

Hard Hearted Hannah: What the music did



cartoon de salvo

Hard Hearted Hannah : Where music added to the story...

By Cartoon de Salvo

Cartoon de Salvo is also a band - a beardy-weirdy folk band. Each night we work in songs chosen by 3 members of the audience from a playlist of music from the American South. We extended our repertoire adding more tunes into the show as we went along on the road. We started to add in other standards and traditional, songs that had universal themes and songs that had shaped our lives. We scoured the lyrics of Tom Waits, Randy Newman, Hank Williams and Nick Cave for their story potential.

This stories in this book have in some way or other been shaped by that random select playlist. We worried that some songs would dictate too strongly a particular narrative (although I think Neil's best character was a fantastically hard-hearted Scottish Hannah in *The Last Laugh*) but that challenge in itself created new characters and interpretations. *I'm thru with love* became about a son's loss of his father in *Appalachian Mountain Tragedy* (my favourite title) and we finally freshened up the context of *You Sexy Thing* which was chosen 19 times on tour - in *The Bid* it became about a winning corporate proposal. *Riders of Dragons* flashed back to the 50's and 60's world of biker gangs and there was a nice completeness in the fact that our songs that night were all of that era. *River Run Red* was perhaps our most ambitious and satirising story. We set our tale in the crusades, and of course the islam and christianity kept bubbling to the surface. We finished with Sam Cooke's *A Change is Gonna Come*.

Alex Murchoch, Artistic Director, Cartoon de Salvo

The Bid

Lyric Hammersmith, Thur 15 May, 2008

Songs: Hard Hearted Hannah, You Sexy Thing & Ginger Man

Neil starts, on the phone in an office

Characters

Nicholas, a landscape architect

Sir Steven, his boss

Stephanie, the office assistant

Maurice, a colleague

Jennifer Wilkins, a landscape architect

Hannah Hanson, her new boss

'Boy', her minion

Colin & Mavis, Jennifer's parents

Angie, her sister

John, a Lothario

Nicholas is on the phone, talking urgently about 'the bid.' Stephanie gets him a coffee. Maurice slaps her arse. Nicholas is summoned by Sir Steven, who has returned from work after his trachotomy to disarray, and who warns Nicholas that if he doesn't win the bid, his job is on the line. Jennifer Wilkins rings a doorbell, and is guided through a curious labyrinth of corridors to attend her job interview. She is interviewed by Hannah Hanson, a stony American lady.

Jennifer is applying to run Hanson Inc's bid to regenerate the city of Hull in time for the Commonwealth Games. A rival company is also bidding for the contract. Hannah tells Jennifer that she reminds her of her younger self, and is therefore appointed to the job. Hanson Inc, she is told, only ever employs women to senior positions. All men in the company are treated like slaves.

Jennifer is greeted at home by her mum and dad. They eat dinner. The parents are proud to hear of her new job, and recall their own younger days when they lived in Hull. Jennifer's father has read about Hannah Hanson in the papers, and tells Jennifer about what a ball-breaker she is reputed to be. [Hard Hearted Hannah]

Nicholas has summoned all his colleagues to a bowling alley. It's a team-bonding exercise, combined with an opportunity to discuss their bid. Stephanie has great trouble picking up a bowling ball. Nicholas outlines his own plans for Hull, which involve building a bridge from Scotland to the Humber. Stephanie offers to help with the bid by being a 'skunk' - she means a mole - and retrieving information from the rival bid - as Jennifer is her best friend.

Jennifer and Stephanie are in a nightclub. Stephanie has spotted a cute red-haired boy. Stephanie talks to Jennifer about her new job, trying to prise details from her. The cute boy, John, arrives and makes a play for Jennifer. While they dance, to 10cc's I'm Not in Love, Stephanie rifles through Jennifer's bag and steals some plans for Hanson Inc's bid. Jennifer and John are falling in love.

