

TRAVELLERS

A six-part radio sitcom by

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Episode 1: Mulbeaver

SCENE1. INT. COLLINS & ERNEST RICK'S FLAT. DAY

INTERIOR ACOUSTIC. CLATTER OF PLASTIC COUNTERS.

COLLINS: Weird thing this morning.

ERNEST-RICK: What?

COLLINS: Had to fasten my belt on the last notch.

ERNEST-RICK: (Nervous laugh) Chhh...putting on a bit of lard. Nothing weird about that.

COLLINS: That's what I thought, until I realised there was only one notch left, whereas yesterday there were three. And if I'm not mistaken, there were originally seven.

ERNEST-RICK: That is a bit rum.

COLLINS: You've been eating my belt, haven't you? Slowly. Like a licorice twist?

ERNEST-RICK: May have had a nibble. Here and there.

COLLINS: And all this time I'm thinking – I'm porking out, must cut-down on the carbs. Give Ernest-Rick first dibbs on the good stuff.

ERNEST-RICK: There is no good stuff. No food at all. I've been feral for about three days now. You've become a soft white fawn in my eyes.

COLLINS: And don't think I don't know what happened to my trainers.

ERNEST-RICK: Not me.

COLLINS: Really? There was me thinking it was you because of the Nike crumbs on your tank-top and your cheesy breath.

ERNEST-RICK: I only ate the soles.

COLLINS: That's because I walked in on you before you got started on the uppers.

ERNEST-RICK: I was saving the laces and uppers, for an emergency. Like now, when there's nothing in the pantry.

COLLINS: There is no pantry. You chucked it on the fire days ago. There's no fridge either because you sold it to an old skank.

ERNEST-RICK: A witch. And strictly speaking that was a barter transaction, for some magic beans and an enchanted pig.

COLLINS: Magic beans...chhh...

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah.

COLLINS: In a tin?

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah.

COLLINS: Didn't strike you as odd that magic beans traditionally come in threes, whereas these came in a tangy sauce?

ERNEST-RICK: And a shape-shifting pig.

COLLINS: A tin of barbecue beans 'n' bacon bits. Wish we'd eaten them when we had the chance now.

ERNEST-RICK: Easy to be wise after the event.

COLLINS: Yeah, well you buried it somewhere. In the dark.

ERNEST-RICK: It might have sprouted into a wondrous curly beanstalk.

COLLINS: And then you chewed the soles off my trainers.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah but they do look good like that. Elegant. Like spats.

COLLINS: I've had to paint the bottoms of my feet white, with Tippex.

ERNEST-RICK: You've been hoarding Tippex?

COLLINS: Trust me, it tastes disgusting.

ERNEST-RICK: You expect me to believe that?

COLLINS: Tell you what, there's a fortune cookie hidden under the sink. I've been saving it for...

ERNEST-RICK: Gone.

COLLINS: Gone? Gone where?

ERNEST-RICK: My cookie-hole.

COLLINS: You ate my last cookie?

ERNEST-RICK: It was off. You wouldn't have liked it.

COLLINS: Fortune cookies don't go off.

ERNEST-RICK: It was uncanny, Melvin, a thing of evil. You're better off without it.

COLLINS: It was my property.

ERNEST-RICK: You wouldn't have wanted that fortune. A misfortune, a curse. I wouldn't wish that on anyone.

COLLINS: I don't give a toss about the fortune, I wanted the cookie.

ERNEST-RICK: The two things are indivisible. Eat the cookie, suck the fortune. You're lucky I ingested the curse on your behalf. You dodged a bullet there.

COLLINS: How could my life be any worse?

ERNEST-RICK: (Ominous) You will hurt your foot.

COLLINS: That won't stop me kicking you in the head.

ERNEST-RICK: That's what it said - that oriental Devil's-sweetmeat.

COLLINS: You will hurt your foot? That's not really much of a curse.

ERNEST-RICK: No.

COLLINS: You should give me your trainers to make amends.

ERNEST-RICK: They're not edible, Mel. Rubber soles. You wouldn't enjoy them.

COLLINS: Mine had rubber soles.

ERNEST-RICK: Oh... hey, Mel.

COLLINS: What?

ERNEST-RICK: They were rubbery (accented to sound like lovely).

COLLINS: I hate you.

ERNEST-RICK: You hate the situation we're in. You're displacing again, transferring all your rage and frustration onto me. It's OK, I can take it. Go on, let it all out.

COLLINS: No, I really do hate you. We owe the Santoris three-months back rent and I'm stuck here, with no food, no heat, no TV and no hope, waiting to get my legs broken by Michaeliades. My wallet had two second class stamps in it - I could have written to someone for help - but you ate them. I hate the way you eat all my stuff. I hate your ridiculous two-names name and I hate having to play Scrabble all day.

F/X: RATTLE OF PLASTIC SMARTIE LIDS

ERNEST-RICK: We have to play Scrabble to keep warm.

COLLINS: I hate the fact that we have to play with old Smartie lids on a tartan scarf. I hate the way you invent words that sound like Scandinavian Tourettes.

ERNEST-RICK: We don't have enough consonants. We've gotta buy more Smarties, for the consonant lids.

COLLINS: We don't have any money. If I had money I wouldn't be here.

ERNEST-RICK: Don't worry, Mel, any day now there's going to be a letter...

