

Black Light

Lyric Hammersmith, Wed 4 June 2008

Songs: *Mama Told Me Not to Come, In the Jailhouse Now & Diamond Ring*

Brian starts, as a wheelchair-bound man fixing his android

Characters

Professor Grundheim, the ruler of Earth

D48, his android

D13, his other android

Martin & Vanessa, security forces

Kevin, a human-insect hybrid

Reg, his father

Charlotte, his mother

Glenn, his sister

Steven, a human-insect hybrid

in lieu of Tommy's defeat.
 As Mr Fantoni signals towards the ring, Tommy hammers Slasher, and the numbskull crashes to the floor. The referee raises Tommy's fist in victory - but Tommy still believes he may have got Mr Fantoni in fatal trouble. Mr Fantoni puts him right. Tommy congratulate his gran and slaps her heartily on the back. Her glass eye spits out of its socket, and pings off the heads of the escaping Vicente and Lucio, who were fleeing the venue. The glass eye knocks the pair unconscious. Tommy rifles through their pockets and finds enough evidence of criminality to have them locked away. Now he and Mr Fantoni can dedicate themselves to his boxing career. Tommy hugs Reg, saying that being a good brother is more important than being a good boxer. The whole family celebrate in Xtremis nightclub, where Tommy has requested a special song for his gran. [*Hard Hearted Hannah*].

The Glass Eye
The Frighteners
Black Light
Hotel Magnificent

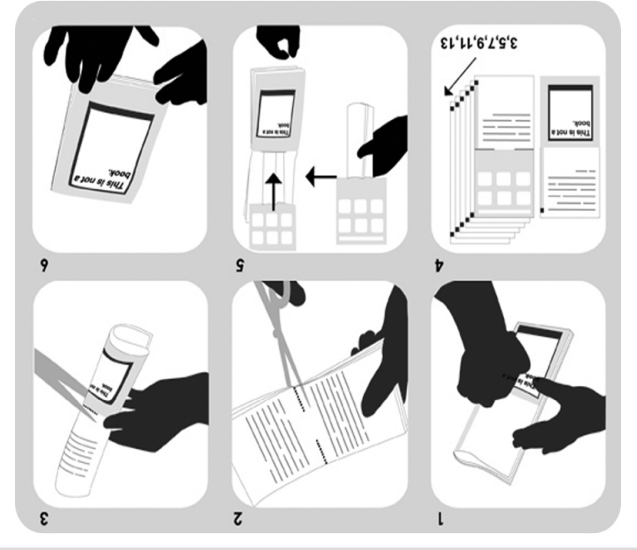
We like an adventure, enjoy a tall tale. We also committed to never pinning down any rules about storytelling and structure. We went out each night, and plundered moment by moment our subconscious. Lee Simpson from *Improbable Theatre* told us gloomily that "it would never stop being terrifying," and from my point of view he was right. Maybe a bit of that fear created the following yarns, which might have been ripped from 70s television, B-movies, pulp fiction and trash culture. Maybe these strange ones were more fun and scary to be in because they were so unpredictable. Maybe it was the audience - because even the titles here are a bit weird...

Logan and Other Stories. As told by **Brian Logan** and illustrated by **Alex Murdoch**.

Continuing the adventures of **Cartoon de Salvo's** voyage into the unknown with **Hard Hearted Hannah and Other Stories**. As told by **Brian Logan** and illustrated by **Alex Murdoch**.
 From our unconscious minds... **the world of the Strange and Bizarre**



Cartoon de Salvo



www.diffusion.org.uk
 DIFFUSION eBooks are designed to be freely
 available to download, print out and share.

created on: Wed Feb 4 17:47:57 2009

Cartoon de Salvo

Hard Hearted Hannah - the world of the Strange

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

Producer - James Turnbull

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 Frighteners
 Icklesham Village Hall, East Sussex, Friday 7
 March, 2008
 Song: *Diamond Ring*
 Neil starts, camping with Alex
Characters
 Tom and Sandra, a couple
 John Parker, a farmer
 Mary, his wife
 Seth, his son
 Sergeant, a policeman
 Neville, his colleague
 Some chickens