Stephanie flirts with Nicholas in the office. She tells him her moling has borne fruit. She shows him Jennifer's plans for Hull: a crystal dome over the whole city, cascading water; a sky needle piercing the stratosphere; elephants parading the streets. Nicholas is daunted. This is a far superior bid. But



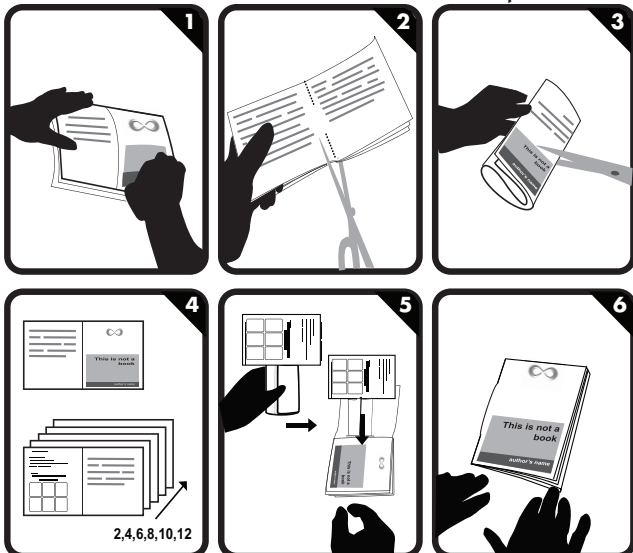
Hard Hearted Hannah: Music

Cartoon de Salvo

Cartoon de Salvo (Neil Haigh, Brian Logan & Alex Murdoch) improvised each of these stories in front of a live audience, over 2008-09, in this book Brian Logan retold the tales & Alex Murdoch did the pictures.

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An old man, Tom Clark, puts some logs on the fire in his nursing home and leaves through his old scrap-books. Nigel, his carer, asks after visitors.
A schoolteacher asks her pupils to copy lines down from the blackboard. Chris obeys. Arnold doesn't. He just doodles. The teacher threatens Arnold with a trip to the 'psychopath' headmaster, Mr Blink.

Characters
Tom Clark, an old man
Arnold, a schoolboy, his grandson
Chris, his schoolmate
Their classroom teacher
Mr Blink, the headmaster
Nigel, an attendant in the old folks' home
Rebecca, ditto
Jimmy, a biker
Belinda, Tom's old girlfriend
A motorcycle salesman

The Riders of Dragons
Kimbolton Village Hall, Herefordshire, Friday 11 April 2008
Songs: You Sexy Thing, His Latest Flame & Tears On My Pillow
Neil starts, as an old man in a rocking chair

Hard Hearted Hannah and Other Stories is created by
Cartoon de Salvo.

Co-commissioned by Farnham Maltings and the Lyric,
Hammersmith

Performers - Neil Haigh, Brian Logan and Alex Murdoch

Design - Rebecca Hurst

Musical Direction - Paul Kissaun

Production Management - Naomi Pirie

Cartoon de Salvo are of the few companies in the UK working with whole story, rather than sketch-based improvisation formats. Read more about the artistic process on their blogs at www.theatrevoice.com and visit www.cartoondesalvo.com

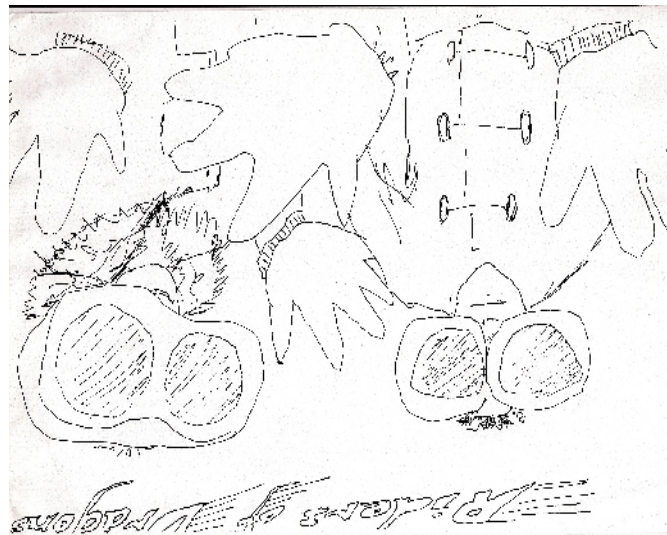
The Salvo's are produced by Ed Collier, who can be contacted on ed@cartoondesalvo.com

You leave in awe of the human imagination and feeling like you've been to the best party in town. Magic

The Daily Telegraph, Top Ten Comedy Shows 2008

Like Tales of the Unexpected on Acid

Audience member, Icklesham, Kent



and tells Tom just to accept it and stop being so square. Tom threatens to quit the Dragons, and their forthcoming trip to Bognor. Arnold and Chris are in their 'biker' gear. They have devised a 'Dragons' ritual to denote gang membership. They somersault across the lawn of the old folks' home - to avoid the searchlights. They appear at Tom's window and he practically has a heart attack. They talk about the last bikers' convention Tom ever visited, in Bognor, 60 years ago. The boys persuade him, however reluctantly, to take them to Bognor. The trio 'escape' the home, and head for the Bognor bus.

