

The Tick

"The Tick Vs. The Late 70's"

Written by hujhax

<http://hujhax.livejournal.com>

ACT ONE

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MI5 DEVELOPMENT LAB - DAY.

A Union Jack flutters in the foreground, "Rule Britannia" plays in the background, and then we pan to see a sleek, modern building. There are few trees in the front lawn.

There is a muffled explosion, and alarms go off.

Two large and mean-looking MERCENARIES break out through one of the building's windows. One of them is carrying a spherical electronic device.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE THE WINDOW - DAY.

Through the window we can see an office and a hallway and COPS coming down the hallway. Blast doors immediately close off the hallway before the COPS can get through.

COP
Hey!

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MI5 DEVELOPMENT LAB - DAY.

The MERCENARIES run off, gloating.

Then behind them, THE TICK parachutes into frame.

THE TICK
(pointing)
Halt, international naughty-doers!

THE TICK lands. The MERCENARIES turn around.

THE TICK
Prepare yourselves for an
undeclared import of justice!

The MERCENARIES give each other a look. One of them smiles and pulls out and presses a BIG RED BUTTON, which starts BLINKING, and run away. THE TICK chuckles.

THE TICK

Oh, you can run, but you can't --
hey, a balloon!

Suddenly, a large, white, perfectly-spherical BALLOON
knocks THE TICK out of frame.

THE TICK (O. S.)
Whoa.

THE TICK staggers back to his feet. The BALLOON waits
close by. THE TICK throws a punch; the BALLOON dodges.
THE TICK throws a punch; the BALLOON dodges.

THE TICK
(still throwing punches)
Crafty... little... British...
thing....

EXT. FURTHER OUTSIDE THE MI5 DEVELOPMENT LAB - DAY.

As the fight continues in the background, a silver Rolls-
Royce pulls up next to the two MERCENARIES. MERCENARY #1
holds up the sphere, grins. The car window rolls down. We
see THE ECONOMIST, a shadowy figure with a glinting monocle,
sitting inside. He has a prim, upper-class Brit accent.

THE ECONOMIST
Get in.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MI5 DEVELOPMENT LAB - DAY.

THE TICK sees this going on, momentarily distracting him
from the BALLOON. The BALLOON seizes the opportunity and
knocks THE TICK to the ground again. It continues to pound
THE TICK when he is out of frame. THE TICK cranes his head
into the frame.

THE TICK
Arthur! He's getting away!

EXT. TREE - DAY

ARTHUR is still tangled up in his parachute, which is
tangled up in a tree. In the background, one of the car's
passenger doors shuts, and the car drives away.

ARTHUR
(struggling with parachute-stuff)
I'm stuck!

There is a loud POP.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MI5 DEVELOPMENT LAB - DAY.
The BALLOON spirals away into the distance as it deflates.
This reveals M, a British gentleman with graying temples
and the slightly confused and distracted air of someone who
spends most of his time in a laboratory. M is holding a
pointy stick.

M
My apologies -- I would have
arrived sooner, but our security
system is a mite unpredictable.
(holding out a hand)
My name is "M." I'm from British
Intelligence.

THE TICK
What's the "M" for?

M
It's a pseudonym.

THE TICK
Mark?

M
No.

THE TICK
Millicent?

M
Let's not --

ARTHUR (O. S.)
Excuse me...

EXT. TREE - DAY
ARTHUR is still stuck in the tree.

ARTHUR

Could somebody help me down from
here?

INT. M'S LABORATORY

In M's laboratory, we see M holding a small, portable display. The display is showing THE TICK and ARTHUR bound up with ropes and tied together on the back of a fleeing llama, while the MERCENARIES emerge from a Mayan temple with a glowing artifact, and THE ECONOMIST looks on. The date ("5th July") is shown in the top left corner.

M

(pointing)

He's called "The Economist." We
had our top agent pursuing The
Economist, but 005... disappeared.
You are our best hope for stopping
this nefarious plan.

