

Greetings Club Member

I'm surprised writers don't make more use of music in literature.

Movie producers do to great effect. Think of the soundtrack to *Forrest Gump*. Can you hear Rolling Stones' 'Paint it Black' without picturing Bell Huey choppers flying into battle in Vietnam? And what about movies like *The Sting*, *Saturday Night Fever*; the raw energy of 8 Mile's 'Lose Yourself' or the triumphant 'La Marseillaise' in *Casablanca*?

In life music is everywhere. It can shape how we feel in the present and how we remember the past.

Granted writers can't use music in the same way. Imagine reading a car chase scene and 'Bat Out Of Hell' emerges from within your book's spine – like one of those prank birthday cards. No ... Not happening.

But there are other ways. In *Bring Me Giants*, Clayre and her young daughter are in an emotionally distressing predicament. What does Clayre do? Comforts Leigh by singing a Sunday school lullaby. An act that not only conveys her nurturing and loving nature but also affirms her bond with her daughter. Four lines of lyrics that conveys more than a whole page of backstory.

In the closing chapter of *Bring Me Giants*, the radio is playing Nat King Cole's hit song from the era, 'Roll Out Those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer.' Clayre mulls over the irony of 'lazy days'. It's been anything but for the McGavells. But hey, the family are sitting on the veranda enjoying a drink before Sunday lunch so you can get with the mood.

They're also 'crazy days'. On the world stage, there's been a coup in Togo. Nigeria became a republic. Kenya and Zanzibar are independent. The South African police raided a farm called Liliesleaf. The United States blockaded Cuba. Two hundred and fifty thousand people gathered at the Lincoln Memorial to hear Martin Luther King Junior speak about a dream. And Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated President Kennedy in Dallas.

What about hazy? Well, at that time the future of Central and Southern Africa was anything but clear.

So I wasn't just using three hooks to steer a conversation. I intended for residual memories of that tune to bring the narrative to life. By the way, you can get *Bring Me Giants* here:

BRING ME GIANTS

In my latest novel, a Russian satellite operator's favourite tune is Led Zeppelin's 'Stairway to Heaven.' It's apt for his profession – and as the Soviet Union had banned western pop music, it also conveys a rebellious streak in the younger generation towards totalitarianism.

So that's it for now. Let me finish by saying if you've read a book that used music in a way you'll never forget I'd like to hear about it.

Catch up with you next month.

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