COLLINS: There are hundreds of letters. All piled up under the front door. We get more every day.

ERNEST-RICK: I'm not talking about the bills and the threatening ones from the neighbours made from cut-up bits of newspaper. I'm talking about good news. You know what I'm talking about.

COLLINS: (Sigh) The game show.

ERNEST-RICK: Bah..bing! Named it in one. The Game Show.

COLLINS: Stars-In-Their-Eyes-with-animals.

ERNEST-RICK: Tonight, Melvin, I'm going to be Marilyn Manson's Western Australian frilled Lizard. Ordinary pets made up to be celebrity pets, Melv. Everyone loves pets. Everyone loves Celebs.

COLLINS: You made Claire's mum's Dachshund wear a pleated lampshade round its neck. It's abuse.

ERNEST-RICK: It was a concept-testing video. Stimulus material for the focus group. They loved it. Everyone loves it. Don't forget the pilot.

COLLINS: A budget airline flight-steward.

ERNEST-RICK: Head of flight-entertainment at EasyJet. He made some very positive noises.

COLLINS: High pitched wheezing. He was hyperventilating, because he'd just been knocked off his bike...by you.

ERNEST-RICK: Vent your rage, Melvin. It's OK.

COLLINS: Listen to yourself. You dressed up a dog and accosted a man in a hat. There is no letter. There will never be a letter. And that's another reason why I hate you.

ERNEST-RICK: I'm going upstairs to work on my guns.

COLLINS: (Sighs) It's still your turn.

F/X: CLATTER OF SMARTIE LIDS.

ERNEST-RICK: Ouuiaa. On a greeny-purple-heather-coloured square.
Triple-word score. Six hundred and thirty-nine points.

COLLINS: (Sighs) I would challenge but what's the point?

ERNEST-RICK: I bunged the dictionary on the fire back in February.
Ouuiaa is that brightly coloured crest-thing on a
mulbeaver's head. You'll just have to take my word for it.

COLLINS: Mulbeaver?

ERNEST-RICK: It's a kind of bird. Eats its own...

F/X: DOORBELL

...Shit. The Santorinis.

F/X: DOOR OPENS

AGATHON: Hello, my beautiful friends. My lovely rent-boys. Only
myself today. My brother, Michaeliades, is wrestling in
Pankration.

COLLINS: Pankration?

AGATHON: Theydon Bois Pankration. Proper Greco-wrestling. Not
like on telly - all sparkly bikini-trouser, fake tans.

COLLINS: Your brother's an actual wrestler?

AGATHON: Of course. True Greco-style wrestler, in Pankration; every man smothered in olive oil, strip of oxhide pulled tight up the buttocks, just sufficient for to cover the keftedes.

ERNEST-RICK: None of that fake WWF nonsense, eh, Mr Santorini?

AGATHON: (Serious) You want I should tell The Rock you say this?

ERNEST-RICK: Pfff. Like you know The Rock.

AGATHON: I know this Rock. Good friend of Michaeliades. I have Los Angeles number. Maybe ring him today. Fly Heathrow, be here tomorrow, maybe tea-time, to kill you because you call him a nonces.

ERNEST-RICK: I didn't...I...

AGATHON: (Laughs) Ah, just messing with you little bit? Yes?

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah.

AGATHON: You don't mind me messing with you? Is OK?

ERNEST-RICK: Is OK.

AGATHON: (Serious) No, is not OK. Michaeliades will kill you because you call his friend The Rock, a nonces. Micahaelides loves this Rock. In a strange way, from behind? No. Not in a strange way, from behind. In a beautiful way. With value.

COLLINS: We don't have the rent.

AGATHON: (Laughs) This boy tellings me he not have the rent. Like I am just some landlord to him?

COLLINS: You are just the landlord.

AGATHON: Yes, but in a beautiful way. With value.

COLLINS: Well, we haven't got the rent.

AGATHON: You think this matter? No. You think this why I come? Every single week?

COLLINS: For the rent.

AGATHON: No. I come because you friends. My brother? To my brother you are brigands. Scum. Ahhh, my brother has pressures. Must train for the heavy Pankration. Can not afford friends.

ERNEST-RICK: That's a crying shame. Obviously we're gutted...

AGATHON: Is not enough to have my friendship? Ernest-Richard Dubbo Mullcaster: passport number – 703358988, issued Isle of Wight. Valid 'til 2015. You see, no secrets between good friends.

ERNEST-RICK: We've got nothing left, Mr Santorini.

AGATHON: Always something left.

COLLINS: You've been through his personal stuff, Agathon. In this country stealing people's passports is illegal.

AGATHON: Is because I am concern for you, Melvin Collins, number: 806346782, issued Exeter. Valid until 2012.

COLLINS: Christ.

ERNEST-RICK: Keep the passports. Makes no difference. Everything in this house that can't be burnt or sold has been eaten...

AGATHON: Shame, since everything belong to me and my brother. Except your passports. So I keep. Till you give rent.

COLLINS: Isn't there some Greek myth about forgiving people who've forgotten to pay for an ass or something?

AGATHON: Nobody pay for ass in my country.

COLLINS: Maybe, you could just give us a break, Agathon. Another week or two while we find ...

AGATHON: Melvin Collins, I have letter for you. I keep till you pay.

COLLINS: Fine, but I think that letter may be good news. I have a sixth sense about these things, Mr Santorini.

