

Some of the scripts contain “must-read-again” lines.

Here are my favourites (although many faves had to be omitted).

Don't take another step if you are under the age of 15.

Or if you are easily offended.

Page	TITLE
2	A Fight at the Opera House
4	AFL Grange (incomplete)
5	Birth of Paris
7	Bowling for the Bong
10	Chamber Musique for a Witty King
12	Cheetahs and Gazelles
15	Death of Nightjar
19	Debacle
21	Effigy in C Sharp Minor
23	Eight Point Five Years
25	George and John
30	Hastings
35	Hittite Bullshite
40	Hope for Homeless Men
43	Impoverished and Poorly
48	Kippa-Ring
52	M'Coure
56	Nick Stillen's Casquette Girl
59	Parallel Evolution
63	Picaroons
67	Retracing His Steps
70	Roderick Fortescue
73	Slash and Burn
77	Teaching Cricket to the Yanks (incmp)
81	The Curse
84	The French Touch
88	The Thread
95	The Old Silk Road
98	The Pitt Games
102	The Roman Legions
106	The Substitute Dinner
109	Third Wicket Review
113	Torres Strait
115	Tribulates
118	Wonderlings

A FIGHT AT THE OPERA HOUSE

[There are WAY too many! One only. [\[Page 119\]](#)]

Mark and Brad are totally stunned. Mark now jumps up out of his chair. All three men stand in front of the plasma screen.

Brad *appalled* What? You think that Tristan should be on the ferry, wearing a crappo face mask and be wearing a franger as well?
Unbelievable!

Terry *grasping at straws* Just in case ... He's a planner ...

Mark *outraged* And how the hell do you drag on a Frenchie if you're on the slack?

Terry You'll think of a way. Get him excited.

Mark *astounded* Before he has to run to catch the Ormolu Ferry?

Brad He's too crook to bar-up anyway!

Terry *forceful* Look! We want the F.O.A.R. to give the lead here.

Those OzFooty dickheads are squeaky-clean. Always have been.

Our message has to be that we in F.O.A.R. aren't useless thugs who'll have random sex with anyone on the Ormolu Ferry.

Who's playing Tristan? It's Eddie K, isn't it? You can't have Eddie telling IsYoung that he wants to have sex with her without his re-assuring her that: (a) he'll be careful and wear protection and (b) that he respects her as a woman and that he understands the International Convention on Women's Rights.

Brad *like he's been hit* Whoa! Terry, mate! We can't put all that into a love song!

Mark shakes his head vehemently, gesturing with sweeping arm movements. He cannot believe what he is hearing.

Mark *appalled* They've drunk Love Potion #9, mate! They're out of control!

Terry *shouting* Yeah, well I don't give a flying fuck how you do it. Just don't
bring the F.O.A.R. into disrepute.

Terry slams out of the meeting room, leaving Brad and Mark staring at each other, lost for words.

AFL GRANGE (incomplete)

BIRTH OF PARIS

[Page 111] Jason spreads his towel on Edwina's chair, and then sits naked on it. Whistling happily, Jason kick-starts Edwina's laptop into action.

Jason is in heaven. All of Edwina's work (up to the quick sketches she drew on waking) has been scanned into the laptop and colourized. The offerings are superb. They breathe life. We can see how much they mean to Jason.

So absorbed is he, that he does not hear Edwina's footfall outside the apartment. She opens the door. Edwina is nonplussed to see Jason sitting at her desk, consumed by his desire to view her artwork. She steps forward but is unable to speak to Jason.

Geoff	Hi, Eddie. You know Jason, don't you? The geologist. You must have met him at "the office" any number of times. He pops around for a shower at about this time. His digs are crap.
-------	--

Jason stares in disbelief at Edwina, mouth open.

Edwina stares back at Jason, trying not to notice that he is stark naked.

Suddenly, Jason leaps to his feet, makes a gesture of defeat, grabs his towel (this falls to the floor, so he is obliged to bend for it) and then he bolts for the bathroom.



[Page 57]

Toby	What on Earth are they doing?
Maria	The smart money is on "playing", but I could stand some minor correction.
Toby <i>fielding the sarcasm</i>	Oh, ha, ha!
Maria	They are entertaining your little grandchild.

[Pause]

Don't they look utterly enchanting? Why couldn't we have had a girl?

Toby

For my part I don't begrudge our sons. They might not have been "picture perfect" as these lovely creatures cavorting on our lawn, but they are fine, steady young men. I'm not sorry at all.



[Page 162] The officials look at each other and at the photos. Then they go into a confabulation.

Jason further supports his innocence. Jason speaks in French.

Jason

And this man (you must have heard of August Godefroy?) He presented to me some of the spoils of the dig for me to keep by me in Canada. Hence the rocks. A bit of Paris. Not perfume, nor fine art: but rocks!

The officials remain uncertain.

Jason *sighs*

I wish I could explain the humour to you.

Exhausted, Jason allows his head to flop back.

Jason *frustrated and angry*

Oh, for fuck's sake! I've just been besting the Saxons and now this crap ...

And my chest hurts.

BOWLING FOR THE BONG

[Page 74] Sandy rushes into the police station with Laurie over her shoulder. She plonks him on the floor and then without a backward glance, tears out. We get a close-up of the little child looking about and then crying. He blubs: "Mummy!" several times.

We see and hear footsteps. A young male police constable bends over the child.

Young police constable Hey! What's up little man?

There is a pause. The young constable's tone changes. He calls out to someone off-screen.

Young police constable Heff! Isn't there a missing kid? I think he's just been given to us. Can you find a description?



[Page 51]

Mongol Khan *urgent* Come on mate. We can't muck around. The cops'll be gunnin' for us.

Johnno Yeah, well help me get Leckie back on board, will ya? I reckon he's bought his ticket for the big dirt dive.

Both Johnno and Mongol Khan attempt to reseal Leckie but Leckie is almost dead. Another 2 bikes rock up. The riders are Kozzie and Freckler.

Freckler What are yuz doin'? Come on, will yuz!

Kozzie Wait on. Tie him onto Johnno. I've got a bit of rope here.

Johnno sits astride his motorcycle while Freckler and Kozzie use their combined strength to haul the dying Leckie up behind Johnno. Then they tie Leckie up to Johnno, around the waist.

Freckler *shouts* That'll do. Listen. There's a truck stop up the road. The others have gone in there. But we won't have long before the cops find us. So fuckin' move it!

All 3 motorcycles roar off. But Leckie's body has not withstood the challenges of the ride and he has died.



[Page 82]

Paul *to Jared* I gotta ask you something because ... because I'm intrigued.
What was the problem in Tasmania?

Jared *cracks a laugh* Which one?

Max *intervenes* The 24-carat bitch.

Jared *embarrassed* Oh ... Her ...

Paul *grins* Go on ... What happened there? Come on. I need a light note
after all the drama.

Jared looks about for inspiration, sucking in a big breath.

Jared We were in a crowded room and she was being difficult.
Whatever I suggested was shit. I began to feel that it was all
over. I couldn't work out why. I'd been really nice to her. You
know. But you know when the bell has rung ...

And then she swung around and walked off. When she got as
far as the dance floor, she turned around and in her loudest
voice asked me what my name was because she'd forgotten.

Both men wince.

Max Ouch!

Jared Yeah. So I immediately got myself a transfer to New South
Wales and haven't looked back.



[Page 10]

Jared *sighs* Yes? What's up?

Max I'm here to see Sergeant Fitzgerald.

Jared Ah ...

Max Is he about? Sergeant Richard Fitzgerald.

Jared No ... Ah ...

Max Are you able to call him on his mobile and let him know that I'm here, please? Max Strudwick from the ATO. It's fairly important that I speak to him.

Jared Ah ...

Max *becoming impatient* Mobile? Does he have a --?

Jared No. No. Actually, he's deceased. Sorry to have to tell you like that. I'm his replacement. Sergeant Jared Kerr. Until they find -

Max *appalled and shocked* Dead?

Jared Yes. They're at the funeral now, actually. Would someone else be able to help you? I mean, although I'm not up to speed with all the various --

Max When you say "dead", do you mean ... Was he shot? Or murdered, do you know?

This question rather surprises Jared. His eyebrows flick up.

Jared No. Just a heart attack. Straightforward. Dropped to the ground gripping his chest, I believe.

[Shrugs]

Nothing suspicious about it.

CHAMBER MUSIQUE FOR A WITTY KING

[Page 27]

Graeme *quickly, earnestly* I'm innocent, Sir. I didn't kill anyone. I've never had a knife like that and wouldn't know how to use it if I did. They gave me a lie-detector test and I came out of that with flying colours, Sir.

William *reassuring* Excellent! And what about books or magazines? Need any reading matter? Can't have you dying of boredom.

For a moment, Graeme is unable to answer. His lip trembles as he tries to speak. Then he bursts into tears.

Graeme *sobbing* I don't want any books. I can't read anything because all I can do is think of Mum's face. I've disgraced my parents without doing anything wrong.

I just want to go back to my barracks, with the other guys. I want to go home.

William shifts in his chair as the boy sobs.

William *without emotion* Just remember our squadron's motto. Tell me what it is.

Graeme *through his tears* "Fortis et Fidelis", Sir.

William And that translates as ...?

Graeme *proudly* It's "Strength and Truth".



[Page 170]

Air Force man What's with the flakkie, Squad?

Graeme *appalled* You're never taking up the crate, Squad? You've no clearance. I thought --

Air Force man *put out* It were my turn, Squad.

William *in no-nonsense mood*

I'm taking up the kite in your place, Duncan, and if you don't like it, I'll put you on a charge.

And Threlkeld: **you** are confined to barracks. Don't even think about leaving. You men are commanded to guard Pilot Threlkeld.

He's not to speak to anyone, and certainly under no circumstances may he leave the barracks. Understand?

I don't care if his mother dies, Threlkeld stays here!



[Page 120] William is about to take off in Gordon's car.

William Rightiho! Off we go to consummate the nuptials.

George Have fun!

William What's this called exactly: "whoring for Britain"?

George Yes, but will it get your pilot off the manslaughter charge?

William Anything's possible!

William drives off into the night, waving briefly to his brother through the window. George watches the car disappear, then shakes his head, chuckling.

George *to himself* "And King Charles was my best man." Typical ...

CHEETAHS AND GAZELLES

[Page 23] These are three funny takes resulting from Jeremy taking on board the criticism of his "brutal" treatment of the visitors to the mortuary.

Our three visitors have obviously been shown the mortal remains of a loved one. We shall hear Pachelbel's Canon but no dialogue.

- Jeremy looks sympathetic as he hands a box of tissues to a shaky old Indian man. Jeremy pats him gently on the shoulder.*
- Jeremy suddenly hugs a very surprised old lady. He rocks her.*
- A soignée lady has a stunning coiffure and elegant make-up. This lady dabs at her eyes with a lace hanky as she nods sadly. Jeremy removes her toy dog from her grasp, and then sweeps the lady to his chest, with his free arm. We see that the lady is shocked at being scrunched- up against Jeremy, and that the dog begins to yap.*



[Page 31] Badger stands at the front door of William Pendlebury's home. Just as he is about to knock on the door, Simone opens it violently. At first she seems delighted that Badger is the guest. But then she pretends to be a prim and proper young lady.

Simone *acting a part* We are only at home to members of the Iroquois Confederacy or to thespians who are able to recite the first 23 lines of Shakespeare's "Henry IV Part I".



Simone Just a guess, but the double-barrel surname gives one pause: my Gran will know him. Probably one of her buddies. She invited quite a tranche of dubious character types to the nuptials.

William From her church: St Bartholemew's in Danube Square.

Simone *gushing* She **loves** the ravishing stained-glass windows and the vicar has a “nice manner” (whatever that implies).



Badger Nevertheless, I'll need to interview her.

Simone *airily* That's just tosh. Beth won't be able to help you find the killer.
[Frowning with meaning]

No, the clever money's on the bloke who swanned in here all uninvited (on the day after the “Wedding-That-Swallowed-Lyme-Regis”) and scoffed ten quid's worth of breakfast. And then commenced to snog our Bethany.



[Page 116]

Lady Highgrove *sighing* Oh dear ... My driver is once again removing his kit ...

This exercise will no doubt be in relation to his one and only tattoo.

I've come to believe that most people are decorated with ink as a form of self-expression. But Sligo bears his as a badge of honour (or so it would appear).

William *astounded* What on Earth ... ?

Lady Highgrove For all that he's an excellent driver, one can't sack a man simply on the basis of his body ornamentation, can one?

William *lost* His tattoo?

Jeremy quickly joins Her Ladyship and William at the window.

Jeremy *keen* What's this about a tattoo?

Lady Highgrove From time to time my driver disrobes in order to display to an unidentified party his glorious tattoo in the style of a black Gothic scorpion. Some kind of secret society I understand.

Without a word, Jeremy dashes off. Through the conservatory window we see Vin and Paul go into a vigorous hug. Jeremy can be seen running into view.

Lady Highgrove *heavily* Ah, yes! And this is how it invariably ends: a masculine hug
sarcastic denoting good fellowship, along with a special handshake.

My driver and your future son-in-law, dear William. No wonder that my health is so fragile!

DEATH OF NIGHTJAR

[Page 184] Charles arks up (even though he can hardly speak, he has so much cake in his mouth). He is passionate in defence of his imaginary hero.

Charles *thickly, passionately* Yes he did!

Brandon *thickly, equally passionately* No, he didn't. All Tresilian did was to wonder at the feats of Bob and Ben. If you read back over your vast tranche of notes, you'll soon realize that Tresilian actually achieved nothing, except for smoking a pipe, catching a cold and being almost devoured by a lion.

Charles *thickly, appalled* Oh! That's **so** not true!

Immediately, the boys are fighting in earnest, with a grave danger that they will choke on cake crumbs as they box and wrestle. All able bodies in the vicinity rush in to separate the squabbling boys.



[Page 116] Cyndie frumps, folding her arms and looking out of her window in a withering temper. The three men grin in a show of male camaraderie.

Colin *brightening* I'm enjoying this bleak, unattractive scenery, I must say. Takes a chap back to his ancestral roots. Once, we all donned animal skins and stomped about in acreage just like this. Kill or be killed it was.

That right there encompasses our "Team Cavalier" spirit.

My primitive inner man is gurgling up to the surface.

The other men chuckle; Cyndie humphs in disgust.

Warren Just make sure that your effervescent "inner man" doesn't soil the upholstery. This car is a loaner.

Kos *lost, all at sea* Wizard?

Charles *absurdly proud* My Grandfather was kidnapped when he was my age. Only he killed his captors (well, one of them anyway) with a little bow and arrow he'd made all by himself.