Gretel, Rolf, and the mutilated Chet. The only thing that might help them is another book: *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, which Hank has with him. In that book, the monster turns against its maker and rebels against its loneliness. Might Gretel be made to turn against Rolf? The trio head to the cellar...
 In the cellar, Gretel is turned against Rolf, as Hank persuades her she is doomed to a lonely freakish life. Gretel chainsaws the crazed hotelier to death. Chet's life is saved by Jack, referring to the manual as he sews on the American's dismembered limbs. The brain in the jar reveals itself to be Maria, Rolf's ex-wife, whom he murdered. Jack stitches the brain together with Rolf's butchered body to create a new creature, with whom Gretel is left - in a bizarre lesbian zombie love tryst - while the tenants leave.
 The sleigh driver arrives at the strangely quiet Hotel Magnificent...

tethered by the mongrel Gretel. Rolf sends Gretel to the cupboard, from which she retrieves a chainsaw. Rolf advances towards Chet...

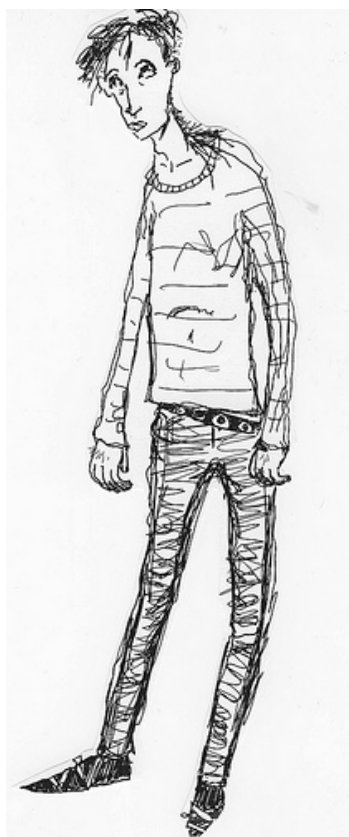
Hank, Judith and Jack are Alpine-dancing at the festival. Chet has mysteriously not shown up. Jack disappears to get drinks, leaving his wife with Hank - who seduces her.

As they recline in Hank's room, Hank tells Judith that he had sworn not to behave like this on the holiday. [*Ginger Man*] Hank breaks the post-coital bliss to wonder where Chet is. He goes to look for him.

It's the middle of the night, and Jack is worried about Judith. He has returned home alone from the festival, with a sore head. Where is Judith at this late hour?

Jack asks if Hank knows where Judith is. Hank won't lie to Jack; he says that Jack might find the answer in Hank's room. Hank heads off to seek Chet, and Jack enters the room, where he finds Judith cowering behind the sofa. Judith is a serial adulterer; Jack is used to dealing with it. Jack finds a book inscribed to Chet from the professor he spoke to earlier: a medical manual about sewing on dismembered limbs.

Hank bursts back into the room. Downstairs, he has seen a horrendous scene. He explains about



Hank puts a tune on the jukebox [*You Sexy Thing*] to conceal his lust. Rolf steals downstairs into the cellar. There, Gretel is inert in a chair. Rolf connects her to a power source, and electricity surges through her. Rolf rejoices: Gretel is his creation, a Frankenstein's monster assembled using body parts of former guests to the Hotel Magnificent. He hopes to add to her soon with new organs and limbs. Chet knocks on the door, looking for the wine cellar. Rolf admits him, and Chet spots what resembles a human brain in a jar. Rolf gives Chet a bottle of wine. As Chet leaves, Rolf admires his nose. Hank apologises to Chet for his display in the bar earlier. He prepares for the Alpine festival, which the Americans are attending with the English guests. Chet, meanwhile, phones his old professor in Washington DC. He wants help identifying the seemingly human brain in Rolf's cellar. The professor corroborates his hypothesis. Chet sneaks back into the hotel basement, and encounters Gretel, manically rounding on him. He realises that something is up - then Rolf looms from the shadows. Chet will soon start feeling sleepy, Rolf warns him - the wine was drugged. Chet collapses into a seat, into which he is

Tom and Sandra pitch tent in the countryside on their ninth anniversary weekend away, and they get it on in the tent. Farmer Parker and his wife have a relationship based on rancour and resentment. And the TV is broken. Parker believes himself to have ESP, and says that a 'fissure' is open, that dark forces are abroad - and that their son Seth might be liable to one of his turns. Seth is confined to his room. At the police station, Neville shows the sergeant a newspaper interview with the local eccentric: Farmer Parker. The Sergeant has recently relocated from London and can't take seriously these petty rural concerns. It's night-time, and Tom and Sandra prepare for bed. They are apprehended by Parker, bearing a rifle. He urges them off his land. He warns them that tonight will be a dangerous night. The following morning, Sandra comes to the farmhouse to buy fresh eggs. Again she is threatened by Parker and Seth, who shoots a hen before her eyes. After she leaves, Parker and Mary berate Seth for not having laid claim to her. He's 14 now - not 12 anymore - and it's time he took a woman and produced heirs. Disturbed, Tom and Sandra try to leave - but their car gets stuck in the mud. The Sergeant

