINEER

I'm sorry, Captain. Maybe there's some sort of communications malfunction.

CAPTAIN (to the Engineer)

I want you to suit up, get out there, and take a look at the receivers on the outside of the ship. I want to be certain we've checked everything twice.

CAPTAIN (to the Scientist)

Take over the controls. Broadcast our position on all channels. Full stop.

BLACKOUT

SCENE 2

During this scene, the ENGINEER is outside the ship, on a spacewalk to check the communications equipment. The CAPTAIN and the SCIENTIST can communicate with the ENGINEER via an intercom. The outside of the ship can be represented on another part of the stage, or the ENGINEER can simply be offstage.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)

Airlock secure. Initiating spacewalk communications protocol.

ENGINEER (OFF)

Captain, can you read me?

CAPTAIN

Just don't do any laughing while you're out there and we'll know it's you.

ENGINEER (OFF)

No worries there, Captain. Out here, I'm nervous!

CAPTAIN

Keep your magnet boots on. We're right here on standby.

SCIENTIST

What's to be nervous about? It's just a spacewalk.

CAPTAIN

It's the new spacesuit. Probably has him a bit jittery. It's a semi-autonomous suit.

SCIENTIST

Those suits that adjust your movements? I thought those were just prototypes.

CAPTAIN

Well, they are, but Mission Control wanted us to have one for this mission. There are only three of us up here in this very expensive can. Oxygen is precious. If the suit runs low on it, and the astronaut becomes unconscious, the suit can auto-correct, or it can be piloted from Mission Control.

SCIENTIST

That's, well, it's brilliant, I guess. They'd use our bodies as puppets?

CAPTAIN

Or, just the suits, but basically it seemed the best way to make emergency repairs and to bring the ship home.

ENGINEER (OFF)

I've made an adjustment to the equipment out here. Can you try scanning the communications channels again and see if anything has changed?

SCIENTIST and CAPTAIN make adjustments. A new transmission plays. This broadcast from Earth consists of extremely upbeat music, annoyingly upbeat "catchy" or "pop" party music.

ENGINEER (CONTINUED)
How's that? Did it work?

Beat

ENGINEER
What's going on in there you guys?
Are you having some kind of party? I
can't hear you! What is that?

SCIENTIST
It's the transmission. It's not
coming from us.

ENGINEER (OFF)
Repeat. I do not copy. Over.

CAPTAIN (yelling)
We are getting different signals now. Don't panic. Keep
making adjustments!

ENGINEER (OFF)
Copy that, Captain. This suit is
making things difficult. It's like
I'm arm-wrestling with myself out
here.

The party music on the radio is interrupted.

SCIENTIST
Captain, I think we have an open
channel!

CAPTAIN
Hailing mission control. Requesting
Earth approach coordinates. Hailing
mission control. Do you copy?

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)
Helloooo, how's everybody doing out
there tonight? One, two. One, two.
Testing testing. One, two. Two. Two.
Two. Two. Helloooo! Mic check. Mic
check. One, two. Can you hear me in
the back? Can I get a whoop whoop?

CAPTAIN

Um, copy that. Requesting Earth approach coordinates. Our mission is on standby pending spaceflight directive from ground control. We're not moving until you say when.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)

Yeah? Whatever! Check this out, man. I can make your ship flap its wings. Make it go flap! Flap flap flap. Fly!

ENGINEER (OFF)

I'm sorry to interrupt, Captain, but my suit, it's --

RADIO VOICE (CONTINUED)

Oh my god, you have got to hear this song, dude. It's the best!

More party music plays.

CAPTAIN

That racket again! What the hell is going on out there!

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)

Initiating re-entry wing deployment. Rotating re-entry wings 45 degrees. Rotating re-entry wings negative 45 degrees. Rotating re-entry wings 45 degrees. Rotating re-entry wings negative 45 degrees.

CAPTAIN

Stop it!

SCIENTIST

Captain, I can't override the commands.

ENGINEER (OFF)

Captain, many of the ships mechanical systems seem to be moving in response to the signal. I'm going to try to turn the receiver back to its original position.

CAPTAIN

Fine. And shut off that noise!

ENGINEER (OFF)

I'm having trouble moving, Captain.
It is very difficult to work under
these conditions.

CAPTAIN

Well, I don't give a damn! Get it
done. We can't just park here and
listen to music all day. Let's get
moving, dammit! What is he doing out
there? Can you see?

SCIENTIST

He... He looks to be... Dancing.
He's dancing, Captain.

BLACKOUT

EXT. OUTSIDE THE SHIP

The ENGINEER is doing the spacewalk.
We hear more of the music from the transmission, as well as
sporadic occurrences of the canned laughter. The ENGINEER is
attempting to make adjustments to the equipment, which is
perhaps similar to a satellite dish. There is zero gravity,
so the ENGINEER's movements should be slow and fluid. While
moving across the exterior of the ship, the space suit is
receiving instructions to dance. The instructions come
sporadically at first and the ENGINEER struggles to override
them with other movements. After a while of this, there seems
to be more dancing and less of the ENGINEER's intended
movements. Eventually, the ENGINEER is overcome and the only
movements are dance movements. As though it were some
seductive dance move, the arms reach toward the chest of the
suit, to open it revealingly.

ENGINEER

No.. No.. No!

The suit's chest is slowly pulled open. There is a terrible
hissing sound as the precious oxygen escapes from the suit.
The ENGINEER convulses briefly and dies. The suit then
removes its own helmet, revealing lifeless remains within.
The suit doffs its helmet, up and down, as one might do with
a hat during a tap-dance.

BLACKOUT

INT. INSIDE THE SHIP.

By now, the music has reached a crescendo and shows no sign
of stopping.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
Exterior airlock opening sequence
initiated.