Don't worry, though ... I won't snuff anyone out, nor attempt to escape. I can't tell you how exciting this is!

Not that I'm not having a marvo time with Trader. (Well, I shall if we ever get started). He promised to play cricket with us and teach us to ride a horse and –

Do you know what? We argued for hours yesterday at the airport about why anyone would call the stroke a "French cut" when the Frogs don't even play cricket! What do you think?

Googsie *lost, all at sea* Uh?

Wayno *puzzled* Who did what with a bow and arrow?

Irish *puzzled* Do ya call yer dad "Trader"?



Charles No, I call my dad "Dad". He's Garth Allendale. My Grandfather's various exploits made us rich. Not that we have any money to splurge on paying kidnappers, of course ...

Trader is now **very** rich. And "Trader" is not his real name, anyway. It's "Rylance", which stinks.

Charles *utterly downcast* Oh ... I see ... You thought that I was Brandon ... You didn't mean to kidnap **me** at all ... Bummer!

After a moment's disbelief, all the men speak at once.

The five men speak at once.

Kos	Wayno	BG Blouse	Irish	Googsie
<i>irate</i>	<i>to Irish</i>	<i>To Wayno</i>	<i>To Wayno</i>	<i>General question</i>

Well, that's easy fixed, isn't it? Just pop a bit of lead in his scone and then go and get the real boy.	Shut the fuck up, Irish, or I'll paint you a new arsehole with my electric drill.	I don't think you ought to swear in front of the little boy. He's probably not used to tough men and rough language.	You pointed him out on the TV. I said: "Are you sure it's not the other one?" and you said: "Nah, that's him". Ya prick!	So ... what's happened? Have we snatched the wrong kid? What do we do now? Put him back?
---	---	--	--	--

DEBACLE

[Page 55] There is a pregnant silence almost in the form of a confrontation.

Roger/Cumberland Sir! **Sir!**

The dog is now about to pounce on Glyn/Grenville. With casual grace he whips a keen blade from its small scabbard on his lower leg and plunges the shimmering steel point deeply into the dog. The dog gives a screaming yelp of pain, then collapses to the floor, dead. From the table there is a hubbub of concern, shock and horror. Two ladies faint.

With neither emotion nor affectation, Glyn/Grenville clears the gore from his blade on the edge of the tablecloth, then restores the blade to its scabbard. He promptly nods towards one of the startled footmen. Glyn/Grenville orders the man to remove the carcass with a flippant gesture.

Glyn/Grenville That canine pudding is offensive to the ladies. Summon assistance for them, won't you?



[Page 75]

Happy to oblige, the security guards trundle away, leaving The Author and Silvio alone. Silvio speaks urgently in such a way that only The Author hears him.

Silvio Listen! A few of my actor friends from "Debacle" have gone missing. They appear to be in some kind of lockdown. I need to be able to contact them. Any ideas?

The Author Yeah, sure. The Maurice man is a jucking fenious (not like my Truckie, but a fenious with computers). He has all your mates captured in a portal.

Silvio is appalled. He does a double-take.

Silvio **What?!** That's not possible.

The Author He has an **agenda**. I love saying that: makes me sound important. An agenda! The Truckie reckons that somebody will

have to break into the portal without the Maurice man knowing anything about it and free the captive souls.

Look out! They want you to cook them something ...

Silvio whips around to see the crew becoming impatient. When he whips back to The Author, she has gone.



[Page 48]

Connie

You've met me before but obviously you've completely forgotten me. Not being a luscious babe with those "Mammy!" collagen lips, enormous tits and a slinking kind of saunter. Men are ever attracted to the wrong women and only realize it when their intellects have been battered by nothing-sayings and their wallets are empty. Ruled by their dicks, every man-Jack of them!

✂ ✂

And that's why I sought you out (even though it cost me 20 pound and a great deal of inconvenience). Now I realize that you two gentlemen couldn't give a flying fuck about Alex's whereabouts but it happens that (although I'm very used to being a grass widow) this time it feels different. Something is going on. And now he's disappeared from view but not before doing a considerable amount of frowning and sighing when he ***should*** have been learning his lines. For his role as Pitt.

So where is he?

EFFIGY IN C SHARP MINOR

[Page 52]

Tannenberger

The great Albert Camus lost himself in a quaint little Parisian movie joint.

I can't recall off the top of my head what the flick was. Our moral lesson which centred on the Devil, was it?

[Shrugs]

Whatever it was ... But he fell head over heels in love with my angel.

Dashed off a stunning piece related to a woman (alone) standing about in a desert awaiting her knight to rescue her. This time, the woman was "good" instead of "evil".

The harsh sun, the restless sand-bearing wind and the ochre colours. That's what he envisaged, this genius, this Camus.

But not for Trichide, I said.

Adamant. I was adamant.

No, no and no!

No, not for Trichide.

Duncan

Why not?

Tannenberger shrugs as he sucks on his cigarette. Then he grinds the butt strongly into the ashtray.

Tannenberger

I lived and breathed Trichide. The camera must devour her.

Not the desert. No.



[Page 28]

Steve *speaking into phone, eager*

I can hardly hear you. They are at each others' throats. It's better than MEW by far!

Oops! Somebody has called somebody a "bitch".

Oh, he plays the husband and he's threatened to make the love scene unforgettable. She's arched her back like an angry cat, daring him to touch her. My God, if they can keep up this chemistry ...

Ah! She's lashed out at her leading man. Is one allowed to do that?

Oooh! Charlie has thrown himself between them. Good man! Looks like we're breaking for morning tea. Give the combatants a chance to cool off. Right, so I'll scoff a couple of Chelsea buns and then – yes! See you then!



[Page 6]

Cheri

And you need to get your facts straight, Duckie. (Though nobody else does so why should you?) The bacterium which caused the plague (Yertil yertil horribilis or something or other) affected **fleas**. These fleas became bloated with blood but still thought that they were starving. Their throats felt blocked. And so they snorted out the "yertil yertil" into the host immediately they attached. That means that the nanosecond some poor benighted soul was bitten, it was already all too late. And you earnestly believe that this ghastly pestilence movie will thrill the modern audience? Amazing!

The others have wandered in the boardroom. Cheri stalks off into the boardroom, too. Jacques calls after her.

Jacques *lost* But I'm sure that there were rats in it somewhere.

Cheri stops rather suddenly and then turns. Jacques has quickly followed Cheri into the boardroom.

Cheri There **were** rats. **Millions** of 'em. But they weren't the buggies doing the biting. The rats were the means of transport for the **fleas**. They boarded ships en masse to gorge on the stores (grain and so on). The yertil-bearing fleas were hitching a ride on the backs of the rats. God is cunning, what?

EIGHT POINT FIVE YEARS

[Page 79]

Donny *to Gibbo* You gotta be seriously worried about those cakes at Molland's. They are just flopping around on plates.

No cling-wrap, no sneeze-guard, no fly-spray ... Nothin'! Not even a fly-swat left over from the Second World War that yer Auntie Min bought at Aussie Disposals. Jesus! They don't care!

A good sneeze from one of these crusty old seafaring types and your éclair is instantly covered in globs of nose-from.

Gibbo *completely lost* What?

Donny *philosophical* No wonder they all died in childbirth ...



[Page 69]

Henge *kindly* Yes, Barbara. Trot along. Perhaps give the security lads a buzz, will you?

Gibbo *laughs* Ho-ho! Yes that's what we want. Some more blokes to be witnesses to what we are about to reveal.

Let me introduce my new besties. These are the Terzo Boys from Steak-and-Kidney. Good blokes every one and absolutely male to their back teeth. No "feminine side" here!

They are Machismo, Testosterone, Rippling Biceps and Six-Pack. However I know them as Mac, Ron, Rip and Packa.

Oh, and Donny (Don Airlie who plays Cap'n Wentworth) has dragged his sad carcass along for the ride.

Donny *charming*

G'day fellas.



[Page 6] Lina turfs the boxes of books off the outdoor chair, then sits down next to Donny.

Lina

When the blokes say that they are going off to enjoy some sport – that's not what they mean. "Sport" in those far-off days wasn't golf or footy or tennis or so on ... It was taking out a shotgun (and a dog or two) to shoot game birds. "Pheasants" not "peasants". And grouse.

You'll get the drift.

Donny is unimpressed. Frowning, he passes the book back to Lina. With a happy sigh she riffles through the pages.

Lina

Oh! And don't make the dreadful mistake that I made. Grandma nearly fell off her chair laughing at me. I couldn't work out why they were always on about going to take a bath. You know: soapy water in a tub. But they were going to a **place** called Bath in England. I think it had something to do with old Roman baths ... But I'm probably on the wrong tram there.

GEORGE AND JOHN

[Page 128]

- Norm Do you mind my saying something?
- Nerine *careful* Well, that rather depends on what you intend to say!
- Norm When you pricked your finger last night, you started to talk to me in some queer language. But you knew me.
- Nerine Ah! I probably spoke to you in old Norman French.
- Norm I dunno ... I 'spose so.
- And you held onto me, talking all the time. I couldn't understand what you were saying, but it sounded pretty affectionate to me. You started stroking my cheek and I thought you were about to kiss me just before you slipped off into the land of nod.
- Nerine *blushing, bites lip* I must tell you the full story sometime.
- Norm Last night, you said that we'd been very fond of each other back then, in the old days. I think you might have meant that we were lovers.
- Nerine *confused, looks away, blushing* Yes, we are now. That is, we're married now and having a baby.
- Er ... How's that afternoon tea coming along?
- Norm nods and looks as if he is going out of the bedroom. But he doesn't go. For a couple of seconds they look at each other. She smiles sweetly and looks so beautiful that he doesn't seem to have much of a chance. He sighs, scratches his head, then goes back to the bed.*
- Norm *low-voiced* Pommie blokes probably do the right thing at a time like this. They'd give it the old "stiff-upper-lip" and go for the tea-caddy until all thoughts of passion have passed over.

Trouble is, I'm not English ...

Here, he moves in quickly, taking Nerine in his arms and kissing her passionately. She is right in there too, kissing him back with equal ardour. The music is superb, sweeping.



[Page 140]

Nerine *frantic* Come on! I have to stick you with the point of our dagger for you to go into the dream. And **you** can find the ruddy jewels!

Nerine grabs Norm's hand and dashes off to the lumber room, where she was previously pricked by Maggs' jewellery. Norm allows himself to be dragged along but is reluctant.

Norm What the hell is **this** all about? Hey, steady on!

Now in the lumber room, Nerine begins her frantic search for the dagger.

Nerine *talking very fast* You heard what George said, about the Saxon fighting axe.

Well, we don't have an axe, more's the pity, but ...

It's here somewhere. I know it's here because I remember seeing it. Actually, as I recall, it was one of the first things that they found.

Norm *almost laughing* Hey, settle down! You're getting yourself into a tizzy.

Nerine gives a triumphant cry, waving about a small sharp Italianate dagger.

Nerine Here it is! I knew it!

The dagger immediately flies out of her hand and lands deeply into Norm's left forearm. It goes through both his jumper and shirt sleeves. The music is now electrifying.

Norm *yells in pain* Bloody hell! Be careful, woman!

Blood oozes onto Norm's clothing. Both Nerine and Norm stare at the patch of blood, awestruck.

Norm becomes giddy and grabs the girl's upper arms so as not to fall.

Nerine *aghast* Oh, Heavens! Are ... are you alright, Norm? Lord! What have I done!

Norm *speaking in Norman French with subtitles* I can escape to Normandy. But you must stay with my parents, for they will care for you. Don't follow me! Ah! I love you so ...

Norm kisses Nerine very passionately. Then he collapses onto Nerine.

Nerine, aghast, can hardly hold the weight of the man. Other men, who had followed the pair and have witnessed the kiss, now rush in to help. We cannot hear them: the music is now overwhelming. We only see the men lowering Norm on to the floor of the work shed and see the girl looking horrified yet elated by what has happened.



[Page 22]

King George *reaching into his jacket pocket* May I offer you a cigarette? I'm sorry, I don't know your name.

Norm Norm Yardley, from Sydney, Australia.

The King and the commoner shake hands.

Norm Yeah, thanks, I could cop a fag, if you can spare one.

His Majesty offers Norm a smoke from his gold cigarette case. Norm takes a cigarette, looking at it appreciatively.

Norm *grins* Ah, tailor-mades. Pretty flash, that case: a bit swish. Ya must 'ave won some money at the races to afford a gold case like that, eh?

King George lights the cigarette for him then lights his own.

Norm *inhales in complete enjoyment* Ta. That just hits the spot. I just roll me own, me. They're never as good as the tailor-mades, though.

King George I've smoked these for longer than I care to remember. They're rather good.

Norm Yes. Smooth ... Sorry, I didn't catch your moniker?

King George My moniker? Oh ... er ... Bert Windsor is my name. How ... how are you getting on here? How's it going?

Norm *squinting in thought* Do ya really wanna know? 'Cause I can give you a blow-by-blow rundown, if that's what you're after.

King George *affably* Of course.

Norm squats and draws in the sand with his finger; he speaks with huge enthusiasm.

Norm As I saw it, the problem was this slag here. So, I designed a series of drainage canals and installed bigger pipes. Then, the key to solving this problem was to actually pump the sludge out of **there** to over **here**, into holding bays. That left an area the size of Belgium which I shored up. I did that by putting in rock ballast and reo. It was quite a job, but that let us extend the works for miles, as you can see.

[Stands]

I'd better go and see what those blokes are up to. They've probably got it arse-about.

Norm pats the King on shoulder and shakes his hand.

Norm Nice to meet ya, Bert. Thanks for the death-stick. Look after yourself, mate.

As he starts off, Norm yells to some distant person.

Norm *shouting* Wind that hose out about three more yards or it's not going to reach the fucking hawser, you bludgers!

Norm sprints off, while the King grins and rolls his eyes.



[Page 110] Swiftly, without seeming effort, Clarin steps forward from behind the curtain and kills Guy by plunging the sword strongly into his chest. Guy drops to his knees, gasping. Touching the blood and looking totally surprised, he looks directly up into John's eyes.

Clarin (without even a hint of emotion) draws out the sword. Globes of blood drop from it.

Guy slumps forward, dead. John freezes in disbelief. Martin sobs and tries to make himself go to the fallen knight, but can't do more than hopelessly reach towards him, sobbing pathetically.

Clarin is utterly calm, as he hands the bloody sword back to John.

Clarin *without emotion* There you are, Sire. He couldn't have asked for a cleaner death.

King John gingerly takes the sword, which he immediately hands to Martin, who is devastated.