Rebecca, another carer, offers company to Tom while she hoovers.. When she leaves the room, Nigel is there, asking her on a date after work. She accepts.

Arnold refuses to speak while Mr Blink gives him a dressing down. Mr Blink calls Arnold's mother to complain about his behaviour. His mum says he's been having a hard time, since granddad was sent to a home. Meanwhile, Arnold defiantly stands on the head's chair.

Tom leafs through his scrap-books, remembering his days, way, way back, in a biker gang, the Dragons. His memories come to life around him: he rides with his girlfriend Belinda sat behind him, and his friend Jimmy riding alongside, on a distinctive bike with a padded back seat. Jimmy flirts with Belinda. The memories fade.

Nigel meets Rebecca, as appointed, at the bus stop. He tells her how sexy she looks in her mittens and bobble-hat - even in July. [You Sexy Thing].

Arnold comes to visit his granddad. They discuss the fact that Arnold's mother is angry with her dad, Tom - and has kicked him out of the family home. When he leaves Tom denies to Rebecca that Arnold has even been there.

Chris has lifted some of Arnold's doodles, and is amazed by them: pictures of dragons, of motorbikes. Arnold tells him they're his granddad's pictures; that his granddad used to visit bikers' conventions. Together, they decide to form a biker gang of their own: to dress up in Chris's welder dad's goggles and gloves, and to go to the old folks' home and kidnap Arnold's granddad, and to go to a bikers' convention themselves.

The younger Tom throws pebbles at the window of Jimmy. It's the middle of the night, but Tom wants to talk. Belinda has left him; is Jimmy involved with her? Jimmy denies it,

river will one day run red, and that that will herald 800 years of strife. The brothers lead the knights to a position from which they can ambush the taxman. They do so - and Sir Gareth fatally wounds the taxman in the assault. The taxman bleeds copiously and wades into the river. Dying, he twists horribly in the water, and his blood turns the river red. He dies.

At the palace, the carpet is hung on the sultan's wall. The sultan agrees to surrender the city as planned, and the knights arrange for the Christian flag to be flown above Jerusalem. A marriage is hatched between Dinara and Sir Gareth to celebrate this accord. But as they close in to embrace, Dinara stabs Gareth through the heart. She is a zealous Muslim, and will not see her city yielded to the Christians. Sir Gareth demands vengeance as he dies, and Sirs Hugh and Denzel lay siege to the sultan and his men. The carpet-sellers flee. War has begun.

Back in their bolt-hole, as Dinara vows to fight for Jerusalem's freedom from Christian incursion, Ahmed and Rachid bemoan their continuing misfortune and poverty. [A Change is Gonna Come] Back in England, Eleanor welcomes Sir Denzel home.

Ahmed decides that they must go into hiding for some days, until the storm blows over. Dinara will have to be left alone - but if she needs the brothers, she can find them in their usual bolt-hole.

Eleanor sits at home, pining for Sir Denzel. Her father comes to console her, and wishes she would stop crying herself to sleep at night. Sir Denzel may never come back. She should try and forget - as Denzel may well have forgotten her.

[Tears On My Pillow]

The knights are in Jerusalem. They disguise themselves with headscarves, and delve off into the city - arranging to meet again later by this carpet stall.

The taxman comes to the carpet stall seeking Ahmed and Rachid. He now knows they have robbed him. In their absence, he vows to go to their home - and have his wicked way with Dinara. Suddenly, a stranger appears. It is Sir Gareth - although he introduces himself as Farouk. He notices the Christian symbols on the carpets. The taxman is taken with this stranger, and invites him to come and meet the sultan.