Judith. He welcomes them to the Alps. His hotel is threadbare; he claims to have built it with his own hands. Jack and Judith are unnerved. He tells them there is an Alpine festival on in the village. His statuesque chambermaid Gretel helps the visitors to their rooms.

Chet and Hank are driving up a mountain road. The two friends have come on holiday together from the US of A. Chet is a naturalist, come to research flora and fauna. Hank has been in trouble back in the States; he has been caught multiple-timing his girlfriends and has run for cover. The trip will wean him off this misbehaviour, he hopes.

A sleigh-driver drives his two dogs ever onwards through the snow.

Jack and Judith are in the bar of the Hotel Magnificent. Jack mentions the scuzzy, spooky nature of the place. As they examine the curious decor, Rolf suddenly appears, to serve them drinks. He tells them that the decor is his Frankenstein theme. Don't they know that the famous novel was set in the Alps?

The two Americans appear. Hank is dumbstruck to clap eyes on the gorgeous Judith, whose good looks jeopardise his recovery. Chet plies him with tranquilisers, and chats with the English guests.



Rolf, a hotel proprietor, sits at his reception. Finally, two English guests arrive: Jack and

appears and tells them that their best bet is to seek refuge at the Parkers' farmhouse.

Seth answers the farmhouse door. Sandra is admitted. Tom is chased away and shot as an intruder by Parker. Sandra is alone with Seth. Seth drugs her to sleep. With his father egging him on, Seth plans to dress Sandra in his mother's wedding gown and marry her this very night. They reminisce about John and Mary's wedding, which took place under similar circumstances.

Sandra wakes up in a strange dress.

Parker warns Seth that the moon is full - the night will end in tragedy.

Tom arrives at the police station with bullets in his arse, begging the Sergeant for help. The Sergeant follows Tom to the crime scene. Sandra is being led to a hilltop by the Parkers. Seth is transforming into a werewolf. Mary makes Satanic incantations by a hilltop altar. A chicken is sacrificed.

From the bushes, Tom and the Sergeant observe this ritual. The only way to kill a werewolf, says the Sergeant, is a spear through the heart - or a tent-pole. Tom pledges to do the deed if the Sergeant provides a distraction. The Sergeant interrupts the marriage rites. Seth bears down on

him, fangs drooling - and then Tom strikes, spearing Seth through the heart. The young couple make their escape. The Parkers cradle dying Seth in their arms. The Sergeant doesn't know who to arrest. The bereaved Parkers retire to their farmhouse, promising that this carnage will be cleared by daybreak. A year later, on their tenth anniversary, Tom and Sandra finally enjoy a blissful, romantic camping weekend.