ERNEST-RICK: He does.

AGATHON: OK. I give. But if is no money, Michaeliades come back and twist off the keftides. Make kebab with. Deal?

ERNEST-RICK: Deal.

F/X: PAPER RIPPING

ERNEST-RICK: So?

COLLINS: Grandaddeiedlefteverythingtomeinheritancebighouseindevon.

F/X: CASH-TILL, BELLS, HEAVENLY CHOIR.

COLLINS: I'm saved.

ERNEST-RICK: We. We're saved.

SCENE 2. EXT. COACH STOP. DAY

F/X: HYDRAULIC WHOOSH OF COACH DOORS.

DRIVER: (Off) Wadebridge, Devon. Wadebridge, gateway to the West Country.

COLLINS: You had cash all this time.

ERNEST-RICK: Only twenty quid. Strictly for investment opportunities or natural disasters.

COLLINS: We've been living in a natural disaster for the past month. My gums are bleeding from malnutrition. People get airlifted for less. All this time you've had money?

ERNEST-RICK: You should be thanking me for getting us here.

COLLINS: I'm on the brink of starvation, standing on a cold pavement with no soles in my shoes, I've really hurt my foot and I'm supposed to be grateful? What you got left?

ERNEST-RICK: Nothing.

COLLINS: The tickets cost sixteen quid. That leaves four.

ERNEST-RICK: I bought snacks for the journey.

COLLINS: Snacks?

ERNEST-RICK: Cheesy Wotsits.

DEGS: I like your spats.

COLLINS: Thanks, they're...

DEGS: Camelford, Camelto House, yeah?

COLLINS: Yee...es.

DEGS: Got a motor waiting for you.

ERNEST-RICK: See.

COLLINS: Hang on, this is not...

DEGS: Wait one, the locks are a wee bit temperamental.

F/X: WINDOOW SMASHING.

DEGS: And the ignition's a bit...you know.

F/X: RIPPING. PLASTIC CRACKING.

ERNEST-RICK: (Hisses) He's twoccing it.

COLLINS: I can see that.

F/X: CAR IGNITION

DEGS: There you go. All yours, lads.

COLLINS: You're not driving?

DEGS: Lost me licence. Anyways I prefer to hang off the back. For the air, like. But don't fret, keep a good look out the rear mirror and I'll wave you directions.

ERNEST-RICK: Ah, what the hell...

COLLINS: (LOW) The lunatic's going to hang off the back.

ERNEST-RICK: (Hisses) I can see that...Just shut up and get in. Maybe we can lose him on the way. Try swerving a bit...

FADE

SCENE 3. EXT. CAMPSITE.DAY

**F/X: EXTERIOR ACOUSTIC. CAMPSITE. CAR PULLS UP.
CAR DOORS OPEN AND SHUT. CALLIOPE MUSIC.**

COLLINS: (Low) Jesus, who are all these people?

DEGS: Here we are then, lads.

COLLINS: Yeah, thanks. This is Camelford?

DEGS: It is that.

COLLINS: Camelto Manor?

DEGS: S' right.

COLLINS: Only I don't actually see an actual house. Just a lot of tents.

DEGS: Camelto Manor? The old house? Nah. There's no house here any more. The old house is long gone. (Beat) Been gone for...ooh, a good couple of weeks now.

COLLINS: Gone where?

DEGS: Sold. Taken down piece by piece. Gone for scrap to a builder's merchant.

ERNEST-RICK: (Low) They've twocced your house.

COLLINS: I can see that. Excuse me, but that was my house. You can't just go around pinching people's houses.

F/X: CROWS CAWING

GABRIEL: Ahhh, you say that, but you'm don't know the ways of the country.

COLLINS: Who the hell are you?

GABRIEL: They call me Old Gabriel. On account of I'm old and...uh...there's another reason...

COLLINS: Well, Old Gabriel, you're in big trouble. This is a serious offence, it's...ah...I don't exactly know what the actual name of it is, but it's pretty damn serious.

F/X: CROWD MUTTERING

DEGS: You don't know our ways.

ERNEST-RICK: (Ingratiating) We don't, but we're very willing to learn.

GABRIEL: You pale city-folk, you come here with your pale city skin and your pale city ways.

COLLINS: You're about to find out what pale city folk can do when...

GABRIEL: Pale thighs and titties. Pale, like twelve-day-old milk-vomit you are.

COLLINS: S'cuse me?

GABRIEL: Like a dead vole...embryo. Beyond the pale. You...

COLLINS: Yeah, yeah, a couple of mole tits. Fine, now if you're quite finished you can...

GABRIEL: Finished? Not by a long chalk. Not by the pizzle of a Leicester Longboy. These be our ways, the ways of...

COLLINS: The country? Well, we don't know the ways of the country, but I expect we'll get the hang of them quite quickly from what we've seen so far. Basically, we sit around doing bugger-all all day, stealing anything that's not tied down, spouting complete nonsense.

GABRIEL: Did he just call us nonces?

DEGS: Think he did at that.

F/X: **ANGRY MUTTERING**

GABRIEL: You're not from round here, are you?

COLLINS: Oh God.

GABRIEL: I see these things just by looking at a man. You be from London. I can tell by them pale titties of yorn...and them fancy spats.

ERNEST-RICK: That's amazing. Nailed us in one. Geezers from London. That's us. Spot on. Well done.

