



# Kent Academic Repository

Perks, Richard (2023) *Curse of The Sandman (for solo microtonal guitar [fretted in 8-EDO] + electronic effects)*. Microtonal Guitar Institute Item format: Online.

## Downloaded from

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/101840/> The University of Kent's Academic Repository KAR

## The version of record is available from

<https://youtu.be/W8KfAKDqB5w>

## This document version

Updated Version

## DOI for this version

## Licence for this version

UNSPECIFIED

## Additional information

## Versions of research works

### Versions of Record

If this version is the version of record, it is the same as the published version available on the publisher's web site. Cite as the published version.

### Author Accepted Manuscripts

If this document is identified as the Author Accepted Manuscript it is the version after peer review but before type setting, copy editing or publisher branding. Cite as Surname, Initial. (Year) 'Title of article'. To be published in **Title of Journal**, Volume and issue numbers [peer-reviewed accepted version]. Available at: DOI or URL (Accessed: date).

### Enquiries

If you have questions about this document contact [ResearchSupport@kent.ac.uk](mailto:ResearchSupport@kent.ac.uk). Please include the URL of the record in KAR. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our [Take Down policy](https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies) (available from <https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies>).

# Curse of The Sandman

for Solo Microtonal Guitar  
(fretted in 8-EDO)

+ Electronic Effects

Rich Perks

*“I move from dreamer to dreamer, from dream to dream, hunting for what I need. Slipping and sliding and flickering through the dreams; and the dreamer will wake, and wonder why this dream seemed different, wonder how real their lives can truly be.”*

— Neil Gaiman (The Sandman)

## 8-EDO Overview

8-EDO (Equal Divisions of the Octave) is the tuning system derived by dividing the octave into eight equal parts of exactly 150 cents each. A guitar fretted in 8-EDO adds a further dimension in that each string can produce a different set of eight notes depending on the choice of tuning/scordatura applied. This yields a specific overall 'note-pool', containing a complex array of quarter-tone pitches. Certain notes may appear only in certain registers; and some pitch classes common to 12-TET (i.e. where each string yields the same twelve notes) may be eliminated altogether. This method of note/pitch generation presents various expansions and limitations both sonically and physically on the guitar, affording novel performance possibilities.

Each string generates a pitch-set comprising two diminished seventh arpeggios, each displaced by 150 cents. Though these pitch-sets inherently yield much dissonance, they also provide excellent approximations of 11-limit Just ratios 12/11 (undecimal neutral second  $\approx 150.6\text{¢}$ ) and 11/6 (undecimal neutral seventh  $\approx 1049.4\text{¢}$ ), and a very good approximation of the 13-limit Just ratio 13/10 (tridecimal semisixth  $\approx 454.2\text{¢}$ ), see Figure 1 below.

*Curse of The Sandman* is written for any microtonal guitar fretted in 8-EDO (or any microtonal guitar capable of producing the equivalent note-pool, e.g. adjustable microtonal guitars; guitars fretted in 16-/24-EDO etc.), and makes explicit use of any well-approximated Just intervals throughout.

