**Look what they’ve one to my song, ma**

In 1976, a Mancunian punk band called Buzzcocks borrowed £500 from friends and relatives and recorded and released the Spiral Scratch EP (Print run: 1,000 copies).

[INSERT PIC 1]

Little did they know that 37 years later the stand-out track ‘Boredom’ would achieve national exposure as the soundtrack for a Sainsbury’s commercial.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NeCsFeOa08>

But they aren’t the first artists to see their work take on a life of its own in incongruous, and sometimes downright inappropriate settings…

**Looking at You**

The Song: Detroit legends the MC5 re-recorded their epic single in a more commercial form for their 1970 album ‘Back in The USA’, which was a major influence on the British punks later in the decade. (The Damned subsequently recorded a version, and include it in their stage act to this day.)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDA2fCnVR3A>

The Situation: The BBC’s 1978 mini-series Law and Order provoked a major political row with its depiction of corrupt police, bent lawyers, biased judges and an inhumane prison system. In amongst this, ‘Looking At You’ can be clearly heard emerging from a car stereo. Was it being played on the radio? Unlikely, given the playlists of Radio 1 and Capital at the time. Was one of the crims in possession of a cassette copy? Less likely still. How this esoteric song found its way onto film remains one of life’s mysteries.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7wJu2ve4h4>

**Jerusalem**

[INSERT PIC 2]

The Song: Blake’s poem (set to music over a century later) is set among the ‘dark satanic mills’ of the industrial revolution.

The Situation: Rousing patriotic curtain-raiser for England cricket tests on home soil.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RunYbjEyXj8>

**Swing Low, Sweet Chariot**

The Song: Historic Negro spiritual.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Thz1zDAytzU>

The Situation: Everywhere that appalling drunken men gather to support the Awesome Guys of the England rugger team.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wR0U_2md8aw>

**Born In the USA**

The Song: Bleak tale of a Vietnam Vet struggling in a country devastated by ‘Reaganomics’.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7oVzHm_S0-A>

The Situation: Selected as a possible campaign anthem by, of all people, Team Ronald Reagan. When Springsteen’s management turned them down, Reagan nevertheless referred to The Boss in a speech:

‘America’s future rests in a thousand dreams inside your hearts; it rests in the message of hope in songs so many young Americans admire: New Jersey's own Bruce Springsteen. And helping you make those dreams come true is what this job of mine is all about.’

This endorsement did nothing to dispel the popular misconception that the song was intended as a patriotic paean.

[INSERT PIC 3]

**Turning Japanese**

The Song: The Vapors’ power pop hit is alleged to refer to the facial expression apparently adopted during the act of masturbation.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEmJ-VWPDM4>

The Situation: Every time there is a TV report on Japan, up pops the familiar chirpy chorus: ‘Turning Japanese, I think I’m turning Japanese, I really think so.’ It’s the gift that keeps on giving, and the sort of royalty money-spinner that songwriters dream of.

**London Calling**

The Song: The Clash’s apocalyptical vision of state repression, nuclear destruction, and the drowning of London.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfK-WX2pa8c>

The Situation: British Airways ad (2012) and regular signature music for tennis’s annual ATM Tour Finals at the O2 Arena in Greenwich.

[INSERT PIC 4]

**White Riot**

The Song: Another Clash classic, this time inspired by the Notting Hill anti-police riots of 1976. (‘Black man gotta lot of problems but they don’t mind throwing a brick.’) Singer Joe Strummer dreams of a ‘riot of my own’.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoJYM3krDWQ>

The Situation: Played at Pride Park as the Rams of Derby County Football Club take to the field.

[INSERT PIC 5]

**If The Kids Are United (They will Never Be Divided)**

The Song: Shouty Surrey street urchins Sham 69 invite ‘the kids’ to join the Sham Army and, er, understand one other.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doCrdhbPcmw>

The Situation: Prime Minister Tony Blair’s walk-on music at the 2005 Labour Party conference. It seemed utterly bizarre at the time, and no less so today.

[INSERT PIC 6]