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I'm sure people will ask me in years to come: "What was the hardest part of your thesis"? My answer will be: "The Acknowledgements"! How do you find the best order to thank people in? How do you make sure you don't leave someone out? How do you avoid sounding like a complete tool as you thank everyone from your supervisor to your neighbour's dog? There's only one answer – you can't, so here's my best stab at it...

I reserve my deepest gratitude for my excellent supervisor, Mark. Thanks for knowing exactly when to supervise and when to let me run amok! Thanks for all the helpful brainstorming sessions and countless brilliant ideas, without which my thesis would only be a shadow of what it turned into. Thanks for all the advice and for gentle pushing in the right direction. Thanks for helping me gatecrash the likes of BioMERGE and SIZEMIC, which have been the best of experiences for the future. Above all, thanks for being such a good friend.

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Finally, if you've read this far and you were starting to think – “Hey, he forgot about me”! Well, I didn't – I was saving the best wine till last. Without you, it

would all have been meaningless. Without you, I could never have made it this far. Without you, I might as well burn it all right now. So give yourself a good pat on the back. You deserve it. Thank you!