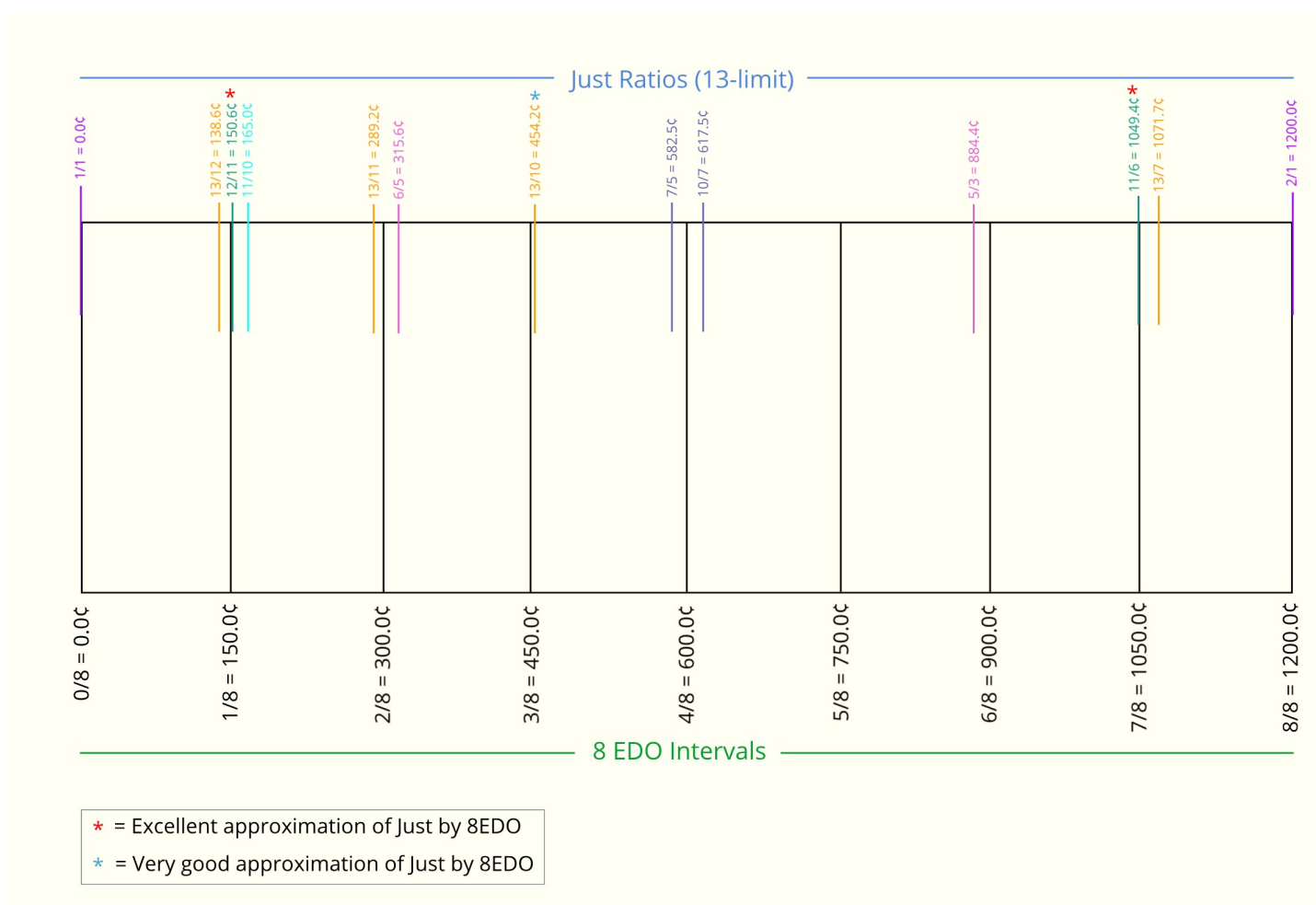


Fig 1. Just intervals approximated by 8-EDO

## Note-pool/Fretboard Map (first octave)

6 5 4 3 2 1  
D A D G B E

1  
E<sup>d</sup> B<sup>d</sup> E<sup>d</sup> A<sup>d</sup> C<sup>‡</sup> F<sup>‡</sup>

2  
F C F B<sup>b</sup> D G

3  
G<sup>d</sup> D<sup>d</sup> G<sup>d</sup> C<sup>d</sup> E<sup>d</sup> A<sup>d</sup>

4  
A<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup> A<sup>b</sup> D<sup>b</sup> F B<sup>b</sup>

5  
A<sup>‡</sup> F<sup>d</sup> A<sup>‡</sup> D<sup>‡</sup> G<sup>d</sup> C<sup>d</sup>

6  
B G<sup>b</sup> B E A<sup>b</sup> D<sup>b</sup>

7  
C<sup>‡</sup> G<sup>‡</sup> C<sup>‡</sup> F<sup>‡</sup> A<sup>‡</sup> D<sup>‡</sup>

8  
D A D G B E

Open  
I – Fret 1  
II – Fret 2  
III – Fret 3  
IV – Fret 4  
V – Fret 5  
VI – Fret 6  
VII – Fret 7  
VIII – Fret 8

### Enharmonics/Pitch Class Labelling System:

1. All quarter-tone pitches have been spelt in their simplest form (e.g. *C quarter-tone-sharp* is used instead of *D three-quarter-tones-flat* throughout, as this note is 'closer' to C than to D etc.).
2. Pitches along each string (by fret, from the open string) have been allocated a different 'letter-name', until the point at which a duplication of letter-name is needed to ensure simplest quarter-tone enharmonic spelling, in accordance with rule 1.
3. Any strings that yield the same pitch-set, have matching enharmonic spellings (to avoid confusion in score).
4. All semi-tone accidentals have been spelt consistently throughout, in accordance with rule 2.

