

"THE CLOCKWORK FABLE"

or

The Melancholy Tragedy of The Boy, A Clockwork Child of Cogtopolis

A Prog-Rock Mind-Movie in Three Oscillations

by

Gandalf's Fist

ACT I: THE DAY THE GREAT COG FAILED

EXT. AN ABANDONED STREET - NIGHT

Footsteps echo down a cavernous cobbled street. Slow and laborious, an old man, the LAMPLIGHTER, can be heard whistling as he strides ever closer. Intermittently, he coughs and wheezes, a mixture of contentment and suffering. He stops, ascends a ladder with a measured thud. A sound of flame-touching-gas fills the street as a lamplight is lit.

LAMPLIGHTER
(Surprised, coughing and spluttering)

Oh! hello... didn't expect to see anyone else in this rotten part of town... sneaking about! It's a wonder ye didn't scare es to death... and then where'd we be at? Come with ye - them bins are no place to be hiding...

Debris clangs and rustles for a few brief moments

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)
Now then. What we got? Stand still will ye- what's matter? You lost? Ha! - one of them reckless exiles from Porfan I suppose? Ey? Joyriding steam carts? Scrumping for turnips? Out on the rob?
Ha! Maybe not... Forgive me - it is a particularly dark day and my charge has just begun. Come along if ye want... I'll give ye the grand tour!

EXT. ARDEL - COGTOPOLIS CITY CENTRE - NIGHT

The sound of pistons, steam and machinery become louder and louder as the sound of the hustle and bustle of city life, people going about their daily business fades into view.

LAMPLIGHTER
Ahhh - Cogtopolis! The city beneath the surface... not a smidge of daylight to be seen in living memory. The Sun: Nowt but a whisper, a legend...

Ever been to 'topolis before? Hmmm... don't think so. You really don't look the type...

He pauses for a while as he watches the traveller's face, hoping to see some spark of interest in his speech

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)
Why "Cogtopolis"? Haha! Well, it's a safe bet that, despite the utter collapse of civilisation and the near extinction of the human race, Town Councils have remained anything but imaginative! Wait. Listen.

A low THUD and RUMBLE Reverberates, a BASS frequency shaking the very city.

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

You hear that? That's the old girl! The 'Hyper-extended Support Differential' - a giant cog to you and I - providing us with energy, air, plasma for the lights and indeed, the etymology of our lurid City. Slowly, steadily she moves her circles... humming her baritone tune of continuity.

When my lamps are at their lowest ebb, when all is calm, you can even hear it's heartbeat in the outer suburbs. A marvel of modern engineering, I tell ye. A masterpiece. Art, almost...

The sounds of mechanical thuds and crowded street chatter grow and swell as they continue down the bustling street

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

Well, I'm sure you've heard the stories... you *ARE* at traveller after all! Technological abominations; clouds engulfing the sun; twenty year winters and the slow, agonising death of "The Surface".

Children's stories, no more, no less. Half baked, quarter baked... never cooked... so raw they would choke ye Nana. Yet, somehow or other we all put our tails between our legs and ended up here - in the warm, safe belly of the earth.

The old man's tales are cut short as the sound of heavy breathing and the gallop of footsteps. EVE, her heart pounding, thunders past...

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

And now... on the night before Shadowmass, young Eve rushes to meet her Mentor...

PLAY SONG: "Shadowborn"

VERSE 1:

RUNNING THROUGH A RUST-LOCKED CITY
TIRED EYES YET HEARTS STILL BEATING
IRON-CLAD THE STEAM CLOUDS CLIMBING HIGHER
SHADOWS DANCE AND PISTONS SCREAMING
CAN YOU HEAR THE DARKNESS BREATHING?
STAIRWAY TO THE SURFACE; YET WE CLOSE OUR MINDS

CHORUS:

WE WAIT FOR A TIME
WE WAIT FOR OUR LIVES
IS THE SUNRISE JUST A DREAM WE LOST?
- A DAY WE LEFT BEHIND?
IS THERE LIFE ON THESE STREETS?
IS THERE SOMETHING LEFT FOR ME?
ARE WE WHAT WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN BEFORE?
WE ARE SHADOW-BORN

VERSE 2:

FIGHTING PAST OUR INFESTATION
 METAL BITES AT DEPRIVATION
 A SPECTRE OF THE HARMONY WE KNEW BEFORE
 GEARS GRIND THROUGH AUTOMATION
 CURSED WE CRY IN ISOLATION
 HARD HOLD OUR HEADS HIGH WHEN OUR LIFE IS LOW

<CHORUS>

BRIDGE

FATHER'S SONG, MOTHER SAID,
 DOES IT LINGER IN YOUR HEAD?
 TALISMAN, ROUND YOUR NECK,
 DOES IT FILL YOUR HEART WITH DREAD?
 FATHER'S SONG, MOTHER SAID,
 DOES IT LINGER IN YOUR HEAD?
 TALISMAN, ROUND YOUR NECK,
 DOES IT FILL YOUR HEART WITH DREAD?

VERSE 3:

WELCOME TO OUR WORLD OF SHADOW
 WELCOME CHILD, EMBRACE YOUR SORROW
 WARDENS OF THE LIGHT NOW RAISE THEIR BANNERS HIGH
 YESTERDAY WAS OUR TOMORROW
 LEAVE A TRAIL; YOUR SOUL WILL FOLLOW
 HANGING ONTO DAYDREAMS WHERE THE SUN STILL SHINES

<CHORUS>

WE WAIT FOR A TIME
 WE WAIT FOR OUR LIVES
 IS THE SUNRISE JUST A DREAM WE LOST?
 - A DAY WE LEFT BEHIND?
 STILL THE FIRE BURNS INSIDE
 BUT I'VE WAITED ALL MY LIFE
 TO BELIEVE IN WHAT WE DREAMED BEFORE
 WE ARE SHADOW-BORN

EXT. THE UNMINABLE ZONE

*At the OPENING of the TUNNEL to THE GREAT COG, high
 frequencies BOUNCE and DANCE as if reflecting off a
 GREAT WALL hewn of DIAMOND*

LAMPLIGHTER

And so we came to be - much like you - here, in Cogtopolis...
 Dropped down a random shaft into the planet's bowels to play
 family with all the strangers we found here.
 Don't get me wrong, we all deal with the dark in different
 ways. it's nice enough. I'm happy doing what I was born to
 do. Just putting one foot in front of the other and making
 sure there's enough plasma in my lamp to keep me from falling
 on me arse... You know what they say, It's better to light
 the lamp than curse the darkness...

THE LAMPLIGHTER grunts, coughs and struggles as he stretches aloft to light another lamp. Again, the sound of gas bursting into flame is heard reverberating around the surroundings.

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

You see, every day, Lamplighters, such as I, travel the whole city refilling the plasma lights. Lit from the very same reservoir that provides all the steam for our great city, each of us is given an Eternal Flame when we take on the mantel... no small task...

No small task indeed, and serious business - you see the flame, fragile as it seems, can only be extinguished when the 'Lighter dies. They say you can tell the age of a 'Lighter by the brightness of his flame...

(The old man trails off as if caught in his own thoughts)

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

QUARTZ! DIAMOND! ONCE PRECIOUS MINERALS; NOW WORTHLESS,
CALLOUS AND UN-MINABLE. IMMOVABLE BY MAN OR MACHINE... A PRISON
FOR THE IMPOVERISHED AND THE WEAK...

Crude shanty-towns, stuffed into cracks of shimmering
 gemstone.

Bonny isn't it? How my Lamps gleam and dance. Beautiful...
 hypnotic...

Scant consolation for the cold and the hungry.

Pause. Their footsteps continue.

LAMPLIGHTER

Well, that's where she's gone - through there. To the grand
 old hall... an ancient cavern... mined before my time even!

In there, poking through the cracks in the ceiling you can
 see it bright as night... the great cog, shaking cavern walls
 with every predictable shudder.

Pipes, valves, gauges - god knows what they all do... mind you,
 most of their dials are long since blind from all that
 condensed sulphur-rain that drips from the rocky walls.

Several smaller gears whizz around, a deafening racket they
 make, diverting the power towards the outer city reaches -
 all the while, the giant one makes her rounds, slowly,
 steadily, mimicking what we may call a day-to-day routine -
 only stopped from time to time for maintenance...

Come now, we'd best crack on... my flame is dull, my time is
 short.