F/X: MURMURS OF AMAZEMENT. SPORADIC APPLAUSE

GABRIEL: Knew it. Said as much.

ERNEST-RICK: Just popped down from the Smoke. You know, for the country air.

Gabriel: The where? What's 'at you say?

ERNEST-RICK: Smoke.

Gaberiel: Don't mind if I do, at that.

DEGS: Go on then.

ERNEST-RICK: Go on, what?

DEGS: Old Gabe'll take a smoke off you.

ERNEST-RICK: What smoke?

DEGS: I don't know, what you got?

ERNEST-RICK: I don't...

DEGS: You offered Old Gabe a smoke, now you've got to follow through. That's our ways. The ways of the country.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah but...I... that's ...

DEGS: Owe him a smoke, you do.

COLLINS: Look, can you just stop with the smoke thing. Neither of us smoke.

GABRIEL: Half a Woodbine 'ud be nice. Or a Bennie H.

F/X: CROWS CAWING WITH INCREASING INTENSITY

ERNEST-RICK: Hang on, I might have a few Cheesy Wotsit bits left...

DEGS: Old Gabriel'd be happy with a stogie or a rollup.

COLLINS: We've only got Cheesy Wotsit bits.

DEGS: Oh, crimminy.

COLLINS: Oh crimminy? What's that supposed to mean? That's not even a thing.

DEGS: That ain't good.

GABRIEL: It's bad. Very bad.

F/X: CROWS. AGITATED

ERNEST-RICK: In what way bad, exactly?

DEGS: You drawing down the wrath of the crows 'pon you.

ERNEST-RICK: Crows?

DEGS: Crows.

GABRIEL: You'm don't know the ways of the crows.

COLLINS: Right, that's it. Get off my land.

F/X: APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS. CALLIOPE MUSIC

MOTHER A: Melvin Collins. We've been expecting you.

COLLINS: Oh God, what now? Who are you supposed to be?
Mother Theresa's evil twin?

ERNEST-RICK: (Low) Don't inflame the traveling people, Mel. They'm
have powers beyond our ken.

DEGS: This is Mother Agnew - seeress. Matriarch of all
Travelers.

MOTHER A: I've been aware of your approach for some time now.

ERNEST-RICK: How so? Has our coming been foretold through time
immemorial or through your unearthly powers, Mother
Agnew?

MOTHER A: Saw the car coming up the drive with Degsy hanging off
the back. He used to work the dodgems of course. Watch
yourself with him, a bit light-fingered is Degs, have the
teeth out your head soon as look at you.

GABRIEL: Go on, a Craven A?

COLLINS: So you're in charge here, Mrs Agnew?

MOTHER A: Mother Agnew. I am the matriarch and seeress of the Traveling people, yes.

COLLINS: Right, well if you'd like to ask all these layabouts to pack up and sod off I'd be most grateful. Then we can discuss the theft of my property.

MOTHER A: Ah, your grandfather warned me of this: that his only descendant might be a creature of the Other World - a Nimby.

F/X: COLLECTIVE GASP FROM THE CROWD

ERNEST-RICK: Cursed hellspawn demon-ape, right? I knew it.

MOTHER A: Certainly no friend to the Traveling People.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah, begone from us, Collins, you cursed spawn-of-darkness thing. You'm Nimby.

MOTHER A: A Not-in-my-back-yard person.

ERNEST-RICK: Oh...

COLLINS: Except I don't actually have a backyard any more, since you and your gang of dodgem-riding tea-leaves have twocced my entire house.

MOTHER A: It was necessary, to provide the funds for the journey ahead. There is much you have to learn, Melvin Collins, and so little time. Come, walk with me to my deluxe

caravanette and we will speak of your Grandfather and his plans for you.

ERNEST-RICK: What about me, your maj?

MOTHER A: Bring him if you must, young Melvin.
Were you planning to tell him about all the crow-shit in his hair?

COLLINS: No.

ERNEST-RICK: Oh...for...fff...

GABRIEL: Skunk mebbe...don't mind a little bang o' Lemon Haze if you'm got any?

SCENE 4: INTERIOR CARAVAN ACOUSTIC.

GRAMS: DISCORDANT, CONTEMPORARY DANCE MUSIC.

MOTHER A: This is my son, Edweed, one of the special ones. At age three Edweed spake but two words and never uttered more. From thenceforth he has only ever communicated through the medium of contemporary dance.

ERNEST-RICK: What did he say?

MOTHER A: I just told you, he doesn't speak.

ERNEST-RICK: The two words. What were the two words with which he...ah... spake at age three?

MOTHER A: I don't remember. "Arndale Centre", I think. But that's not important now. You must observe his gyrations and I will translate. He welcomes you, Melvin Collins.

COLLINS: Right. Thanks. That's very nice. (Loud) Tell him that's very nice of him.

MOTHER A: He's not deaf, Melvin Collins.

COLLINS: Sorry.

MOTHER A: He welcomes your friend also although he does ask him to stop scratching his balls. That's fighting talk.

COLLINS: Sorry, we're not used to...all this.

MOTHER A: Why would you be? You've spent your entire life in the Other World, the Outside. But, whether you like it or not, Melvin Collins, you are the Seventh Son of a Seventh son are you not?