CAPTAIN
Good! That's our engineer coming
back in. When that's done, I'll shut
off all the communications, even if
I have to bite the wires in half
with my damn teeth! I'm sick of
this noise!

SCIENTIST
Captain?

CAPTAIN
What is it now?

SCIENTIST
The dancing, Captain. It hasn't
stopped and, well, I thought I
saw... I can't be sure what I saw.
We've lost contact. I can't get any
readings. Not even... Not even life
support from the suit.

CAPTAIN
Never-mind all that now. It's
probably just another
communications malfunction acting on
the suit. We'll power it down in a
moment and we'll get out of here.

SCIENTIST
The outer airlock hasn't closed yet.

CAPTAIN
What?

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
Inner airlock opening sequence
initiated.

There is another hissing sound now, as all the air inside the
ship begins to escape into the vacuum of space. The CAPTAIN
and the SCIENTIST are being pulled towards the airlock as it
slowly opens to reveal the ENGINEER's body standing in the
doorway.

CAPTAIN
Shut it down! Send the distress
signal!

The SCIENTIST struggles to slam on some buttons. An alarm
sounds, adding yet more sound to the crescendo of sound that

has been building this whole time. The CAPTAIN and the SCIENTIST are pulled out of the ship, past the ENGINEER and into the abyss of space. The body of the ENGINEER stands ominously in the airlock doorway. Its autonomous space suit is disco dancing.

THE END

THE PIECE OF REAL ESTATE AT THE TOP OF THE TALLEST BUILDING ON EARTH

Dylan Kinnett

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Draft
information
Contact
information

"When you go in search of honey,
you must expect to be stung by bees."
— JOSEPH JOUBERT

CAST OF CHARACTERS

EXECUTIVE:

A confident, successful executive with an abrupt formal manner.

ASSISTANT:

The fastest person in the room.

BOSS:

The owner of the company, focused on the big picture and cannot be bothered with trivial details.

MELVIN WOODSTOCK:

A washed-up real-estate investor.

BARBARA WITHERSPOON:

A wealthy eccentric.

SETTING

An executive office. The furnishings are simple, sophisticated, and cutting-edge. There is a desk for the Executive and a work/reception area for the Assistant. At first it is a quiet space, but it becomes increasingly full of sound throughout the day. Broadcast news, or some other form of persistent information should be part of the ambiance of the place at the start of the business day.

TIME

Monday morning. The near future.

INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE. MORNING

The EXECUTIVE enters the office and is greeted by the ASSISTANT.

ASSISTANT
Good morning!

EXECUTIVE
Good morning. What do we have today?

The ASSISTANT hands some information to the EXECUTIVE.

ASSISTANT
You've got a sales call this morning. The boss might swing by before lunch. You have meetings scheduled at 4 p.m., 4:10, and 4:18 this afternoon...

EXECUTIVE
Wow, busy day.
(glancing at the information)
Tell the third meeting I'll be late.

ASSISTANT
You asked me to remind you to review the language for the new Altitude Initiative. It starts today and there will be an announcement.

EXECUTIVE
Where did we leave off with that?

ASSISTANT
(points to some of the information and reads a passage.)
"The changes we are making will help us to assess deliberately our buy-in, in a results oriented way. Components include roll out, gap analysis, and rejuvenated stakeholder analysis. We're making forward progress towards the mission by implementing a skill set that is both ubiquitous and bleeding-edge."

EXECUTIVE
None of that sounds even vaguely familiar. Or meaningful.

ASSISTANT
You wrote it.

EXECUTIVE

It's Monday.

The coffee pot makes a tone to announce that the coffee is ready.

ASSISTANT

Coffee?

The EXECUTIVE places the information on the desk and returns to retrieve the coffee.

EXECUTIVE

Thank you so much.

ASSISTANT

Are we buying or selling today?

EXECUTIVE

Buying, but I have a feeling there will be some selling along the way. The reports come out today. They're not good. The company needs something else to talk about today. That's why, today, we're going to buy the piece of real estate at the top of the tallest building on Earth.

ASSISTANT

So that's why they named it the Altitude Initiative.

EXECUTIVE

(returning to desk)
Let's get started.
(sitting, preparing to
make a call.)
Who's first on the call schedule?

ASSISTANT

Melvin Woodstock. His property is the observation deck at the top of the Windsor tower.

EXECUTIVE

That's his tallest building, right?

ASSISTANT

(already listening to the
phone.)
Just completed, last week. I have Melvin on the line now. It's ringing. Are you ready?

EXECUTIVE

Ready...

(joining the phone
conversation)

Melvin? Melvin! How are you? How's
that golf game of yours?

The ASSISTANT remains on the line, but is suddenly distracted
by some urgent work, information, etc.

MELVIN (V.O.)

I wish it were better, but business
is way over my head lately. On top
of that there's the wife, the
ex-wife, the girlfriend, you know?
ha ha.

EXECUTIVE and ASSISTANT exchange disapproving glances.

MELVIN

Besides, my health isn't so hot.
It's gotten so bad my doctor says...
Well, I can't even swing a golf club
any more.

EXECUTIVE

That's a shame, Melvin. What's the
diagnosis?

MELVIN

Obesity! Look, I'm glad you called.
Your boss said that you might.

As MELVIN talks, the ASSISTANT gestures wildly to get the the
EXECUTIVE to "stop," "cut, cut" or "hang up now."

MELVIN

I'd like to try to see if I can't
interest you in a room with a view.
It's a spectacular view. From up
here you really can see everything.
From up here, you really start to
wonder how anybody could have ever
thought that the world was flat.

EXECUTIVE

Yes. Impressive. Well, it seems
there's a mutual interest. I'll go
ahead and put something together for
you to review later, okay? Bye for
now!