PLAY SONG: "LAMPLIGHTER"

WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME?
 WHAT DID YOU BRING?
 REACHING HIGH; AMBER FIRE
 THE SORROW THAT STINGS
 I'VE HEARD THE STORIES
 YOU'VE HEARD THEM TOO
 NOW IT'S NIGHT
 LAMPS ALIGHT;
 A MEMORY EXHUMED

LAMPLIGHTER, LAMPLIGHTER
 SHOW ME THE WAY
 WITH YOUR HAND UPON
 THE VEIL OF DARK
 SURE NIGHT WILL FADE
 LAMPLIGHTER, LAMPLIGHTER
 LIGHTS LEAD THE WAY
 WHEN YOU'RE HANGING ON
 TO MORNING'S SONG
 YOU'LL ONLY PRAY

LAMPLIGHTER - SING A SONG
 LAMPLIGHTER - HANGING ON
 ALLOW YOUR EYES TO REST TONIGHT
 THE LIGHT YOU BREATH WILL ALWAYS SHINE
 LAMPLIGHTER - SING A SONG
 LAMPLIGHTER - HANGING ON
 ALLOW YOUR EYES TO REST TONIGHT

THE LIGHT YOU BREATH WILL ALWAYS SHINE

INT. THE CAVERN OF THE GREAT COG - NIGHT

High in the Cavern overhead, THE GREAT COG can be glimpsed through natural holes in the ceiling of the cave. CHUGGING and JUDDERING, each painstakingly slow movement of the giant gear shakes the walls of this ancient control room. THE TINKER, consumed by clouds of steam, is frantically tapping on gauges and dials as they spin wildly in their brass casings.

THE TINKER

(whispering and muttering to himself)

... you impossible... infernal contraption...try again, MUST try again... pendulum anomalies nominal... 7 vibrations per hour... not practical... Encampment pressure fluttering... I just can't...

SUDDENLY, EVE arrives, GASPING for air

EVE

(Exhausted, trying to catch her breath)

I'm...

THE TINKER

Late?

EVE

(sharply)

Here.

(pause)

EVE (CONT'D)

Conveyors were crammed. The whole steamin' city was out! Had to run the whole way. I don't see why we even have to work on the day of...

THE TINKER

(sarcastically)

Well.. didn't I tell you? Didn't I just!! That whole festival is, quite frankly, PREPOSTEROUS! SUPERSTITION and POPPYCOCK my girl! POPPYCOCK! There's a MUCH finer time to be had among these Gizmos, doohickeys and thingyamy-traptions I'll have you know! Yes indeed... *THIS* Gauge here: twenty seven point nine... very interesting! *THIS* one here: Twenty TWO point FOUR... how unusual...

EVE

Sigh I thought you'd be finished by now

THE TINKER, seemingly ignoring EVE, turns his back and begins busily pulling a succession of levers and turning a myriad of valves

THE TINKER

... but no... nobody cares how many times I have to oil this Goose-Hinge, how much time it takes to re-calibrate this weasel Flange... and don't get me started on all those Lentil Sockets... You see girl, the Shadowmass, despite occurring on a *PREDICTABLE* yearly interval - for *TWO* centuries no less - always seems to catch this city by surprise.

EVE

Well I'm surprised we're still here... it's never usually taken this long to reset the coils.

THE TINKER

Precisely! The old girl's sick.

EVE

Sick? How...

THE TINKER

She's slow. Really slow. At this rate it will be 7 cycles to her next setting... twice as long as usual...

EVE

So?

THE TINKER

So? SO? So IF my calculations are correct, the great cog is slowing to a halt...

EVE

But that's...

THE TINKER

...Impossible? Yes. She is historically reliable, not wavering by much more than a nano-turn in generations. The end of the machine spells the end of filtration, the end of air circulation and end of life here in cogtopolis...

EVE

Shadow save us!

THE TINKER

And yet...

EVE

What?

THE TINKER

The readings remain normal. Pressure: equalised; Air ratio: Clean; Chicken soup vending machine: Inedible... nothing has changed... it's almost as if... the cog is obsolete...

EVE

What? Doing nothing? Since when? How is that even possible?

THE TINKER

There can be only one cause... Did you get the parts I told you to bring along?

EVE

Yes, here they are...

THE TINKER

You got that Thimble-wrench?

EVE

Yes.

THE TINKER

The Monkey-spanner?

EVE

Yes.

THE TINKER

The electro-sock? Owl Sponge? salmon harness? donkey pincers...

EVE

YES!!

THE TINKER

The biscuit iron? ...Mine broke again last night during my... erm... expedition.

EVE

You were up there again, alone? I told you not to go there without me! You could fall and break your legs...

He snorts.

THE TINKER

My legs are fine, even the one with the gammy toe. Want to see what I discovered last night? Here, look...

He opens up a huge leather-bound notebook.

THE TINKER (CONT'D)

These are the readings from my gauges way up the cavern wall - the highest ones that I've seen in my whole life. Off the scale...

EVE

Impossible. that would mean...

THE TINKER

(interrupting)

That the sun has returned to the surface! - or is returning, as yet, we have no clue about how bright it already is. Here, look - see that gauge there? The one next to the speckled plungers? The needle is bent... pointing at an estimated 250 bishops! That must've been before the gauge broke...

EVE

Unbelievable...

*He closes the book quickly with a loud 'thud' and
hastily hides it back under his drawing desk.*

THE TINKER

Back to work then. This could possibly explain those strange noises the giant one made earlier - I dare-say it won't take long to spread the news... this city communicates almost entirely by gossip...

PLAY SONG: "THE GREAT COG"

VERSE 1:

TIME TASTES SO SLOW
FIND YOUR WAY
CHASE THE MORNING
NOT EASY IT SEEMS
REACHING NOW FOR THE SUN
YOU, DYING SLOWLY NOW,
BRING THE LIGHT BACK HOME

CHORUS:

ALL MY LIFE
DREAMED IN DARK
SEEMED SO LONG
CLOCKWORK HEART
RUST IN HELL TONIGHT
RUST IN PEACE TONIGHT
IN YOUR DREAMS TONIGHT
ILLUMINATE.

VERSE 2:

GHOSTS IN MACHINES
HAUNT YOUR MIND
FIND THE SECRET
DECEIVING IT SEEMS
CLOCKWORK HEART BEATS UNDONE
YOU, DREAMER OF THE SKIES
MAKE THE NIGHT YOUR HOME

<CHORUS>

BRIDGE:

GEARS IN WHEELS
RHYMES IN RHYMES
YOU'LL NEVER FORGET
OLD FATHER TIME
UNDERGROUND
SLOWING DOWN
YOU'RE THE WHEEL
OF UNDERTOWN

<CHORUS>

EXT. ARDEL

The 2nd Secretary sweeps along the conveyor. The sound of WHIRRING BELTS can be heard whilst DOPPLERISED GEARS AND CRANKS create a slow sense of movement. In his hand the secretary grasps a brass message tube, he reaches the courtyard and sweeps his eyes across the crowd of people, the man he was due to meet was nowhere to be seen... The SHADOWBORN THEME played by solo woodwinds swells in the background.

He grabs his pocket watch out of his pocket and glances at it, he was late and hoped the man was still there, the Primarch would have his skin if the message was not delivered.

Suddenly he was shoved from behind. The Collision SFX is heard along with a sharp grunt.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Give me the canister.

2ND SECRETARY

What? Who?

The secretary glances round and sees who has spoken. It was the man he had been waiting for.

2ND SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Oh it's you... Yes, the master says these need locating with some haste.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

As always, I am at your master's disposal.

The Nightkeeper takes the canister and disappeared into the crowd, the secretary loses sight of him in seconds.

EXT. DARK ALLEYWAY ARDAL.

The alleyway is dark and claustrophobic, accentuated by the filtered sounds of the city in the distance. The Nightkeeper opens the canister a hollow HISS of the tube depressurising is heard, followed by the SLOW SCRAPING of the RUSTED THREAD being unscrewed. He glances over the cyrptographs sent to him by the Primarch. The sound of a roll of paper being unfurled is heard.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

(whispering to self)

Sigh Cryptographs and diagrams, ciphers and secrets... can nothing be simple... now let's see...

His eyes scan the cryptograph. The sound of parchment jostling in hands can be heard. In the centre are 2 small interlocking cog wheels with text written below... THE GREAT COG THEME/MOTIF begins to swell in the background.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY (CONT'D)

The Alpha and Omega? The lesser and greater wheels? But what...

He continues reading. Again the rustling of paper and pages is heard.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY (CONT'D)

Find them? ... Find them where?

INT. PRIMARCH'S QUARTERS

Dialogue slowly fades in, the Primarch dictates a letter to his 1st Secretary. The clatter of typing can be heard as he speaks

THE PRIMARCH

...as such, the city boarders are no longer safe for pedestrians 'STOP'. For this very reason, I, anointed Primarch, Chief guardian of Cogtopolis, decree an extension to the curfew... forbidding all those that ...

He is interrupted by a knocking at the door

THE PRIMARCH (CONT'D)

Yes?

2ND SECRETARY

The priest has arrived, your grace. Shall we tell him to wait?

THE PRIMARCH

No, shadows No, let him in.

(to his 1st Secretary)

You may leave. We'll continue this matter tomorrow.

The 1st secretary leaves the room, making way for/evading the Pastor, who enters the room.

THE PRIMARCH (CONT'D)

Ah, your Holiness! Do come in my friend, have a seat. We have to discuss some of that... pribble-prabble that's on the street.

He waits for the 2nd secretary to have left the room, audible by the huge door that shuts with a loud, reverberated "CLACK".

PASTOR SIMON

Sire, I know of what you speak and these *rumours, for rumours they are...* They trouble me not.

THE PRIMARCH

My friend, you disappoint me. To speak on blasphemy as one would children, passing notes and whispers. Surely, you must realise..