John *nervous and* Oh! Yes ... well, that's what we do with traitors.

aghast at what he has achieved [Convincing himself.]

We take harsh, swift vengeance on our enemies, both within the camp and without, eh young man?

Now, the body. How will we dispose of these guts without causing untoward talk in the household?

Clarin *unemotional* Leave it to me, King John. I'll wrap the carcase in some sheets and lug it outside. I'll clean up the blood while I'm at it.

John Excellent! And no-one the wiser. Good! We'll just put out a tale that we sent him on some mission or other, but that he was murdered by scoundrels. I'll put out a search party for them. Or, no! We won't even have to say that. Say he just rode off on my orders, but never returned, and we don't know what happened to him.

HASTINGS

[Page 153] His eyes wild with excitement, Cedric rudely interrupts, snatching back the photo.

- Cedric Pymble Village? But where is that?
- Vicar Oh, now Cedric ... Er ... Pymble would be somewhat to the North of Suffolk We motored there on –
- Cedric These trees weren't here in my day. You'd have to be actually walking in the wood to spot it!
- Pearl *frowning* Dear boy, please sit down and drink your tea. There's no earthly need for this unseemly display.

The guests and even the servants are uncomfortable and a little shocked by Cedric's outburst. He does not hear a word of it. He is totally engrossed.

- Cedric *frowning* I can't quite ... This rock ... did the locals have a name for it, do you know?
- Vicar *to his wife, Verona* Can you remember, my dear?
- Verona Yes, Giles.

[Turning gushingly towards her hostess]

Mrs Skeggs, we simply **had** to stop the auto for a photograph of quite an amazing rock formation, in a rather attractive woodland. I understand that the people of that vicinity know the feature as "Poor Francis Rock".

- Cedric *awestruck* "Poor Francis"? But in my day it was widely called "Tate's Tor".
- [Slaps hand to forehead.]*
- No wonder we couldn't find it!

Anyhow, there can be no mistake ... it's the rock in my backyard, alright! And here's the lane, just exactly as it was.

Amazing! Yet Egilstead is gone from the foreground.

Everyone is dumbfounded by Cedric's revelations. Verona Ancaster carefully picks her words, because she is not sure what to make of Cedric.

Verona *carefully*

Ah yes. That'll be it. Have you been there, Cedric?

Cedric *fairly bursting with excitement*

Too right I have! It was my mother's house ... her name was Egil. My father was Eorl Wegga. ***I was born there!***

And do you mean to tell me that the Tor's still standing? Of course it is!

[Grabs his forelock in sheer disbelief. Turns to the Vicar, shouting wildly.]

You're the Holy man that the old man spoke of. And Egilstead is in Pymble!

Christ all bloody mighty!

This outburst causes complete consternation. The Vicar blushes fierce red.

Cedric

May I borrow this, Reverend? I promise you shall have it back. I must show it to my friends. Pymble Village! They'll never believe ... excuse me!

Cedric dashes from the room, with the music now racing along stirringly. The funeral mourners are all concerned, embarrassed, confused. Cedric's mother looks very displeased.

Next thing, a World War I style motorbike roars up the drive. Clearly, this is Cedric, still wearing the armband. He is in goggles but no helmet. We see him through the drawing room window, and see the looks of outrage, surprise, concern on the faces of the mourners.



[Page 77]

George *bright* Well, for my part (aside from my injury, of course) I don't begrudge my share of the adventure at all. It was rather fun, actually.

Cedric stares at George, as if he has not really seen him before this. Cedric sits back, frowning and affronted.

Cedric Fun?

George *pleased* Rather! That's what I should say.

Bell *with bitter sarcasm* Fun, Danton? And which part of killing the Saxons did you enjoy the most, old man?

Leonard I say, steady on! No need to take that tone, Belfry. You beastly Saxons started the business, after all.

Henry and Cedric continue to be affronted by the attitude of George and now Leonard. Geoffrey also sides against the erstwhile Normans. He turns quickly towards Leonard, his face twisted into a savage snarl.

Geoffrey *snarling* You bloody Normans simply floated across the water to snatch our kingdom. What were we supposed to do? Sit on our hands all day?

The classmates of our 5 boys experience a frisson of excitement, expectation. The 5 boys have now disturbed the Mathematics Master, who turns from the blackboard and mutters to them to behave themselves.

The Master *feebly* Boys! Settle down, there, won't you? The material I'm presenting here is of major importance to the progression of Mankind.

The Master is ignored. The classmates are watching the argument rather than paying attention to their mentor, who turns back to the board, oblivious to the by-play. George incites further rage by spreading his hands in an expansive gesture.

George *heavy sarcasm* If that's all you cattle-herders are good for –

Bell *eyes wide open* Oh ho! And what of your dear demoiselles who are too nimminy-pimminy to walk unaided across a field?

Leonard adds further fuel to the fire as he leans forward to speak.

Leonard *derisively* There, now! Of course. You'd rather have your ladies refined and dignified, ***like Wegga's sister*** –

Geoffrey is standing now, fists clenched, leaning forward menacingly and he speaks through clenched teeth. The boys in the class not involved in the fight get really excited and stirred-up.

Geoffrey *very menacing* Be careful, Len Mortimer! Don't you start on Lollie.

Leonard *taunting, eyes ablaze* With her red elbows and boiled hands from scrubbing the clothes.

Henry *screams angrily* You fucking bastard!

With the fight in full throttle, the boys now adopt the old tongues.

George and Leonard scream Old French/Norman obscenities.

Henry, Geoffrey and Cedric hurl offensive words in Old English.

Bell jumps agilely up onto his desk to hurl himself at Mortimer.

There is an all-in brawl between the five boys, smashing desks and sending books and stationery flying. Obviously, Bell, Bevan and Cedric are fighting against Danton and Mortimer. The latter boys, being outnumbered, are the underdogs. Bell is visibly demented by his anger (eyes ablaze and teeth clenched) and he fights with brutal intent. The other boys simply brawl.

During all this, the old Mathematics master tries to establish order: "Boys, boys! Stop this at once!" but he is ignored. The other boys are thrilled, excited or scared as appropriate. Some barrack loudly and seem to derive great pleasure from the spectacle.

Mr Durrell bursts energetically into the room and proceeds to separate the combatants. A young prefect follows him to lend assistance. It is exceedingly difficult to separate the five boys as they fight with such earnest passion. Leonard Mortimer's nose is bleeding profusely.



[Page 162]

Leonard *with quiet menace*

All five of us fought at the famous Battle of Hastings, with the scars to show for our efforts. We have all proved our mettle and our manhood on the field of war, so do not waste any more time, woman, in trying to fob us off. We shall sit down to drink and sup in the King Harold Inn, and you will bring us five Cuban cigars, a platter of cheeses, a loaf of fresh-baked bread and a bottle of Scotch whiskey. Your finest.

[Deliberate]

If you would be so good. Oh, and a couple of mugs of your best ale, for Mr Skeggs.

Everyone is frozen in dumbfounded silence as Leonard begins to ascend the stairs.

Leonard *frosty*

Up here is it?

Old Man *nodding stupidly*

Fust floor, Sir.

Leonard nods decisively and marches boldly up. The boys, murmuring appreciatively follow.

However, Henry cannot resist leaning over the banister. He cheekily makes a further demand of the dazed pair below.

Henry

If you can drum up a chicken and veggie pie as well, that would be grand!

Henry winks pertinaciously.

HITTITE BULLSHITE

[Page 156]

Miles *distracted* Vincent is not anywhere in the villa. He has ... he has ... simply vanished ...

Theressa Can't have "vanished" ... Must be about somewhere ...

Miles *in low voice* *Le Professeur Phanton* ... His mortal remains, too, disappeared without a trace ...

Theressa *trying to be jovial* I'll re-join our friends. I'm sure that Vincent has turned up by now. He must have done.

Come on! We ought to see what the others are up to ...

Miles is enthralled in his own thoughts. Yes, he has "got it".

Miles *low-voiced* ... the little boy (the one who held the fan) told of a bird which hopped out of the window ...

Nimble, Theressa descends the rocky pile and disappears into the mess of rocks. Miles runs his fingers through his hair. He has worked out the puzzle. He squints into the sky, avidly watching the departing birds.

Miles *softly, low-voiced* Ooroo, mate.

The camera backs away, with superb views of the Mediterranean taken from the Spanish hillside. In the middle distance, Miles remains, standing on the rocky debris, looking after the two eagles as they disappear into the East.



[Page 47]

King Jethrodates May I ask you boys a question? One of you poured a tasty elixir down my throat at a most strategic point in the fight yesterday afternoon, at a time when I felt that mah opponent was besting me. That medicine seemed to lift me above the clouds and I saw

mah way clear to whupping that old Luxes dude. Which of course I did in goodly time.

Might I know what was in that elixir?

Mullet *voice-off* Bull spunt, sir.

King Jethrodates Bull semen?

Mullet *voice-off* Yep.

Flavoured to be potable, of course.

The King continues to gaze out over the sea. He is meditating.

King Jethrodates Bull semen ... Alright! ... No wonder I feel so bullish today.



[Page 112]

Stranger On my long journey, strangers fed me. I asked for no gold and no shelter. But strangers fed me and gave me drink; and I was well pleased.

Without any further ado, the Stranger strolls off, with his customary easy, graceful stride. As the Stranger departs, Feral calls after him.

Feral Well ooroo, mate. Hope the bugs don't bite ya.

[To the others]

He seemed like a decent sort of a chap.

Dingo Ya reckon? That prick? He's a poonce. A dropkick.

Dingo has become thoroughly disgusted with everything. He rudely imitates the Stranger.

Dingo "One of ya's gonna join me on me travels".

[Normal voice]

He'll probably skirt around that embankment to steal our camels from where we parked 'em. I bet he's got priors.

Mullet *concerned* What'd he mean about you bein' cursed? If you're cursed, then so are we ... We always did everythink together.

Dingo *disgusted* Awwwww. I dunno ... I got touched up by a bull in the WAFL footy match and youse didn't ... I've been real crook ever since ... That's all I can think of ... I dunno ...

Feral *trying for something uplifting* So, boys. What are we gunna do next?

Mullet Nuthin' ...

Dingo *depressed* Me neither ...

Tacitly, the boys have apparently come to a decision that they can't get along anymore. They slyly glance at each other.

Feral *forced brightness* I'm going to grab a spade and rescue me money. I'm pretty sure I remember where it's buried.

Mullet Good on ya. You do that.

Dingo I'm going to give Crete a burl.

They continue to drink. Feral piles the rest of the food onto slices of bread. He grabs a bucket and walks down to the Tigris, filling the bucket with water. This he uses to douse the BBQ.

The 3 men have come to the end of their comradeship. They stand in a triangle, such that each man can look at the other 2. There is now a profound awkwardness.

Mullet *sadly* We should have chucked it in when Stiffy left.

There is no response.

Feral Awright ... I'm walkin' back to get me camel. If she's still there. If Desertman hasn't' nicked her. Bloody nong, she is ...

Do ya wanna come, Mullet?

Mullet *suddenly shy* Nuh. I'll go back later. See youse.

Feral *in utter sadness* Ding?

Dingo looks down, unable to speak. He shakes his head.

And that is the end of the partnership.



[Page 133] Nettlethwaite nods, so Marell clears his throat and reads. Music: becoming more thrilling, but still background. Camera closes in on Marell.

Marell *translating*

And the Phoenicians sought those golden goods which the Hittites had stolen from them. Many days did the men of Tyre, Sidon, Byblos and Berytos sail the seas unto the other side, until they found shelter with the eagles. There they did find the golden eagle of the Hittites, which did rule over every creature of the land, even over the creatures of the fields and of the forest. And unto this golden eagle did these men give great homage.

[Breaking off]

Does this mean anything to you?

Dr Nettlethwaite
deeply

Please continue.

Dr Marell

And he that had flown with the eagle spake unto these men from Phoenicia, saying, "They that shall steal from the one shall be in debt to the other. They that did take from one the goods of another, robbing and cheating to gain advantage and power over other men, these shall suffer in the depths of Hell."

And they that did worship idols of stone shall die in great agony. And they that did sacrifice the son first-born shall likewise die and be wiped from the face of the Earth.

As a wild dog is slain, so shall the unGodly be slain. Such it was as it was ordained to be.

Dr Marell makes an expansive hand gesture.

Dr Marell *C'est tout. That's all.*

Music: very evocative. Dr Nettlethwaite is clearly soaking in the words which he has just had read to him. His jaw works. His eyes look about.

Dr Nettlethwaite "As a wild-dog is slain" ...
whispers

The music rises to a crescendo, then suddenly stops. Dr Nettlethwaite recovers his consciousness of present.

Dr Nettlethwaite What we need is a drink.

Dr Marell A ver' strong drink, *s'il vous plait.*

HOPE FOR HOMELESS MEN

[Page 39] The people in the courtroom sit in stunned silence. Sir Edward stares at Banjo, as does Lorimer.

Lorimer *accusing* Are you trying to tell us --

Sir Edward *interrupting with raised hand* Just a moment please. I should like to interview this witness myself. Pray continue, Mr Banjo.

Banjo *shrugs* It's just that that swill wasn't potable. Not by a long chalk. So, to make it taste alright enough for Horrie to drink glasses of it, someone *else* had to have doctored it.

Sir Edward *slight smile* And how is it that you know what the urine of a horse tastes like?

Banjo *blushes and shrugs* I was a gunnery sergeant in the late war, sir. I got around.



[Page 117] Torrens spies the bottle.

Torrens *scornful* That's not quinine! It's ginger beer, you duffer.

Marcus *quick-witted* We had to smuggle the medicine to you in this disguise.

[Conspiratorial whisper]

The German and Belgian spies were confiscating all of our supplies, except for soft drinks.

Torrens rolls his eyes but takes the ginger beer anyway and after flipping the top open, begins to drink.

Torrens *begrudgingly* Come in, then. But you can only stay a few minutes. As you can see, the casualties are mounting by the hour.

Marcus *equably* If I were you, I'd call in reinforcements from the Red Cross.

All I want, young man, is that paper you did for school on the bushranger John Black. Or if not that, then at least your rough notes.

Give me the gen, and then I promise that I'll leave you in peace.

Torrens *curious and challenging* Why do you want the notes?

Marcus *ad-libbing* I'm not at liberty to tell you that, Sir. Explosive situation.
Possible crisis looming.

Torrens *frowning* It'll cost ya.

Marcus nods. He had already anticipated this. Marcus pulls a paper twist of lollies and a £2 note from his top pocket. Silently, Marcus places them on a small table which is already covered in junk. Torrens grabs the loot, extracts a musk lolly from the paper twist, puts the lolly into his mouth and then pockets the remaining loot. Then he again screws his fake monocle into his left eye.