As conversation continues, M touches the display with his finger, which changes the display to:

- * THE TICK and ARTHUR trapped in a giant ice cube while THE ECONOMIST escapes on a dogsled. ("1st August")
- * THE TICK and ARTHUR running from giant alligators in a sewer ("23rd July")
- * THE TICK and ARTHUR on a Chinese junk, pointing at THE ECONOMIST escaping on a hydroplane ("12th July")

THE TICK looks around the room, which is full of oscilloscopes, weapons, and half-constructed bits of electronics.

THE TICK

Wow! A secret spy lab!

THE TICK notices a wastebasket. He depresses the lever at the bottom of the waste bin with his foot. The waste bin opens, revealing waste. THE TICK stares in wonderment. THE TICK looks up at a nearby shelf and finds himself face-to-face with a cat sleeping on a lab bench. The cat wakes up.

THE TICK

Oooh. Spy kitty.

This starts a staring contest. M turns to ARTHUR.

Simultaneous with this investigation, we hear this conversation between M and ARTHUR in the background.

ARTHUR

But M, the Economist has escaped
from us five times now!

M

That means you have experience!

ARTHUR

Yes, but --

M

You just haven't had MI-5's
equipment and information.

ARTHUR

That's true.

M puts a hand on THE TICK's shoulder. (At this point, THE TICK is trying to outstare the cat.)

M

How about it, gentlemen?

THE TICK

Huh? Sure!

ARTHUR doesn't look so sure.

EXT. FANCY BRITISH MANSION -- LATE AFTERNOON

We pan across a home that bespeaks unspeakable wealth.
Expensive cars are pulling up.

INT. MANSION

It's an elaborate charity ball. A champagne fountain,
immaculately-dressed people, tuxedoed waiters.

ARTHUR (O. S.)

This watch has all the information
about the agents working for the
Economist.

ARTHUR and THE TICK are trying to look inconspicuous next
to a giant marble staircase. ARTHUR is looking at his
watch, visibly upset, pressing a button.

ARTHUR
So if I press *this* button...

As a WOMAN WEARING A MINK STOLE passes by, ARTHUR presses
the button. A laser beam shoots out of the watch and sets
the stole's head on fire. An unflappable WAITER
immediately puts it out with champagne before the WOMAN
notices.

ARTHUR
I fear my watch.

THE TICK notices something. It's MERCENARY #2, darting by
in the shadows.

THE TICK
Well, there's an agent right there!

THE TICK and ARTHUR pursue THE MERCENARY down a hallway,
and then find themselves in a well-appointed cul-de-sac.

INT. MANSION - AROUND A CORNER
The MERCENARIES watch THE TICK and ARTHUR disappear down
the hallway; MERCENARY #2 opens a panel on the wall,
revealing a switch, and throws it.

INT. MANSION - CUL-DE-SAC
ARTHUR and THE TICK look around the dead end, confused. A
beep. A large TRAPDOOR swings open under them, and they
fall down into....

INT. INTAGLIO MACHINE
THE TICK and ARTHUR land thumpily upon a pile of giant
perforated sheets of paper. There is only one apparent
exit, into what looks like a metal hallway.

There are various noises of the machine starting up. Suddenly, it SHOOTS the topmost sheet of paper into the 'metal hallway'. THE TICK and ARTHUR wind up halfway in the metal hallway -- they get up and walk back to where they were. As they do so, the ceiling of the 'metal hallway' slams down and lifts up again. The sheet is now a perfectly-printed set of twenty-dollar bills.

INT. INTAGLIO MACHINE (CAMCORDER)

A black-and-white camera's-eye view of the same scene. A little red dot and the word "REC" in the corner.

MERCENARY #2 (O. S.)
Smile for the camera!

THE TICK looks up.

INT. LONG HALLWAY -- THE TICK's POV

We're looking up through the trapdoor at the MERCENARIES. Throughout, we can hear the INTAGLIO MACHINE SPEEDING UP.

MERCENARY #2
We can get a good price for
footage of us taking down the Tick!

The MERCENARIES laugh maniacally and exit, as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. INTAGLIO MACHINE

A short time later. ARTHUR has his wings out, and he's flapping desperately. He's holding on to THE TICK. They're only about a foot off the ground.