Hotel Magnificent

Lyric Hammersmith, Sat 7 June 2008

Songs: *You Sexy Thing*, *Ginger Man* & *All Worn Out*

Brian starts, as a hotelier at reception, awaiting guests

Characters

Rolf Gunther, proprietor of the Hotel Magnificent

Gretel, his assistant

Jack & Judith Hubbard, English guests

Chet & Hank, American guests

Maria, a disembodied brain

A professor, back in Washington DC

A sleigh-driver

His two dogs

The Glass Eye

Songs: *Please Let Me Get What I Want*, *The Wanderer* & *Hard Hearted Hannah*

Brian starts, as a boxer punching a punch-bag

Characters

Tommy Burns, an aspiring boxer

Mr Fantoni, his coach

Reg, his brother

Susie, his mother

Hannah Stevens, an elderly woman

Dr O'Connor, an optometrist

Wendy, his assistant

Timothy 'Slasher' Lewis, a boxer

Vicente and Lucio, gangsters

Harry Stevens, Hannah's husband

A barmaid

walking past. Kevin shows him that his claws are hands once more, and that he has the means to cure the other hybrids. D48 appears, and tells them that Kevin's space-juice contains an ingredient called 'white light', which cancels out the effects of the Prof's experiments. Kevin believes that a return to the organic ways of old might save the planet. D48 tells him he's too late. The only way is to evacuate the Earth on the prison ship - and take the planet's whole population to the colony. The Prof appears. He tells D48 that he will thwart his evacuation plan. But the android has commandeered the Skyvision airwaves and turning Grundheim's armies against him. Now the prison ships are being filled with escapee humans as the apocalypse draws near. D48 promises that, when the colony is reached, Kevin's organic scheme can be used to create a better world. The Professor screams at them to stay with him, to trust that his 'Black Light' experiments can yield success. They ignore him. The space-crafts leave the Earth, marooning the Professor, alone in his wheelchair, on a burning planet. Months later, on the colony, Martin and Vanessa celebrate their wedding with a song. [*Diamond Ring*]

Tommy is at the gym, doing boxing training. His coach Mr Fantoni enters and holds the punch bag.



D48 tells Kevin to return to his family in search of the reason for his resistance to mutation.

Kevin's family are at home, rueing their son's exile. The doorbell rings. It is Kevin. He tells his story, and they give him space-juice. Suddenly, one of his claws turns back into a hand. His mandibles shrink. It must be the space-juice! Kevin asks his parents what this drink is, that they have drunk all their lives. His father Reg explains that it is an old-time recipe, made from actual fruit and vegetables, which he and mother grow on a tiny allotment on the roof of their pod. They are interrupted by a broadcast by Grundheim, demanding the return of the fugitive mutant. Kevin must find D48 and relate the space-juice discovery.

Martin and Vanessa are with the Professor, receiving their orders to hunt down the fugitive mutant. The Prof demonstrates his power by telling Martin and Vanessa that he knows all about them; knows that Martin has a crush on his partner; knows that Vanessa is an enthusiast for old-time memorabilia - vintage cars, for example. The Prof is getting more demented.

While patrolling the streets, Martin and Vanessa discuss the Professor. Should they be serving him? Are his experiments wise? They spot Kevin

Grundheim has implanted emotional microchips into D48 - and sure enough, D48 says he is indeed feeling things. D48 shows the Prof into Kevin's prison cell, and Grundheim interrogates the mutant to work out why Kevin has mutated less than the other insecto-humans. Kevin is left alone in the cell, remembering his mother's wise words. [*Mama Told Me Not to Come*]

The Prof tries to de-activate D48 for further experiments. But D48's new-found emotion has sent him running amok, and he rebels against the Prof. D48 jetpacks off into the sky. Grundheim is alarmed.

The corridors of the prison spaceship team with insect mutants. Kevin jostles through them, and speaks to a rasping mutant called Stephen. The craft hurtles towards the space colony. [*In the Jailhouse Now*]

D48 jetpacks to the hull of the prison ship and carves a route inside. He has come to rescue Kevin. As the least evolved mutant, perhaps he holds the key to reversing the experiments and saving the mutants' lives...

Kevin and D48, clinging to one another, jet-pack back to Earth. They discuss Grundheim's notorious 'Black Light experiments' with which he tries, ever more crazily, to save the human race.

Tommy is making progress as a boxer, and there may be a big opportunity coming up for him.

Tommy is pleased: he would dearly love to give up his work as a postman.

Tommy's mother Susie summons Tommy and Reg to the dinner table. Reg makes a sarcastic remark about Tommy's boxing, and Tommy storms out. Reg is jealous that Mr Fantoni never offered him big opportunities back when he was a boxer too.

An old woman, Hannah Stevens, waits in the opticians for her eye test. The doctor discovers that she hasn't had an eye test for 20 years. She undertakes a test and Dr O'Connor realises she has a diseased left eye. He tells his assistant Wendy that they will need to operate. Hannah makes an appointment for the operation.

As Tommy delivers the mail and dodges the dogs, he promises himself that this time, taking advantage of Mr Fantoni's promised opportunity, he'll get what he wants, and become a professional boxer.

[*Please Let Me Get What I Want*]

A man sits alone in a corner, twitching, pulling on boxing gloves.

Susie calls her mother, Hannah, to ask how the eye tests have gone. She is worried about her

mother. She says she'll send the boys round. Tommy visits his grandmother Hannah. He picks a photo of his late granddad from the mantelpiece; he too was a boxer, and Tommy wants to live up to his example. Tommy asks his gran about her husband's early death. Reg arrives. Tommy claims that Reg's own boxing career founded on his relentless womanising. You can't be a libertine and a boxer, he says.