Torrens *cloak-and-dagger* This is a very serious matter, Lord Harberry. Should these papers get into the wrong hands, then Europe might implode.
Any slip-up and it could be war!

Marcus *plays along* Yes, I'm well aware ... I'll guard the State papers with my life,
Sir: depend upon that.

Torrens studies his half-brother's face through the monocle and then nods solemnly.

The brothers shake hands solemnly, and Marcus makes to leave by the bedroom door.

Torrens *urgent* Someone might be watching ... You'd better leave by the back exit. You only have to climb out of the window and shinny down using the bushes as a step ladder.

Marcus No. I think that I'll take my chances and exit via the door like any civilized man.

Marcus mocks Torrens by bowing. As he reaches the door, Marcus turns back to speak to Torrens.

Marcus Oh, and by the way. I'm providing you with another sister, in addition to Daphne. I'm all set to marry her sister: the young Doctor.

Torrens *unimpressed* Well, that's nothing to brag about. The silly sheila bought a Vauxhall. Can you believe that?

IMPOVERISHED AND POORLY

[Page 122]

Gibbo *very aggressive* I'm not going to mince words here. And I'm not going to pull punches. This is serious stuff and if someone has to say it, it might as well be me.

The Broken Hill Bachelor and Spinster dance scheduled for tomorrow night ought to be (should be!) postponed in the interests of public health. However things have gone too far down the track to call it off. So the word is that all attendees need to be warned of the dangers of kissing on the lips.

Further, there is a potential danger of infection from sexual hijinks. So we'll set up various kiosks at the B & S Dance flogging frangers at no cost to the punters.

And "frangers" is the Australian word for "French letters" which is the English translation of "condoms". Which is funny because the French call the buggers "English hoods". So there you go ...

[Gains his equilibrium]

If you are intending to throw the leg over in the back of your ute or off-road vehicle, you are urged to be prepared with a French letter or five. And they will be free to all comers, as I said.

This advice must be taken with the utmost seriousness.

And those rumours that are floating around (about the efficacy of gargling with Listerine before sticking the tongue in) are absolutely unfounded.

The camera closes in as Gibbo points straight at it.

Gibbo *pointing* F-PROTA is real. F-PROTA is lethal.

Men and women of Broken Hill (and all Australia) be vigilant. Be careful!

The whole of this magnificent country is praying for our own Jeparit.

Thank you for your attention.



[Page 14]

Cooper *scared* But a man dressed as a woman can't get preggers. Right?

Donny Correct.

Cooper So a paternity test using our DNA is dumb. Yeah?

Gibbo *depressed* Yeah. Pretty much.

Cooper So how come I got a summons to go for a DNA test? Where's that in the scheme of things?

Donny They wanted to --

Cooper No! Listen to me. I alone was asked to give them my DNA sample. There wasn't a snowflake's hope in hell of me getting that bird (sorry! guy) preggers.

They can't possibly have needed my DNA – so why ask for it?
And why just me?

There is a long, thoughtful pause.

Cooper *appalled* It's a total shocker.

I mean – imagine me on paternity leave. I'd be stationed on a comfy couch watching (I dunno) the cricket or the footy or the car racing or the Dapto dogs ... drinking beer and eating salt & vinegar chips before my Lucky Loo noodles delivery arrives ... and then somebody shoves a baby into my arms.

Donny *amused* That's how it goes (according to what people who know have told me). A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do, mate.

Cooper Yeah. But I don't think I can do that.

Donny *giggling* Which bit?

Cooper Having to hold a baby. It might piss itself. I'm not up for it, Don. Straight away that's a fail.



[Page 19]

Jeparit That's it. I bought some pieces of armoury from him. Don't worry: I have the appropriate licence.

Grace What did you buy?

Jeparit Do you really want to know?

Grace *shrugs* Otherwise I wouldn't have asked.

Jeparit Oakleigh-Doakleigh. I can't remember off the top of my ...

Here we go.

Jeparit pulls his docket out of his trouser pocket.

Jeparit *reads* Wogdon. His brass framed flintlock boxlock powder tester known in the trade as an "eprouvette".

A Spanish miquelet Ripoll blunderbuss belt pistol (yum! yum!)

Ketland and Son. A flintlock holster pistol. 24-bore brass barrelled.

And some sundry flasks and gorgets.

Grace is impressed. She whistles. Jeparit hands over the docket to Grace. She glances at it then hands it back.

Jeparit *grins* Jealous?

Grace That lot must have made a large hole in your afternoon tea money.



[Page 58]

Tisane Hi! Where's my father?

Blaike If you are Ed Swan's daughter, then I can tell you that he's on his way back home.

Tisane Right.

And you are?

Blaike I'm your father's side-kick. Blaike Penfold. Constable Blaike Penfold. Cold Cases.

Tisane *managerial* Constable Blaike Penfold, I have three further questions.

Question 1: are you so busy right now that you can't drag yourself away?

Blaike *surprised* Ah ... No. I'm okay to --

Tisane Question number 2: are you able to help me with my Maths? Mechanics. Moments. Levers.

[Sighs heavily (with eye-roll) then reading]

"The tendency of a force F to turn a body round a given point O is measured by the product of the force and the perpendicular drawn from the point on its line of action, this product F times OA being called the Moment of the Force about the given point."

[Looks haughtily at the screen, at Blaike]

Duh!

Blaike *smiles* Yes. I know that stuff. We could --

Tisane

Your answers to the first two questions have been very satisfactory. So here is question number 3: will you explain it to me? Because right now it is like swimming in glue.

KIPPA-RING

[Page 6] Narrator (Bern Skolgord) action as appropriate to Bern's words. Include fierce wrestling with his friends on the ground.

Children! Mom still calls us children.

I have an impressive growth of hair on my chest and have grown to just a smidgeon over 6 foot 1 inch tall and my sister has developed into ... Well, let's just say that she looks very enchanting to all my friends and so I spend hours putting them straight about what they can and cannot do with my sister. And that means more fighting of course but fighting with guys is a totally different thing to fighting with your sister and so ... Oh, hey! I don't need to tell you that ...



[Page 26]

Bing and Bern are about the same height. Bing stretches out a paw and shakes Bern's hand. Then, Bing casually takes Bern's movie camera, adroitly switches it from still photographs to movie mode, and stands next to Bern with an arm around his shoulders. We hear the whirr of the movie camera as Bing (smiling in a sleazy, greasy way) films himself and Bern (who is looking like he has seen a ghost).

Bing *confidential* G'day, Bern. I'm a guy like you. A guy ... So no marsupial pouch.

 Just don't ask me about what I keep in my pouch 'cause I don't got no pouch. Guy ... no marsupial pouch.

Bern is still thunderstruck and does not react to Bing's confidential admission.

Bing *winking* It's a fact.

Lots of tourists converge on the small group to take photographs of the huge kangaroo. Bing is obliging, posing in the manner of a male fashion model, even slinging a hessian bag over his shoulder as if it is a stylish jacket.

Narrator (Bern Skolgord) whimsical

Sometimes, saying nothing at all is a much better tactic than trying to speak and only managing to sound like a lost lamb.



[Page 66]

The well-groomed female receptionist on the front counter of the Laszlo Hotel smiles encouragingly.

Receptionist Oh yes! The Royal Wottamatta Agricultural Show is on at the moment: for the rest of the week actually.

That's lucky isn't it (if you were intending to visit)?

The various members of the party of 9 (Dal, Flynt, Elizabeth, Mattie, Bern, Rafe, Cedric, Foley and Prajapasi) look about at each other. The receptionist turns to Flynt and Elizabeth.

Receptionist I imagine that you would think of it as a State Fair in the US. All the prize-winning livestock and farm produce from New South Wales is on display. There are loads of interesting things ... I like the sheep dog trials and the Jack Russell hurdle races the best.

Elizabeth *confused* But ... "Royal"? Did you say "Royal"?

The Receptionist nods, smiling.

Receptionist That's right. Most of the Australian establishments have "Royal" in the name. But everyone just calls it "The Show" or simply "The Wotta".

I'll book you 2 taxis to take you there, if you like. It's not that far.

Bern *frowning* Nope, you'd better make that 3 taxi cabs, Ma'am. Bing the Roo is waiting for us out the front.

Dal *excited* Yeah! Let's go! I'm gonna find me Dad!

Scene: Exterior, catching taxis outside the Laszlo Hotel

As the party of 10 (Dal, Flynt, Elizabeth, Mattie, Bern, Rafe, Cedric, Foley, Bing and Prajapasi) pile into the 3 taxis, Bing circles around Foley, giving him a very contemptuous look.

Bing *disparaging,* What is this specimen: a footy roo?
looking at Foley

Bern *to Bing* We missed you last night. Where'd you sleep?

Bing gives a meaningful wink.

Bing On a park bench, mate. Was I alone? Now that'd be telling ...



[Page 71]

King Ludwick Bring forth the Jester!

Another horse and rider shuffle forward. The Jester is dressed in motley.

King Rolando *stern* Well?

Jester Wottamatta, Sire.

King Rolando *offended* What's the matter?

Why, you **know** what is the matter, Fool.

Can you not be more helpful?

King Ludwick *pointing* Off with his head! De-bean the Jester!

Jester *desperate* Sire! Sire!

Wottamatta is the place to which we must hie ... and with all speed, Your Glorious Majesties!

King Ludwick Oh? And how know you this? Did you read it in your tealeaves?

The Jester reddens with embarrassment. He holds up a used tea-bag and then reads from the tag.

Jester *reads* "Wottamatta Special Blend – By Appointment To Her Majesty".

King Rolando *decisive* That settles it! Men, follow me to this place called "Wottamatta",
and may our efforts be blessed so that sweet virtue might
triumph!

M'COURE

[Page 32] It is clear that Gordon does not regard Holly as other than jolly, lively and wonderful.

Gordon I'd like to interview you, Miss Holly. May I? Do you mind?

Holly *eating* Of course I mind. You're not a policeman. A newspaperman. What on Earth led you to becoming a member of the Press corps?

Gordon has finished his breakfast, and now enjoys his cup of tea.

Gordon *unperturbed* It was my inquisitive nature.

Holly *unimpressed* Monkeys are inquisitive. Intelligent, certainly, when compared with dogs and cats. But decidedly disgusting in their habits.

[Leans towards Gordon, as an aid to conversation]

Monsieur Gribaldi has the most enchanting, adorable little capuchin. But such a scamp. She becomes positively w-h-o-r-i-s-h when in the company of a roomful of gentlemen.

Gribaldi is the itinerant fruiterer in my *banlieue*, but would rather be a major poet, you must understand.

Gordon *unabashed* Then please label me as a simian. For I'm disgusting, filthy, poetic, deep, troubled ...

Judith has heard enough. Flying two bright scarlet patches of blush on her already rosy cheeks, Judith ushers the children out of the dining room in good order.

Holly *delighted* How very masculine of you! I've changed my mind ... I should **love** to be interviewed. Let's stroll along the river as we do so.

Gordon Good! You can teach me the steps of the rumba to aid our progression.

Roger *very annoyed* Holly, this is hardly edifying breakfast conversation. Could you not lower the enthusiasm gauge just a trifle?

Holly *snitty* "She turns her withering glance upon her hapless brother. 'No!' she responds, flatly."

Roger resignedly folds his newspaper, and hands it on to Gordon as he rises.

Roger *sighs* So be it. I give up. Pendlebury.

Roger nods to Gordon, then strides out of the room. Holly turns towards Gordon, giving him a very naughty look.



[Page 49]

Tyndale And this is your usual domicile?

Holly Good Heavens, no! I was packed-off to Paris some time back. My employer (Professor Buxton, whom I telephoned, and who should be here at any instant) has assigned me to the study of the intricacies of the Breton Congress of Death.

Gordon *pretending to be affronted* You didn't tell me that! How ghoulish!

Holly *affronted* Well, it's no good becoming squeamish now, is it? After all, you're a reporter on a scandal rag. One would have thought that that vocation would require a cast-iron stomach. Doesn't your editor demand of you a certain level of titillation mixed with gore for your readers?

Gordon *feigning indignation* I take the deepest offence at The Argus being maligned in that manner. When recently asked by the Palace to keep quiet about a tawdry liaison between a certain lord and a well-known showgirl, we printed nary a word, although we could well have brought the Government to its knees.

Holly *defensive* You spent positively days picking over the murder of that gold-smuggling hoodlum in Soho not so long ago.

Tyndale *perplexed* Would you two mind delaying hostilities until I've finished my interviews?



[Page 14]

Buxton My dear Miss Allendale, we're working on the assumption that there *is* a connection, given the timing of the boat's first appearance. That's why we're here, waiting for these people.

The camera pans the river, noting its serenity. It is Lannscombe who suddenly breaks the silence.

Lannscombe Quiet now! Ready to record!

All eyes are turned to the bend of the river. They are riveted. As the boat begins to appear around the bend in the river, the camera starts whirring. All the faces are taut with eager anticipation or (in Margaret's case) consternation. There is no noise other than the whirring of the 1930's camera, and the random slapping of waves on the riverbank.

The boat comes alongside the landing. Sirhana becomes excited, calling out delightedly upon spotting Margaret. For the first time, we realize that the other six passengers are behaving like automatons.

On the landing, all our people stand as if frozen, except for Margaret who acts like a sleepwalker. The blanket falls from her shoulders as she lopes to the edge of the landing, then steps fluidly into the boat. Grand, exultant music bursts forth as Margaret moves towards the boat.

As the boat leaves, we notice that Margaret (just like the other passengers) seems robotic. The 1930's camera is still filming but does not move to follow the boat. The boat moves off, and we follow it around the next bend of the river. Ahead, in the night, as seen from behind trees, willows, bridges, and so on, there are a few great buildings appearing to be henge-like castles, alight with lanterns, flambeaux and lamps. It is beautiful and wonderful. The boat is heading towards that sight.

Our music builds and becomes utterly overpowering as the mystic boat carries Margaret away.



[Page 121]

Enid *very quietly, not looking at Dynon* Take that colourful thing which looks sort of like a boat and stow it.

Dynon acts on Enid's words without delay, surreptitiously slipping a shimmering opal object in his right-hand pocket.

Enid *normal voice* Yes, I was a virgin when Trader married me.

Dynon *smiling* My Sylvia was a virgin, too. Frightened, she was, on our wedding night. But I was unfailing kind and gentle with her, and that set the seal on our happy marriage.