PASTOR SIMON

... I realise but only my duty sire! I shall preach my sermon, as I do every year. I shall speak to their hearts and minds, and, should I fail, I will speak to their FEAR. Lest we forget the fate of those heretics who shunned the darkness when the light failed us...

THE PRIMARCH

(interrupting the pastor sharply)

They perished! Perished with the surface... yes yes, I remember the stories

PASTOR SIMON

As you should, sire, as you should

THE PRIMARCH

Your holiness, my friend, for years now, from behind these great walls I have kept your Faith true... But in all that is holy I cannot keep exiling your heretics to Porfan. These whispers, these Rumours as you put it... they grow. They grow day by day, each heretic more convinced than the last, each troubled mind adding to the swarm, reaching for the surface..

He pauses, reading the realisation on the pastor's face.

THE PRIMARCH (CONT'D)

And should, while you stand atop these very steps, filling the vapour with words, these heretics, these blasphemers, achieve their goal? What then my friend?

PASTOR SIMON

Do not question my faith sire, I know my place in this world..

THE PRIMARCH

Faith? And will your faith save you, or I, or anyone from the breaking waves of dust, disease and radiation that will flood forth from the surface?

A long silent pause. The atmosphere is tense, filled with a sudden dawning of fear

THE PRIMARCH (CONT'D)

These heretics.... they are but a worm. We may hack and slash wildly, but with each swipe, each wound, it multiplies... ever crawling towards the surface. It is a pale creature... squirming blindly towards the light and must be stopped.

PASTOR SIMON

But how?

THE PRIMARCH

You, my friend, shall bring me the worm's head...

INT. THE TINKER'S WORKSHOP

Eve bustles in to the workshop, looking for instruments and upending her satchel on to the work bench. Books and trinkets clatter onto the wooden bench, a whirring, clanking, and tip toeing Boy enters

BOY

EVE, ARE YOU WELL?

EVE

Hullo Boy. I am well, your Father keeps me busy as always, how are you today?

BOY

GOOD, I AM WELL ALSO.

EVE

Ah ha, found it,

Nuts, bolts and washers CLINK and JANGLE as she lifts a tiny mechanism above her head

BOY

HOW IS FATHER?

EVE

He is, hmmm... occupied, busy with work. He is energised, giddy, even more so than usual.

BOY

I AM GLAD. I MISS HIM.

EVE

He misses you too, it's just that...

she bends down and whispers in the boys ear...

EVE (CONT'D)

...the sun has returned.

BOY

(WHIRRING and CLICKING as he spins into gear)

THEN IT IS ALMOST TIME.

INT. ARDAL PASTOR SIMONS QUARTERS

Pastor Simon holds court with his closest brethren the atmosphere is sombre yet claustrophobic. As in a VESTRY, the muffled sound of organ music, similar to Requiem in D Minor, is heard from an adjacent room.

PASTOR SIMON

Friends, there are rumours, dark rumours of light and those that tell speak of these heretical thoughts are enemies of the shadows and of the true path. You have all heard of these rumours, Yes?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 1

Yes your holiness, we have heard.

PASTOR SIMON

And where do we believe these rumours are coming from?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2

I have heard it from the Beggars of Porfan, but those scum always refuse to follow us and believe in the light.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 3

And also in Cartoe, this heresy is widespread your holiness.

PASTOR SIMON

We need to remove the head of this treachery, more are turning from the shadow path, with Shadowmass upon us we need to suppress this evilness, The Primarch has reached out to us, he wants these rumours quashed.

He pauses, glancing round at his closest followers

PASTOR SIMON (CONT'D)

I want all of your ears listening on the streets, find me who speaks these untruths, and we will purge them. The Darkness never ends.

EXT. THE HOLY QUARTER

The Lamplighter skirts along the holy quarter continuing his duties for the day. In the distance the Domicile tower dominates the city 'skyline'. A sanctuary, a reward for the few with privilege or title, the residential area is far more subdued in tone, with the occasional Steam Ranger, delivering their messages heard high above.

LAMPLIGHTER

Well, here we are, right in the shadow of the domicile tower - plenty of lamps to be lit here I tell ye - gives es the chills every time! That tower...It was once a monument of sorts you know, pointing, signalling the location of the one way in - or out - of Cogtopolis: The Aperture. Now, just a glorified mausoleum for the Pastor and his dark associates. Sad really...

Not that people round here trouble themselves which such things... the Aperture, the Tower... the brass-bound man on the street has enough to worry about.

Not that it always was like that, mind you... Wardens of Light, Nightkeepers... a violent clash of ideology that nearly tore this city apart... No matter - as with any war, one religion always comes out on top - leave them to it I say... The Nightkeepers can have their way, preach their sermons... try and banish any memory of sunlight...After all, the Aperture's been sealed for hundred of years...

The lamplighter carries on his work for couple of beats, climbing a ladder and lighting a lamp.

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

...You need two cogs to open it, unlock it, they say... Two missing gears - I heard it from Wapnar Dave. The Admiral down at the Rangers' mission reckons the Nightkeepers have them... and Farmer Todd's really got into his head they were melted down to make the Primarch's brass zeppelin goggles... Folklore... urban legend... nobody *REALLY* cares anymore... Look harder... follow the steam plumes... That solitary ladder descends from the Aperture; a great ladder of a Thousand Steps. Forging it's rusted, twisted, path downwards, corkscrewing through clouds of vapour and shafts of steam, it ends *THERE*, almost at our feet... vanishing ominously into the parapet of the Domicile Tower.

EXT. AN ABANDONED ALLEYWAY

EVE

What have you learned?

THE TINKER

The surface is warm, around 300 Munchens, that's habitable, if the water is melting, we would have light and water! We could harness the Sun and travel on rails as we did in the past and if the sky is clear, we could fly the sky ships or paddle steam across the seas to other lands.

EVE

Yes but..

THE TINKER

But nothing my dear, the cog has slowed again, I oiled her twice yesterday, *TWICE!*, the mechanism has never been in better shape but She will not turn. It's almost as if She does not want to turn any more.

EVE

Well I have secured the supplies you asked for. 3 spools of moose hair rope, counter hooks and diamond spikes, I've got the Boy guarding them, if anyone asks, he'll tell people it's supplies for the festivities.

THE TINKER

Hmmm. Good good, he is well? With all my comings and goings I have not seen him of late.

EVE

He misses you, but he understands that you cannot take him, when you go at such a speed, he is looking forward to the festivities.

THE TINKER

I wish he could be more involved but he cannot, I will take him out tonight when we return, it will be good for him to stretch his joints.

EVE

So when can we make our ascent?

THE TINKER

Maybe the day after next, I have the walnut drill and want to get a new hatstand probe into the rock as soon as possible, best to wait until the festival has finished.

EVE

I have been telling as many people as I can about the light, I have heard it being spoken openly on the streets, it's amazing.

THE TINKER

Yes, yes, well it won't matter when we open the aperture, who believes who doesn't believe, none of that will matter any more.

He opens his leather journal and thumbs through the last pages, A RUSTLING sound is heard he asks his next question absent mindedly

THE TINKER (CONT'D)

And how goes the search?

EVE

Not good, I have heard nothing useful, I have the lowly from Porfan helping us. They are scraping together what they can from the old texts.

THE TINKER

Sigh What I would give to have the original plans! The Cog, the Aperture. But no, not a sausage! just few scraps here and there... corners of designs, odd scripts and unused rivets, it's not enough Eve, it's not enough, we must learn how it works.

EVE

I will keep trying..

THE TINKER

The Aperture must open, it MUST!

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2

Oh must it now?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 3

I think the Primarch would be very interested to here that.

THE TINKER

Run Eve, run.....

PLAY SONG: THE CAPTURE

INT. CARTOE

An abandoned building on the outskirts of the city

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Tell me what I need to know

EXILE ELDER

Arrrrgh... no more. No more, I do not know.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

That is not what i've been told

The CRUNCH and GRINDING of Torture instruments jolt loudly into focus

EXILE ELDER

Arrrrgh, there... is a.... Parchment.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Where is it? What does it tell you?

Much louder the sound of CRUNCHING mixes with that of RIPPING and STRAINING of the Elder

EXILE ELDER

Huh... Urgh... Hidden in Porfan.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

What is it?

Another TURN of the Torture Device is heard, this time, the SHARP SCREAMING of the Elder is heard

EXILE ELDER

The Alpha and the Omega.... it tells of their keepers

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Where in Porfan?

A final CRUNCH and SCREAM is heard, the room falls silent.

EXT. ARDEL - THE SERMON STEPS

Atop the grand stone staircase leading to the domicile tower, PASTOR SIMON delivers his annual sermon to celebrate the Shadowmass, commemorating the day mankind sought refuge beneath the surface. As usual, A VAST CROWD has gathered, occasional sounds of HECKLING and FIGHTING can be heard among the onlookers. The Lamplighter looks on...