Mr Fantoni introduces Tommy to 'Slasher' Lewis - a numb-skulled boxer who Tommy recognises from school. Mr Fantoni wants Tommy to fight Slasher the Saturday after next. All the big promoters will be there. But Mr Fantoni tells Tommy that he must take a fall in the fifth round as part of a betting scam. Tommy is horrified. Hannah attends her operation, with Reg as her chaparone. Dr O'Connor gouges out her diseased eye. Reg can't watch, and exits to the corridor, where he flirts with a nurse. Dr O'Connor selects a new type of glass eye, from Japan it is indestructible, and hard as a bullet. He screws it in. Hannah is warned that, should she receive a jolt within the next ten days, the eye may get dislodged. Left alone, Hannah has a vision of a dance she had with her husband shortly after WWII.

message to the peoples of Earth via Skyvision. It is the year 4519, and as the sun draws closer to the Earth, humanity grows desperate for a way to stave off the apocalypse. Grundheim has been cross-breeding humans and insects, to evolve a species that might prosper in a hotter world. But the experiments have failed, and Grundheim now orders the rounding up of the mutants, to be sent to a prison colony in space.

Martin and Vanessa patrol the streets, heavy weaponry in hands, looking for insecto-human mutants. A man walks past, hands in pockets. They order him to reveal himself. Kevin shows his mutant hands, or claws. Martin and Vanessa bundle him into a net and herd him away. The trio take a hoverbelt to the prison facility, on which Vanessa discusses her fondness for kitsch old icons of yesteryear. Kevin is left in a cell, among scores of other insecto-humans - all more evolved, and less human than him.

Back at Kevin's house, his father, mother and his boyish sister fret about him. Father blames himself for persuading Kevin to volunteer for the experiments. Kevin's mother had always opposed it. They drink space-juice and watch a broadcast by Grundheim that forbids any families of mutants from trying to save their loved ones.

Professor Grundheim is re-wiring the hand of his android, D48. He asks D48 to broadcast a



Tommy is belting away at the punch-bag. Slasher appears and they talk a little about Reg, who Slasher knows. Tommy talks ruefully about Reg's compulsive promiscuity. Mr Fantoni arrives, and demands an answer from Tommy about the proposed fight fixing. He tells Tommy that he has got tangled up with some nasty criminals, who will kill Mr Fantoni unless Tommy loses in the fifth. Tommy has no choice but to agree.

Ding ding! Round one of the big fight. Mr Fantoni gives Tommy a pep-talk in his corner, then Tommy and Slasher slug it out in the ring.

Tommy visits his gran. He asks what granddad would have done if he'd been asked to throw a fight. Hannah tells him that his granddad was once asked to participate in match-fixing. But he refused, and walked away from boxing for good. She can see the same integrity in Tommy.

Ding ding! Round two of the big fight. Tommy asks Mr Fantoni if those hoodlums in the crowd are the ones who are threatening his life. Mr Fantoni says yes. Tommy and Slasher fight - and it's difficult for Tommy to pretend that beating Slasher isn't easy.

Tommy tells his gran that he can't follow granddad's example, because Mr Fantoni's life is at stake. She asks what kind of trouble Fantoni is

in, and implies that she knows many of the criminals involved, who are from the same families who have run boxing since her husband's days. She promises to sort things out, and tells Tommy that, whatever happens, he mustn't take the fifth-round fall. Ding ding! Round three of the big fight. Reg offers to buy drinks for his gran and mother, who are all watching the fight. As rounds three and four unfold in the background, Reg flirts with the barmaid, who invites him to the Xtremis nightclub later. [The Wanderer] Ding ding! Round five of the big fight. Tommy looks desperately towards his gran to see if she has a plan. Tommy is punched by Slasher and takes a fall, but as the count descends from 10 towards 1, he can't stay down. Hannah sits between two be-suited thugs: Vicente and Lucio. She tells them she knew their father. She namedrops her husband, Harry Stevens, which makes the two thugs quake. Then she tells them that, whatever the price attached to Tommy's defeat, she will pay it. She moves aside to make a phonecall to her husband Harry, alive and well and living as a multimillionaire in Spain. He agrees to underwrite the deal. Lucio and Vicente grudgingly agree to accept Hannah's 5m