Enid *also smiling* Trader came at me with all the speed and determination of a St Kilda Road tram as soon as the door was closed on our Honeymoon Hotel suite. In like Flynn! **That** set the tone for our married life, it certainly did. He treated the marital bed like a workbench. I very quickly learned which way was up!

Walter Dynon coughs dramatically and stands quickly, moving away, leaving Enid to continue to fossick through the contents of her bag.

NICK STILLLEN'S CASQUETTE GIRL

[Page 3]

Nick *calling out* Do we have to have the black-and-white print? Can't you get hold of a colorized version?

The film trundles on.

Nick *calling out,* Hey! This is a porn flick, right?
delighted

Gray *voice-off* No way, man! It's a straight mews-com. Straight-up!

Nick calling out, Then why is this Marietta "naughty"? Bad girl, slut, hussy, love
dissatisfied and goddess...
comedic

Gray *voice-off* No! She stays a virgin right up until the end credits.

Nick is bored and uncomfortable and shifts about in his seat.

Nick *calling-out,* Aw, now this chick is singing to a little birdie.
annoyed

Gray *voice-off* Yeah, she has a fabulous set of lungs. Some pipes!

Nick gives up. He has finished his snack, and so screws the pack up in a fatalistic way, chucking it over his shoulder. Then he stands and sidles out of the theatrette.

Nick *calling-out,* Send me a text when you got a colour version of this crap, will
impatient ya?

Nick stalks out into the darkness. We can just make out that Nick opens a door and exits through it.

Gray appears in the gloomy light with the projector light behind him.



[Page 76] Nick's mouth works, his eyes are wide open.

Nick *dreamily* I learned most of the words ... Dutch Schultz's last words, you know. I could recite them. "I'm a pretty good pretzler".

Nick tries to get a grip. He allows his whole body to shiver. He looks a mess.

Nick *gulping in air* I learned it, like I learn lines for a film. I memorized it all. The dog biscuit for the snappy dog, and the chimney sweep and the French Canadian bean soup ... Mother, Satan, the Chinaman and pavement bears ...

Aiden *voice-off* Mr Stillen, we need for you to stay cogent on this. Please focus – we need your assistance here.

Nick turns towards Aiden.

Nick He died in 1935, you know. That's when my film was made. The original of my film, that is.

Oh God!

Aiden *desperate* Please don't lose it, Nick. We need your insight. Does any of this ring true? Did you have any idea that Kramer was leading this double life?

Nick *reciting* "Be instrumental in letting us know. They are Englishmen and they are a type I don't know who is best, they or us."

Aiden *voice-off* Take Mr Stillen home and get his wife to slug him with a stiff drink. Brandy would be best.



[Page 112]

Nick We brought it in as an Act of God.

The General nods, pointing to the pinup board.

General Groves If only we could rope God into **this** one.

Nick *tired and dismissive* Why are you bothering? Let the spooks sort it out. It's their turf, after all.

- General Groves It's funny. Loads of people buy that crap on TV sitcoms and such like that senior Army and Navy personnel are dodderly old farts who dribble into their cereal. Well, sir: the reason I got to the very exalted rank I achieved was owing to my first class brain. And that's a fact.
- Nick *smiling* Like Colonel Hall in "Bilko"? God, my dad loved that show. I think he bought-up every tape.
- General Groves Just so ... Couldn't pour water out of a hobnail boot if they'd glued the instructions for doing so on the sole.
- Well, I like fine to use my grey matter as much as I possibly can ...
- Have any police officers so far quizzed you on the murder of your friend?

PARALLEL EVOLUTION

[Page 80 & 83]

Claudine *smug* "D" for "Ditto".

Daniel "D" for "Ditto". Okay.

[Matter of fact]

And just so that you know: if I ever propose to you (little sweet desert blossom), I won't write it down in esoteric chalk letters on a card table. I'll sweep you into my arms and bury my face in your hair. Furthermore, you will **not** be left abandoned at the altar.