LAMPLIGHTER

Quite the gathering isn't it? Always like this on Shadowmass. Is this you first? the Pastor stands up there and blames our ancestors, blames them for their failings, blames them for poisoning the sky and then reminds everyone that they are Shadowborn.. yadder yadder, Yawn..... A believer? Me. Hmmm, No. Don't get me wrong the Pastor speaks well and the weak of mind love him, but I have seen many Pastors in my years and old Simon there is by far the least persuasive. A firebrand yes, but not a nice man, there are many disturbing rumours of what these Nightkeepers do... Speaking of rumours, here's a good one for you...

(Pause)

The Sun has returned. Or so they reckon.... It's quite a buzz, I heard it from the Old washer Ethel, and she heard it from Jimmy the sweep, and then I heard a similar rumour on the conveyor from Old Man Pinto... interesting times and what will I do? What will I do if people don't need the Lamp's anymore? I don't think anyone has thought this through....

PLAY SONG: "VICTIMS OF THE LIGHT"

VERSE 1:

COME GATHER ROUND ALL YOU TRAVELLING SOULS
FOR A TALE I HAVE TO TELL
ON THE LIES YOU FEED FROM THE DEVIL'S MACHINE
IT WILL SEND YOU STRAIGHT TO HELL
IT'LL DRAG YOU KICKING AND SCREAMING
EMBRACE THE FATHER OF THE NIGHT
PRAY THE DARKNESS BE OUR SAVIOUR
FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE LIGHT

VERSE 2:

YES THE SPARKS OF LIES ARE DAMNATION
AND YOU KNOW I'M ALWAYS RIGHT
CRAVE THE LAMPS THAT BURN ABOVE THIS WORLD
I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES
AND YOU THOUGHT THAT YOU WERE DREAMING
BUT YOU'RE ONLY GOING BLIND
PRAY THE NIGHTKEEPERS KEEP YOU SAFE MY CHILD
YOU'RE THE VICTIMS OF THE LIGHT

CHORUS:

DARKEST OATH
TAKE ME HOME
AND BAPTISE OUR HEARTS OF STONE
DARKEST OATH
TAKE ME HOME

SPAKE THE SHEPHERD OF OUR SOULS

VERSE 3:

DOES YOUR HUNGER GROW FROM THE BRASS-BOUND MAN
CLAWS HIS FINGERS AT THE SKY
WHEN HE TOUCHED THE STARS AND HE CRAVES THE DAWN
IT'S A SICKNESS OF HIS MIND
AND SOMEWHERE IN THE FUTURE,
WHERE WE ALL WILL JOIN THE NIGHT
YOU WILL CURSE THE SUN THAT FAILED YOU
NOW THE VICTIMS OF THE LIGHT

CHORUS:

DARKEST OATH
TAKE ME HOME
AND BAPTISE OUR HEARTS OF STONE
DARKEST OATH
TAKE ME HOME
SPAKE THE SHEPHERD OF OUR SOULS

CONGREGATION'S RETORT:

DAYLIGHT A DISTANT MEMORY,
SHADOWS ALL AROUND,
THE DARKNESS CONSUMES US,
WE ARE LOST IN THE CROWD.
THE PREACHER HE TELLS US,
OF THE SINS OF THE PAST
WE NO LONGER LISTEN
WILL THE SICKNESS LAST?

THIS IS SHADOWMASS.
WE ALL LIVE IN FEAR
FEAR THE MORNING STAR
KEEP YOUR CONSCIENCE CLEAR

WHISPERS OF DAYLIGHT
WE DREAM OF THE SUN,
THE FUTURE IS CLEARER
WHAT HAS BEGUN?
THE PREACHER HE TRICKS US
WITH FEAR AND WITH HATE
WE NO LONGER LISTEN
AND SOON WILL ESCAPE.

THIS IS SHADOWMASS.
WE ALL LIVE IN FEAR
FEAR THE MORNING STAR
KEEP YOUR CONSCIENCE CLEAR

VERSE 4:

COME FORTH MY FRIENDS, LET THE LAMPS GROW DIM
PRAY THE WHEEL KEEPS TURNING ON
PRAY FOR NUCLEAR WAR, AND WHAT CAME BEFORE
FROM A TIME WE DON'T BELONG
AND YOU SEE THIS WORLD AS CHILDREN
AND YOU PLACE YOUR HOPE IN I
YOU CAN FEEL THE NIGHT SURROUND YOU
SLEEP THE VICTIMS OF THE LIGHT

PASTOR SIMON

...and so my children, on this Shadowmass night fear the light, fear whispers of the light, we are shadowborn and the Darkness never ends.

INT. A PRISON CELL

The Tinker and Eve find themselves captured for their perceived heresy. The room is stone clad and CAVERNOUS, emphasised by the REVERBERATED Drip of water-on-stone. Distant, filtered, GROANS of other prisoners can be heard from either side.

THE TINKER

You know, once you get used to it, it's not half bad!

EVE

Sigh What isn't?

THE TINKER

Prison! People are always in such a hurry to tunnel out of them. I tell you what, with a lick of paint, a few tactically placed plants and a bicycle-operated trouser press or two, this place really wouldn't look half bad. Certainly better than that flat I had above that Badger Orphanage.

EVE

You've got to be kidding? We're Trapped! Trapped in the dingiest, darkest, cramped hole in the dingiest, darkest cramped city in the history of the world. It is so DAMP I can hardly breathe...

THE TINKER

Ah, but it is a rather NICE damp! Gives the place a certain *je ne sais quoi*... don't you think?

A Loud shuffling is heard in the corner of the cell.

EVE

What's that?

THE TINKER

That? Oh it's just that Nightkeeper in the corner. I've been watching him for hours... thought he was dead, he certainly smells like he is. I tell you, it smells like a crusty old stoat in a chamber of guff.

EVE

I think that's just this place. Anyway, what's a NIGHTKEEPER doing in here?

THE STEAM RANGER

(Coughing, laborious, in pain)

I WAS Nightkeeper, a domicile guard, but I lost my way, I could not hold that office, not without submitting to the dark baptism. I cracked, I could not do it any more.

THE TINKER

I understand my boy. I've heard of the ceremony, never seen it myself. There's been all kinds of tales of their animal sacrifices in the name of their so called 'Gods'. Foxes and Ferrets, Moles and Meerkats, Gerbils and Groundhogs, as well as the odd stray Dolphin, all slain for these twisted rituals.

EVE

I thought it was just legend to keep the faithful in line.

THE STEAM RANGER

(shuddering, depressed)

I wish it was just a legend...

THE TINKER

Hold the phone - a domicile guard you say? By my calculations, that would mean you know the ladder well, yes?

THE STEAM RANGER

Yes. I spent three long years guarding the base of that infernal thing. A ladder to nowhere.

THE TINKER

Or so they wanted you to think. But, by jove, that could be our ticket to a way out of here.

THE STEAM RANGER

To what? The surface? To our doom? I do not put my faith in the Pastor, nor the Nightkeepers, but neither am I a dreamer...

(pause)

...It is far safer to believe in nothing.

THE TINKER

And what if I were to tell you that the Sun had returned and that he's definitely got his hat on! Hip hip hip hooray!!

THE STEAM RANGER

Then I would call you a lunatic sir! The sun? the sun... I've heard the stories, 4 miles of clouds, 2 miles of hardened ice. Nothing, not even the sun, can not penetrate that! The surface is dead, no... nothing lives there now.... Only Darkness.

EVE

We've all heard the stories, but the surface is warming, the light has returned.

THE STEAM RANGER

How can you know this? A rich Ardel girl like you, why would you concern yourself with such trivial matters. Look at that pendant you've got on there, it's probably worth more than my life...

EVE

(taken aback)

My necklace? It was my fathers...

he gave it to me before he passed... didn't cost a penny. Anyway, what's wealth got to do with knowledge? To do with hope? I've always wanted to know about the world above and what's happening up there. We have probes measuring the temperature, the pressure and more than that, the Cog is slow, the Cog knows that the sun has returned.

THE TINKER

Bingo! I'd stake my reputation on it. The Sun's back alright and we know the way out, we just don't have the blasted means to do it. Besides, there's one thing we don't have...

THE STEAM RANGER

And what is that?

EVE

Knowledge of the Aperture mechanism.

THE TINKER

Even I with all my years, I have never seen it. The Primarch never trusted me to go near it, the twisted old fruit. But by God, I have the means and the will to open it...

A rattling of keys is heard, the lock turns and the door swings open, and light pours into the cell. A voice rings out of the light.

JAILER

Tinkerman, the Master wants to talk with you

A SMALL STRUGGLE is heard, the door SLAMS and footsteps slowly trail off down the corridor...

Play song: eve's song

VERSE 1:

STARTLED LITTLE STARLING ON YOUR OWN
YOU FLEW THE NEST TOO EARLY NOW YOU'RE LOST AND FAR FROM HOME
STARED INTO THIS DAYDREAM FROM AFAR
NOW YOU GAZE INTO THE NOTHING WITH A STRANGER IN THE DARK
SPEAK TO ME IN WHISPERS ONE MORE TIME
YOU FEEL THE LAMPS ARE BURNING, ARE THEY EMBERS IN YOUR MIND?
NAVIGATE THE MYSTERY OF WHO YOU ARE
YOU STOPPED THE WHEEL FROM TURNING BUT IT SPLINTERED IN YOUR HEART

PRE CHORUS:

LIGHT THE NIGHT
BURN THE GREY
EVENING SONG TODAY.