The intaglio machine is in full swing, shooting sheet after sheet into the metal clanger, which is smashing down over and over again.

ARTHUR collapses. THE TICK picks him up. THE TICK has to leap the opposite way that the paper is going, just to avoid getting eaten by this contraption.

THE TICK
Wait a minute.

INT. INTAGLIO MACHINE (CAMCORDER)

THE TICK
(reaching towards the camera)
What's back here?

INT. INTAGLIO MACHINE

With his one free arm, THE TICK yanks out the CAMCORDER and tosses it aside. He reaches through the hole left behind and roots around a bit. He yanks his hand out of the hole -- he's now got a bunch of torn-out wires.

There are various sparks, emissions of smoke, and zapping noises to indicate that the machine is falling apart. The intaglio machine stops shooting sheets of paper, and the clanger slows to a stop.

THE TICK
(to camera)
Ha! Villainous videotapers, your engine of evil is no match for justice's uncanny knack for breaking stuff!

ARTHUR is halfway on his feet, leaning heavily on THE TICK.

THE TICK
(pointing towards the clanger)
Onward!

THE TICK marshals ARTHUR through the clanger. ARTHUR whimpers slightly, expected to be squished at any moment.

EXT. BASEMENT WINDOW -- LATE AFTERNOON
A palatial exterior wall meets the neatly-manicured lawn. There is a window flush with the ground.

ARTHUR stands nearby, playing with a set of car keys.

THE TICK pulls himself through the window, breaking out a larger hole in the wall in the process.

THE TICK
There!

EXT. LAWN -- LATE AFTERNOON
The two MERCENARIES, looking shifty, are getting into a small aircraft.

THE TICK
(To ARTHUR)
Where's our wheels?

ARTHUR
(still regarding the car keys with
some puzzlement)
I pressed the "car" button...

THE TICK goes wide-eyed at something in the distance.

ARTHUR
(cont'd)
I don't think it did anything.

Suddenly a SLEEK, RED, FUTURISTIC-LOOKING CAR screeches to a halt in front of them. Smokes wafts from the wheels.

THE TICK and ARTHUR regard it for a moment, and then hastily hop in.

INT. SPY CAR

The car's interior is full of an intimidating array of buttons, levers, wheels and such. Through the windshield, the world looks slightly red-tinted, and there is a Terminator-like collection of readouts along the edges.

THE TICK hops in the driver's seat, ARTHUR in the passenger's.

ARTHUR
What do we do?

THE TICK
No time for thinking, Arthur!
Full speed ahead!

THE TICK presses a big red button marked "Start." The engine revs up loudly. THE TICK looks at the dizzying array of controls.

ARTHUR
We need to follow that plane.

ARTHUR points at the two MERCENARIES in the distance. As he does so, a cursor appears over the MERCENARIES, and the windshield view ZOOMS IN on them. A slight yellow HIGHLIGHT flashes on them.

CAR (V. O.)
Target acquired.

The CAR fires a small BLINKING ELECTRONIC BUG at the airplane as it takes off.

EXT. BASEMENT WINDOW - LATE AFTERNOON
The tires squeal and the car pulls away. THE TICK and ARTHUR scream.

INT. CAR
The CAR hangs a hard right and squeals to an abrupt halt.

THE TICK
Huh?

Ahead, in the distance, we can see the edge of a cliff.

ARTHUR
Oh, no.

EXT. BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE - LATE AFTERNOON
The FUTURISTIC CAR starts slowly rolling towards the cliff edge.

THE TICK
Arthur? How do we stop this thing?

INT. CAR
ARTHUR is flipping through a clearly-labeled "Operator's Manual".

ARTHUR
(reading)
"Thank you for purchasing the ZX-700 all-purpose spy vehicle..."

THE TICK
Skim, man! SKIM!

EXT. BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE - LATE AFTERNOON
The FUTURISTIC CAR vrooms its way to the cliff's edge.

THE TICK
Bad car. BAD CAR!