Claudine *making a face* Can't wait.

~~~~~

*Claudine enters the area, bearing the last wedge of cake on a paper bread and butter plate.*

Claudine Would either of you gentlemen care to finish off the last portion of Black Forest Cake? Daniel? James?

*Daniel stares at Claudine, breathing irregularly. Again, he distractedly drags his fingers through his hair. He even gives a half-sob, and points vaguely in James's direction.*

Daniel *to Claudine, stricken* This guy is my half-brother.

*James leaps to his feet and abstracts the plate from Claudia's fingers. She is staring at Daniel in a trance-like state.*

*Just then, a burst of heavy tropical rain belts down.*

James *smug* Thanks, Darl. I'll polish this off for you, if you're keen to get the dishes done ... or ... whatever it is that you have to do ...

*With his back to Daniel and Claudine, James stands in the open doorway, watching the torrential downpour as he scoffs the cake. Behind him, we see Claudine and Daniel standing stock still, eyes locked. And then, with a great effort of will, Daniel leans forward to pull Claudine into his arms, burying his face in her hair.*



*[Page 91] We now see a close-up of James rubbing the cricket ball on his groin.*

James *voice-off* ... and the beautiful thing is, that you're giving yourself enormous physical pleasure on the telly in front of millions of international cricket fans and it's all done with everyone's implied blessing.

*Daniel is seen to be standing in the pose of a resting batsman, leaning on his cricket bat, with the other hand on his hip, and one foot crossed over the other.*

Daniel *amused* Bullshit!

Sir David No, it's quite true. He's legally polishing the ball. He may even add sweat or spittle (so long as it's tastefully applied). But no sunscreen or insect repellent or --

Daniel *laughs out loud* I saw one of the guys do that when we were kidding around in Darwin. But I thought it was just his way of bein' funny. You seriously say that the real legend cricketers do that?

Sir David Certainly.

Daniel *in denial* Get outta here! That's utter crap! You're pulling my leg here.

Sam No ... He's fair dinkum. It's a legitimate part of the game for the bowler to rub-up the ball on his groin. Mad not to!

You must have noticed the red stain on the white trousers?

*James bowls and Daniel is on strike, now adopting the batting pose.*



*[Page 74]*

Sir David                      And these guns?

Fenn                              Sir, through Nat's good offices, we got two Austeyr F88SA2 combat weapons (the favoured firepower of the Australian Army, I hear) and – What did you bring, Daniel?

Daniel *calmly*                I have a Smith & Wesson M&P40 and a Llama MAX-I C/F.

*James whistles, impressed.*

Nat *proud*                      My gun's got more stuff on it than Fenn's, but I don't know what it all does.

*Sam looks about, uncertain.*

Sam *concerned*              Are you gents acquainted with weaponry at all?

Fenn                              Yes, Sir. Sure! Daniel and me, we spent a couple of years in South America. We had to sleep with UZIs under our pillows. Almost we did ...

Sir David                      And the cricket gear? That all belongs to Mr Jarrah Jarrah, one presumes.

Daniel *smiling*                No, Sir David. That gear belongs to all of us. Fenn and I have embraced the game. We're hoping to grab some practice.



*[Page 32]*

Drunken male *voice-off*      Welcome one and all ... Spend yer first night of the New Year in the Black Mariah. Courtesy of the NT constabulary.

*There follows much male laughter, coughing, swearing and groaning.*

*A police officer takes Daniel's jaw in his hand in order to inspect his hurts.*

Policeman *gravelly*            A bloke's been carted off to Emergency in a critical condition. Youse might be spending more than just the one night in the lock-up. So shut the fuck up!

*[To Daniel]*

Do you want anything for that cut, mate?

Daniel *morose*

I want to make a phone call to my lawyer.

*Daniel's American accent is pronounced. All the men in the van laugh, including the policemen.*

Policeman *amused*

Ah! So you're a Septic Tank, are you? That "phone call to my lawyer" stuff -- That's only in Tom Cruise movies, mate. You're not in Arizona now. This is Darwin and martial law holds good during a Category Four cyclone, so I can basically throw you in the clink and chuck away the key without one shred of evidence against you.

Male *voice-off*

Yeah, so don't give him the slightest provocation, Yankie-boy, because he'll do it. I know his form.



*[Page 8]*

Sir David

When we started our delightful email war, they appeared to be sending polite advice (so far as I can tell) ... Now, there seems to be a certain gravitas ... A bit of an urgent prod in the rear end. "Getta offa our turfa, Englese bastards!" (They just can't forget the Falklands, darling).

Ah! The Australian Navy has a good-sized vessel in the vicinity and they've offered to help us to pack and remove our gear. Bless their little hearts. Yes, we'll take up that kind offer. Thank you very much, beloved Aussies.

*[Typing]*

"Come immediately and save our sad souls". There!

## PICAROONS

*[Page 68] We now return to the exact position we left off before the interruption. The screen remains frozen with Gibbo in an embarrassing posture.*

*The “freeze” melts away as if play mode is resumed on a DVD. Gibbo shakes his shoulders and arms. Donny stands around beside him.*

Fleming microphone      All good?  
*voice-off*

Gibbo *calling out*      Yeah. They are all very sorry for themselves. But – yeah, all good.

Fleming microphone      What started it?  
*voice-off*

Donny *calling out*      Aw, they were all playing the pokes. As you do.  
  
Then one of the lads complimented a lady on her bosoms. That's the word he used: “bosoms”.

Gibbo *calling out*      And then one of the other lads said: “That's a bit old school isn't it? Calling them 'bosoms'”.

Donny *calling out*      And it pretty much went from there.

Fleming microphone      So – it was pussy-based?  
*voice-off*

Gibbo *calling out*      Pretty much ...

Donny *calling out*      Usually is ...

Fleming microphone      'Kay.  
*voice-off*      Take up your positions. Donny you're not in this scene. So take a hike.

*Donny nods as he strolls out of camera shot. Once again, Gibbo loosens up by shaking himself.*

Fleming microphone      Gibbo – you ready?  
*voice-off*

Gibbo *calling out*      Yeah, mate.

Fleming microphone      The fencing lesson in the medieval dungeon. And roll it. **Action!**  
*voice-off*



[Page 24]

Master Alf      If any of you seadogs have complaints on the weight of your loot bag, we will take that up after all the other men have gone ashore. But I'm as certain as I can be that no man here shall have any reason to dispute his just portion of the spoils.

Oliver *calls out*      Begging your pardon Master Alf, sir. But pirate Captain Barbaretti (he that skippers the "Black Sloop", ye know) calls his men "pretty boys". Yet you call us just plain "seadogs".

I beg your honour might call us "pretty boys" so that we may feel more like pirates, beggin' your pardon good sir.

*There is a murmur of assent from the pirates.*

Master Alf *brusque*      Never gonna happen!

Dumpling: I don't call you "pretty" because none of you bain't pretty. Not even close! You only need a looking glass to testify to **that** fact.

And I don't call you "boys" because you are all grown men. Well, the potboy brothers aren't men yet (out of course) but I never address them anyways. So naught lost there.

And you are all the very best bunch of pirates that any man-jack ever sailed with (or fought alongside with) so I don't have to give you all fancy names, now do I?



Right! Back to business.



[Page 144]

Cooper *to Des*                      You're a helluva big unit Des, if ya don't mind me saying.

Des                                      Aw I've gone to seed a bit now ... But yeah I was a prop with Cronulla for a few months a long, long --

Jeparit *snarky*                      I'd have guessed that you might have been a prop if anyone had asked me. No offence of course.

Donny *to Des*                      We could have used you as a Viking. The shower we had were pretty gruesome.

Gibbo                                  Flem nearly keeled over when he saw the bill that came in for the damage those ratbags did to the RSL in North Bondi. You could hardly count the row of zeroes behind the dollar sign.

Des *surprised*                      But I **was** a Viking! Youse blokes all came up and congratulated me after I done me scenes.

*The 5 friends are all surprised. They cannot work it out. Des is equally surprised that they do not recall this.*

Gibbo *frowns*                      When ... When did we do that?

Des                                      Flem was there. You all came up and we high-fived. You all said stuff like: "Great work, big guy!"

Like that.

*The 5 friends look from one to the other. Naomi rolls her eyes.*

Naomi *snarky*                      Tsk! He played Rurik. God! You blokes are as thick as two planks sometimes.

*As Des nods, the others are aghast.*

Donny *eyes goggling*            ***You – were – Rurik?***



## RETRACING HIS STEPS

*[Page 81] Brother and sister are engaged in finding the printed review of the Saturday night performance. Catherine is thrilled; James keeps his pride in check.*

Catherine *reading* "The National Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra (under the baton of Mr Gregory Hoarsfell) played to rapturous applause on Saturday night at the Queen Victoria Theatre's gala vice-regal command performance.

"The concert was of the highest standard, with --"

Blah, blah, blah ...

Glinka's Ruslan and Ludmilla overture gets a mention -- "an all-time favourite" --

James *grinning* An old war horse!

Catherine *reading* Yes, the reviewer is pretty cool about the soprano. She wasn't much chop ...

Ah! Here it is! Here it is! Here it is!

"The final item was Maurice Ravel's 'Bolero', a new inclusion to this orchestra's repertoire.

"In this work, absolutely everything hangs on the dedication and concentration of the snare drummer, and Mr James Cobey's playing was faultless."

*Catherine leaves off reading to give James an enormous hug. She jumps up and down, filled with joy.*

James *squirming* Is that all?

Catherine *reading* That's all about you, I'm afraid.

"In fact, so excellent was the rendition of this piece by all soloists that the orchestra received three standing ovations. I recommend any –"

Oh, Jamie! This is wonderful; what a boost to your career.

James Cobey, you are a national treasure.



[Page 105]

Brownie

So I kept that leather pouch and thought it might be trouble. So I hid it: after I checked there wasn't any money in it.

Then, after the ex-missus shot through with most of the stuff, I dug that out and had a look at it again. Properly this time.

Stone the crows, I thought. Most of this is in Latin.

*Ernie and Barry have been frowning over the contents of the pouch, flick-reading page after page.*

Ernie *concerned*

No ... This isn't actually Latin ... It's more of an old style of French.

Barry *riveted*

These are old ship's logs ... or ...

*The other two young men join Barry and Ernie. Barry is wide-eyed over one particular page that he turns over and over. He touches his hair, doing a double-take.*

Barry *very excited*

These ... These are written instructions from the King of France to one of his captains. "*Mon cher Jean-François*" it starts. Jean-François ...

It's signed "Louis". Must be the one who was executed ... The King talks about his privations – and blood in the streets! This was written when he was about to be guillotined. Oh, my God! It's Louis XVI!



*[Page 83]*

*Glover and de Chaumont sit on the front porch and glance idly at local Fremantle newspapers which contain nothing to interest them.*

De Chaumont *matter-of-fact*      Perhaps this evening you will manage to couch a woman, or even more than one.

Glover *astounded*      What a suggestion! No, Sir, I won't be doing that.

De Chaumont      You will be quite safe. I'm positive that such a smart, well-run establishment as this hotel can provide you with female entertainment of the most exquisite standard.

Glover *appalled*      No! I ... That really is quite antediluvian ...  
  
When I feel like making love to a woman, I'll organize that for myself. I'd hardly call in hotel staff to manage such a ...  
  
Really, no! Thanks all the same, but ...

*[Snorts]*

"Couch a woman" ... Good God!

De Chaumont *shrugs indifferently*      Oh, well, if you'd rather not.  
  
But there is always much discretion. A gentleman's needs are understood and the staff here will no doubt be used to such arrangements.

Glover      You can fix yourself up, if you wish, but I'm rather not in the mood.

De Chaumont *firm*      Ah no! I am faithful to the death to my wife. I shall never sully our marriage-bed.

I just happened to be au fait with these matters owing to some fellow officers with whom I've bivouacked in the past ... That's all.

## RODERICK FORTESCUE'S JAZZ BABY

*[Page 91]*

Fatty But hang on a minnie. If you're not St Peter, then you must be ...  
Oh shit! You're not, are ya?

St Peter Yes, I am He. The Holy Father. The Godhead.  
  
I recall that I vented my anger against St P. via volcanoes, or famines, or something major.

*[Remembers]*

The black plague, that's right. I can't risk **ever** having that happen again. That proved one of my darker ideas.

*[Artistic shudder]*

Never to be repeated.

So, the point to all this is that I sent the Archangel Gabriel earthwards for a spot of R & R. He's unbelievably old and getting very frayed. "Bring back St Peter ... in chains if necessary" I told Gabie. "Righi-ho" he agreed. And off he toddled. Chief of the Angels: Righti-ho!

Blow me down if **he** didn't pen a doubtful volume on the origins of Jazz, under the penname of Roderick Fortescue.



*[Page 65]* The chase goes on. Spud is serving back the diatribe to Monty.

Spud *shouts* The gents from the rear stalls would like to point out to the hypocritical turds that are trying to run this show that the old Colonies became known as "The Lucky Country", while proud old Mother England went down the gurgler. So stick that in yer pipe,

young Monty. And yer know just where you can stick yer bloody Empire ...

*Nuggett very neatly trips up one of the stagehands and Fatty (the only one doing any punching) lands another telling blow on someone else.*

Archie                      Ah, yes. Remember that chap. Saw him bowling yesterday against those Jamaican fellows. Good seamer. Very handy to have a bowler like that on the team.

*[Considers a moment]*

Wasn't wearing that war paint when I saw him on the field, however. But I'd recognize that ripping style anywhere.

*Lord Stainford is rousing himself. He sits, dabbing at his face with his fingers, as he sees the blood on them. He is horrified.*

Lord Stainford *appalled*    Great Zeus! My ... my claret is flowing!

*Archie politely hands to Lord Stainford a neatly pressed hanky.*

Archie                      Take mine, old boy.



*[Page 41]*

Monty                      Whatever happened to "The sun never sets on the British flag?" Don't those dreadful people realise that ***we*** are EMPIRE??

*Solemnly, standing strictly to attention, led by Monty, they all sing "God Save the King". They only get a few notes out unaccompanied before a full symphony orchestra swells the tune as they sing.*

*It is a magnificent moment. Gladys begins to dab at her eyes with a lace hankie, whispering "God Save England" and the men are moist-eyed, trembling-lipped. There is a long silence, wherein nobody moves much.*

|                           |                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Gladys <i>sniffs</i>      | Which king was it?                                                                                                                                  |
| Archie                    | The one before the one who abdicated.                                                                                                               |
| Monty                     | George V?                                                                                                                                           |
| Lord Stainford            | Yes. "Bugger Bognor".                                                                                                                               |
| Monty                     | Then ... is he here?                                                                                                                                |
| Lord Stainford            | No. He went to Elysium. They all do.                                                                                                                |
| Gladys                    | I say! David and Wallis are said to be here, in Jazz Heaven; on that island there. They're both devoted to syncopation.                             |
| Lord Stainford            | Quite right. He wrote me a letter telling me how ripping it all was and would I like to throw some togs into a valise and motor over to visit them. |
| Alec <i>smug</i>          | I've dined with them on the island on several occasions.                                                                                            |
| Gladys <i>incredulous</i> | Have you? And was the abdication discussed?                                                                                                         |
| Alec <i>firm</i>          | Certainly not.                                                                                                                                      |



## SLASH AND BURN

*[Page 51] Then Ralph Bing (seedy journalist) bursts in. Ralph is played by Cooper. He starts talking immediately and is hard to shut up. For a while, everyone seems to talk at once.*

Ralph/Cooper

The anthrax scare -- how will Victoria's hospitals cope?

The press has dubbed your killer as the "Tram Stabber". How safe is it to travel by tram? Should we boycott them? And is St Kilda now a hot spot?

The victim is reported to be a himbo. Did he have sex a mere half-an-hour before he died?

How many dinosaurs have escaped from the Outback Dino Planetarium? Why have they headed for Sydney? How do you intend to stop them?

Have you reported the problem with out-of-date golden syrup to the health department? Can treacle be used as a substitute? Is the public safe?

Can the transformers be stopped? Is this a real world major electronic control breakdown?

Will you be mounting a raid on the Dapto RSL bowls club? Word on the street speaks of dodgy goings-on in that direction.

Are the rumours true? Was Josh Gibson sacked because he is too loaded with testosterone? What will happen to the TV show now that much-loved Tony Nedson has been spifflicated by a sheep dredger?



*[Page 60]*

Wayne

Hobby? I hope it's fulfilling.

Lindel                      No. Not one bit. It's all rather fey, really. He's that glorified thing known as a fly half.

*Wayne is clearly disappointed at this news.*

Wayne *deflated*              Oh ... I see ... A man ...

Lindel                      He's pretty hopeless. I have to do everything for him, of course. Do you know -- I think that his mother was jolly glad to be able to offload him onto me.

Wayne                      That sounds grim. But ... But I thought that those chaps were very clued-up? Fly halves, I mean.

Lindel                      Not at all. I mean to say that on the pitch he's a genius: veritable Rhodes Scholar. But real life defeats him utterly. Can't even catch a train without guidance.

Wayne                      That's a pity.

Lindel                      He's frightfully good looking. And strong enough to pick me up with only one hand. Naturally, one has to adore him.



*[Page 35] Telling pause.*

Gibbo *big breath*              I've been sacked.

*Donny cannot credit what Gibbo has just said. He is stunned.*

Donny                      Come again.

*Gibbo slaps his hands onto his thighs and stands up.*

Gibbo                      I've been sacked. Released. Banished. Retrenched. Made redundant. Flicked. Scrap-heaped. Moved on. Dropped. Given me papers. Kyboshed.

*Donny cannot take this in. He makes all kinds of noises in his throat as he watches Gibbo slowly nod. Donny tries to get a grip.*

Donny *calls out to*  
*Cooper*

How's that coffee coming, Coops?

Cooper *voice off*

Won't be long ...