In the sumptuous sultan's palace, Sir Gareth is led towards the autocrat's chamber, then left there by the sly taxman. Sir Gareth enters and announces himself to the sultan. The sultan is a corrupt despot lounging on a divan. Sir Gareth remarks on the spartan décor in the sultan's quarters, and the sultan agrees that yes, his walls could definitely be brightened by, say, a hanging carpet. Sir Gareth vows to find him one, and thereby secure the sultan's favour.

The taxman pays a visit to Dinara. He is seeking the brothers, but also trying to seduce Dinara. Dinara is repelled by his advances. He demands she come with him as collateral against the brothers' escape - and that she bring the splendid carpet with her. He has a use for it.

Ahmed and Rachid cower in a poky wee bolt-hole somewhere in Jerusalem. Ahmed bewails his lot: are they destined to be forever poor and put-upon, or might a change one day come? Just then, they hear noises through the thin wall that conceals them. It is Sir Denzel. On hearing their voices, Denzel spears through the wall with his sword. The two brothers must make a run for it. Denzel chases them through the city, the busy souk, in and out of Ali Baba-style vases and finally discovers and corners them. Ahmed and Rachid surrender - and tell the knight templar that they are happy to help him, for they have no loyalty to the current regime or religion, only to saving their lives and feeding their family.

Sir Gareth appears, and recognises that these are the carpet-stall proprietors. He tells them of his haunting journey through the sultan's palace [People Are Strange] and of how he has won the friendship of the sultan, if only he can secure for him a carpet. Ahmed and Rachid know just the one - and lead the knights towards their home.

The taxman instructs Dinara to spread out her carpet by the river, for them to recline on. His seduction is underway.

The knights and the brothers are at Ahmed's home - but Dinara is nowhere to be seen, and neither is the beautiful carpet. The taxman has been here, and stolen both of them!

In the sultan's quarters, Sir Gareth - or Farouk - asks his majesty's permission to hunt down the fiendish taxman, and retrieve the carpet. Will the lazy sultan willingly surrender control of Jerusalem in exchange for a beautiful carpet? Yes, says the sultan - he will.

Dinara and the taxman are by the water's edge, the ravishing red carpet spread out beneath her. Some way off, the knights templar consults with Ahmed and Rachid. The brothers know this riverside well - they were born here, in a little tent. And they know it comes with a curse that the

Cooper and his son, Dale, are out hunting. The father is teaching the son how to shoot. But Dale seems incapable of bringing a bird down from the sky. Cooper isn't happy with him. They see a wildcat, and Cooper tells his son how he has spent 50 years longing to slay one. Vance appears and warns them off his land. They go, grudgingly.

Some animals

A cougar

People queuing at the post office

The voice of Derek, Bobby-Sue's New York colleague

Mr Schneider & Mr Du Pres, European traders

Bart Koslowski, her new employee

Martina, her employee

Bobby-Sue, a conservationist

Vance, his neighbour

Dale, his son

Cooper, a trader in animal hides

Characters

Brian starts, as a man out hunting with his son

Love

Songs: Smuggling Man, You Sexy Thing & I'm Through With

Bingham Village Ventures, Notts, Sat 26 April, 2008

Appalachian Mountain Tragedy

Belinda is doing her make-up. Jimmy enters and tells her that Tom suspects they are lovers. [His Latest Flame]

Nigel and Rebecca find that Tom's room is empty but find a letter. They decide to pursue the lovely old geezer to Bognor.

Tom, Arnold and Chris survey the scene at Bognor. There's the bikers' convention, on the 60th anniversary of the last one Tom ever visited. He worries that Jimmy and Belinda may be here - but the boys persuade him to enter. Inside, they ogle the motorbikes - particularly one with a distinctive padded back seat. Tom recognises it as Jimmy's bike. Jimmy and Belinda appear. With Tom, they discuss old times. Now, Belinda has to go into a home, for which Jimmy is to pay for by selling his old bike. Jimmy leaves Tom and Belinda, telling Tom that the Dragons were never the same without him. Belinda tells Tom that, 60 years ago, she made a mistake to leave him. [Tears On My Pillow] Why did she not leave Jimmy? Well sometimes people just stay together.

Nigel pops into Tom's room at the home. Belinda has moved into Tom's room. Nigel says he's talked with Tom's daughter - Arnold's mum - and she has forgiven him for saying that he never truly loved her mother; that another woman remained his real sweetheart. And now she has invited Tom home. Arnold and Chris enter with new crash helmets on. Tom has bought them Jimmy's motorbike - in exchange for his setting Belinda free.