COLLINS: Yes, I'm...I was the youngest. My brothers were all quite a bit older. They were sent away to boarding school. When I was only five they all died in the same dormitory fire. The Lower-Vulture Dormitory Tragedy.

MOTHER A: (Ominous) A dormitory named Lower Vulture?

COLLINS: All the dormitories at that school had the names of birds of prey: Upper and Lower Eagle, Upper and Lower Kestrel, Upper and Lower Osprey, Lower Shite-Hawk, and of course, Lower Vulture. Oh, and Sparrow.

MOTHER A: Don't you think that's significant?

COLLINS: Yeah, I think Sparrow might have been where they put all the nerds.

MOTHER A: You are the only surviving son. The Seventh of a long line of sevens. And your name is Melvin.

COLLINS: I prefer Mel.

MOTHER A: You're an Eldritch, Melvin Collins. Your grandfather was named Melvin also. You come from an unbroken line of Eldritch. Descendant of a famous mage. Your powers are dormant but they exist. I feel them...please don't pick

your nose, Ernest-Rick. Edweed considers that fighting talk.

ERNEST-RICK: This is all very nice, Mother Goose, but we're broke and my friend would like his house back. Or the equivalent cash value.

MOTHER A: Does your companion really need to be here? My son's beginning to lose his tempo.

COLLINS: This is all a lot to take in. Uh...which mage am I descended from, exactly?

MOTHER A: Do you not know your own destiny yet...Melvin Collins?

COLLINS: Well...you know....

MOTHER A: The power that was passed to you on the death of your grandfather, also called Melvin?

COLLINS: Not as such.

MOTHER A: The name of your extraordinary ancestor - Britain's greatest mage and wizard, has echoed down the centuries through seventh son of seventh son to its present incarnation. Even now you cannot see this, (Emphatic) Melvin?

COLLINS: Dumbledore?

MOTHER A: Think again, (Emphatic) Melvin.

COLLINS: Gandalf the Grey?

MOTHER A: For crying out loud. It's not that hard.

COLLINS: I'm not really big on fantasy. I prefer Dan Brown.

MOTHER A: A name so like your own.

COLLINS: Melvis?

F/X: MUSIC CHANGES TO PAN PIPES.

MOTHER A: I can see that, Edweed, but he is all we've got.

ERNEST-RICK: Mel, these people are twats. I'm going back to London.

F/X: MUSIC REVERTS TO DISCORDANT

MOTHER A: Ernest-Rick, before you depart, my son wishes to inform you that he finds your body language offensive.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah? Good. Tell him it was meant to be.

F/X: MUSIC CHANGES TO HAPPY CLAPPY.

MOTHER A: Really Edweed? That's needlessly rude. (Sighs) Edweed would like you to know that he finds your hairstyle risible.

ERNEST-RICK: It's the wrath of the crows if you must know. But you can tell him he just pirhouetted the wrong guy. Edweed is getting on my tits and is about to get himself tuned up.

**F/X: HIP-HOP MUSIC ACCOMPANIED BY HEAVY STEPS
AND SQUEAKING SHOES**

(Grunts) Knee-spin, flare, windmill. Deepside, Wu Tang!
Yeah? What you got to say now, Ed...weed?

F/X: SINGLE PAN PIPE TOOT

MOTHER A: Oh, for goodness sake, Edweed, take it outside.

COLLINS: Yeah, do that. You're giving me a headache, both of you.

F/X: MORE PAN PIPE

ERNEST-RICK: Oh really? You want some more, Edwuss?

F/X: FOOTSTEPS. CARAVAN DOOR SLAMMING.

SCENE 5: INTERIOR CARAVAN ACOUSTIC. SOME TIME LATER.

RHYTHMIC DRUM BEATING

MOTHER A: (Chanting) Hey a hey a hey a hey a hey a hey...

COLLINS: This is all very interesting but can we just...

MOTHER A: We have a long and arduous journey ahead. I call upon Willocks, my Cherokee spirit guide, to point the way.

COLLINS: Willocks?

MOTHER A: He might be a Navaho, I can never remember.

COLLINS: I thought native Americans were supposed to be named after the first things their mums see when they're born: Running Stream, Passing Cloud, Sitting Bull, Pissing Eagle, Two Dogs Humping, that sort of thing?

MOTHER A: I always thought so too but Willocks is one of those unusual names. It's like when you've got loads of Smiths and you're called Farquerson-Chomley-Smythe. That's what he tells me anyway. He's a bloody liar though. Can't believe a word he says half the time.

COLLINS: So, not much of a spirit guide really.

MOTHER A: Makes me laugh though.

COLLINS: Is he here now? What's he saying?

MOTHER A: Speak, Willocks. I entreat you. I call upon you for the means to begin our journey.
No, Willocks, that mote not be ...

COLLINS: What? What did he say?

MOTHER A: He says the keys to the Volvo are in my green bag and I know they're bloody not, I went through it for a Kleenex not ten minutes ago. He's such a gobshite. I'll check the sofa...

FADE

SCENE 6: INTERIOR ACOUSTIC. CAR ON THE MOVE.

F/X : DOG SLOBBERING

COLLINS: So, where exactly are we going?

MOTHER A: All will be revealed in time.

ERNEST-RICK: The horrible dog's phlegming all over me. How come I get stuck in the back with the horrible dog anyway?

MOTHER A: That's Doge.

ERNEST-RICK: All right, Dogey. Can you just...

