



MUSICMAIL 4

It's all about the Money!

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Hi, welcome to podcast 4...Oscar wilde once said "When I was young I thought that money was the most important thing in life; now that I am old... I know that it is."

My name's Rokeby Lynch and I think my friends would agree that I've lived through many highs and lows. During the nineties I was a successful promoter and DJ in London ... I used to walk into department stores with large rolls of cash and buy whatever I wanted. At the turn of the century however, I decided to write a work of philosophy and ended up living on a Greek island, my designer wardrobe was reduced to a bag of shorts and t-shirts, and I was broke... absolutely no money. My daily budget permitted me one large bowl of pasta a day. One problem, though... I had a dog... I had to share the bowl with him. God damn... I loved that dog... but when it came to dinner time...

Anyway, as you may have guessed... today's show is all about one thing, people... Money!

Aloe Blacc: I need a dollar



So we're going to listen to two tracks which celebrate money, but let's look at the reverse. This next song is absolutely beautiful and works both as narrative and music. It tells the story of a poor man struggling (luchando) to survive. This is very apt for the difficult economic times we live in, and I'm sure we can all relate to the lyrics ...

*I need a dollar, dollar, a dollar is what I need (necesito un dollar, dollar... un dollar es lo que necesito).
And if I share with you my story would you share your dollar with me (y si comparto mi historia contigo
compartirías tu dollar conmigo)*

MUSICIAN

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But we're going to use the next part of the song to learn about some employment-related words in English. Aloe Blacc sings...

*I had a job but the boss man let me go
he said
I'm sorry but i will not be needing your help no more
I said
please mister boss man I need this job more than you
know
But he gave me my last paycheck and he sent me out
the door.*

In English "To let someone go" when speaking of a business is 'to fire someone.' It means they are firing you... despidiendote. And just before we listen to that, here's a list of our top 5 colloquial English phrases used to talk about firing a worker ...

Axed (proviene de la palabra 'axe' – 'hacha')
Given the boot (dado una patada en el culo con la bota)
Kicked out (echado – dado otra patada)
Laid off (phrasal verb – infinitivo – 'to lay off')
Given the sack (inglés británico)

ALOE BLACC I NEED A DOLLAR

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I need a dollar dollar, a dollar is what I need
hey hey
Well I need a dollar dollar, a dollar is what I need
hey hey
And I said I need dollar dollar, a dollar is what I need
And if I share with you my story would you share your
dollar with me

Bad times are comin' and I reap what I don't sow
hey hey
Well let me tell you somethin' all that glitters ain't gold
hey hey
it's been a long old trouble long old troublesome road
And I'm looking for somebody come and help me carry
this load

[Bridge:]

I need a dollar dollar, a dollar is what I need
hey hey
Well I need a dollar dollar, a dollar is what I need
Well I don't know if I'm walking on solid ground
Cause everything around me is falling down
And all I want - is for someone - to help me

I had a job but the boss man let me go
He said
I'm sorry but I won't be needing your help no more
I said
Please mister boss man I need this job more than you
know
But he gave me my last paycheck and he sent me on
out the door
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Pink Floyd: Money

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Okay, so now we're continuing appropriately with a track called 'Money' by Pink Floyd from their classic album "The Dark side of the moon." Let's listen again, but what I want you to listen to at the beginning is not a word but a sound. "Ka-ching". That sound is the sound of a 'till' or.... 'cash register'..... in American English.

After that, the singer sings "Money, it's a gas". This phrase about 'gas' means "it's fantastic" but... it's rather an old fashioned – anticuada – word. The most important word of colloquial English I want to teach you today is "Stash." When Roger Waters sings...

*Money, it's a gas
Grab that cash with both
hands
And make a stash*

*Money...es fantástico...
coge el dinero con las dos
manos
Y hace un alijo*



A 'till'. This is not a sexy picture!