Donny *disbelieving*

But why? Why would they do that? I thought they loved ya.

# Gibbo

They did. But I've got naughty-boy bits

*[Points downwards]*

and so I've been shafted.

## Donny *outraged*

What?! Are you telling me that because that's a bloke's tackle bulge in your Reg Grundies (and not a pair of socks) they knifed you?

# Gibbo

That's right.

Donny *appalled*

Because you're a man? They white-anted you because you're male?

# Gibbo

Yup.

Donny *appalled*

'Kin' 'ell! Can they do that?



*[Page 20] Then Gibbo stops and points at Cooper.*

# Gibbo

There exist those professional information boards outside the lift doors on every floor of the Bowery Building in downtown Sydney. Yeah? As in "Dame Edith Glumfart" is on Level 11. Like that.

Let's get our heads around what you are proposing here, Coops

...

Let's storyboard this (in our imaginations) ...

Our T-Rex saunters into the foyer of the Bowery Building.

Wanders over to the lift doors. Uses her teensy-weensy hands to

find out which floor her hearing is on (as per the aforementioned information board).

"Ah! Here it is!" quoth she. "Coroner Sir Malcolm Sterling is presiding in courtroom 15. That'll be on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. Oh, goody goody gumdrops."

Then our wised-up T-Rex tries to enter the lift. No go. She's too big.

A Chinese bloke scratches his head. "You'd better take the stairs, darl." The dinosaur looks around her, perplexed. The Asian bloke points to the doors marked "Stairway". Our trusty dino gives the thumbs-up signal with her titsy-bitsy thumbs and then up the stairs she goes. Bit of a squeeze, but she manages (panting and puffing) to scale the steps up to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor.

From there she seeks out courtroom 15. She tries the door. No go. She's too big. Has to crash it down. Then she can bung on her sensational floorshow which consists of mindless slaughter, catastrophe ...

*[Withering look of total disbelief]*

Is that how it's gunna be done, Coops, old buddy?

Jesus Christ!

***Get – a – fucking – grip, - mate!***

## TEACHING CRICKET TO THE YANKS (incomplete)

*[Page 51]*

Lord Tamar *solicitous* Your Majesty is not feeling well?

Tewkes *more solicitous* Should you wish to be transported back to the castle, Sire?

Edward No.

No, we are well enough to watch the game but not to take part in it, we fear.

*Edward emits a tedious sigh. The King's minders glance at each other, wary.*

Edward *pedantic* Gentlemen. You must be aware by this that I am of habit a cold fish – liking not the convention of rubbing shoulders with my fellow men. The common man.

Yet today in this jolly meadow I might be thought to be almost merry.

As merry (that is) as a king can be with such a weighty crown to wear upon his saintly scone.

*There is a silence as the game continues. Edward is gloomy and sullen. He speaks in a sermonizing way to no-one in particular.*

Edward Do you see these young fellows here? They are the very flower of England's young manhood. And we doubt not that they have many brothers and sisters tucked away at home.

But our sainted mother's death followed hard upon our own birth. So (to say true) we are not just her elder child but her **only** child as well.

Our dearly remembered Papa of course had more children than us. We speak of our two dear sisters whom we love with all our heart.

Lord Tamar                      Well said, Your Majesty. Well said.

Edward                         It is our whole endeavour to provide a glowing, wholesome future for these lads and their ilk. Yet from the time that we ascended the throne of England upon the demise of our much-beloved Papa there has been nothing but tumult and despair in the Kingdom. There is not one bright note to be found in our reign, Gentlemen.

It must stop, you know. We command that the realm be brought into proper order. That is our solemn command. That is it!

*The ball is hit into the air and appears to be about to land in Edward's lap.*

*Without showing even the slightest emotion, Edward takes a neat catch. All the onlookers applaud. The men attending Edward are especially fulsome in their congratulations.*

*Edward grins and nods as he tosses the ball back to the nearest player.*

Edward                         You shall instruct the Council of our determination, Lord Tamar.

Do you realize what they say of us? "Sheep eat men". That is how our Realm shall be recalled: a land of careless, Godless people whose one thought was to claw for gelt as does any merchant or grubby man of law.



*[Page 59]*

Aitch *urgent*                      Knots! That lady! The one you just kissed her hand ... Did you get a look at one of her finger rings?

Knots *all at sea*                      What?

Aitch *excited*                      That lady ... Paicecott. The Right Honourable lady ... I recognized that ring straight away. It's Rozzo's ring, Knots. Rozzo gave to her his favourite signet ring.

Knots                                What are you talkin' about?

Aitch I never miss anything about a man: his tattoos, his scars, the colour of his eyes, his chin, his ears ... and any interesting jewellery that he always wears. Straight away I spark up when I see that ring. It belongs to Rozzo that ring. When I first met up with Rozzo Dezario, I made a mental note on that very ring and just now I dredged it back up from my memory bank.

And now this lady has it.

Knots *still at sea* How --

Aitch *thoughtful* And furthermore, she's wearin' it in plain sight – like she don't care who sees it. Nothin' to hide – like that.

Knots But --

Aitch *excited* She's been flyin' around the States getting' her new TV show organized, correct? And on one of her many plane trips, she bumps into Rozzo. He's doin' everything possible to get out of the country, leaving no trail. But he bumps into her: Lady Paicecott. And so now his guard is down. And he loses his heart right there (on account of her being so very beautiful and all). So he says somethin' like: "I might never see you again. Please accept this token of my love and affection". Like that. And he hands over the signet ring for her to wear. The ultimate sacrifice. Like that.

Knots *frowns* Are you for sure about this?

Aitch Sure I'm sure! I am never wrong about that stuff. And my newest idea is that if you was to question the Right Honourable about the ring (looking right into her baby-blues) she would tell you what she and Rozzo talked about on that aeroplane (when they wasn't too busy smooching, that is). Without knowin' it, the lady might spill somethin' useful to us about Dezario.



*[Page 15]*

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Brown <i>meditative</i>   | The trouble is that they're born, not made.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Rowson                    | Who?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Brown                     | Keepers. Wicket-keepers. They who squat down on their haunches as duly ordained custodians of the wicket. Like frogs<br>...                                                                                                                                                    |
| Rowson                    | Wicket-keepers? You reckon that it's an innate gift, then? Is that what you reckon?                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Brown <i>nods</i>         | Yes. Yes, I do. An inborn talent not able to be acquired.<br><br>You know what? You could be from West Woop-Woop and never played cricket in yer life. But if you've got the knack, you're a natural.<br><br><i>[As if stating an established fact]</i><br><br>Born. Not made. |
| Rowson <i>disparaging</i> | Huh!<br><br>Come on! Gate D-23. This way!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



## THE CURSE

[Page 87]

- Vincent                      So, you're off to study the ... what was it?
- Roland *self-important*    I will photograph and gather geological, biological and botanical specimens for inclusion in my opus: "*Cairo, A Journey Across The Sands.*"
- Vincent                      And therefore you will evidently be journeying across the desert sands in some measure?
- Roland *haughty*            Evidently, *mon cher*.
- Vincent                      And when you return to us, you won't forget to visit the old harridan as you promised?
- Roland *smug*                No need!
- Roland taps one of the saddle bags with his riding crop.*
- Roland                      The harridan came to me. Or, one should speak, that one of her minions did. So I'm prepared already.
- Vincent *alarmed*            But you will be very careful, then!
- Roland                      Of course.
- Vincent                      *Bon chance*, my so dear friend!

*Roland climbs adroitly onto the camel's back without assistance (which is offered by several hands), and taps the beast's neck with his riding crop. The animal drags herself to her feet, as do the other camels. If the camels can be inspired to make camel-noises, so much the better! With a solemn wave to Vincent, and then to the other two men, Roland heads off.*



[Page 52] Ulpia picks over the grave-goods.



I want them to look nice for the games ... everyone will be there.

Where are those slaves? Hey! Are youse gettin' Errol and Dwayne ready for the games or not? Lazy bastards ...

Modra's puttin' on Games this arvo for the locals. He's got a horse runnin' in the 3rd. Might do alright.



*[Page 147]*

Feral

Settle down ... come on, just settle down!

Bit of shoosh up the back, youse blokes!

Now ...

I've had a gutful, I really have. I'll tell youse that right now!

I've blown up empty sheep and eaten mice.

I've been attacked by grave gods, ghosts, armed guards, pirates and --

Curl

Sand flies?

Feral

Yeah! Sand flies.

So youse blokes just get rowing and do the best you can.

When we hit shore, there's beer, rum, women and food.

*[Rousing]*

Let's get cracking, boys!

## THE FRENCH TOUCH

[Page 52]

Curl *whining* I'm too clumsy and too heavy for this. Ya need a boy for the top level. Someone lighter.

Feral *cheeky* Let's get a girl so I can look up between her legs.

*Groans from everyone other than Feral. Feral scrambles down, jumping easily to the ground, and Donger jumps down from Chips' shoulders.*

Chips *exasperated* Come on, boys, it's not that hard. Strewth! I taught a mob of them Assyrians how to do the Human Tower, and they could do it in their sleep.

Curl *still lying on the ground* Well, get them back, whydoncha, for a triumphant return performance, ya dill.

Feral Probably on drugs.

Chips Have another go: come on, team! Let's get into it. The public in Luxor demands our circus act, and we're gonna give it to 'em with bells on.



[Page 99]

Feral *angry* It'll do, if it gets the job done. I don't care what I turn out like.

Dingo *derisive* Yeah, good on ya ...

Pooter *voice-off* Hey! Ya still there, youse blokes?

Donger, Feral, Dingo *together* We're still here, mate. Yeah, yeah, yeah, still here ...

Pooter *voice-off* You've gotta make sure that you really cover yourselves with the slime.

Feral                      So ... what ?? Do we go in the nuddy or ...??

Donger                    We can't. We'll be shinnying-down ropes. Don't want rope splinters in our old-fellas.

Pooter *voice-off*        Cover yerself real good, even your lovestick. Really slip, slop, slap it on. Youse can wear clothes, but underneath, you gotta be smeared bloody well with this goo. Alright? Y'understand?

                                  Hey! Yer still there? I want youse to get somethink from me house and bring it back here right away; somehow, you have to get it into me hand.

Donger                    Yeah, what's that?

Pooter *voice-off*        Me magic wand. If I could turn meself into a bird or a lizard, I could get meself out of these chains and make a break for it through the bars.



*[Page 58] Dani slumps into a nearby chair with his head in his hands.*

Dani                        As I landed the plane, we could see Ferrier. He was riding along (*ventre à terre*) towards this place ... a noble steed. He was dressed like any lordly desert-dweller. And of my aeroplane, he took no notice.

                                  Well, later we found that horse, steaming with sweat, tied up outside. Just left there unattended.

*[Quickly looks up]*

                                  That's not like any of your officer friends, now is it?

Miles                      Assuredly not. The management of our beasts (horse and camel alike) was the pride of the regiment.

Dani *triumphant*        Exactly so!

But then, we heard breaking glass, and found a smashed window.

Miles, you know Ferrier: oh so well! Why, he is a respectable, respected officer in the French Army. A captain, for God's sake! And yet he uses his shoe to smash-in a window, as cool as you like.

Miles *frowning deeply* Yes, as you say, that sounds decidedly out of character. What can this mean?

Harry We followed him through the broken window into the house and tried to comprehend what he was doing. But ... it was like he was in some kind of a trance ...

Dani *snaps finger and thumb* *Oui*, that's it, in a trance.  
Once inside, without emotion or ceremony or even conscious thought, your friend Roland scrounges about in drawers, cupboards, wardrobes, until he finds that hookah, and then (calm, so calm as he is), he sits down cross-legged on the floor, and begins to smoke like any Turk. Puff! Puff!

This is crazy, I thought. The man is mad! To sail all this way to Cairo for *this?* *Stupide!*

Miles And there was no-one here? No servants, no lady of the house?

Dani Absolutely no-one, I tell you.

Miles What made you telephone to *me*, then?

Dani Because he told to me that I must contact you. He *insisted!*

Harry That's right, Sir. He was just crazy that Renauld (I mean, Dani) should go call you up at your hotel.

Dani *frustrated*

You don't understand, Miles. When he started to smoke, he seemed to realize that something was wrong. He said in oh! such a strained voice:

"I've been here before. I've been here before. You must tell to Miles. Yes, and to Vincent and to Martin. *Vite, vite!*"

That's just what he said. Then, he passed out. We carried him to this bed while the servant went for --



*[Page 105] Everyone is still coughing and urging Curl. With a screech, Basrani takes the ropes off Curl's shoulders, puts them on her own, coughing wretchedly. Lissom, she then scrambles up each level of the Human Tower very agilely up onto Feral's shoulders, with assistance from the men in the tower.*

Feral *delighted*

Hup! I **knew** we should've got a girl for the top storey.

*Basrani reaches up for Phooey to pull her bodily through the hole. Quick glimpse of Patto looking anxious for the girl, yet proud of her. The gods groan. They melt away, defeated and dejected. However, the poison remains and builds.*

*Feral looks up, obviously getting a whole new view of Basrani.*

Feral *shouting*

***You bloody bewdy!*** Fuck! I've dreamed all me life that this would one day happen to me!

## THE THREAD

*[Page 107] Start the scene with Cedron lounging back in his large office chair, Brian on a couch. Beside Brian sits Jodie. We enter (as Dennis, holding the camera) during one of Brian's impassioned speeches. In front of Brian is a very well-thumbed copy of Huizinga's classic: "The Waning of the Middle Ages".*

Brian ... the theory being that following the 100 Years War, the streets of London were filled with yahoos and hooligans who'd been trained to do nothing but fight. These gangs of lawless ruffians and mercenaries supposedly put the English legal system under such huge pressure that --

*Lena swans in and interrupts.*

Lena                      What's going on? I thought you told everyone to stay as sober as judges, and here you are getting poo-faced.

*She promptly helps herself to a glass of wine and some food and sits down in a spare chair.*

Cedron *pretending to be offended* "Poo-faced"? Never! I'm simply having a convivial restorative tonic with my fellow workers after a hard day's grind at the mill.

*Jack and Garth follow Lena, taking wine and food, and finding somewhere to sit.*

Jack *winks into the camera* Don't say anything naughty in front of Dennis, or it'll end up on the Web page.

Garth                      Besides, it's well-known that Cedron Dynsflytte is unable to function as one of the UK's greatest living producer-directors without recourse to a snort of red now and then.

Jodie *aside* More "now" than "then"!

Cedron *grinning and ignoring Jodie*      Quite so, Garth.



Jack                                      And anyway, some of the lads **will** heed your temperance policy. So it's not all loss-loss.

Cedron                                    I don't consider this a loss. Actually, this is not a bad drop at all. I'll have to get Louise to order a few more crates of this stuff. Is she still here?

*Cedron cranes around in a vain attempt to spot the office co-ordinator. Failing to see the office co-ordinator, he makes a note with a flourish in his notebook.*



*[Page 45] A laptop is hooked up to a projector, and historical stuff is on the screen. A small group of people watch (seated) as Jason takes them through some of the Cranthorpe background.*

Jason                                      -- so the grounds sprawled down to this stream in Tudor and pre-Tudor times. There were several punts placed along the --

*The door flings open, spilling light into the room, spotlighting Jason, who turns (squinting at the bright light) to see who is barging into his road show. Marl is silhouetted deliciously in the doorway. She is still holding the reel of thread.*

Jason *smiles*                              Hello. Feeling better? Please, take a seat. This is a brief overview of Deepdene Manor from a historical perspective. We haven't been going long.

Marl *bright, delighted*                    That's my stream. I walk for hours along there, picking herbs and flowers for Rosena. At the moment, there are some sweet little baby water voles learning to swim with their mother.

Oh you are finally awake, are you? Should you be up and about? How are your wounds?

*In the gloom, we see that everyone is startled, taken aback, confused. Jason likewise. They all look across at Marl. There is an embarrassed pause.*

Jason *uncomfortable* Yes, well, come in, Marl. As I say, you haven't missed much.  
I'm just going through the --

Marl *concerned and confused* But, you are wearing a modern suit.

Jason *sarcastic* I've come straight here from the Palace. Should I have changed first?

*Thus follows a titter of embarrassed laughter. Marl, still looking perplexed joins the others, and Jason continues with his road show. Stay with this only a couple of seconds, and show Marl playing with the reel, looking concerned.*



*[Page 14] Here we meet George Tisdale, the armourer.*

*A large furniture removal van has been converted into a smithy, where the armour and weaponry is on display. Camera pans over the array.*

George's voice as we pan Hello all. Well, I'm George Tisdale, Armourer. That's a very glorious title. What I really do is to weld bits of metal together. The motto is: "Don't leave the garbage bin lids lying around, or George will turn them into breastplates!"

*[Laughter]*

I'm very lucky to be the husband of the Costumier, Tizzy Tisdale. My lovely wife. It's been a case of Tizzy and I working together because there was such a very fine line between armour and costume in those days of yore.

You can see all the gear laid out for ease of access, and being a van, we can travel to locations. The boys can just come into this van and collect whatever they need for the battle scenes.

There are shields over here, and armour. Chainmail suits in various sizes. The men who took part in the Wars of the Roses were either archers, or men-at-arms. The latter were mounted,

as you'd imagine for knights-of-olde, but most dismounted so as to engage in hand-to-hand combat, with swords, daggers and shields.

So these blokes just wore a lighter version of armour which allowed them to mount their steeds without aid. They weren't done-up in heavy suits of armour; you know, they didn't have to be craned into the saddle. That would have been laughable. They really did need to leap nimbly about in the heat of the battle.

Dennis *voice off*                      How did it go? "And vaulted with such ease into his saddle".  
Henry IV. Part I, I think?

George                                      Ah, a Shakespearian, by my troth. Was it not "seat" rather than  
"saddle", Dennis?