DOGE: I am Doge.

ERNEST-RICK: Uh, Mel, the dog just spoke.

COLLINS: I did notice that.

ERNEST-RICK: Wait, I really think I should be getting back. Actually here's good, you can just drop me...

DOGE: I am Doge.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah, all right, dog, I heard you the first time. Why's the horrible dog talking to me, Mel?

DOGE: I'm not talking to you, runt. I'm talking to him.

ERNEST-RICK: The talking mutt just called me a runt.

COLLINS: Smart dog.

FX: SLAVERING. LICKING SOUNDS.

ERNEST-RICK: What the hell are you doing? What's he doing, Mel?

COLLINS: What's it look like he's doing? He's doing what...dogs do.

DOGE: Sort of a rabbity gamey flavour today. (Beat) Sorry, I have canine-urges...

COLLINS: That's okay, Doge. You do what you have to do.

ERNEST-RICK: Can you... can you just back off. Your breath smells of balls.

MOTHER A:: You need fill them in, Doge. There's not much time.

DOGE: You haven't explained?

MOTHER A: Melvin knows he's an Eldritch. But he's a bit...well, he's not exactly the man his grandfather was.

ERNEST-RICK: Hang on, how come he gets to be an Eldritch? What about me? What am I?

DOGE: You're a runt.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah, well, at least I don't lick my own balls.

DOGE: Least I can.

ERNEST-RICK: You don't even sound like a proper talking dog.

DOGE: Oh? And how is a talking dog meant to sound?

ERNEST-RICK: Sausages...

COLLINS: Pipe down, Ernest-Rick. Let the talking dog get a word in.

ERNEST-RICK: Oh, right, yeah, let's all shut up and listen to the dog...yapping.

DOGE: Mmm... Melvin Collins you are a direct descendant of our greatest mage, the wizard Merlin.

COLLINS: Oh...Merlin! Right, Melvin-Merlin. Right. Right. Got it.

MOTHER A:: (Sigh) Not really that hard was it?

COLLINS: You were saying mage - I was thinking three wise men. Balthazar, Melchior, Casper the friendly ghost...

DOGE: Melvin, do try to concentrate, there is little time. Untold powers lie dormant within you, passed down through the Seventh Son of each succeeding generation. You have spent your entire life in the Outside, the Other World never knowing of this. Certainly your own father never suspected. And we'd hoped never to have to call upon you. But your grandfather passed before his work was done.

COLLINS: Yeah, I was going to ask about that. I don't know that much about my grandfather. I only met him once, when I

was five. All I remember is that he smelled of wee and called me a nancy. How did he actually...ah...pass?

(SILENCE)

COLLINS: Has someone let off?

ERNEST-RICK: It'll be the dog.

MOTHER A:: Tell him, Doge. He has a right to know.

DOGE: Eight-Ball.

F/X: SINISTER MUSIC

F/X: CLICK OF SWITCH

MOTHER A: Don't mess with the radio, Melvin, this is important.

COLLINS: Sorry, my knee joggled the switch...So he was playing Eightball in the pub? That's as good a way to go as any I suppose, better than...

DOGE: No, Melvin. He was murdered by...Eight-Ball.

F/X: SINISTER MUSIC

F/X: CLICK OF SWITCH

COLLINS: Sorry, sorry it's just than whenever you say Eight-Ball...

F/X: SINISTER MUSIC

F/X: CLICK OF SWITCH

MOTHER A: For crying out loud, Melvin.

COLLINS: ...like that, my right leg does this weird twitchy thing.

DOGE: Eight-Ball...

F/X: SINISTER MUSIC

F/X: CLICK OF SWITCH

COLLINS: See?

DOGE: ...killed your grandfather, Melvin. It is best you know this now. It seems that Eight-Ball...

F/X: COUNTRY & WESTERN MUSIC

F/X: CLICK OF SWITCH.

DOGE: ...somehow got in front of your grandfather. One thing you should always remember is to never look at his back. Never, ever, get behind Eight-Ball...

F/X: GRAMS - KYLIE MINOGUE. I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY.

F/X: CLICK OF SWITCH.

ERNEST-RICK: Hey, no, I like that one.

COLLINS: Who is this...this person and how will I recognize him?

MOTHER A: Not a person, Melvin. A manifestation of chaos and the old order. He's a force, a demon, if you will. Merlin, and others like him brought Britain out of the chaos of the Dark Ages by establishing a network of leylines across

the land: an energy grid, feeding off the light and power of the universe. It exists to keep the elements of darkness and chaos at bay. But in recent years a new network has arisen, undermining the ancient grid, destabilizing the order of Albion.

COLLINS: What new network?

DOGE: Mobile phones. Base stations and transmitters proliferate, popping up in wheatfields like acne in an Argos sales-clerk's bumfluff. Surely you've noticed that since mobile phones appeared Britain has been sliding into chaos?

ERNEST-RICK: Actually that's true, Mel. Britain has become shit since we had mobiles. And Blair.

F/X: ENTHUSIASTIC SLAVERING

Oy, just back off a bit can you, ball-breath?

**SCENE 7: EXTERIOR ACOUSTIC. WIND WHISTLING. HOLLOW SOUNDS
OF EMPTY CAN BLOWING.**

DOGE: Look around you, gentlemen. Violence, techno-morons, litter, graffiti and so on. All symptoms of the slide into darkness and chaos.