## Performance Notes

*Curse of The Sandman* is inspired by characters and events from the graphic novel *The Sandman vol. 1: Preludes & Nocturnes*, by Neil Gaiman (1989).

**Duration:** c. 5 minutes.

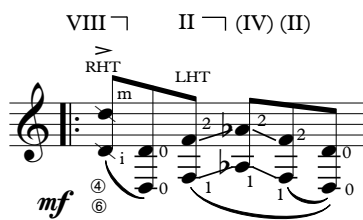
**Scordatura:**



⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ①  
D A D G B E

**Special Techniques and Notations:**

**Tapping**



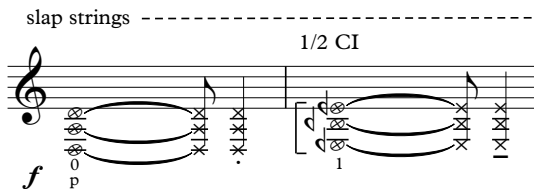
**Right Hand Tapping (RHT)**

Tap notes with right hand. Notated with *backslashed* noteheads and RHT direction above. Finger suggestions provided (i, m, a); Fret number/position indicated by Roman Numerals.

**Left Hand Tapping (LHT)**

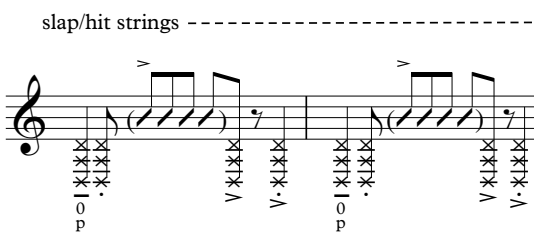
Tap notes with left hand. Notated with standard noteheads and LHT direction above. Finger suggestions provided (1, 2, 3, 4); Fret number/position indicated by Roman Numerals.

**Percussive**



**Slap**

Slap strings with right thumb (p) to create a forceful percussive sound (i.e. a more 'aggressive' form of *tambora*); notated with *cross-head* noteheads; performance direction above.



**Hit**

Hit strings (or guitar body) with either right or left hand; indeterminate pitch; notated with non-pitched *slash* noteheads in brackets; performance direction above.



**'Hit' Artificial Harmonic**

Strike strings with right index finger (i) directly above the fret indicated to create artificial harmonic(s); string numbers provided; sounding pitches notated with *diamond-head* noteheads; performance directions above.

**Electronic Effects:**

**Electronic effects/pedals needed:** reverb(s); delay(s); EQ boost; synth/bitcrusher; ring modulator [LFO]; and vinyl/phonograph emulator.

The use of electronic effects/pedals should be applied as directed by the score; specific settings however, may be decided by the performer. Effects may be added as part of a direct signal chain (i.e. if using an electric or electro-acoustic guitar) or via a microphone (i.e. if the guitar is acoustic). Effects instructions are indicated on the score in square brackets (underneath the staff), e.g. [add delay].



Curse of The Sandman – for Solo Microtonal Guitar (fretted in 8-EDO) + Electronic Effects

8-EDO fretted guitar used to compose, perform and record *Curse of The Sandman*:



**Photo:** Converted Yamaha CX40 (nylon-string electro-acoustic)

# Curse of The Sandman

Duration: c. 5 mins.

Rich Perks

**a tempo**

♩ = 110

Scordatura



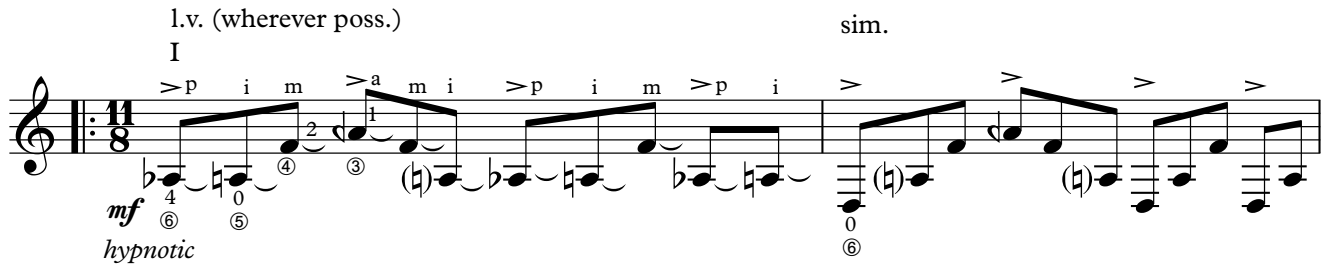
I.v. (wherever poss.)