The EXECUTIVE disconnects and yells to ASSISTANT.

EXECUTIVE (CONT'D)

Sure, he's a cheating bastard who is too fat to swing a golf club, but we need a better reason to hang up on him than that!

ASSISTANT

(still on the line)

What? Oh no, no, no. That? Umm. That was "to fast for that swamp bog." There's a boat-related conversation on the other line. Ok. Alright then. We'll be in touch. Goodbye.

The ASSISTANT disconnects the call.

EXECUTIVE

He heard me.

ASSISTANT

It doesn't matter. He's no longer the owner of the piece of real estate at the top of the tallest building on Earth. That's why you needed to cut it short. They've built another one.

EXECUTIVE

Already? Wow that was fast.

The EXECUTIVE prepares for the call.

ASSISTANT

(looking up new information)

Yes, there's a new owner, and a new piece of real estate at the top of the -- Wow, that's a mouthful. Should we make an acronym?

EXECUTIVE

Yes, please. I love acronyms. But for now: who should I call?

ASSISTANT

Barbara Witherspoon on the uppermost floor of Witherspoon Tower in London. Fully furnished. Not an observation deck. This picture's nice. It's 200 meters taller than the last tower. This will be a cold call, I'm afraid. It's ringing.

EXECUTIVE
 (into the phone)
 Hello, may I speak with --

BARBARA (V.O.)
 Barbara Witherspoon, here. To be
 honest it's lucky you caught me.
 This is a brand new number!

as BARBARA rambles, the ASSISTANT gestures to signal that the
 EXECUTIVE should end the conversation.

BARBARA
 I travel a lot and I bought this
 little apartment mostly for my cat,
 you see. If you'd called only
 yesterday, it would have been just
 the cat at home here and nobody else
 but the help. How can I help you?

EXECUTIVE
 (abruptly into the phone)
 Sorry, wrong number.
 (to the ASSISTANT)
 I feel like I'm prank-calling the
 richest people in the world.

ASSISTANT
 I'm sorry about that, but
 Witherspoon Tower is no longer the
 tallest building on Earth.

EXECUTIVE
 Just like that? Again? Am I getting
 old or is everything moving too
 quickly?

ASSISTANT
 Yes.

EXECUTIVE
 How do we get out of this mess, and
 on to a deal?

ASSISTANT
 New deal: construction just finished
 on a taller one. It's in Japan.
 Should I get a translator?

EXECUTIVE
 Don't bother. I see a trend here.

ASSISTANT

Me too. I got I.T. to install a new app. It plays a tone when there's a new piece of real estate... that meets our criteria.

A tone sounds to indicate when new information arrives.

EXECUTIVE

Seems useful.

ASSISTANT

(seeing an ad for more software)

If you like, we can buy different tones for it. You can get things like syllables sampled from popular music!

EXECUTIVE

Just syllables?

ASSISTANT

Just syllables. Like "yeah" and "babe" and "uhh."

EXECUTIVE

Okay... Why just syllables?

ASSISTANT

Licensing fees. Attention spans? Not sure why they invented it, but people love it.

EXECUTIVE

The default is fine, I'm sure. We can tell it apart from the coffee pot. After this tone goes off, how much time will we have--

Tone sounds again.

ASSISTANT

Well it does seem to vary, but on average, I guess the interval between each opportunity is...

A tone sounds.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

...increasingly shorter.

EXECUTIVE

Another idea: it takes a while to complete construction, right?

ASSISTANT
 (already working on it)
 So you want another alert when
 construction breaks ground. Like
 this!

A second tone sounds.

EXECUTIVE
 I was going to say: We have to hear
 about it, before they get started. I
 want an alert for the early press
 about it.

ASSISTANT
 Like this?

A third tone sounds.

EXECUTIVE
 Do we really have a need for that
 second tone?

The first tone sounds again.

ASSISTANT
 No time for that now.

EXECUTIVE
 Agreed.

Now there are three tones, sounding off with increasing
 frequency, for the remainder of the play. The BOSS enters,
 and strikes up a conversation near the ASSISTANT's work area.

BOSS
 How is everybody this morning? Good
 weekend? Did I hear the coffee bell
 in here? I've run out.

ASSISTANT
 No coffee bell, but we do have
 coffee. It's still warm if you'd
 like a cup?

BOSS
 Super. Use my cup. My kids got it
 for me. It says "the boss" on it.
 See? Right there. "The boss."

ASSISTANT
 (pouring a cup of coffee)
 Oh I see. 'cause you're the boss.
 Cute. Kids.

EXECUTIVE

Those sounds are part of a system we've got for the Altitude Initiative.

BOSS

Yes, the Altitude Initiative. We agreed to call it that, but... We did finally agree to buy the piece of real estate at the top of the tallest building on Earth?

EXECUTIVE

Yes, and we're on target. Our new system alerts us with new information about the... tall buildings.

BOSS

How much information is there?

ASSISTANT

Hear those tones?

BOSS

I thought you must have been making a whole lot of coffee in here, getting a whole lot of work done. But those tones are a lot of information?

EXECUTIVE

Yes.

BOSS

That's too much! For one lousy tower? Who cares! What, because it happens to be a few feet taller than some other tower?

ASSISTANT

Meters.

BOSS

Yes, meters. The metric system. We're behind that now. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE

It's not just that. But there's a new one every day.

BOSS

I know that, but I only care about the tallest one. Did you call Melvin?

EXECUTIVE
(to ASSISTANT)
Which?

ASSISTANT
The golfer.

EXECUTIVE
No, which building.
(to BOSS)
Yes, we called Melvin.

BOSS
Super! How is Melvin? You know his health isn't so good, and I really think we're in a position to help him out.

EXECUTIVE
We were, but he's just no longer the owner of the piece of real estate at the top of the tallest building on Earth.