COLLINS: What is this place?

DOGE: Roughtor. The ancient stone circle laid down by your ancestor. Over yonder is Tintagel.

COLLINS: The castle?

DOGE: The pub.

ERNEST-RICK: Thank God. I could murder a pint.

COLLINS: But this is meant to be the countryside, it's like a post-apocalyptic nightmare, burnt-out cars, graffiti...Why would anyone graffiti a bunch of ancient rocks?

ERNEST-RICK: (Reading) Gawain bums squires.

DOGE: There. There is your answer.

COLLINS: Gawain bums squires?

ERNEST-RICK: (Reading) Lance flosses.

COLLINS: I don't get it.

MOTHER A: Arthur.

COLLINS: Who, how, who?

MOTHER A: You sound like an owl, Melvin.

DOGE: It is wrote that in a time of crisis the sovereign of this land may call upon Arthur and his sleeping knights.

ERNEST-RICK: (Smug) Written. I think you'll find that the word is "written".

MOTHER A: Albion's reigning monarch must simply use the words: "Wake up, Arthur." The once and future king will heed the call and ride to our aid. If these words be heard throughout the land, then so mote it be.

ERNEST-RICK: I think you'll find that the word is "must".

COLLINS: Shut up, Ernest-Rick. So, who woke them?

ERNEST-RICK: I think you'll find the word is... no, carry on.

MOTHER A: Margaret Thatcher.

DOGE: Back in Seventy-Eight, during the miner's crisis. She was having a go at Scargill and the union as usual, and during some televised debate, she said...

MOTHER A: (Mrs Thatcher impersonation) "Wake up, Arthur, coal is a dying industry". Of course by then she'd more or less assumed the role of the sovereign, so the prophecy held. They woke up.

COLLINS: So, what am I supposed to do about it?

DOGE: Put them back to sleep, of course. Their time is not yet come.

MOTHER A: Arthur and his knights are guardians of the leylines. You can't begin fixing the leylines until Arthur and his lads are out of the way.

COLLINS: Hang on, what's all this about fixing the leylines?

DOGE: (Too quickly) It's nothing. Simple job, like changing a couple of fuses.

COLLINS: So, why can't you do it?

DOGE: I'm a dog. I have paws.

COLLINS: What about Mother Agnew?

MOTHER A: (Pathetic) I'm an old, old woman, me hands is crippled with arthritis, I can't even carry my own shopp...

ERNEST-RICK: I'll do it.

MOTHER A: NO!

DOGE: NO!

COLLINS: I'm not sure about any of this.

MOTHER A: A moment...Willocks speaks to me. You must cross my uvula with gin to hear more.

DOGE: Why don't we talk about it over a drink at the Tintagel?

ERNEST-RICK: Finally, the mongrel says something that makes sense.

DOGE: What you don't realize, Ernest-Richard, is that although I am a mage with certain mystical powers, physically I'm an attack-dog and if pushed I can quite easily revert to a bestial instincts – I have a substantial amount of Doberman in me.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah, in your butt mostly.

DOGE: GROWLS.

SCENE 8: INTERIOR ACOUSTIC – ROWDY PUB AMBIANCE.

F/X: CRACKED FALSETTO VOICE SINGING BLUE MOON

DOGE: Right, so that'll be a pint of Magners, pint of Bishop's Tipple, pint of gin and a bowl of Boddies for me.

SHARON: Pint of Magners, pint of Bishop's Tipple, pint of gin, bowl of Boddies... fourteen, seventy-eight, or three Jimmy'O Goblins.

ERNEST-RICK: OK... so...

DOGE: Don't look at me. I'm a dog. We never carry cash.

MOTHER A: I left my purse in the Volvo. Willocks swore blind I wouldn't need it.

COLLINS: Ah, we're a bit sort of...

ERNEST-RICK: We're broke.

COLLINS: Because Ernest-Rick spent our last four quid on Cheesy Wotsits.

F/X: SINGING ENDS. RAGGED APPLAUSE

DOGE: Would that be a Midgey-Cracker you've got there, Mother Agnew?

MOTHER A: (Fruity chuckle) It is that. Ash bough, stripped of its bark by the light of a new moon. Can't get nothing by you, Dogey.

DOGE: All right, lads. Now we wouldn't normally do this, but needs must. You see that noisy dwarf over there, just finished singing?

COLLINS: Yeah.

DOGE: Take the Midgey-Cracker, follow him into the Gents, tap him lightly on the back seven times with the Ash bough and he'll release a golden shower.

COLLINS: You what?

DOGE: Strike him lightly on the back with the Midgey-Cracker and...

COLLINS: I'm not going to beat up some midget-pervert in the Gents with a stick. Nobody needs a drink that badly.

ERNEST-RICK: I'll do it.

DOGE: You don't beat him up. You just tap him lightly on the back with the staff seven times. That's the whole point of a Midgey-Cracker. Do this and he'll produce a handful of Jimmy 'O Goblins – solid gold coins. Just light taps and exactly seven times, mind.

ERNEST-RICK: Give us the big stick then.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS AWAY

DOGE: Melvin, it's time you met Arthur.

DOGE: (Calling) Arthur Pendragon.

F/X: NOISE AND LAUGHTER SUBSIDES

COLLINS: Don't tell me. Not the loud-mouthed beardy one in the stained trackies?