CHORUS:

SHADOWBORN
HIDE THE LIGHT FROM YOUR EYES
ONLY SEE WHAT YOU WILL

SHADOWBORN

AND THE NIGHT WILL DISGUISE
AND THE TIME, WILL LEAD YOU ASTRAY

VERSE 2:

WATCHER IN THE DISTANCE; DO YOU PRAY?

DO YOU GAZE AT CANDLES BURNING; WATCH THE NIGHT TURN INTO
DAY?

AND CAN YOU HEAR THE SONGBIRD IN A CAGE?

CAN YOU LIFT AWAY THE VELVET; LET THE DAWN CREEP IN AGAIN?

WHAT YOU FELT WAS IN YOU ALL ALONG, CAN YOU LIFT YOURSELF
FROM FALLING? CAN YOU HEAR MY LOVE SONG?

STANDING IN THE FUTURE, WILL WE SOON, SAY THAT "THAT'S THE
NIGHT FORGOTTEN?" "THAT'S THE NIGHT THAT WE ONCE KNEW"

<PRE CHORUS/CHORUS>

BRIDGE:

OPEN WIDE YOUR ARMS, LET THE BREEZE BLOW THROUGH YOUR HAIR
HOLD IT IN YOUR HEART, LET IT SAVE YOU, SAVE YOU
REACHING OUT TONIGHT WELL I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU THERE
COMING BACK IN TIME, LET IT TAKE YOU, TAKE YOU

TAKE ME BY THE HAND, CAN YOU FEEL THE CURRENT FLOW
I CAN FEEL YOUR HEART, HEAR IT BEATING, BEATING
SECRETS IN YOUR MIND YET I THOUGHT I LET THEM GO
HOLDING IT INSIDE; HEALING, HEALING...

END OF ACT I

ACT II: OF MEN AND WORMS

INT. PRIMARCH'S QUARTERS

The Tinker is brought before the Primarch and Pastor Simon, he is out of breath having been beaten by the brethren since being retrieved from his cell, he is however, still upbeat.

THE TINKER

Ah there you are, lovely hospitality, an exceptional old cell you've got down there. Very quaint, radiant, some would say homely. By George, I wish you did spa days!

THE PRIMARCH

You fool, did you think we would not find out you were spreading these lies.

THE TINKER

It is a simple thing *Albert*, much like you - you absolute wazzock, the light has returned and we will soon be free.

PASTOR SIMON

Heresy sire, blasphemy, he should be strung up and blackened for his crimes.

THE PRIMARCH

The priest is right! I will not have rabble rousers and the like polluting the minds of the good people of this city, you of all people should know that it will not be tolerated.

THE TINKER

Ah the voice of the deluded... you make as much sense as a Cobbler's breakfast; as a Fishmonger's cycle trousers; as Herschel Bean-face and his spice rack collection... It is not heresy, you prize pillock, you and your Nightkeepers' time is at an end mon frere, and the Wardens of the light will see our people into a new tomorrow.

(slap, grunt)

PASTOR SIMON

Unbeliever! Do not speak heresy in my presence, I am the guiding shadow in this world of ours, not you and your heretical contraptions and backwards ideals. The sun is gone and the darkness never ends.

THE TINKER

Haha! The king of delusion, there is no hope for you
(pause as he turns to speak
to the Primarch)

But you *Albert*, you know of what I speak, I can see it in your eyes, your boggley-goggley eyes, there was once a time when you thought as I do... how far from that path you have fallen...

THE PRIMARCH

Our friend, Simon, turned me away from those impure thoughts a long time ago, the only error I have made was to let you maintain the cog, I wonder whether it is you that has sabotaged it. Oh yes I am aware that the cog is slow and you have been spending a lot of time at its heart.

PASTOR SIMON

What do you mean the cog is slow, what have you done, you fool.

The Pastor SLAPS the tinker across the face

PASTOR SIMON (CONT'D)

If the cog stops, then we will die. Sire - I will go to the Cog immediately, perhaps prayer and invocation can reverse his meddling.

THE PRIMARCH

Yes, Pastor, of course.

The door opens and SLAMS as the Pastor exits the scene. Footsteps can be heard echoing and fading down the hallway as he leaves.

THE PRIMARCH (CONT'D)

Well now Eldred what am I to do with you? If I let the Pastor have his way you will not see another Shadowmass, nay you may not see the end of this one.

THE TINKER

Do what you must Albert, I know I am right.... and you know as well, don't you, you old Fox?

THE PRIMARCH

I had my suspicions, you are not the only mender of devices and mechanisms in this place. Simon and his kind can live in their ignorance. But... it is of no consequence, I will soon have what I need and whether the sun has returned or not will not matter.

THE TINKER

And what is it that you need?

THE PRIMARCH

Exactly the same as you, what can open, can also SEAL the aperture for good.

(Raising his voice)

Guards, you can remove this wretch from my sight, hand him to the Nightkeepers, tell them,

(pause)

tell them, they can do what they wish. I am sorry Eldred, but you have gone too far this time. The Darkness never ends.

GUARD

Come on you.

The Tinker is lifted from the chair and hustled towards the door, a Struggle can be heard

THE TINKER

You're wrong Albert, the light will prevail.

PLAY SONG: DITCHWATER DAISES

INT. A PRISON CELL

Eve tends to the Steam Ranger's wounds and they speak in hushed and quiet tones.

THE STEAM RANGER

I joined the Nightkeepers as a boy, I did not know any different, my parents were so proud that I was going to guard the Domicile, become a man of privilege... they turned a blind eye to the screams in the night and the darkening of my mood.

EVE

So why did you stay so long?

THE STEAM RANGER

I did not know any different, the Pastor, his sermons, his passion, he was the only bright part of my world. I assumed that if I kept doing what I was told, life would somehow get easier, but... it did not...years went by... finally, they sent me to round up a family in the shantytowns... to be exile them to Porfan. I saw the terror... the terror in the children's eyes. The same fear I saw in the mirror as a child. My brethren took about their task with glee, beating and binding...lauging...

(he shudders...)

...not worth remembering...

I screamed that night more than I ever had as a child. So I deserted. Became what you see now; a broken man, an unknown Ranger. But... the Nightkeepers' memory is long, and they do not easily forgive. They tracked me down, well... ONE of them did... He... the nameless spy, ruthless, and without pity. So here I am, chained and beaten useless to anyone.

EVE

You can't blame yourself... this place, this whole damn city... it twists your mind... you have a conscience...

Pause. The sound of footsteps is heard as she paces closer to the ranger, in the background, a subtle rendition of EVE'S THEME is played out

EVE (CONT'D)

(more upbeat)

... You know, it used to terrify me, the thought of being lost. Not being able to find my way home. When I was six I was caught playing in the ice-burrows above Porfan... My mother was furious.

She told me stories of my Great Aunt, only a child, larking about in the forests outside her house... never to be seen again. Gave me nightmares for weeks. The thought of it... reaching that point of no return...

(wryly, encouragingly)

...no, you're not lost yet...

THE STEAM RANGER

I AM lost. But hope is a fine thing.

EVE

The Tinker, my mentor he mentioned the Aperture, how close did you get to it?

THE STEAM RANGER

(distracted)

As close as you are to me right now.

EVE

And the vault? The mechanism?

THE STEAM RANGER

(suddenly alert)

Of course, broken. And missing the two main wheels.

EVE

Missing? People have been looking for the Alpha and Omega for generations... two gears stolen from the Aperture to safeguard mankind's destiny. It's a children's story... There must be another way to open the gate. Somebody must know!

THE STEAM RANGER

Secrets lost to history i'm afraid...

EVE

Yes - I know! Do you think... I mean... could they be found and reattached? The wheels I mean, theoretically... do you think it would open?

THE STEAM RANGER

(sympathetically)

sigh And how many cogs do you think there are in Cogtopolis? Should we haul each one to the summit of the ladder? Only to be dissatisfied day upon day? Eve, Your relics... these wheels, they are lost... long corroded, rusted against the hard winters of time. Even should they exist, who would possibly know where to find them?

EVE

Maybe someone who sees everything?

THE STEAM RANGER

Armistead?

EVE

If anyone knows how to open the aperture it's him... we must escape... and you must take me to him.

EXT. THE CENTRAL MONUMENT

The lamplighter, his rounds nearly at an end, reaches up to light the lamps around the central monument.

LAMPLIGHTER

There! Just about done...

The sound of multiple lamps igniting around the stereo spectrum fizz and burst in sequence

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

Ha! That's the last of 'em for tonight! Tiring work! To think - man and boy, I've lit every single light here in cogtopolis at some point! Well... almost every....

The sound of ARMISTEAD'S THEME swells. The sound of steam whizzes as the city's bustle becomes quieter and filtered, giving the impression of soaring high into the cavern ceiling.