BOSS
Did he sell the place?

EXECUTIVE
Since the call? Maybe. We can check.

BOSS
What's the problem? I told you. No price is too high. I don't care that it's just an observation deck. We can remodel!

EXECUTIVE
There's a taller building now.

BOSS
So? We want that one! It's good enough. Lots of windows. What a view! You can look down on everybody from up there. What's the problem?

EXECUTIVE
No problem at all.

BOSS
Super. We're going forward on the partnership. Thanks for the coffee.

The BOSS exits.

EXECUTIVE
(returning to desk)
I don't even know where to begin...

ASSISTANT
By calling Melvin?

EXECUTIVE
Oh, god. Fine.

ASSISTANT
It's ringing.

EXECUTIVE
Melvin? It's me. Returning your
call. How are you?

MELVIN
How am I? I think you put it best.
I'm a fat, cheating bastard, that's
how I am. Why did you call?

EXECUTIVE
Well, as you know, our company is
interested in the possibility of a
transaction...

MELVIN
I just got off the phone selling it.
To somebody else.

EXECUTIVE
Oh. I see. That's a shame. Out of
curiosity though: to whom did you
sell?

MELVIN
You're so clever, look it up
yourself! Now excuse me. I have a
doctor's appointment.

MELVIN ends the call.

EXECUTIVE
That went well. Who bought it?

ASSISTANT
(looking it up.)
Well, it doesn't matter because it
has already re-sold and then that
person already sold it to somebody
else. Would you like me to set up
another tone, or another phone call?

EXECUTIVE

Both please, and thank you.

ASSISTANT

It's ringing.

END OF PLAY.

STREET PREACHER

written by

Dylan Kinnett

Based on a true story

2019-05-27
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"He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not."
— Isaiah 53:3

SETTING

These monologues, or harangues, could become an Internet video, with a low production quality, and degraded, perhaps copied and shared too often, or perhaps trans-coded from VHS.

Interior scenes occur in the partially furnished basement of a home. The exterior scenes occur in one or more crowded places such as a subway, a station, or a marketplace. The preacher interacts with anyone who seems interested.

CHARACTERS

STREET PREACHER

more mad scientist than hermit

EXT. A CROWDED AREA

PREACHER

This is an urgent warning. This is an urgent warning: if you are alive and viewing this tape then you should know that you have missed the end. You're too late.

I am speaking to you on behalf of entire universe! I am speaking to you from the future! You are special. We're rooting for you. Be a Rebel. Resist to the end. We'll see you soon. Love, the original human race.

All things. All this. It's nothing. They are earthly things. They will be destroyed.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT

This second introduction interrupts the first.

PREACHER

I'll open with my real title: this is Mustard Seed Southern Giant Curl 'Da Ram Lamb saying hello to the true believers. And to the rest of you, I love you very much but what hope is there for you? Absolutely no hope, you slothful hell-bound beasts, fit for destruction, who degrade creation with every breath you take. May God have mercy on your wretched souls and there is no such animal as an ethical psychologist. These are false prophets, wolves in sheep's clothing.

I have left your so-called garden of earthly delight, but I see things that remind me of the end of which I speak. The end of the very curve of the earth, the end of the rocks and stones. The end of the beasts that roam this earth. The end of the birds, of rain bringing water down to form streams, rivers, oceans, ice. The end of the miracle of ice. The end of the human animal, who can use a miracle as a tool, cubes in a cold drink. The end of the perception of miracles. The end of the very fact of perception itself. Don't you think I know!

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT

The preacher sees invisible spirits.

PREACHER

Why thank you Mary; that was a lovely thing to say. Mom-Wade, Gramma Pearl, Bertha, did you folks like that? Oh Solomon! You're such a flatterer.

Speaking into the camera.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

The love of man and woman will fail you every time. The profession of faith in the safety of a church never saved anyone because that's just not the plan. They got one thing right though. Apocalyptic reckoning of the highest order: the end is at hand. Look around you. By the time you see this, hear my words, it's in the air. This air, not some highfalutin ozone up there, hard to get, impossible. Here. The end is real. The end is now.

EXT. A CROWDED AREA

The preacher delivers proverbs to a crowd of busy pedestrians.

PREACHER

Love will fail you every time. Love is all you need? Love is most certainly not all you need. What about food and water? Air? What good is love without that?

What you think you know: that's just not how it all goes down.

I am speaking to you from the other side of the future!

It's out there. Literally just as plain as day. Something you see every day will one day be the death of us all. The clockwork killer.

The life-giver is the life-taker and will have no mercy when the time comes. Your prayers will fall on empty space.

Read my lips very carefully. Two words. Not those two words. Two words: solar power. Solar power is... solar power is wow!

The end will come from above, all right!

It really does end in fire, but not the way you think, brother. Oh brother!

The end is comin' right at us, like the landscape on a freeway, getting closer without moving, faster. I see glory in the blur, faster than a freeway, crashing past. I see glory in the chaos, the random human constructions, the divine machinations, faster, faster, on the way to glory, faster than a freeway. What goes faster than a freeway? It's a train.

INT. BASEMENT

PREACHER

You get no salvation! Let the nations of the Earth wallow with their heads in the slop! Mankind is a gaggle of bovine beasts, inbred, domesticated! Our strength is flaccid now.

We are as good as dead! You see the sun and you think you see something red but the sun is not red. The sun is white. The sun is yellow. The sun is a dwarf. But it's getting red. It's getting angry and the sun is growing larger with its anger! When it's done getting bigger, the sun will swallow us all. Whole!

I'm warning you. Apocalyptic reckoning of the highest order. All that: coming soon! Not to a theater near you, but it's coming right at you. It's in the air—this air. And in the space around it. It's in the science books!