River Run Red

Lyric Hammersmith, Thur 5 June 2008

Songs: Tears On My Pillow, People are Strange & A Change is Gonna Come

Neil starts, as one of three knights templar on horseback

Characters

Sir Denzel, Sir Gareth & Sir Hugh, knights templar
Ahmed & Rachid, brothers and carpet-makers

Dinara, their sister

The Sultan's taxman

The Sultan

Eleanor, Sir Denzel's love

Her father

Three horsemen traverse a barren land. They are knights templar, journeying to the Holy Land to reclaim it from the infidels. The three knights dismount for the night, and build a fire. Sir Denzel tries to rally their confidence by invoking justice, honour and valour. 'And Christ,' adds Sir Gareth. Sir Hugh looks at the stars, to interpret their omens. 'You are destined... something... something... good luck,' they say, cryptically.

'Carpets! Carpets!' In a souk somewhere in Jerusalem, Ahmed plies his wares. He is joined by his volatile younger brother Rachid. The sultan's taxman arrives to claim his sum, and the brothers cannot pay. He is poor. Perhaps that's because his carpets seem to bear the Christian insignia? The taxman asks after their beautiful sister Dinara, who stays at home weaving the carpets. Rachid distracts the taxman and picks his pocket, then pays the brothers' taxes using the stolen money. Ahmed is livid when he discovers this. The taxman will punish them severely when he finds out. They gather up their carpets and flee.

A woman sits at home in England, fretting for her distant lover.

The knights templar ride towards Jerusalem. They talk tactics. They are the advance guard, and will infiltrate the city to find its weak points. They also talk of life: does anyone have a sweetheart back home? Sir Denzel denies it, but the other two know that he does. Sir Gareth proclaims himself married to the church. Jerusalem appears on the horizon.

Ahmed and Rachid enter their home. They see the latest carpet that Dinara has woven, hanging from the wall - and it is ravishingly beautiful. They congratulate her. Dinara fetches them falafels while the brothers relate their extraordinary day. Rachid is castigated for his stupidity.



A woman, Bobby-Sue Ellen, is franking letters, then sends her assistant, Martina, off to post them. She opens a letter from an old colleague in the New York conservation movement, wishing her well in their new agency in the Appalachians. The letter ends just as the animals in Bobby-Sue's office demand attention: a wildcat, a horse, exotic birds, a snake. The doorbell rings. A young man from the city, Bart Koslowski, has come to apply for the advertised job - but he is uncomfortable with her menagerie of animals. Nevertheless, Bobby-Sue recruits him on the spot. Vance sits in his rocking chair, telling himself that things are going to be different up here in the mountains and he won't tolerate any illegal hunting from now on.

Dale is out in the woods, practising his shooting. He takes a pop at several birds - then the elusive cougar hoves into view. Dale takes aim at it - but the wildcat escapes.

Bart is typing a letter for Miss Ellen about a gala fundraising event the following Saturday. Bart asks Bobby-Sue if he can volunteer for the reconnaissance mission up to the mountains, to check for illegal hunting activity. She says yes. Bart will be joined by Martina, who doubts that the city boy will be up to it. They arrange to leave the following morning.

Cooper is outraged that Dale had the cougar in his sights and let it escape. He sends the boy back out into the woods to snare the beast. Vance appears at Cooper's door. It seems the men used to be partners in crime but now Vance demands that Cooper cease the hunting. Cooper tells Vance to leave him alone - nature is everyone's bounty, as it says in the Bible. Vance promises that if any hunting takes place on his land, he will be watching, and he will shoot to kill.

Bart and Martina head off from the conservation agency, and up into the hills. At the end of a day's hiking, they spread their bedclothes and prepare to sleep under the stars.

Jennifer is at home, panicking because she realises she's lost the crucial plans. Stephanie and her sister Ange don't help. Her mum and dad try to calm her down.

Hannah Hanson is angry at Jennifer for losing the plans. But she is prepared to forgive her. Because, Jennifer still brings back to Hannah memories of years gone by. Hannah asks: is



Stephanie promises to get more information. If only they could find the stony-hearted Hannah's Achilles heel, the bid may yet be theirs to win...