I

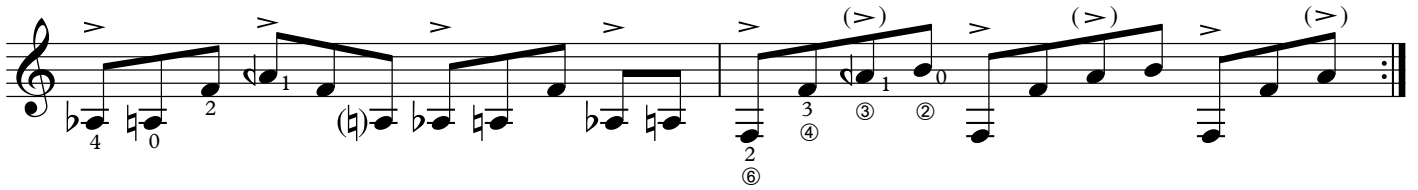
*mf* *hypnotic*

*p* *a* *p* *p*

*sim.*



*Drift away...*

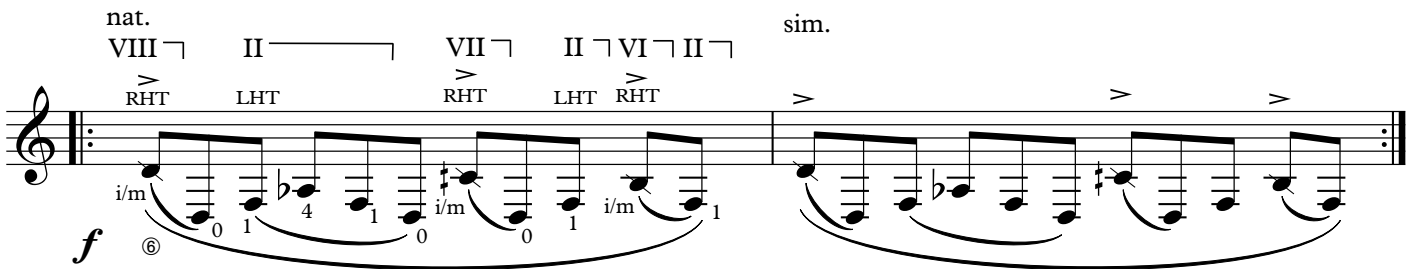


nat.

VIII  $\square$  II  $\square$  VII  $\square$  II  $\square$  VI  $\square$  II  $\square$  *sim.*

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT

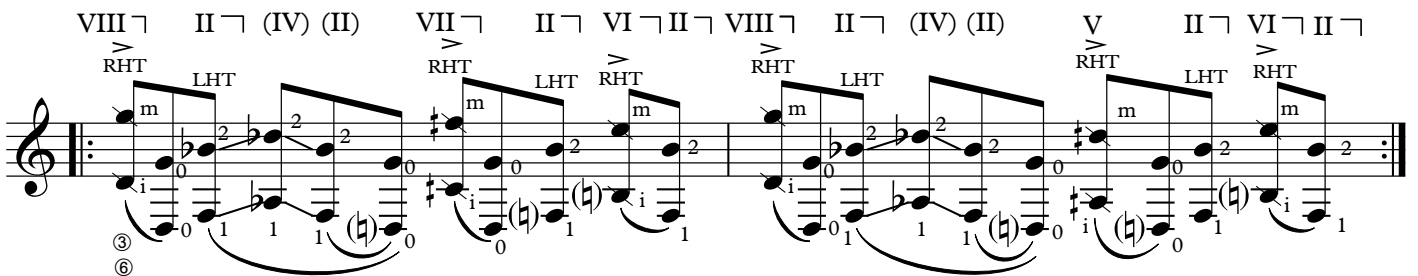
*f*



*'The Sandman' appears...*

VIII  $\square$  II  $\square$  (IV) (II) VII  $\square$  II  $\square$  VI  $\square$  II  $\square$  VIII  $\square$  II  $\square$  (IV) (II) V  $\square$  II  $\square$  VI  $\square$  II  $\square$