CUT TO:

EXT. A CROWDED AREA.

The preacher chants.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

Oh me, oh my! Fire in the sky!
Oh my, oh me! Catastrophe!
Oh me, oh my! Fire in the sky!
Oh my, oh me! Catastrophe!
Oh me, oh my! Fire in the sky!
Oh my, oh me! Catastrophe!

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT

PREACHER

Look it up: science, gravity,
time. The last tree standing, if a
tree stands at all that is, by then,
that last tree will pop into flames
like a match in the microwave. The
rocks and stones melt into pools
forming currents of molten lava
while it will all grow still hotter
and boil, spattering magma like
grease on the lid of a pan into what
thin sheets of air remain, and the
water and the air will drip back to
Earth as its liquid corpse
evaporates in the sun. What is there
beyond that?

(going full-blast, now.)

How would I feel if somebody told me
to just go and look it up? How would
I feel? I'll tell you how I would
feel. I would feel stupid, and then
I would go and look it up. Look it
up. Look it up. Look up. Look up and
see. Sooner or later the Earth will
spin into the Sun. You'll see.
You'll look and the sight will burn
your eyes because you are not
worthy. No one is worthy.

But how do you know it would hurt?
You've never experienced it, because
you avoid it, and you avoid it
because you fear it, and you fear it
because you know, or at the least,
you believe—

...like the landscape on a freeway,
getting closer without moving,
faster. All in a blur in a blaze,
faster than a freeway, crashing past
landscape. It'll be the end of the
chaos, the random human
constructions, our precious
machinations. It'll come fast.
Faster than the freeway. What goes
faster than a freeway? Light.

Every yellow dwarf becomes a red
giant. It's all a matter of time.
Prepare yourselves! Prepare
yourselves for the fiery
inevitability. Take your focus away
from trivial matters and prepare to
see the Earth swallowed whole!

Swallowed by fire!

The preacher chants.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

Oh me, oh my! Fire in the sky!

Oh my, oh me! Catastrophe!

Oh me, oh my! Fire in the sky!

Oh my, oh me! Catastrophe!

Oh me, oh my! Fire in the sky!

Oh my, oh me! Catastrophe!

The End

THE THING ABOUT RESTAURANTS

Dylan Kinnett

(cc-by-sa) Dylan Kinnett

Staged Reading Draft
June, 2019

INT. RESTAURANT

A table and two chairs suggest the interior of a restaurant. Projected images can further suggest the setting.

CHARACTER #1 and CHARACTER #2 are led silently led to their table by a SERVER. They settle in. The server leaves. A conversation begins...

CHARACTER #1
So I'd like to tell you something
today --

The SERVER arrives at the table.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
oh hello, so your name is Patsy is
it?

A brief, pantomimed exchange occurs. The SERVER departs.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
-- so as I was saying, I wanted to
tell you --

The SERVER arrives at the table.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
oh, yes, I suppose I'd like some
water please -- oh, coffee? are you
having coffee? I'll have coffee.
Yes. Thank you.

The SERVER departs.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
So as I was saying, I wanted to tell
you the thing about restaurants--

The SERVER arrives at the table.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
No cream. No Sugar. Black. Please.
-- I'm sorry? Oh, yes I think we
would like another moment. Would we
like another moment? yes, we're
going to need another moment.
Another moment. Thank you.

The SERVER departs.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
So the thing about restaurants is --

The SERVER arrives at the table.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
oh yes, thank you I'll have the club
sandwich.

A brief, pantomimed exchange occurs. The SERVER departs.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
As I was saying, the thing about
restaurants is--

The SERVER arrives at the table.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)
Oh yes, everything is just fine,
thank you. Delicious.

The SERVER departs.

CHARACTER #1 (CONT'D)

The thing about restaurants is, don't talk with your mouth
full.

END.

SPACE AGE BACHELOR PAD

written by
Dylan Kinnett

Based on "Le Piège de Méduse" by Erik Satie

v. 4
(cc-by-sa) Dylan Kinnett

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INTRODUCTION

In the 1950s and '60s, musicians experimented with electronic music in a style named "Space Age Pop" for its infatuation with synthesizers, used to add a space age vibe to a style of jazz music, popular in tiki bars, Las Vegas lounges, and hipster living rooms. Material culture from the era employs a similar aesthetic, called "mid-century modern," "exotica" or "shag."

Hawaii, Las Vegas, and hipsterism were recent additions to American culture. Scenes depicted on record covers of the period depict a time when space travel was real but not fully realized, and the imaginations of millions rocketed toward the possibilities. Musicians in smoking jackets standing on the moon, martinis, space helmets, portable radios, bikinis and satellites: all come together at once on the album covers in a delightfully ridiculous space age romp.

"Space Age Bachelor Pad" takes place in the world inhabited by this music, its audience, the album covers, and even the furniture.

The script is based on an absurdist play written by the composer Erik Satie in 1913. Entitled *Le Piège de Méduse* or "Medusa's trap," the piece included a score for incidental music, to be accompanied by dance. Satie, a composer, approaches the theatrical dialog as sound, to be treated as music. The dialog is not "scripted" in the conventional sense. Instead, the dialogue is "composed" or "arranged" in a musical sense. The result is absurd language, with the themes, patterns, rising and falling intonations music has, but without strictly narrative qualities. It's my contention that the "nonsense" quality of Satie's play is a side effect of the terms of the experiment, rather than the result. I want to continue the experiment, not merely create more absurdity for its own sake.

The story is simple and far-fetched. Here we have an amateur mad scientist, who is obsessed with his work; the guy who lives on his couch, who loves to party; and that guy's girlfriend, who loves music -- there's also a creature from another dimension. These characters inhabit an apartment that is dominated by a fantastic contraption. The contraption captures sound and movement, and processes it somehow.