Jennifer attracted to red-haired men? Jennifer admits that she is currently seeing a red-haired man, and Hannah freaks out, throwing a chair across the room. Hannah gets very sinister and tells Jennifer that as long as she works at Hanson Inc, she is never to be with red-haired men. Because red-haired men bring back bitter memories of... John.

Jennifer and John cosy up post-coital on the sofa at his flat. He cooks her spaghetti. They talk about her work and he realises that the woman she works for is Hannah Hanson, of whom he has some painful previous experience. He goes cold on Jennifer, and insists that she leaves. Jennifer is upset.

It is the scene of the two rival bid presentations. Jennifer is making her presentation of Hanson Inc's bid, but she is too upset and loses the plot. Hannah shoves her aside and describes the Hull regeneration plan herself. 'Boy' introduces the proposed theme tune that will sex up the bid. [You Sexy Thing] Nicholas steps up, without confidence, to present his company, Steven & Williams', bid. Stephanie hisses at him - she has a plan that could still win the contract. She knows about John, and that he seems to have a hex over Hannah.

Stephanie calls John in his flat and summons him to Olympia, where the presentations are taking place. He takes a tube ride to the venue. Stephanie persuades him to spearhead Steven & Williams' bid, capitalising in his legendary sex appeal. John is a bit mystified, but steps up onstage to front the bid. Hannah claps eyes on him, and begins to erupt. Why is he here? How dare he reappear after walking out on her years previously? They look daggers at one another. Then Hannah produces a knife and plunges it into John's heart. John slowly expires, to Jennifer's great distress. Hannah realises that she has done to Jennifer what was once done to herself - taken away the man she loves. And so she drives the knife into herself and dies on top of John.

Vance and Dale seek out the cougar, to save it from harm. Martina and Bart do likewise - and Bart tells Martina how glad he is he followed his bolder instincts, and left library work in Philadelphia to come on this adventure. Cooper is also in the woods, with the cougar's blood on his nostrils. It won't escape him this time. Vance and Dale are first to the beast, and Vance coaxes it lovingly. Cooper appears in the clearing and trains his gun on the animal. Bart and Martina wonder whether to intervene. Vance defies Cooper to shoot. Cooper slays the cougar. Vance and Cooper take aim at each other. Dale leaps between them, and in the scuffle, the son is shot and killed. Cooper refuses to recognise his son, even cautiously emerge onto the scene of the bloodbath and, as in death. Vance shoots Cooper dead. Bart and Martina describe as an Appalachian Mountain Tragedy.

Bobby-Sue Ellen addresses the fundraising gala crowd - if only to cancel the event, in light of what she can only

to the woods.

Martina lays her sheet a distance away from Bart's - which Bart coyly remarks upon - and then she sensually brushes her hair. Bart looks on. They kiss passionately.

The cougar is abroad, and Vance spots it. As he is admiring the animal, he apprehends Dale, shooting at the wildcat. Vance takes Dale home, calms him down, gives him a talk about how his father Cooper is a bad man, and Dale ought not to go hunting. Dale refuses to hear Vance speak ill of his daddy.

Cooper talks to his two guests, Mr Schneider and Mr DuPres - two European fur traders. He shows them their booty - beaver pelts, bird feathers. He tells them about the operation he runs. [Smuggling Man] Schneider and DuPres demand a cougar hide. Cooper promises he will deliver them one.

Bart and Martina wake up and prepare for a day surveying the woods. Bart is very moved by their night together and has written her a song fusing Appalachian sounds with the funky noise of downtown Philadelphia [You Sexy Thing]. They set off, hunting the hunters. They spy the cougar and Martina beckons it.

Cooper and Dale also see the cougar. Cooper instructs Dale to shoot. By the time the boy has summoned courage to do so, Martina has coaxed the wildcat away. Cooper is furious and tells him to seek his fortune elsewhere. He is no longer any son of Cooper's. Dale is bereft.

Vance stumbles upon the distraught Dale, and takes him back to his shack. Dale is numb with pain at his father's abandonment of him. [I'm Through with Love]

Schneider and DuPres are losing patience. They demand that Cooper supply them with a cougar hide - or their contract will be terminated. Cooper himself grabs his gun, and takes