'Alijo' isn't the best translation because a 'stash' doesn't have to be illegal. But it's the one you'll find in a dictionary. A stash refers to anything desirable which you have hidden – (que has escondido.)

For example, remember the old days before Internet porn... you used to go to your older brother's room and find, by accident, under his bed, his copies of 'playboy'... That's his 'stash' of porn.

'Stash' is very important for understanding crime films. The place where a drug dealer hides his drugs is called his *stash house*. And, it's both a verb and a noun. If a criminal hides a consignment of weapons... 'he's... stashing them away.'

But anyway, let's listen to the song again.



LYRICS.... 'MONEY' PINK FLOYD

*Money, get away
Get a good job with more pay
And your O.K.
Money, it's a gas
Grab that cash with both hands
And make a stash*

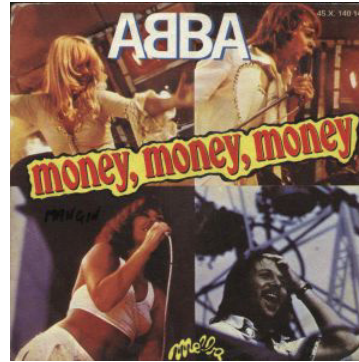
*New car, caviar, four star daydream
Think I'll buy me a football team*

Money get back

*I'm all right Jack
Keep your hands off my stack*

*Money, it's a hit
Don't give me that
Do goody good bullshit*

*I'm in the hi-fidelity
First class travelling set
And I think I need a Lear jet*



Chip the Rippa: Club Rockin (Akon)



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Okay, so, now we've heard some classic rock let's change style and listen to a well-respected rapper called Chip the Rippa.

Play the track

Now, the first thing any of you are going to ask is 'why the hell is the singer, Akon, singing about a 'pocket full of cheese'? – un bolsillo de cheese? Well, my friends, in colloquial English – especially in hip hop – **cheese** means **money**. And it is a word with a long history. Many years ago the government of the United States gave poor families cheese if they had no food. Later of course, like all social security systems, they gave them money, but if someone lost their job or something like that they would continue to say "I've lost my job I'll have to get some cheese off the government."

This track is full of colloquial expressions for money because the whole song is about Chip the Rippa telling us how rich he is. This includes the phrase '**stacks**' which means **a thousand dollars**, and when he talks about 'stacks round his neck' (su cuello) we suppose he's talking about the gold chain round his neck. Then he talks about 'Bundles' which are big piles of money, and most importantly '**a grand**'. You must remember this term for... **a thousand dollars** – it's very common. A grand – or fifty grand or ten grand or a hundred grand. A **grand** means a thousand. Anyway, once again this is Chip the Rippa with Akon... *keep the club rocking*.

*"Cause I be up in the club rockin' posted with a pocket full of cheese (OKAY) (estoy en un club bailando – con un bolsillo de queso)
And you know I keep dem convicts boppin' hold'n it down fa my G's (y sabes que mantengo todo el mundo bailando... estoy aquí para mis fans y amigos)*

ROOTS MANUVA: STRANGE BEHAVIOUR

(COMPORTAMIENTO RARO)



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Okay, at this point... quiero recordarte de descargar la transcripción y la letra gratis de inglesmusica.com o Vocatic.com; la próxima canción es muy muy difícil y tienes que tener mi explicación escrita. Okay.

Now we're going to listen to some real underground music... an artist called Roots Manuva with his song, *Strange Behaviour*. Continuing the theme of money and narrative, this British rapper tells us another story about money and uses some great Jamaican slang. Let's listen once, and then I'll explain it and we'll listen again.

