

Captain Mental and Constable Morgan are sweating in full uniform, whilst lying on a sandy beach and staring up at sunny skies. Their hands are on the back of their heads. Dozens of equally casual families are close by. The odd 'This is great!' is heard. In front of everyone is a calm sea posing no immediate threat to basic and far from functional sand castles. Any form of defence that can be defeated just by being stepped on is pretty poor, but apparently that's not the point. SO WHAT IS THE POINT THEN???? Anyway, behind everyone is a row of tall white houses. Mental starts a conversation with his coworker 'This really is great, isn't it? This really takes my mind off of the rampaging robot.' Morgan agrees 'It sure does. Hopefully now that robots can eat pizza, they will be hard working and sensible.' Mental responds 'Right. Unless they get so addicted they can't focus on work, anymore...' Morgan tuts 'There's always something, isn't there? Still, maybe a robot whizz could find a solution to that problem too, if it comes up. I mean getting machines to eat is pretty damn impressive. Anything is possible.'

Mental's phone vibrates loudly from his pocket. The ringtone is dramatic and heroic. The cop answers his call, still chilled out and mindlessly gazing 'Hello?...' Mental goes pale as Morgan gazes some more. The former gradually stands up, moans and continues 'No way... He must have eaten a lot of pizzas for that to happen... Twenty a day? Oh my word.' Morgan sits on the sand and furrows his brow. He turns to his friend 'What's going on?' Mental ignores him and carries on with the call 'I understand. We'll be there as soon as possible.' Mental pockets his thingamajig and talks to his chum 'Something terrible has happened.' Morgan stands up, too 'What?' Mental looks down 'Someone's finally turned into a pizza. He hasn't got long to live. Charltonham hospital has asked two of the town's nicest people - that's us - to visit and comfort the casualty.' Morgan sheds a tear 'Wow.'

He twiddles his thumbs 'Mental... I'm not sure if I can handle seeing someone in that state. He must be devastated.' Mental smiles warmly 'People die all the time, Morgan. It's just a part of life. I'm sure the man isn't in any pain, as pizzas famously can't feel any. If they could, only sick people would eat them.' Morgan sighs 'But the way he's going to die...' Mental nods 'I understand. It won't be pretty, but I'm sure he's being treated with dignity and he'll get a respectful funeral.' Morgan continues 'How is he being kept alive?' Mental shrugs his shoulders 'I don't know. What I do know is pizzas can't eat. I never knew they could breathe, but now I'm assuming they can. Things are only getting weirder.' Morgan shakes his head 'It must be so hard for his family.'

Morgan takes a phone from his pocket and does some tapping. Mental looks at the device, confused 'What are you doing?' Morgan is still focused on his thingamabob 'I have to know there aren't any more cases. I'm searching the news...' Mental sighs 'You're needlessly worrying yourself...' Morgan's tone is depressed 'Am I? Look at this...' Mental reads from the phone 'Old man turns into pizza whilst walking the dog.' He jumps back 'Oh no. That's BIG news, the whole town must be extremely alarmed... We need to take drastic action.' Morgan finds the strength to face the world as he pockets his phone 'Let's take the bus to the hospital, now.' Mental gives a thumbs up 'Great thinking. You're a good man.'

A father, mother and their two year old son approach the elderly lawman as they bites their nails. The father asks him a burning question 'Hi there... We couldn't help

but overhear your conversation. We're all massive pizza lovers... You don't think... we could turn into pizzas?' Mental looks authoritative 'No, I don't think so. Turning into the things is extremely rare, doesn't matter what it is. How many do you eat?' The father massages his forehead and mumbles 'Maybe... five to eight a day...' Mental's eyes widen 'Jeez!' The mother puts her hand on her mouth 'Jeez?' Mental coughs 'Personally I wouldn't eat more than one a week. You have to think of your blood pressure too, you know? Especially in these dark times where everyone's turned crazy...' The father continues 'Do you think we should checked out at the doctor's?' Mental rubs his chin 'Do you mind if I do a little test?' The father shrugs his shoulders 'Go for it...' Mental stands face to face with the man and licks his cheek, casually 'No. You don't taste like pizza to me. Anyway, got to go...'

As the father's jaw drops open, the two cops turn their backs on him and walk towards the houses. To cut a long story short, they end up on a bus. They sit at the back as it's by far the coolest place to sit. I was always envious of people in my class who got there first, and I'm still not completely over it. Anyway, back to the story. More lovely white houses go past on both sides, but obviously gaining the most attention are the dozen or so other passengers eating Evil Hawaiians. As they chomp with delight, they also shake with wide eyes. Rumours are spreading. Morgan has to do something. He walks to the front of the bus and puts his hands on his hips. He addresses the chompers 'Hello... I can hear you have all heard stories of people turning into pizzas, and whilst one or two HAVE been afflicted with some strange new condition, they are isolated cases. However, we ALL need to be careful.' There is only silence and the occasional bite as Morgan walks back to his seat. He comments to Mental 'These people are clearly traumatised...'