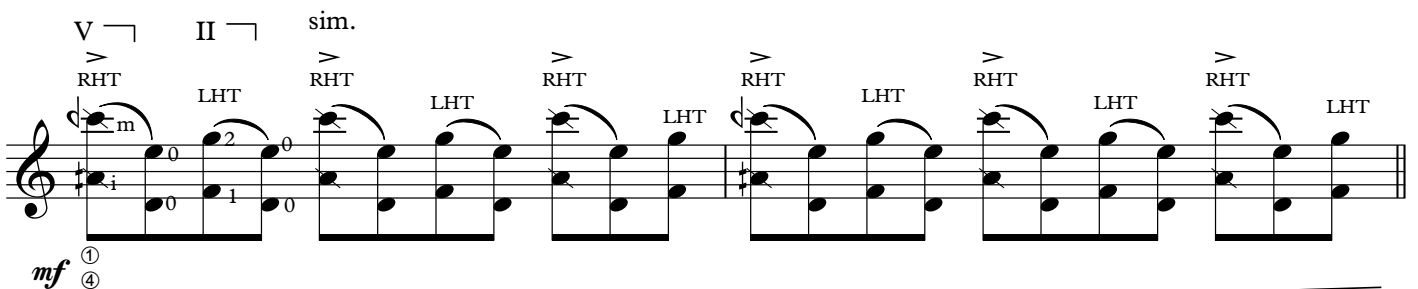
RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT RHT LHT RHT



V  $\square$  II  $\square$  *sim.*

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT

*mf*





VIII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  (IV) (II) VII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VI  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  (IV) (II) V  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VI  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  3

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT

*f* (x4)

II VI II VI II VI II

LHT LHT RHT LHT LHT RHT LHT LHT RHT LHT

*mf*

slap strings

1/2 CI 1/2 CII

*f* p

1/2 CI 1/2 CII

*ff*

nat. VIII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  (IV) (II) VII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VI  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  sim.

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT

*mf*

**Fight!...**

(build tension across repeats)

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT

*f*

[with synth/bitcrusher]

(build tension across repeats)

[add < 200Hz EQ boost]

(build tension across repeats)

[add ring modulator]

(build tension across repeats)

**free time - molto rubato**

*l.v. (sempre)*

[effects off]

[clean, with additional reverb(s) & delay(s)]

**Lost to 'the Dreaming'...**

[effects off]

**a tempo**

♩. = 110

slap strings -----

1/2 CI

*confused & deranged*

**Partially emerge...**

slap/hit strings -----

[with delay]

[effects off]

**Seek help of 'Desire'...**

[with delay]

**fff**

VIII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VI  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  sim.

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT

*mf*  $\text{i/m}$  ⑥

[effects off]

*Attempt to escape...*

(gradually build across repeat)

VIII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  (IV) (II) VII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VI  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  sim.

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT

*f* ④ ⑥

[with synth/bitcrusher & < 200Hz EQ boost]

(2nd time)

VIII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  (IV) (II) VII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VI  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  (IV) (II) V  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  VI  $\neg$  II  $\neg$

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT RHT LHT RHT

*ff* ③ ⑥

[add 'agressive' ring modulator]

*Increasing panic & mania...*

V  $\neg$  II  $\neg$  sim.

RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT RHT LHT

① ④

[add delay(s)]

(build intensity)

VIII  $\neg$  IV  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  IV  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  IV  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  IV  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  IV  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  IV  $\neg$  VIII  $\neg$  IV  $\neg$

RHT RHT RHT RHT RHT RHT RHT

*fff* ⑥

*...awake!*

**rubato**

VIII

(allow effects to decay naturally)

*mp*

*nostalgic & tormented*

[effects off]

[with vinyl emulator & 'bell-like' ring modulator]

**Coda: eternally trapped in a wakeful lullaby...**

*l.v.* (to highlight microtonal beats)

**rall.**

II

VII

*al niente*

[fade effects out]