LAMPLIGHTER (CONT'D)

Up There! A single, flickering light... tucked away where those knotted webs of ladders and stairs meet their end, lofted high above the reach of our rusted pipes and towers there lives... Armistead... The first of us. His cabin, not somewhere, mind, you or I would like to spend the night, is the oldest house below the surface...a crude construction of wood; an ancient precious material, swinging on high... Suspended, shackled, cradled by a tangled mess of rope and iron spindle... there it hangs, precariously beneath the platform of the Aperture.

I'm not sure anyone actually knows how old the old fella is... Ninety? One hundred? Two hundred? Perhaps more...

Swaying to and fro, wallowing in a breeze of thermal pockets, his house exists far out of the reach of us lamplighters, in a world of perpetual darkness.

Yet, every now and again, on nights such as this, if you strain through the gloom, through the vaporous smog and through the twisted maze of metal 'scrapers, you can, if yer lucky, glimpse the faintest of lights. There, glimmering high in the cavern ceiling; Armistead's porch light, Cogtopolis' oldest eternal flame... Each night growing slightly dimmer...

PLAY SONG: LAMPLIGHTER REPRISE

EXT. ARDAL OUTSIDE PASTOR SIMONS QUARTERS

The Tinker is strapped to a post, he is stripped to the waist and dried blood streaks his chest where Nightkeepers have tortured him.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 3

Repent!

THE TINKER
Fat Chance you silly old sausage!

A loud SLAP is heard as The Tinker is Struck.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2
Why do you resist? You know what the blackening does?

THE TINKER
Shine your shoes?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2
No

THE TINKER
Make your toast?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2
No

THE TINKER
Polish your frog?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2
NO!

THE TINKER
Wax your womble? Pester yer Uncle? Spook your teapot? Hogtie your milkman?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2
NO!!!

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 3
Why is he not breaking?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 1
The Spy always makes it look so easy.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2
I know, but he does this all the time.

THE TINKER
It maybe doesn't help gentlemen, that I do not believe your hearts are in it, I think you lack conviction...

The Tinker is Struck again, this time with considerable force.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 1
Silence heretic! We we're not talking to you.

THE TINKER
Repent or silence? You can't have both. By the way, I've been meaning to ask... what would you rather be: a baboon with celery legs or a wasp?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 3

You idiots, he's making us look like fools.

THE TINKER

You see... the baboon would have a lovely, healthy diet but would, ultimately, have to eat its own feet... crunchy and delicious as they are... but a wasp, can fly...

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 1

Silence I said!

A door CREAKS opens in the background. The Pastor marches across the courtyard

PASTOR SIMON

Is he prepared for the Blackening?

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 1

Yes your Holiness, but he will not break.

PASTOR SIMON

No, this one's soul will not be turned, he is beyond hope.

He examines the work of the Brethren

PASTOR SIMON (CONT'D)

Sloppy work my Brethren, I would hate to recall the Spy, just to do some gentle loosening up.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 3

Our deepest apologies your holiness, we lack the proper direction and will endeavour to do better in the future.

PASTOR SIMON

3 turns of flagellation each tonight.

(The Pastor leaves)

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 2

You'll pay for this you old fool.

INT. THE TINKER'S WORKSHOP

The Spy returns to the city, he has knowledge that the Alpha and the Omega exist and heads to the Tinker's Workshop, to investigate.

RANSACKING is heard as we approach

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Where are they hidden?

The SMASHING of glass as apparatus is upended, A HIGH PITCHED CLICKING sound follows, with the boy tiptoeing into the room

BOY
HULLO, HOW CAN I HELP?

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
What kind of abomination are you?

BOY
I AM BOY, MY FATHER MADE ME.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
And where is your Father?

BOY
I HAVE NOT SEEN HIM IN 2 FULL CYCLES

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
What about the girl? Where is she?

BOY
EVE HAS NOT BEEN HERE EITHER.

The Spy crosses the workshop and menaces over the boy

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
Where would they hide something Boy?

BOY
WE ONLY HAVE SUPPLIES FOR THE FESTIVITIES.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
And where are they?

BOY
THEY ARE IN THE CELLAR

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
Show me.

BOY
OF COURSE SIR, PLEASE FOLLOW ME

*A cellar trap door CREAKS open and lands with a THUD.
The sound of footsteps on stone steps, whirring /
clicking follows.*

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
What is this?

BOY
SUPPLIES FOR THE FESTIVITIES

NIGHTKEEPER SPY
This is climbing equipment, and gauges and pipes, this is not
festival supplies.

BOY
(Buzzing and Clicking)
SUPPLIES FOR THE FESTIVITIES

*The sound of Pipes bang and clatter as the spy upends
the table in frustration.*

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

This is not what I am looking for! What else is there?

BOY

SUPPLIES FOR THE FESTIVITIES

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

You're a lot of help.

BOY

I EXIST TO SERVE

PLAY SONG: THE BEWILDERING CONSCIENCE OF A CLOCKWORK CHILD

INTRO:

WHAT AM I?

I'M THE CHILD THAT SHOULD NOT BE

BORN OF RUST

SECRETS FORGED INSIDE OF ME

STRANGE ANATOMY

MY MORTALITY

FATHER TIME,

NOT THE MAN YOU USED TO KNOW

DEEP INSIDE

TICKS A HEART THAT I DON'T OWN

NOW THE OLD ONE SLOWS

WILL YOU LET IT GO?

CHORUS:

CLOCKWORK MIND

RUSTED EYELIDS SEALED IN CHROME

THERE'S AN ORPHAN CHILD

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN LOVE AND HOPE

WILL YOU LET HIM GO?

ONLY TIME WILL KNOW

VERSE 1:

MOVE AND SWAY, ADVANCE THROUGH THE SHADOWS

I WILL WAIT, FEARING LIFE IN MY DREAMS

FAR AWAY, YOU DANCED WITH THE DEVIL

STOLE HIS HEART AND THEN MADE IT IN ME

<CHORUS>

VERSE 2:

MR NIGHT; THEY FEED ON YOUR HUNGER

SHADOW SPY; A CHILD YOUR EYES

IN MY BRAIN ARE SPARKS AND CONFUSION

MOVE AWAY MR THIEF IN THE NIGHT

VERSE 3:

HIGH AND LOW THE WATCHMEN ARE CALLING

THE PASTOR SLOWS; TURNS HIS HEAD TO THE SKY

ALL AT ONCE THE BRASS BOUND SEEK REFUGE

CHAINS THEY TOW; BRING THE OLD GIRL TO LIFE

<CHORUS>

INT. A PRISON CELL

The Steam Ranger and EVE collude in their cell, they have a plan and begin to enact it.

EVE

This is never going to work.

THE STEAM RANGER

Pessimist, I know these guards, they are imbeciles, they won't know how to handle you.

(Eve pounds on the door)

EVE

Help me, help....

(Thud, thud)

I will confess, I want to talk to the Pastor.

(From the other side of the door)

GUARD

Alright, alright, hold your Steam-horses

keys clang and bang, A lock clicks and door opens

GUARD (CONT'D)

What's all the racket about?

EVE

I'm ready to confess, I want out of this cell.

GUARD

(Chuckles)

Less than 1 turn and your ready to sing, looks like I'm winning some groats tonight. Well if you want to come with me, I'll take you to the Brethren.

EVE

I want to get out of here that Steam Ranger is crazy.

The guard glances round

GUARD

Steam Ranger, what Steam Ranger.....

A Damp Thud is heard as the guard crashes to the floor

EVE

That was easy.

THE STEAM RANGER

That was the easy part, the hard part is reaching the summit unseen.

EVE

Which way.

THE STEAM RANGER

No idea, my plan ended on getting out of the cell.

EVE

Great, let's go.

INT. PRIMARCH'S QUARTERS

The Spy reports to Pastor Simon and the Primarch

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

The proof is clear, The Alpha the Omega are out there, I will go at once and torture their location out of the old man.

PASTOR SIMON

We must go to the Domicile tower, we must protect the mechanism. My Brethren will guard the base, sound the alarm Sire, the Nightkeepers will answer.

THE PRIMARCH

Yes things are progressing too quickly, I thought with capturing the Tinker and his assistant we could quell this movement, but it appears to be more widespread than I first thought.

The Door bangs open

2ND SECRETARY

Sire News from the prison, the girl has escaped, with the aid of a renegade Steam Ranger.

PASTOR SIMON

What Steam Ranger?

THE PRIMARCH

A former Captain of the Domicile guard.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

HIM? *HE* is with this girl? Your holiness he has knowledge of the Aperture, with it the heretics will have everything they need to open the mechanism.

THE PRIMARCH

Sound the alarm, summon the Brethren

An Air raid siren is heard

PLAY SONG: A SOLEMN TOAST FOR THE STEAM RANGER REBORN

INTRO:

SPLINTERED WHEELS, CLOCKWORK MINDS

A CAVALCADE OF BRASS-BOUND LIVES

MOURN THE BIRTHRIGHT, IMBUED WITH SHADE

FOR THE SPARKS OF LIFE, HIDDEN BY THE GRAVE

"SIRE PRIEST" SAID HE,
 SPAKE YOU IN TRUTHS? - BY THY FAITH!
 BE WHAT THOU WILL - BREAK NOT OUR RULES
 FOR EVERY MAN, SAVE YOU, HATH TOLD HIS TALE...