Eventually, the girlfriend manages to make contact with another dimension, when she plays with the contraption.

The scenes alternate between dialogue and sequences of sound and movement. The overall mood is very upbeat, hyperactive, even psychedelic and intended to be way way way over the top. The mood progresses in a crescendo as two dimensions blend.

The theme considers communication and how it works, if it works. Music is an important element of the setting, both within the story scenes and the interstitial pieces. Music plays a role in the communication among the characters.

Notes and Links

The soundtrack is already recorded, thanks to Curt Seiss
<http://soundcloud.com/spaceagebachelor> .

I've been using Pinterest to gather up a growing collection of visual examples and pictures of things in the world I imagine here
<http://pinterest.com/nocategories/space-age-bachelor-pad/>

SETTING

An urban apartment on an upper floor. There is a couch, a coffee table, and a piece of furniture to house a record player, old records, ashtrays, and a window open to the sounds of the street below. The living room is open to a kitchenette. In the back, there is a bathroom, and Wayne's bedroom.

In the corner of the living room is a large fantastical contraption.

Somewhere else, there is another dimension. As the play progresses, the other dimension is merged with that of the apartment.

TIME

The retro-future.

SCENES

SCENE 1	The apartment
SCENE 2	Another dimension
SCENE 3	The apartment
SCENE 4	The command center, inside the spaceship

CHARACTERS

WAYNE	a mod, and a scientist
KEVIN	A ROCKER, AND THE GUY ON WAYNE'S COUCH
CLERK	a disgruntled employee of Stereo Hut
DONNA	a free-spirited thrill-seeker who loves music
CREATURE	a moving figure from another dimension
CONTRAPTION	a radio device of hyperbolic proportions

INT. APARTMENT - LATE FRIDAY NIGHT

We see a movement sequence. Wayne is toiling away at his bizarre contraption in a manner that seems choreographed with the sounds that come from it. Kevin sleeps on the littered couch, undisturbed.

INT. APARTMENT - LATE SATURDAY MORNING

Wayne is in his bedroom. Kevin is still asleep on the couch.

An unusual sound, one we haven't heard yet, is coming from the radio contraption in the living room. We can hear the sound, then silence for a beat, and then the sound again.

Kevin wakes.

KEVIN

Wayne! Hey Wayne! Wayne! Hey! Wayne!

WAYNE

What...?

KEVIN

That thing...

WAYNE

What?

KEVIN

What?!

WAYNE

I said, "What?"

The contraption goes silent and dim.

KEVIN

That thing.

WAYNE

You know, I can't see you right now, so if you're going to tell me about something, some details might help, you know?

KEVIN

I don't know, what--

The contraption makes sound and light again.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

But you can hear that, right?

WAYNE
 (Enters, excited.)
 What the hell is that?

KEVIN
 Hell if I know. Turn it off, man.

WAYNE examines the contraption, scribbles notes excitedly. He tinkers.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
 Why is that thing beeping?

WAYNE
 It isn't beeping.

KEVIN
 Well, it was beeping.

WAYNE
 Not beeps... Pings. Pings! Ha ha!
 Pings!

KEVIN
 Yeah, okay. Pings, whatever man,
 but seriously, all morning?

WAYNE
 All morning? Really?

KEVIN
 I don't know. Yeah. I was trying to
 sleep. You should put that thing in
 your room.

WAYNE
 Can't. Need the window for
 reception. Especially now that
 this... Oh, wow. This...
 (scribbling more notes.)
 Besides, technically, this is also
 my room. The whole place is mine.

KEVIN
 (fully awake now, putting
 a record on.)
 Well, alright. Yeah. Sure, but, I
 don't know. Why don't we trade rooms
 for a few days? You can crash in
 here, and when that thing needs your
 attention, you can be there for it.
 I'll get some "peace and quiet".

With "peace and quiet" KEVIN thrusts his hips in a sexually suggestive way, trying to make WAYNE laugh. WAYNE slightly amused.

WAYNE

The couch? No thank you.

KEVIN

It's not so bad.

WAYNE

You keep it, then.

KEVIN

No, the couch is alright, but it's just that... Hey man, weren't you going to go to the bar to watch the game, get out, you know, have some fun, get out?

WAYNE

Can't. Work.

KEVIN

It's not good for you to do... that, forever. You should, you know, get out. It's Saturday!

WAYNE

Hm. So it is. Clear skies, warm weather. It seems nice. What are you going to do?

KEVIN

(dancing and thrusting his hips again)

Donna's coming over this afternoon, and, well, you know...

WAYNE

Oh. So I should get out more, for my own good? I see.

KEVIN

Well, not just for your own good. For everybody's. You. Me. Donna. Everybody wins.

WAYNE

Sorry buddy. No can do. Not today. This is important. It means something. I have to stick around and figure it out. I need to know what caused this, whether it is a fluke or something more. I have to record what has happened here.

KEVIN

Well, shit.

(preparing to leave.)

So, you built that thing, and it is beeping, but you don't know why?

WAYNE

Not beeps. Pings.

KEVIN

Special beeps, then. Whatever, man. Who are you trying to talk to with all this stuff, these beeps, pings, whatever?

WAYNE

(speaking into a
microphone in the
contraption)

Anybody out there?

KEVIN

This is dumb. It's Saturday. I'm going to the bar. I'll bring you back some beer and we can have some fun later, when you're done. Look. Donna was going to come over. When she gets here, will you please tell her that I'm around the corner at the bar? I'll meet her there. You dig?

WAYNE

(not paying attention)

Oh. Okay.

Kevin exits.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

I'll give you some money for that beer...