I can't quite remember the month nor date (no puedo recordar exactamente el mes ni la fecha)

Nothing was gwan and I was jammin round my gate ('Gwan' is argot de Jamaica que significa 'going on'... 'jammin' round my gate' significa 'relajándome en mi casa')

Started fiending for a dragon but had no cash (empezó a querer un cigarrillo pero no tenía dinero)

I had no choice to piggy-bank or trash (no tenía elección – romper mi hucha o buscar en la basura)

It was me and my bold self with five bags of coppers (me fui solo con cinco bolsitas de monedas ('coppers' significa uno y dos centimos))

Splashed out the counter at PJ Patel's (puesto en el mostrador de la tienda de PJ Patel)

He's far from happy with my method of pay (el no esta contento con mi metodo de pagar)

I shrug my shoulders, I'm like what can you say? (encojo los hombros... ¿que puedo decir?)

*It's money, ain't it? I ain't begging you jack (Es dinero, no? no estoy mendigando ni una mierda (**Jack** es la forma corta de **Jack shit** – lo que significa **nada.**))*

And mood I'm in, I might just give you a slap (y con el mal genio que tengo hoy – a lo mejor te doy una abofetada)

Okay, so what was that all about? A good question... and don't worry if you didn't understand: this is serious colloquial English. It's the story of a rapper who begins by saying he can't remember neither the day nor the month but he was at home chilling out when he had a desire to smoke. But he's got no money for cigarettes. And this is where we encounter our first word **piggy bank**... Hucha."

The rapper's only option is to break open his piggy bank or look in the trash for old cigarettes... en la basura. So he breaks open his piggy bank and goes to the shop of Mr Patel and puts a bag of coppers on the counter. **Copper** significa 'cobre' and you use the word **coppers** to talk about very small coins – monedas de uno o dos centimes. Anyway, he puts the money on the **counter** el *mostrador* and Mister Patel is far from happy... no esta contento con todas esas monedas... but the rapper no le importa, dice... "it's money aint it" Es dinero, no?... "And in the mood I'm in... I might just give you a slap" Y con el mal genio que tengo a lo mejor te doy una bofetada.

And just to include our cultural observation for the show – notice the noise he makes with his teeth as he leaves the shop. This is a noise that is used in the Jamaican community to express contempt... desden... okay... let's hit it one more time.

TRACY CHAPMAN: REVOLUTION



Now we can talk about all aspects of economic and working life with 'Revolution' by Tracy Chapman.

Play track...

Tracy Chapman describes all the possibilities that exist in the labour market when she talks about revolution, and the fact that people are...

Standing in the welfare lines, crying at the doorsteps of those armies of salvation (gente en la cola esperando prestaciones sociales, llorando a la puerta de las caridades)

These words refer to the poorest people who depend on government and charities like the Salvation army. The word you need to know is 'welfare'... which sometimes means 'bienestar' but also means 'prestaciones sociales.'

Then Tracy sings about both unemployed people and people with jobs who are...

Wasting time in the unemployment lines (perdiendo tiempo en la oficina de empleo) And the workers... *Sitting around waiting for a promotion* (sentado y aburrido esperando ascensión)

Well, between the desperate poor, the time wasting unemployed, and the bored workers... it seems like Tracy is painting a very depressing picture. But no, Tracy is saying that there is hope now because finally... "The tables are starting to turn." "The tables are starting to turn" is a fantastic phrase which means that a situation is about to change completely. And Tracy says that what's going to change is... a revolution.

Well, this song was composed in 1989 ... and as far as I know the revolution has not happened yet (but it's a bit cruel to return to predictions made in the past. I said two years ago that before 2012 Shakira would marry me and as far as I know we haven't even started our relationship.) But even though there are still poor people, unemployed people and people totally bored with their jobs, I still find the song inspiring.

You see, revolution doesn't have to be across the whole of society. What interests me most – as a teacher and a philosopher – is the concept of personal revolution. A revolution of the self – when an individual decides to change their life through education and hard work. Sometimes, this change can come when people find themselves unemployed, in poverty, or sometimes it comes when an individual realises that their current job is not what they want and deep down... they are fucking bored with their life. Whatever the time... change has to come. So, I would like to wish you all a happy 2011 and if you've decided that this is the year where you create your own personal revolution... Vocatic supports you 100% Good bye...