VERSE 1:
 OATH-BOUND; YOU SLEEP
 BURDENS RELEASED
 NOW YOU WILL SEE
 A TRACE FROM WHERE WE STARTED
 NIGHT BLIND, SERENE
 WARDENS ; UNSEEN
 CAN YOU BELIEVE
 IN MURMURS FROM THE SURFACE?

CHORUS:
 AS ABOVE; SO BELOW
 WORD TRAVELS FAR
 BREAKS THE SILENT DREAMS
 SHADOWS CREEPING HIGHER
 AS ABOVE; SO BELOW
 SEE WHO YOU ARE
 IT'S THE LIGHT YOU BREATHE
 SHADOWS CREEPING HIGHER
 FROM NIGHT-SWEPT STREETS, BUT THERE'S NO ONE HERE
 RAISE A GLASS NOW FOR THE ROCKETEER

VERSE 2
 SERVANT: UN-SERVED
 MASTERS UNNERVED
 STARLIGHT REBIRTH
 A REMNANT OF OUR CONSCIENCE
 SPEAK NOW; SPEAK SOON
 DAYBREAK OUR TOMB
 SING NOW DEATH'S TUNE
 NOW WE ARE ASCENDING

<CHORUS>

BRIDGE:
 STAND BY YOURSELF
 OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE WORLD
 FEAR IN YOUR MIND
 FAR AWAY LIES THE WORLD ABOVE
 NOW IN THE NIGHT
 STREETS ARE ALIVE WITH THE WORDS
 CRYING OUT IN PAIN
 TO BELIEVE OR TO FOLLOW THE BLIND...
 OH WE LIGHT THESE STREETS BUT THERE'S NO ONE HERE
 RAISE A GLASS NOW FOR THE ROCKETEER

END OF ACT II

ACT III: FROM BURROWS WE CAME

EXT . ARDAL OUTSIDE PASTOR SIMONS QUARTERS

The Boy finds The Tinker and releases him, they work together back towards the cell block to release Eve. They witness Eve and Steam Rangers escape.

("Click click" of the boy's tip-toe fades in)

BOY

HULLO FATHER

THE TINKER

Ah my Boy, so very glad to see you.

BOY

YOU WERE NOT HOME, NEITHER WAS EVE, A MAN CAME, SO I LOOKED FOR YOU

THE TINKER

A clever Boy, always helpful as I taught you to be.

BOY

YOU ARE HURT?

THE TINKER

Nothing a warming ale won't fix, could you cut these ropes.

BOY

OF COURSE FATHER

A Sawing sound is heard as The Tinker is cut free

THE TINKER

(Groaning as he frees himself from his shackles)

.... Much better, now we must find Eve, I believe that things are moving on a pace my Boy and we had better be going.

BOY

GOING WHERE?

THE TINKER

To the aperture my Lad,
(sadly)

We have work to do and I am going to need your help

EXT. THE TOP OF THE CELL BLOCK

Eve and the Steam Ranger with reclaimed Jet pack, climb the stone stairs to the roof of the prison.

EVE

(Panting)

Come on, keep climbing I can see the door.

THE STEAM RANGER

(Out of breath)

I haven't walked - let alone run in weeks, let me catch my breath.

EVE

Well you did insist on lugging that pack with you. We could have caught the conveyor across to the Domicile, but you insisted there was a better way.

THE STEAM RANGER

I'm a Ranger now, I felt lost with out my pack, and the quickest way is not across the Cavern floor it's a straight shot from here to the Aperture and no need to climb the ladder.

EVE

I'm still not convinced that the thing will hold us both.

THE STEAM RANGER

That's what the rope is for, I will not let you fall.

A Door crashes open, city sounds are heard as footsteps across the roof become louder

THE STEAM RANGER (CONT'D)

This will do.

The sounds of leather Straps being tightened and taught is heard. The Steam pack is powered up HUMMING and OSCILLATING louder and louder

THE STEAM RANGER (CONT'D)

Eve give me your hands

EVE

And you will not let me fall?

THE STEAM RANGER

Not in a million cycles, you'll be safe.

EVE

Then let's go.

The Rockets EXPLODE and WHOOSH. Eve screams as they are propelled from the prison roof

EXT. ARDEL

The Tinker and Boy see, the Steam Rangers erratic flight

THE TINKER

Look my Boy, Eve

BOY

WE NEED TO HURRY FATHER

THE TINKER

Yes my Boy, you are right, although climbing with you on my back will not be easy.

Pastor Simon and the Spy also see the flight of the Steam Ranger

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Look your Holiness, the Traitor and the heretic

PASTOR SIMON

They are heading for the Aperture. My Brethren there are the Traitors the Blasphemers, they will destroy us all, STOP THEM.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN ALL

By your will, your Holiness, The Darkness never ends.

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Leave the Traitor to me Simon, I will show him how we treat non-believers.

INT. PRIMARCH'S QUARTERS

The Primarch, is heard burning documents.

THE PRIMARCH

Yes, yes, burn that too, I should have destroyed these years ago, but never too late to save the day.

The Door bangs open

2ND SECRETARY

Sire, more bad news... that retched Tinker has escaped, with all the Brethren guarding the Domicile, it seems he was forgotten about.

THE PRIMARCH

WHAT?? BUT HE KNOWS THINGS, WE CANNOT HAVE HIM ON THE LOOSE, HE COULD RUIN EVERYTHING!!

2ND SECRETARY

Yes sire, shall I call out your personal guard?

THE PRIMARCH

No, no, there is only one place he will go... ready my zeppelin!

PLAY SONG: THE CLIMB

EXT. ARMISTEADS HUT

Armistead sits looking over the city, and notices a Steam Ranger spiralling straight for his hut, carrying a young woman in his arms...

meanwhile the Tinker, boy clung to his back, makes the slow, agonizing climb up the twisted network of mangled iron ladders.

ARMISTEAD

The First they call me, oh aye, there were a few lighters before me, old codgers when I were young, all gone now, all gone. The lamp's low, barely a flame, but not extinguished... still life in the old dog yet in't there old fella? Been up here for so long now, all on me lonesome, just me, myself and I. Lonely up here for sure, but the companies good, damn good, can't have many complaints. I tell ya, people say talking to yourself is a sign of madness. Well, when the banter's this good, it'd be mad not to have the odd chat. Certainly better than owt else round here.

Nightkeepers and lighters, clockwork mechanisms and soot, that's all that remains in that bleeding cavern. The odd passing Ranger, or maybe that bloody Primarch, the daft sod zipping around in his fancy flying contraptions...peddling about like there's no tomorrow! I dunno why the daft apeth doesn't use steam like other people, maybe even a hot air balloon or two - they were all t'rage when I where young. I wonder if anyone's even told him how crackers he looks in that stupid Zeppelin? Gordon Bennett! There he goes again... But no, most of my days are spent watching, this place gives me the perfect vantage point. I love this city, but I love it from afar. I can't stand the steam you see, get's reet in me joints and makes es ache.

Visitors? We don't have many visitors do we? There's been a few here and there, but not for donkeys now, many cycles ago in fact. Them there guards are happy at the bottom of the ladder, I'm happy for them to stay there as well, oh aye. Very few come up to the summit to bother Ol' Armistead, their loss is my gain. All a bunch of barmy buggers anyway.

INT. ARMISTEAD'S HUT

A WOOSHING sound is heard as the Steam ranger and Eve land on Armistead's roof

ARMISTEAD

What the bloody hell, you'll knock my bloomin' tiles off, you flippin' hooligan!

A Crash, slide, smashing is heard

THE STEAM RANGER

(winded)

Apologies, Armistead

ARMISTEAD

And who the flip might you be sonny-jim?

The Door creaks open

THE STEAM RANGER

...I would like to introduce Eve, Eve this is Armistead...
the oldest man alive.

EVE

A pleasure, sorry about the roof.

ARMISTEAD

A pleasure? a pleasure? Not bloody likely... disturbing an
old man, wrecking his roof. I hope you and your fella are
gonna pay for that...

EVE

I'm sorry... but it was most urgent and we need your help.

ARMISTEAD

Help? HELP? And what about that daft Get and his robotic pet
climbing up MY ladder? They after help as well?

EVE

The Tinker? he's free?

THE STEAM RANGER

Apparently so, I can see them... they're climbing the ladder,
they'll be here soon.

EVE

I hope they're okay... we need to find a way across to the
Aperture from here... can you help us? We were hoping to find
out about the...

ARMISTEAD

Take a look at my walls will ye? All them etchings...
snapshots, chronicles of life *BELOW*... I have not cast my
eyes above, to that aperture in nigh-on two hundred years...
A young man I were then...

EVE

(disappointed)

Oh...When the Tinker arrives...he'll... I suppose he'll know
what to do.

ARMISTEAD (CONT.)