FADE TO:

INT. APARTMENT. THROUGHOUT THE AFTERNOON

We see a movement sequence. A duet, between Wayne, who operates the contraption, and... either the contraption itself or a party on the "other end" of the contraption. Excited, Wayne moves quickly, presses many buttons, etc. sends many sounds in response, but ultimately he breaks a part of the contraption in the process and suddenly has to stop his tinkering.

FADE TO:

WAYNE

Damm you stereo hut! Your shitty part just broke on me. Right when it matters. Couldn't break tomorrow or yesterday, oh no. Shit's designed to break right when you need it.

WAYNE exits to the bedroom, rummages for socks, shoes.

WAYNE returns. Moves to phone, dials.

CLERK

(V.O.)

Thank you for calling Stereo Hut.
How may I help you?

WAYNE

Hello? Could you tell me your hours today, please! ... Oh, thank you.

CLERK

(V.O.)

Oh, hello again Wayne.
We're open during our regular Saturday business hours, today. I'm surprised you don't know them already.

WAYNE

Yes. Okay, Thank you; Wait!
What time do you close?

Wayne exits.

Contraption continues to make sounds, but not to ping. The record continues to play.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANOTHER DIMENSION

We see a movement sequence. The setting is an otherworldly place, another dimension. A radio signal is received somewhere. The recipient is the creature, which responds to the signal with a series of body movements. Its movements

create sounds. Those sounds are the same sounds that Wayne was responding to earlier. Likewise, the creature can hear the same sounds that Wayne was sending, but they sound distorted somehow, perhaps garbled or maybe slower or in a different key.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT. RIGHT AFTER WAYNE LEFT

Donna knocks. She eventually lets her self in.

She is looking for Kevin. Music is still playing but no one is home. Donna has never been in the apartment by herself. She is curious.

DONNA

(checking the couch, for a sleeping Kevin.)

Kevin! Hey Kevin! Your music is on...

Hm. Wayne? Hey Wayne! Wayne?

She checks the rest of the apartment, and the ice box. She investigates the contraption, notices the broken part, produces a bobby pin, uses it to flip the broken switch. The contraption begins to make sounds again. She leaves another bobbypin and writes a note.

DONNA (V.O)

I fixed it for you. What does it do, anyway? Smiley face... Smiley face... Stars... More stars... Astronaut... Talk bubble... what do astronauts talk about in their space suits? ... 'I have to go to the bathroom!'... Stars!

DONNA

I'm bored now. Jesus, where are those guys?

She notices sounds coming from the contraption. The sounds are a collage of sounds: news radio, old songs, etc.

DONNA

(Imitating Wayne into a microphone.)

Hey, look at me everybody. I'm mister Wayne. I built this weird thing. Harrumph harrumph. They're not beeps and bleeps, I'll have you know very much. They're pings. Pings, damn you!

The contraption pings.

DONNA
Pings? Pings!

The contraption pings.

DONNA (CONT'D)
Ping!

The contraption pings.

DONNA (CONT'D)
Far out.

The contraption plays a recording. "

CONTRAPTION
Tonight - Mostly clear. Cold with
lows around 9 degrees above zero. A
winter weather advisory is in
effect. Northwest winds 5 to 10
miles per hour.

DONNA
Not here, buddy. You must not be
from around here. It's summer time;
Beep beep. Hello?!

The contraption pings.

DONNA (CONT'D)
Oh, ok. Ping.

Donna pretends that she is running her own, personal radio station.

DONNA (CONT'D)
But anyway, enough about the
weather. It's time to Rock. and.
Roll! Wayne and Kevin, wherever you
are, and for you out there in radio
land... You're listening to
W.D.O.N.N.A. radio! D! O! D.O.N.N.A!
Oops, that spells "DoDonna"!
Whatever! Here's a little song for
you!

TRANSITION TO...

We see a movement sequence. Donna enjoys her own personal radio station, rapidly pushes many buttons, etc., plays a few parts of a few songs over on the record player, adjusts their

volume, then finally proceeds to rock out to one entire song of her choosing, in particular.

END MOVEMENT SEQUENCE

DONNA hears WAYNE returning home. She abruptly tries to reset things and then frantically decides to pretend to have been asleep on the couch.

FADE TO:

EXT. ANOTHER DIMENSION

The music is transmitted to the Creature, who responds by dancing something similar to a 60's. *dance e.g. the mashed potato, hand jive, the watusi, etc.* Perhaps the Creature is also aware of visual examples.

INT. THE APARTMENT

Wayne enters. Music is still playing. Donna is pretending to be asleep on the couch.

WAYNE

Oh, Hello Donna. Were you here last night, too?

WAYNE turns the volume down on the music and sets to work immediately. He finds Donna's note.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

That's cute, Donna. I like it. The stars. Hm. They walked on the moon with diapers on. Oh, what am I saying!

DONNA

(stirring a little)
Sleepy.

WAYNE

I hope you don't mind, but I need to proofread this technical writing now. I do my best proofreading out loud. How does it sound?

Wayne reads at Donna.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

"This device offers continuous passive motion and sound transmission. The device can be set independently for flexion and extension transmissions, for transmission of radial and ulnar deviations and has secondary functions for the transmission of binary data."

Donna groans.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

"Communications are conducted over the S-band and X-band providing bandwidth as high as 115.2 kilobits per second. Each unit of this device type comes complete with soft goods, controller/battery unit, power supply, carrying case, and instructions for use. Please read these instructions carefully."

DONNA

Jesus Christ, Wayne. It doesn't make sense at all!

Wayne continues reading, as Donna tries to drown him out with fingers in her ears.

WAYNE

Of course not, Donna. It's a technical manual.

(chooses a random passage)

"Precautions: Adjust for proximity to bath tub, wash bowl, kitchen sink, laundry tub, or any environment near water."

(Donna is singing to drown him out. Wayne gets louder.)

"This will often require extensive research. Do not use an untested adapter at the same location as this device."