To cut a long story short again, Mental and Morgan end up in the intensive care unit of a hospital. A three foot wide, sliced pizza lays on a white bed by a single wall. Coming out of the large meal's sides are normal human hands. On the bottom of it are two feet wearing black shoes. A ring is wrapped around the casualty's left hand finger. A wire on the ring leads to a machine on a plastic table, that shows his pulse rate and blood pressure. By the table is an acoustic guitar. A nurse in a white apron stands by it, looking mournful. Two normal-looking men on his left and two on his right also have beds to themselves and have tubes in their mouths, and stuff like that. Mental and Morgan stand in front of the pizza's bed, facing the pizza man. Mental starts a conversation with him as he wipes his eyes 'How are you feeling? I see that you play guitar...' The pizza's feet wriggle. A weak man's voice comes from the food as a lower slice moves up and down 'I'm a goner, aren't I?'

Mental walks to hold the pizza's right hand 'You're getting the best care on offer. You'll be at peace, soon. Would you like to play your guitar? Please keep it light...' The pizza's feet wriggle again 'Yes, please.' The nurse hands the food his instrument. He strums a two chord, major key song and sings cheerfully 'Oh wow, oh wow, I'm a pizza now. I'm a pizza now. Oh wow, oh wow, I'm a pizza now. Yeah, I'm a pizza now. Holy cow! I'm a pizza now!' He then strums a sad chord and mumbles 'How, oh how? How am I a pizza now?' Morgan starts to cry 'This is the saddest thing I've ever seen...' He holds the pizza's other hand and pulls himself together 'That was very good. Did you write it yourself?' The pizza responds 'Ha, no. That's an old blues song...' Morgan widens his eyes 'Really??' The pizza laughs 'No, only joking. It's really only a piece that could have been written in very special

circumstances...' Morgan nods 'Of course.'

The pizza places the guitar by the bed and starts to cough. Tomato sauce flies in front of him. Mental covers his mouth as the nurse pulls a cloth from her pocket and wipes the pizza's lower slice. She tries to calm the food down 'You'll be ok. Are you in pain?' The pizza responds 'I'm fine. Just a bit uncomfortable.' His tone becomes more serious 'Nurse... Before I go... Can I just have one last pizza?' The worker looks sad 'I'm sorry... If you have just one more, you're going to have to say goodbye to your hands and feet...' The pizza's feet wriggle once again 'Of course. I understand. How about you play me my favourite song?' The nurse shakes her head 'I'm so sorry, there aren't any CD players in this hospital...' The pizza understands 'Of course. Would you mind... singing it to me?' The nurse looks understanding 'Of course. What is it?' The food coughs up more sauce 'Sorry... Anything by Slipknot...'

The nurse takes a deep breath and screams the loudest expletive of all time. All patients turn to her as the cops look horrified. The nurse goes bright red '... How... was that?' The pizza laughs 'Perfect. But I was only joking. From the back of the room, another nurse enters and raises her voice 'What in the world is going on, here??' The other nurse looks down 'I'm so sorry. Just fulfilling a terminally ill patient's wish...' The pizza apologises and wriggles his feet a further time 'We've all got to keep up our spirits, right?' The new nurse chuckles 'I guess!' The pizza sings again, this time in a mournful tone 'I got the pizza man blues, got the pizza man blues. I ooze tomatoes, yes tomatoes, I ooze. Got the pizza man blues...' Mental turns to the first nurse and sighs 'Do you think maybe another pizza would cheer him up a bit?' She looks down 'Maybe a small slice wouldn't hurt...'

The heart monitor plays a continuous bleep. The new nurse runs to the nurseless side of the pizza and shouts 'His heart's stopped!' Mental raises his voice 'Where's the defibrillator?!' The second nurse replies 'It's not going to work on a pizza!' The two health workers press their hands on the middle of the meal firmly, over and over again. Pizza sauce flies on everyone nearby. Eventually, they stop and look to each other in silence. The first nurse sighs 'There's nothing else we can do. He's gone. We have to inform to inform his next of kin...' The second nurse agrees 'I suppose technically speaking we should inform his fellow pineapples and tomatoes...' The first nurse scratches her head 'Eh?' The other one shakes her head 'No, of course not. I wasn't thinking clearly.'

A man with a camera on his shoulder bursts into the room. He is lively and slightly out of breath 'Is this the ward where the pizza man is being treated?' Mental goes red 'Have some respect! A man has just died!' The journalist marches to the fatality and films him from a variety of different angles 'Terrible news, terrible. What was his diagnosis, exactly?' The first nurse replies in a state of bewilderment 'Severe pizzafication'. The cameraman groans 'Oh how awful. It's not contagious is it?' Mental finally loses his temper and screams in his face 'Get out now!' He removes a taser from his pocket and waves it manically in the intruder's eyes. The latter comments nervously 'Ok, ok, I'm just doing my job. Do you mind if I have a slice?' The man gets tasered on the lip. Everyone claps as he crashes to the floor and smashes his recording equipment. Mental's phone is heard ringing from his pocket. He answers it 'Hello?... The robots want to stop eating pizzas but can't? They are refusing to work and are demanding treatment? Oh God dammit!'