(lost in thought)

... Oh aye... a young man... full of hope... lit the first
lamp I did... and swore an oath to keep it, mind you... Oh
them lads dug deeper, like bloody moles they were... hoards
of 'em scurrying to safety... yet, still, Ol' Armisted kept
his station, watched over 'em, kept my eye on 'em... the
first lamplighter...keeper of the surface...

EVE

(aside)

Poor thing...

THE STEAM RANGER

I flew past this house many times... he never forgot a face... now he doesn't even recognise me. It's sad to see him like this, how much has he sacrificed? I doubt he can help... it must have been a hundred cycles since he even thought about the aperture... I'm sorry Eve, there's just no way of opening it...

ARMISTEAD

(overhearing their
whispering)

Gordon Bennett!! Opening the Aperture are ye? Just jump off my bloomin' platform, easier way to kill yoursel AND won't take rest of us with ye...well... well I never!

EVE

What? ...Why are you looking at me like that?

ARMISTEAD

Chuffin' 'ell! The Omega, right there before my very eyes! I'd recognise that little bugger anywhere.

EVE

My Necklace? You mean *THIS* is the Omega?

ARMISTEAD

Aye.... but rein yer neck in love, in case ye haven't noticed... it's bloody eternal winter up there, ye'd catch yer death of cold no sooner had ye stuck yer noggin out t'door... and no amount of necklaces, cogs or fancy gizmos will change *THAT*, let me tell ye... bloody suicide!

THE STEAM RANGER

Not suicide Armistead, escape! The Tinker believes that the Sun has returned. And if there's any chance that's true... it has to be worth a shot...

EVE

But we're still missing the Alpha cog.... how will it work?

THE STEAM RANGER

Look at these scawlins... Armistead's memory may be shot, but he had the whereabouts to preserve his secrets. Look.. It seems the Alpha is only needed to close the Aperture, but to open it, we need only the Omega.

EVE

Then let's go!

ARMISTEAD

Ta very much, but I'll stay right here, if it's all the same to you. *IF* I'm gonna die, I'll do so sitting in me chair, looking at me city... please yersel, just don't blame me if ye pop yer clogs....

EXT. APERTURE CONTROL PLATFORM

Eve crosses to the Aperture mechanism, and tries the spindle and the Omega, it does not turn

EVE

It won't turn.

THE STEAM RANGER

It must! You saw the etchings... it **MUST** turn.

EVE

Maybe we read them wrong... We *NEED* the Alpha... the two wheels must turn together... so close, but so far. You were right all along... the other cog could be anywhere.

THE TINKER

Not quite anywhere my dear Eve!

EVE

Tinker!

THE TINKER

That's me alright. You see, the cogs... well lets just say I've had both of them *VERY* close to me for a rather long time. Not just a handsome face you see, always got a trick up my sleeve. One is with you, the Omega wheel... I see that mystery has already been solved. It seems we have a Sherlock Holmes in our midst.

That little beauty was given away a long time ago, put safe in the hands of the one man I could trust. That was of course my friend, your father, I loved him like my own shoe pipes. As for the Alpha ... now here's a fun fact for you, 'twas indeed my own family who had been entrusted with it's concealment since the day of reckoning... quite a burden, but by golly, we rose to the task, sealing the aperture pronto tonto. Of course, I had to keep the Alpha wheel somewhere very safe.

EVE

Where?

BOY

IN ME.

EVE

IN YOU? where in you?

THE TINKER

It is the master cog,

(pause)

It is the heart of him, it makes him... what he is.

EVE

His HEART? No! why did you do that?

THE TINKER

I'm a scientist Eve, I did it because I could.

EVE

But if we take out... the Boy... HE will die!

THE TINKER

Eve, please....

BOY

DO NOT CRY EVE, IT IS WHY I AM.

EVE

But why? Why make me get to know him? Why did you let me love him.

THE TINKER

I am sorry Eve, I never imagined that he would be so... so lovable.

THE STEAM RANGER

Eve, we cannot stay here, our exit from the prison will not have gone unnoticed, we must leave by the Aperture or we must flee.

EVE

I will not do it, I will not take out his heart, I cannot, please, help me.

THE STEAM RANGER

Tinkerman...What do we do?

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

YOU... will burn, Heretics, Traitor and the abomination all, no one will hear of your blasphemy.

THE STEAM RANGER

YOU!

NIGHTKEEPER SPY

Traitor. Have you not yet tired of fleeing the shadow?

THE STEAM RANGER

You will not stop us!

(Running and scuffle heard)

Your time is over Shadowborn.

The battle between spy and ranger is played out through song. The spy is defeated.

EXT. APERTURE CONTROL PLATFORM

Pastor Simon and his Brethren arrive

PASTOR SIMON

Everybody stay where you are. Brethren, seize them!

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 1

Yes your holiness... nobody move!

THE TINKER

Ah the Holy Man! Well, isn't this a hell of a shindig?
Any more interruptions? We are leaving, you religious toe-rag!
We are done with your waffle and your hibberdy-gibberdy, the
sun has returned and we're moseying on out of town!

PASTOR SIMON

Blasphemy! The sun is dead! We are shadowborn, always to live
in the Shadows, we will not listen to your lies. You will not
endanger us, my flock, by opening the Apperture, you will
kill us all!!

*The Primarch, arrives on the Platform, followed by the
Steam Ranger*

THE PRIMARCH

No, Simon... we will not die, The Tinker is right, the Sun
has returned, the cog is slow and your time is at an end.
Whereas I... I shall continue to rule. Unopposed... with the
Alpha and Omega in my possession I will seal the aperture for
a thousand cycles... a new Pastor, a LOYAL pastor will take
your place preaching to the weak.

PLAY SONG: AT THE SIGN OF THE APERTURE

PASTOR SIMON

You... I knew you could not be trusted! My Brethren - seize
him.

NIGHTKEEPER BRETHREN 3

Your Holiness, but he is the Primarch, he is the Master of
the city.

PASTOR SIMON

You fool, it is all lies! I will blacken all of you! This is
a land of shadows, a place of redemption... our sanctuary! We
will not be distracted by your blasphemy.

THE STEAM RANGER

No Pastor, it is you who preaches Blasphemy, I was once like
you, so convinced of the shadows and the dark. But this is
the truth, we CAN return to the light.

THE TINKER

BOY! Activate the bassoon-powered trifle cannon!

*The bassoon sounds, A scream is heard as one of the
Brethren is tipped off the platform by a barrage of
trifle.*

THE TINKER (CONT'D)

Sterling work my Boy! And now, the time has come...

BOY

EVE, I WILL MISS YOU.... GOODBYE...

A clicking and whirring sound dies off as clinking sound the cog is removed

EVE

Boy! NOOO!

THE TINKER

(hastily)

There's life in him yet! Ranger... here! Take it! Take the Alpha wheel!

A humming, glinting sound is heard as the Cog is thrown

THE PRIMARCH

No! you will NOT open that Aperture.

The Primarch, grabs Eve by the neck.

I WILL push her, give me the Cog boy.

EVE

Push me then you weaselly old maggot! We will be free of you either way.

BOY

(Clicking slowed, Wheezing)

LEAVE.... MY FRIENDS..... ALONE.....

THE PRIMARCH

Argh! get off me you wretched child!

BOY

GOODBYE.... FATHER.....

THE PRIMARCH

ARRRRGGHHHHHHH.....

The boy, pushes the Primarch from the Platform the sound of his cry fades low into the reverberating cavern, rocks and stones bounce and echo in his wake. EVE screams, as she threatens to follow...

PLAY SONG: DEATH OF THE BOY

EVE

Help!

THE TINKER

I've got you my girl! Now quick, pass me your necklace, lets get this blasted thing open.

The Aperture mechanism is heard turning, a series of cogs and steam is heard whoosihing.

THE STEAM RANGER

Eve, Tinker come on. The Alpha's in place, lets do this.

THE TINKER

Finger's crossed my dear.

EVE

You have doubts?

THE TINKER

Always... but if I'm wrong, I'm wrong. At least I've still got my reputation, that, and a smashing set of porcelain duck figurines... besides, what's the worst that could happen?

PASTOR SIMON

You fools, you doomed us all.

The door is heard creaking, a whisp of wind is heard

PASTOR SIMON (CONT'D)

NO! The... light...

THE TINKER

After you my dear.

EVE

But what about the others?

THE STEAM RANGER

I've removed the cogs, the door will remain open. Others will follow with each new sunrise.

PLAY SONG: ESCAPE FROM COGTOPOLIS

End music.

ARMISTEAD

GORDON BENNETT! They were right! Never saw that coming, did I heck as like. Me? leaving? Aye, and pigs might fly. No, I reckon I'll just stay here and watch the others leave. Maybe then I can get some bloody peace and quiet round here. The surface i'nt for me, haven't got the skin for it. Old Armistead will just sit down here, watching... waiting.... No matters, at least i've still got this plasma lamp... old faithful here.

The sound of "TAP-TAP" as Armistead taps the glass against his Eternal lamplight. A GUST OF WIND IS HEARD... fizzling out the flame.

ARMISTEAD (CONT'D)

Oh.....Bugger!!!

FIN