(Donna gets up and goes to the stereo, to drown him out. Wayne gets louder.)

"Do not disable the device if it exhibits a distinct change to your installation, or if the device has been dropped, damaged or exposed to moisture"

(She increases the volume of the music, so Wayne also increases the volume of his voice.)

"Do not the product exhibits a distinct change in to your installation unless proper the following conditions:" I should edit that.

(They get louder.)

"A cordless adapter may be used if repair work is required."

(Louder.)

"The device should not exceed the maximum output rating indicated in diagram 1, position A."

(Louder still)

"The motion settings 'off', 'low force', and 'high force' can be used to modulate the transmission bandwidth. Start in the closed down position. The lamp indicating all power is extinguished, press the short button. It will glow a bright yellow for a period of time before glowing blue."

(Loud but somewhat indistinguishable)

"Attention: If the pattern switch already allocated move set clock for the video recording pattern then enter the video recording pattern to start directly. Chapter Two.

Powering on the device: flip the power switch to the on position!"

(Beat)

Donna... It's already on. Why?

DONNA

Great! Now you can turn it off!

FADE TO:

EXT. ANOTHER DIMENSION

We see a movement sequence. The creature is lonely, sad, or bored because there is no longer any communication with the other world.

INT. THE APARTMENT

Only a moment has passed, but Donna has turned the music down.

It is during this scene that: either the apartment is blending with another dimension, these three are getting really drunk, or both.

Wayne tidies the apartment.

Kevin enters. He is tipsy. He has a case of beer.

KEVIN

(to nobody in particular)

Oh there you are, now you are. Where are you when I need you?

Donna and Wayne help themselves to the beer.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Hey Wayne, we won, by the way. No thanks to you. You should have seen it. We... Donna, why didn't you come out, at least?

DONNA

Where were you?

KEVIN

At the bar. Wayne, there were all kinds of hot girls there. Wayne...

DONNA

Well, this hot girl was right here. Waiting for you.

KEVIN

Yeah, Wayne. What's up with that?

WAYNE

I'm sorry, I...

DONNA

Oh, I didn't tell you guys. This is that new album I told you about the other day. I brought it to play. Isn't it great!

KEVIN

No.

DONNA

Oh, whatever, Kevin. Wayne, you heard it. You like my music, don't you Wayne?

WAYNE (ENJOYING A BEER.)

Well, I wasn't exactly paying attention...

KEVIN

(producing a bottle.)

Let's do shots!

They do shots.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Sorry babe, but this music has got to go.

Kevin plays some very different music. He starts dancing.

BLACKOUT

LIGHTS UP

Some time has passed. Everyone is more intoxicated.

DONNA (TO KEVIN.)

It's just that you, you don't even really listen to it. So how am I supposed to know what to put on. You know? I ask you what do you think of it and you say oh yeah, it's fine, or whatever, but then some other time when it's the same thing you just say no, you don't like it. And you never say what you do like or what you don't like so how am I supposed to know? You know?

KEVIN

Yeah. Well, shit changes. My mood, and stuff. When I say it's fine, it's because it's fine then, but other times it isn't. So when you ask me what I think when I think it I tell you I think it. Next time, same thing. Right? Right? Yeah, come on.

DONNA

OK. I'm just saying. Would it kill you to dance with me?

BLACKOUT

LIGHTS UP

Some time has passed. Everyone is more intoxicated.

KEVIN (TO WAYNE)

So how far out does it go?

WAYNE

We're not sure.

DONNA

Who is "we"

KEVIN

You know, the community of people who make these kinds of things.

DONNA

So, they build all that, and they're not even sure what exactly it can do?

WAYNE

It's an experiment.

KEVIN

Yeah! Picture this. You're going to have a party. You invite your friends. You don't invite some people. So, they're your friends right? You know them. You kinda know what they'll do. But it's a party! You don't really know what will happen. If you did, it wouldn't be any fun!

DONNA

It's nothing like all that, is it Wayne? All that hard work you do, dealing with that thing. It's like a party?

WAYNE

In a way, he's on to something.

KEVIN

See? I'm on to something.

DONNA

And what is it that you're on to?

Donna and Kevin make out. Wayne pours three drinks, talking, oblivious to Donna and Kevin.

WAYNE

Sure, it's like a party. Or, rather, the invitation to the party. It's a message. You send it out as far and wide as you can or want to, and then you wait. You wait, for a response, an RSVP, or maybe some of them will just show up. You don't know, really. Like Kevin says; you don't know what will happen.

Wayne presents the drinks.

KEVIN

An invitation?

DONNA

Ooh, let's drink these now.

BLACKOUT

LIGHTS UP

Some time has passed. Everyone is even more intoxicated.

WAYNE

Let's do shots!

They do shots.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Alright you guys. I've heard your music. And I've heard your music. And now, if it wouldn't trouble you too terribly much, it is time. It is time. It is time for a little something I call, my music.

TRANSITION TO:

We see a movement sequence. Wayne uses the contraption to create an incredible variety of musical sounds.

After a while, Kevin uses the stereo equipment, etc. to add his even more variety to the music.

Donna dances.

FADE OUT

INT. THE APARTMENT. VERY LATE.

Everyone is asleep. A record is still playing. It is Donna's music.

The contraption pings.

The Creature has arrived in the apartment, somehow. It investigates the space, finds the contraption, and begins making adjustments to it.

Donna awakes, to get a glass of water. She eventually sees the creature. It is moving in response to the music. The record ends.

DONNA

(very nervously)

Hello?

The creature manipulates a "ping" from the contraption.

DONNA

(delighted to realize that this is the thing she was communicating with earlier)

Oh, yeah? Hold that thought. Stay. Stay right there.

She plays her music again. They dance together.

THE END.