A CLOSEUP on the CAR driving off the edge. ARTHUR and THE TICK scream. As this is going on, the CAR sprouts wings, propellers, and a tail rudder. After a brief dip, it gets its bearings and starts gaining altitude.

INT. CAR
Both ARTHUR and THE TICK are recovering from being scared out of their wits.

ARTHUR
It... turned into a plane.

THE TICK
Keen.

EXT. SOMEWHERE OVER THE OCEAN - EVENING
Jaunty spy music plays as the CARPLANE makes its way across the ocean.

EXT. ISLAND - NIGHT
The CARPLANE lands on the beach of a deserted-looking island. Moonlight. Palm trees. Insect sounds.

The doors pop open; ARTHUR and THE TICK step out and look around.

CAR (V. O.)
Target attained.

ARTHUR
But there's nobody here.

THE TICK
Looks can be deceiving, old friend.
And the magic carplane knows more
than it lets on.

EXT. ISLAND - NIGHT
We see the island from a distance. There is a regular "boop boop boop" noise.

EXT. ISLAND - NIGHT
A closer shot of THE TICK and ARTHUR as they walk over a small sand dune. ARTHUR is looking at his watch, which is blinking in time with the "boop boop boop," which is increasing in frequency.

ARTHUR stops.

ARTHUR
This should be it.

THE TICK and ARTHUR look around, but there's nothing to be seen but sand.

Then a LOUD MECHANICAL NOISE, and THE TICK and ARTHUR are silhouetted against a huge cave-like opening that appears in the ground. They jump back into the shadows; two NINJAS emerge in a little flying vehicle; before the opening can close again, THE TICK and ARTHUR jump inside.

NINJA (O. S.)
Hey, you --

We hear a punch land, and then a thud.

INT. UNDERGROUND COMPLEX -- WIDE VIEW

A huge, multi-level structure -- kind of mall-shaped, with glass elevators and multiple floors looking out on a central 'atrium' -- but more industrial. Lots of plain gunmetal construction. Lots of industrial-looking forklifts and loading docks.

THE TICK and ARTHUR are dwarfed by their surroundings. They make their slow, befuddled way along one of the walkways that skirt the atrium. Alongside our heroes, NINJAS go about their daily business.

THE TICK
Wow!

INT. UNDERGROUND COMPLEX -- WALKWAY
ARTHUR and THE TICK continue walking.

ARTHUR
What if somebody sees us?

THE TICK
Arthur, I think we can count on --
yaaah!

THE TICK has noticed the two MERCENARIES approaching the opposite way. ARTHUR notices this as well, and pushes them both into the nearest open doorway.

INT. SCIENCE LAB

Remarkably similar to the M lab we saw in Act One. This lab looks a little more industrial. Lots of threatening-looking devices about.

THE TICK and ARTHUR blunder in here and collide with DR GUPTA, a serious-looking young woman in a white lab coat. DR GUPTA staggers a few steps backwards; THE TICK and ARTHUR tumble to the floor. DR GUPTA peers down at them with a "Who are you and what are you doing here?" look.

THE TICK
Halt! Naughty science girl, we've
been sent here by British
Intelligence!

DR GUPTA
So was I!

For a moment, everyone looks at each other a bit puzzled.

DR GUPTA
Oh, you're here to see the weapon
test!

THE TICK
Urrr....

ARTHUR
(lying)
Yeah! The... test!

INT. WEAPON DEPLOYMENT CHAMBER
A vast underground chamber with a rocket in it. On a very high scaffold, we see a round piece of electronics being loaded into the nose-cone. We may recognize this as the spherical object that the MERCENARIES stole at the beginning of the show. Again, everyone is dwarfed by the scale.

DR GUPTA is giving THE TICK and ARTHUR the tour.

DR GUPTA
I'm M's top engineer. And now
double-o-five has me on this top-
secret project.

THE TICK
Uh... double-what-what?

005
Britain's top agent.

They have come upon 005 -- think the Roger-Moore Bond, only with a thin, evil-looking moustache.

ARTHUR
005, you're in great danger! This
place has been infiltrated by...
the... Economist.

As ARTHUR says this line, THE ECONOMIST enters and appears at 005's side.