MOTHER A: Very good, Melvin.

DOGE: Even in these humble surroundings you marked him by his serene and noble bearing.

COLLINS: The round table. Covered with beer mats, broken glass...and empty crisp packets. Oh, and puke.

ARTHUR: Ayyyy...It's Dogey and Agger Mugnew. Come to take us home, you old brazzer? Where's Smelly Melly? Busy pounding the wizard's sleeve, yeah?

MOTHER A: Old Melvin's dead, Arthur.

ARTHUR: Sorry to hear that, Mother Agnew. (Beat) On the upside, I suppose this means we can stick around then? Forever?

DOGE: I'm afraid not, Arthur. It doesn't change anything. This young gentleman is Old Melvin's grandson, another Melvin, true and direct descendant of Merlin, seventh son through the line of seventh sons- an Eldritch. He's been

summoned to redress the natural order: firstly, to put to you and your knights back to sleep.

ARTHUR: Suppose we don't actually want to go? Suppose we want to stick around carousing and such for the next millennium? What are you going to do about it?

DOGE: Young Melvin is here to make you. Just as his grandfather would have done.

ARTHUR: This gusset? He'll have to be a better man than his grandpa then, Doge.

MOTHER A: Oh, he is that. And more, Arthur.

F/X: DERISIVE LAUGHTER

COLLINS: (Hisses) Hang on a...

ERNEST-RICK: (From across the room) Have a care, sir. Melvin Collins will brook no insult to his manhood. I plight my troth on it.

F/X: SILENCE

ARTHUR: What exactly is that meant to be?

ERNEST-RICK: I am called Ernest-Richard Dubbo Mullcaster...of the...ah...house of Mullcaster.

ARTHUR: Never heard of you.

ERNEST-RICK: That's as may be. Nevertheless, I am a man of wealth, power and substance, and not to be trifled with. To show my goodwill I propose a round of ale for all, on me.

F/X: RAUCOUS CHEERS

ARTHUR: Yeah, go on then, why not? You're all right, Ernest-Richard of the House of Dubbo-Mullcaster. Bring on the booze and summon my jester. I'll have a yard of lager top.

GAWAINE: Sire, Nigel Smallpiece has retired to the jakes.

ARTHUR: Well get him out then. I could use a laugh.

COLLINS: (Whispers) What the hell are you playing at?

ERNEST-RICK: (Low) I just got you out of a very tight spot, with a drunken bearded psycho. Money talks, mate, and tonight I'm the man with verbal diarrhoea. That midgey-stick is bloody brilliant.

F/X: RATTLE OF COINS

Look at the gold! Come panto season, we're set for life.

DOGE: What did you do with Nigel Smallpiece?

ERNEST-RICK: Who's Nigel Smallpiece when he's at home?

MOTHER A: Arthur's dwarf jester. How many times did you hit him?

ERNEST-RICK: No idea. He wouldn't stay still.

MOTHER A: How many Jimmy O'Goblins did you get?

ERNEST-RICK: Not exactly sure. A shedload.

DOGE: You fool. Tap him lightly seven times, I said.

ERNEST-RICK: Yeah, like I'm going to listen to a dog.

MOTHER A: What happened?

ERNEST-RICK: I was smacking him up a bit and he just disappeared.

DOGE: You beat the essence out of him, you fool.

ERNEST-RICK: I got loads of gold coins. He was like a little one-armed bandit...with two arms.

ARTHUR: (Roars) Where's Nigel Smallpiece?

DOGE: This is not good.

MOTHER A: Arthur, there's been a misunderstanding. I fear Melvin Collins's companion overused a Midgey-Cracker on your jester. Nigel Smallpiece has been obliterated. I'm sorry, we should have been more careful.

ARTHUR: Then this Collins must meet me on the field of single combat. Nigel Smallpiece was of my court.

MOTHER A: It would seem so.

DOGE: It is the law.

ARTHUR: So mote it be.

ERNEST-RICK: I think you'll find that's "must".

COLLINS: Wait. Hang on a second. Ernest-Rick beat the dwarf out of existence and I'm the one who gets lamped?

DOGE: According to Arthur's courtly code of conduct you are technically Ernest-Rick's liege. You take responsibility for his mistakes.

ERNEST-RICK: Go for it, my liege.

COLLINS: No...no, this is insanity.

DOGE: This is all for the good, don't you see? Best Arthur in single-combat and he'll accept your authority. It'll be so much easier then for you to put him and his knights back to sleep.

COLLINS: I'm not meeting anyone on the field of combat. I don't even play five-a-side any more.

ARTHUR: Bring me my shield and breast-plate.

F/X: CLATTER OF IRON

ERNEST-RICK: Forgive me, your highness, but the design on your shield, that wouldn't be a...

ARTHUR: Aye, Ernest-Richard, a Mulbeaver. The Pendragon's have always fought 'neath the banner of the Mulbeaver.

ERNEST-RICK: A Mulbeaver with Ouuiiaila rampant?

ARTHUR: Of course a Mulbeaver with Ouuiiaila ramapant. A Mulbeaver's not much bloody use without its Ouuiiaila.

ERNEST-RICK: Ah well, good luck then, your maj.

ARTHUR: Won't need it with this pillock. (Bellows) Oy, Gawaine. Bring us me Burberry helm.

FADE OUT.