DR GUPTA
Men!

THE TICK
You weren't kidnapped at all!

005
This arrangement is voluntary.
Have you tried buying good caviar
on a government salary?

DR GUPTA
What are you using the Luddite
Bomb for?

THE TICK
The Ludd-a-what?

THE ECONOMIST
You'll find out soon enough.

As THE ECONOMIST delivers this line, he leans over to a control panel and presses a button. Little tubes pop out of the floor and emit a noxious-looking green gas. THE ECONOMIST and 005 put on gas masks. THE TICK, ARTHUR, and DR GUPTA begin coughing.

THE ECONOMIST
Soon enough.

The ECONOMIST and 005 laugh maniacally. THE TICK, ARTHUR, and DR GUPTA fall to the floor. ARTHUR and DR GUPTA immediately pass out. As THE TICK's eyes slowly shut, we...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

BLACKNESS

A black screen. You are likely to be eaten by a grue.

ARTHUR (O. S., whispering harshly)
Tick! Tick!

INT. WEAPON DEPLOYMENT CHAMBER -- LATER
FADE IN on THE TICK opening his eyes a bit and groaning.

THE TICK
(mumbly)
Nobody could hang-glide off of
that ski lift, Mister --

THE TICK's eyes pop fully open, and he takes in his surroundings. THE TICK is strapped down to a metal platform. ARTHUR is strapped down to his own metal platform, his head squooshed against it so that he's looking at THE TICK.

Directly above them is the exhaust end of the ROCKET. Along the perimeter of the room are nondescript- and bored-looking NINJAS. THE TICK responds vocally to each of these in turn, with increasingly-anxious-sounding noises.

THE ECONOMIST
Hello, Mister Tick.

One more worried noise as THE TICK spots THE ECONOMIST sitting on a big comfy leather chair off to the side of the metal platforms.

THE ECONOMIST
(gesturing at the arrangements)
A bit melodramatic, but who could resist the irony? You will be destroyed by the very weapon you worked so feebly to prevent! And as you perish, I shall become the greatest economic power the world has ever known!

ARTHUR
Um...

THE ECONOMIST
(gesturing to him, a bit peeved)
Yes?

ARTHUR
How is firing off a big rocket
going to do that?

THE ECONOMIST
Do you even know what the Luddite
bomb does?

THE TICK
Ooo! It blows stuff up?

THE ECONOMIST
It disables technology. And when
I have destroyed all the computer
systems of the world's major
financial centers, then...

THE ECONOMIST presses a button -- a window opens revealing
a chamber full of untold riches. Gold, gems, etc. THE
ECONOMIST gazes at his riches, enrapt.

THE ECONOMIST
(cont'd)
... whoever has the most *real*
money... rules the world.

THE TICK raises his hand.

THE ECONOMIST
(peevisish)
Yes?

THE TICK
Could you explain that again?

A MONTAGE follows, set to rather ominous music:
* THE ECONOMIST patiently explains things to THE TICK.
* A clock reads 9pm.
* THE ECONOMIST now has a big flip chart.
* THE TICK looks confused.
* The clock reads 10pm.
* THE ECONOMIST rubs his temples wearily; a NINJA brings
THE ECONOMIST a cup of coffee; THE TICK (presumably) asks a

stupid question; ARTHUR rolls his eyes; THE ECONOMIST
angrily throws the coffee to the ground.
* The clock reads 10:30pm

THE ECONOMIST
That's it! I give up!

THE TICK
(still trying to piece it together)
So if nobody else has a
computer....

THE ECONOMIST
No! No! No more explaining!
Just firing the big rocket!

THE ECONOMIST walks away to one of the computer panels.
We see ARTHUR on a black-and-white viewscreen.

ARTHUR
We need a plan. And fast.

A wider shot reveals that we are now in...

INT. CONTROL ROOM
The view of ARTHUR is one of many on a big wall of TVs. DR
GUPTA is sitting in a chair, arms folded. Two NINJAS --
one NORMAL NINJA (NN) and one NINJA WITH A SILLY-SOUNDING
VOICE (NwaSSV) guard the exit.

DR GUPTA sighs and starts to get up. Both NINJAS begin to
draw swords on her.

NN
The boss says you stay here.

NwaSSV
You are to gaze upon the
destruction you have unwittingly
wrought!

DR GUPTA
Fine.

DR GUPTA sits back down and folds her arms.

DR GUPTA
Can I at least have my watch?

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE CONTROL ROOM
In this otherwise grubby and industrial-looking hallway, we can see the door to the control room. An EXPLOSION knocks the door off its hinges, and smoke billows out. We can see the light of a couple more BLASTS.

NN
Ow!

NwaSSV
All is lost! Fate is avenged upon
us!

During this set-to, DR GUPTA darts through the doorway, in more than a little alarm and disarray. She uses her watch to aim one more laser beam back into the room she came from; the beam is timed like so:

NwaSSV
Woe betide the --
(bzzt!)
ow!

DR GUPTA runs down the hall.

INT. WEAPON DEPLOYMENT CHAMBER
As usual, THE TICK and ARTHUR are tied to their respective platforms. The room is empty but for them.

THE TICK
I've got it! Arthur, use your
watch!

ARTHUR
My hands are tied to the platform.

THE TICK
(pensively)
So... we just have to get your
hands untied.

ARTHUR sighs.

Close-up on THE TICK. There is a laser-beam sound.

THE TICK
Huh -- wha? Who's doing that?!
That tickles!

Close-up on ARTHUR.

ARTHUR
What's going on?

Laser-beam sound. ARTHUR makes anxious noises, then... gets up! He looks at his wrists -- the cables tied around them now terminate in smoking, frayed ends. He looks up to see...

DR GUPTA, pressing some watch buttons. She aims the watch at a wall-mounted video camera and -- *BZAP!* -- takes it out. Behind her, THE TICK looks at similarly burnt cables.

THE TICK
Keen!

INT. WEAPON DEPLOYMENT CHAMBER -- CONTROL CONSOLE
DR GUPTA is typing desperately. ARTHUR and THE TICK look on.

COMPUTER (V. O.)
Launch in twenty seconds. Twenty... nineteen....

This continues in the background.

DR GUPTA
(still typing)
I can't stop the countdown!

THE TICK
Uh-oh.

ARTHUR
Wait a second.

ARTHUR jabs the button marked "DEPLOY PAYLOAD."

The nose cone of the rocket opens, revealing the spherical device that was stolen in Act One. It parachutes to the floor, deploying little robotic legs. It lands. It emits a bright blue pulse of energy. All the computer screens go blank.

COMPUTER (V. O.)
(slowing down to half-speed)
two... one... error detected.
Shut down. Daisy, daisy....

The lights go out. Complete darkness.

THE TICK (V. O.)
(suddenly getting it)
Oh! It shuts down computers!

ARTHUR sighs.

EXT. BEN'S DINER - EARLY EVENING

THE TICK (V. O.)
And once the mad scientist snuck
us out of the building, we just
took our magic flying car to
safety!

INT. BEN'S DINER - SEWER URCHIN, DIE FLEDERMAUS, and AMERICAN MAID are listening to THE TICK and ARTHUR hold forth about their little adventure. (Technically, SEWER URCHIN is not listening, but is engrossed in playing with a small toy double-decker bus. DIE FLEDERMAUS has a little flag. AMERICAN MAID has a cricket bat.)

DIE FLEDERMAUS
Oh, man! I *never* get the breaks.
(to AMERICAN MAID)
I could be such a cool spy.

AMERICAN MAID rolls her eyes.

AMERICAN MAID

Good work, boys.
SEWER URCHIN suddenly looks up.

SEWER URCHIN
Ah! Definitely need to know the
time.

ARTHUR
Oh, um...

ARTHUR looks at his watch, and gets ready to press one of
the buttons.

THE TICK
Er, Arthur....

EXT. BEN'S DINER
A LASER BEAM shoots out through the window sets a newspaper
box on fire.

SEWER URCHIN
Uh... never mind.

BLACKOUT.

END OF SHOW