Dennis *voice off*                      Whatever ... You seem to be ready for a full-scale war, George.

George Tisdale *smiling*              Yes, I think we might have obtained a lot of this lumber from  
*as he handles a sword*              the garage sale held recently at a well-known rival studio.

Dennis *voice off*                      Not counting what was nicked from that Henry VIII thing last  
year.

George *grins at the*                      Ah, so you know about that, do you?  
*camera*

General laughter.



*[Page 33]*

Lucy *slowly*                              Yes ... I've seen him before. Yes ...

Withie *eager, keen*                      Who? Who is he?

Cornelia *frowning*                      Now, was he not ...?

Lucy *thinking aloud*      Something to do with Richard Neville, I fancy. Neville dined with us, in great state not long since. 'Twas a strange night, with gauze-clouds racing over a waxing moon. I could not forget. And **this** man came up to the house but would not permit himself to be admitted.

Cornelia *pleased*      I wondered if I hadn't spied that magnificent gelding before! Now I remember!

Withie *excited*      Oh, Cornelia, tell me at once! Who is he?

Cornelia *thrillingly*      He hovered outside, in the shadows of the dappled moonlight, holding his steed's bridle. And nobody but the Great Man might approach him or speak to him.

Withie *in wonder*      "The Great Man?"

William      Neville, of course. Earl of Warwick, ye know.

Lucy      Yes. Yes. And Cornelia ... You are in the right. The Earl of Warwick must go to him ... He called him ... Oh, what was it? I caught a clear glimpse of this gentleman's face as he wound off his mufflers to speak to Warwick.

Cornelia *thrillingly*      Yes, yes, I remember. 'Twas ...

Lucy      And as he spoke, the Earl called him ...

Withie *impatient*      **What** did he call him?

Cornelia *wringing her hands*      He came to give some direction to the Earl, you understand.

Lucy      And that very noble man was forced to leave the dining table in order to come out to him, as this man refused to come inside and be recognized. Of course! I do remember it quite well.

Cornelia      And he spoke to Neville, at length. Then this gentleman vaulted up into the saddle and rode off at speed.

Lucy Oh, drat! What on Earth was his name?

Withie *aghast* Can't you remember?

*Long pause. The camera looks at one anxious face after the other, and then at Giles.*

Cornelia Craghead? Cragford? Cra - something

Withie Who?

William Not "Giles Cranthorpe"?

Cornelia Oh, yes! That's it! ***That's it!***

Lucy *firm, assertive* Aye! Sir Giles Cranthorpe. The very name! This is he, certainly.



*[Page 19]*

Tizzy *wryly* Definitely not old.

Marl She's about yay tall and a bit chunky.

Tizzy What does she wear?

Marl Grey. Something like a widow in half-mourning. A woollen shawl ... A little grey bonnet. She looks almost skint.

Tizzy *a bit uppity* Well, she wasn't dressed by me, darling. None of my ladies has anything even approaching grey, and they're all on the tall side.

Marl *screwing up her face* Hmmm ... next time I see her, I'll have to bring her to the ground with a flying rugby tackle. I must find out her hidden agenda.

Tizzy Why? What's it all about?

Marl I've been accosted by her ***twice*** now and it's always the same line. "You and your sisters! What lovely singing!" Then she flits off.

Tizzy I didn't know you had any sisters.

Marl                                      That's just the point! I don't have sisters, only brothers. And I don't sing. Oh! and she calls me "Winnie".

Tizzy *stops work to*                      ***Winnie!?***  
*stare at her*

Marl                                      I know! Isn't it bizarre? Thanks for the mag.  
  
                                              *[Leaves, waving the mag as Tizzy shakes head]*  
  
                                              Ooroo!

## THE OLD SILK ROAD

*[Page 59] They all stand. Gordon strides forward close to William, with face of thunder.*

Gordon *angry*                      You listen to me, young man. What is this about you knifing a man? Are you trying to take the Mickey --

William *expostulating*        Dad! Never mind about him. He was a felon.

Gordon *forceful*                I bloody-well want to know the truth, Boy! Now you'll stop this nonsense about Jack Bradley and tell me exactly what happened.

William *exasperated*          Dad! Jack was unarmed. Two bods set on a man without gun, knife, grenade, pike, sword ... How totally wrong is that!

*Gordon cannot take this in. He gasps, running his hand through his hair.*

Gordon *exasperated*          You never attack your opponent from behind. How many times have I told you that the right way to confront your opponent is fairly; from the front.

William *defensive*            I didn't have any option. There was no fairness about the way the pair of those rascals jumped Jack, who was completely the innocent party. I told you that! I couldn't possibly have stood by and let them murder him. You and Mum didn't bring me up that way.



*[Page 49] The snack consumed, Sir Lentock wipes his fingers on a handkerchief, whilst at the same time using hand and head gestures to indicate to Desmond that he should eject the bird via the window. This Desmond does. On his way back to the desk, Desmond retrieves a very heavy glass ashtray.*

Desmond                          The livestock is gone, Sir.

Sir Lentock                      Good.

Desmond                      Pardon me, Sir, but why do you put yourself to this bother, when you could just as well set the secret missive alight with match or lighter?

*Desmond holds out the ashtray, which Sir Lentock scornfully waves away.*

Sir Lentock *in the grand manner* I have it on the very best authority that in some distant lands there are days on which no naked flames are permitted in the open due to the extreme risk of bushfires. *Verboten!*

I shall use South Australia as a fine example of this phenomenon. No matches, Grantley! Stay safe!

*Sir Lentock stands and behaves as if he was a bravura actor in an amphitheatre.*

Sir Lentock *pompous*      The Russians have no doubt discovered a scientific method for the deciphering of messages previously believed to have been utterly destroyed by fire. Here, I forestall such heroic attempts at espionage.

Desmond *smiling*          That makes you a formidable adversary, Sir Lentock.

Sir Lentock *very quiet*    I'm the best adversary a man could wish for.

I am both subtle and compassionate.

*Here, Sir Lentock pats his stomach.*

Sir Lentock                  You see? I am digesting the contents of the communication both spiritually and physically.

*Sir Lentock sits. He has on his face a wicked, boyish grin.*

Sir Lentock                  Let the foes of the United Kingdom try to decipher **that!**



*[Page 93] William slumps off. Gordon sighs loudly, then turns to George.*



- Gordon *fatigued* I'm tired. I want to sleep. Make it a very quick précis, and I'll congratulate you on reaching an important milestone; then we'll retire.
- George *relaxes* Right!
- You know, the vicar's daughter is about 19 or 20, and she's got as much appeal as the back end of a cow. Nobody but a blind fool would fancy her.
- We were playing strip-jack-naked in the Vicarage and --
- Gordon *appalled* God help us! You're not going to tell me that you lost your virginity in the Vicarage, are you?
- George *defensive* She was losing the card-game on purpose! Anyway, after what my brother did, **my** conquest is a bit lame.
- Gordon *wryly* Yes ... the less said about William's escapade, the better.
- George *grins, shaking his head.*
- George *summing up* I didn't force myself on her. I didn't have to.
- I closed my eyes and pretended that she was Jane Fonda, or even Catherine Deneuve, perhaps ...
- And when I felt ... you know ... well, I pulled out and deposited my seed onto an old smelly towel that Cherry had thoughtfully provided for the purpose. So as not to get her preggers. That's all there was.
- Gordon *has taken this in. He nods, shakes his son's hand and slaps his shoulder. As he moves off, George calls out.*
- George *shouting* And I ruddy-well enjoyed it! Very much!
- Gordon *half-turns to wave.*
- Gordon *calling back* Excellent!

## THE PITT GAMES

*[Page 70] Astor now hovers as Gibbo is dragged to his feet. Gibbo supports himself by holding Donny's shoulder. Gibbo continues to feel his jaw.*

Astor                      Sorry I slugged you, mate.

Cooper                     That's fine. We could use that wicked right-cross of yours at the Sydney Southside Gym. You could front-up as the main event. Get you a trainer –

*Astor to Donny*                Don't know my own strength sometimes. Not a good idea to egg me on as he did ...

Would you like me to investigate?

Donny                      Investigate what?

Astor                      The scrubber with the mono "Corker" who has nice tits and who speaks like Chaucer. I'm a scholar as well as being an all-round stud. Majored in English Lit at Oxford. If questioned, perhaps the girl will say something useful.

*Gibbo eyes Astor with malice.*

Gibbo *snorts*                You just wanna root her!

*Astor shakes head*              No. I screwed the wardrobe mistress only two hours ago. I'm all good thanks.

Why not give me this hooker's directions and I'll suss it out for you guys.

Cooper                     Are you goin' dressed like that? In your Ardenne get-up?

*Astor grins*                    Yeah. Why not? On my noble steed. All costumed and caparisoned in demonic black. Give the tourists something else to photograph whilst they meander along The Shambles and snickelways of York. They'll think I'm a tourist attraction.

*Astor whistles shrilly. The steed leaves the riverbank, ambling up to Astor who turns to Cooper. Nothing is said. However, Astor indicates to Cooper (by mime) that he requires to be legged up into the saddle. Cooper obliges and Astor is mounted again. He becomes Ardenne once more.*



*[Page 8]*

Mocket *frowns*

Club, sir? Games?

King Charles

I don't have much power. But in this one area I am able to muscle-up. I become a veritable weightlifter.

Mocket

No power? But is it not true that you own all the swans in England, Sir? Surely I have understood that correctly?

*King Charles whips around to face Mocket. He has been broadsided.*

King Charles *surprised,*  
*lost*

Swans? What good are swans?

Mocket *flippant*

They roast up very deedily, Sir. Or you could even export swansdown to the world's bastions of culture and refinement. I believe that male ballet dancers --

King Charles *snaps*

Never mind the swans!

*King Charles resumes his seat. He gestures to Mocket that he should also sit once more. This Mocket does.*

King Charles *recalls*

Now ... Where was I before you attacked me with my swans?

Mocket *quoting from*  
*memory*

You don't have much power, Sir. But in this one area you are able to muscle-up. You become a veritable weightlifter. Your Majesty.

King Charles

Right!

*King Charles shifts about. He studies Mocket who retains complete sang froid.*

King Charles *points to Mocket* I want you to take part in my games. They have full Royal sanction. And you might prove to be a useful competitor, Mocket.

Mocket Um ... Sir?

King Charles *triumphant* The PITT Games.



*[Page 101]* Gibbo is superb. He sits astride a large white stallion. It is richly adorned as would befit a king. Gibbo himself is done out in the kind of costume befitting King Henry VIII. The applause and music continue (demanding attention and awe) until Gibbo's steed walks up to the four men.

Gibbo's voice is distorted: he is wearing his footy mouthguard.

Gibbo *gluggy* This as hot as hell. Like being in the Nullarbor in the middle of summer. Can someone chuck some cold water over me?

Donny What's wrong with yer voice?

Gibbo Aw sorry.

Gibbo removes his mouthguard which he pushes into the top of his sock.

Gibbo Still had me mouthguard in. Just gotta remember to put it back later on.

Cooper emits a loud crack of laughter.

Gibbo *offended* Whaddya laughin' for? The bloke who's been training me told me to make sure I wore a mouthguard for the battle scenes.

Cooper That's gonna look flash when you start speaking.

Gibbo *annoyed* No ... well of course when the camera comes into close-up I would have ditched the mouthguard, wouldn't I?

Jeparit *appalled* You're never doing your own stunts?

Gibbo *proudly* Blood oath.

*[Points to Astor]*

So's he.

Astor *nods*

And "yes" I also have a mouthguard. Only mine was minted for boxing not football. And a boxing groin guard. Look after the knackers at all cost (above any other consideration).

*Wordlessly Jeparit, Cooper and Donny look questioningly towards Gibbo.*

Gibbo *shrugs*

I'm wearing the usual jock-strap. And a cricket box. Plus shin guards and forearm guards.

*Wordlessly Jeparit, Cooper and Donny look questioningly towards Astor.*

Astor *nods, laughs*

Same ... Same ...

Jeparit *pleased*

Then you're all set?

## THE ROMAN LEGIONS

*[Page 76]*

*Tye voice over, musing  
aloud*

I was the only cunt left out of 10 blokes.

I picked the lock on the handcuffs. Didn't take long. Then I snuck off out of the crappy shed. By then the minders were "friendly" with me. Not watching me closely because they figured that I had come over to their side. Fucking losers!

They had food put aside for the croc in case there were no bodies available. Great big hunks of beef. Stank! It had been there for days. I got hold of the machete that I'd already honed. I found some chain ... a hook ...

I dragged the huge wodge of meat along the bank of the dam. On the chain I dragged it. When she came up for it, I slashed at her with the machete.

Oh, she was fast! Man, she was real quick off the blocks. I thought I was a goner. So I just kept slashing with the machete. With every last bit of strength in my body: eyes sharp, teeth hard clenched ... Over and over and over ...

She rolled about in the death agony. Smashing at the water with her gigantic tail. I thought for sure that the minder blokes would hear the kerfuffle – but they were dead to the world.

The croc's life snuffed out right there in front of me.

You know what I said? I said: "That was for Trev."

*[Slight pause]*

My mate Trev. He was the first to go.



*[Page 115]*

Horato *to himself*                      Zeus protect me! This evil place ...

Two possibilities present themselves. Either serves. Scipio Australis (knocked out by Aequin's slaves and still non compos mentis) has been washed out to sea or --

Slave *calls down*                      Master! Do not fear. I shall come to you.

*Scipio lunges forward from his dark hiding place just as the geyser erupts. He is armed only with the ropes that are still tied to him. We see that Scipio's eyes are bright with anger, his teeth hard clenched. Taking Horato from behind, Scipio strangles Horato (who struggles wildly). Scipio finishes Horato's speech for him as Horato's limp form finally droops and drops.*

Scipio *breathless*                      Or he waits in the gloom to seek vengeance.

Horato *with last breath*              Please! I beg you ... Spare me ... Spare me ...

Scipio *snarls*                              Whimpering sod! My friend Leet showed more pluck than you in the face of death. Die bravely as a Roman, not as a stuck pig.

*Horato whimpers as he dies. Tears stream down his cheeks as he lies resistless on the cold rock floor of the cave.*

*We see (in the background) the slave being lowered on ropes.*

*Scipio retrieves Horato's dagger. Scipio plunges the dagger into Horato's heart. Camera is close up to Scipio. Scipio's voice resonates through the cave.*

Scipio *very grim*                      That was for Caesar.



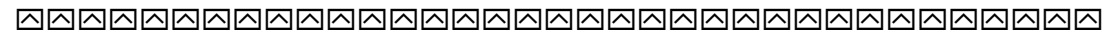
*[Page 127] Now the laundry is filled again with eager beavers: keen to plot an action plan.*

*As soon as Paul spots Jared, Paul wags a finger at him.*

Paul *explodes* You are a complete tosser, Tazzie Kerr! All you had to do was to phone me and let me know what you were up to. I've nearly gone and put my foot in it. That's all!

Jared I tried to contact you but the sheep rustlers had you in a headlock.

Paul *disgusted* Aw, the bloody Nainsook gang. Total bludgers! One says one thing and then another brother rocks up to say something completely different. And then a third one sticks his oar in ... I'd be running around in circles if Clarrie Tozer hadn't taken one for the team.



Paul *firmly* You can't do **anything** until this matter is totally cleared up. Everything that Jared is involved in (related to Tye, that is) will be instantly suspicious.

*[Changes tack]*

Now! If this is a bloody engagement party, then who the fuck has got engaged if it's not Casey and the Darwin Ripper?



*[Page 20]* Joss turns towards her laptop, which is nearby.

Joss Hang on a minnie. We came across another Parramatta dude. Maybe a connection ...

Joss fiddles about on the laptop.

Joss Alright. Does your brother know a Trevor Hinchcliffe, would you know?

Sammie *somewhat sour* Yes. Trev is a mate of my brother's.

Joss You no like?

Sammie No. Me no like.



Joss                      He's reported as missing, too. At about the same date: last Tuesday evening.

Sammie *acerbic* I'm genuinely surprised that anyone would bother to call in Trev as a missing person. He's a serial pest from a dysfunctional family. It's like: "Let's throw a party – Trev's nicked off".

*Joss grins and makes a cat-like growling noise.*

Joss                      You certainly no like.

## THE SUBSTITUTE DINNER

*[Page 84] Trent (wandering about aimlessly) is extremely drunk. He buttonholes Charles who happens to cross Trent's path.*

Trent *slurring*                      Are you um ... Do you um ... Are you able to arkse a quezzy to the Prezzie?

Charles *pleasant*                      If you tell me the nature of the question, Sir, I'll tell you if I'm able to help you out.

Trent *aggressive*                      Well, I want ya to arkse that bloke from ... The Prez ... You know ... why our flag is in the corner of the Hawaii flag. Do we own Hawaii or somethink? Arkse him that. For me, will ya?

*Charles almost loses his aplomb. However, he rallies quickly.*

Charles *tactful*                      That may not be --

Trent *getting very worked up*                      I played in the Hawaii Marksters and I done good. I think I come third ... No! fourth ...

But no-one would tell me why they've got **our** flag in **their** flag.

So, I wanna know if those **bastards** took it off us.

Or pirates maybe ... What about the Russians? They might have--

Wayne *helpful but not quite accurate*                      Mr Goodall. I've got the answer for you. The Union Jack appears in the canton of our Australian flag and in the canton of the Hawaiian flag as a way of honouring Captain Cook. That's the common theme. He discovered both the east coast of Terra Australis and the Pacific islands of Hawaii.

Trent *satisfied*                      Right. Good. Captain Cook ...

*[Gives strong thumbs up]*

Yeah, good upon you ...

*As Trent saunters off (muttering to himself) Charles smiles and nods to Wayne as he (Charles) rushes off.*



*[Page 44] In front of this larger audience (and positioned on the dancefloor) Murray is led to a chair. He sits and the didgeridoo is handed back to him. Charles addresses the audience.*

Charles *grand*

Your Royal Highnesses, Mr and Mrs President, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Sir Murray GulGul is a hero who valiantly saved two boys from certain death at the hands of a deranged kidnapper. His act of supreme courage was rewarded by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in that Sir Murray received the Order of Australia in her Birthday Honours.

A talented player of the didgeridoo, Sir Murray will now entertain us with a rendition of bush animals as found in Arnhem Land. Playing an instrument which was created to commemorate Federation in 1901, please welcome Sir Murray GulGul.

*There follows warm applause. Murray quickly gets into rhythm. There is a small group of musicians nearby. The drummer takes his drumsticks (upside down) and taps the ends in time to Murray's playing. We stay with this setting for maybe a minute. Murray indicates to the drummer with head nods that the addition of tapping works a treat.*



*[Page 89] Just as Taylor threatens to explode there is a knock at the door.*

*Trent wanders in. Two of the President's guards rush in after Trent and hover about (ready to leap into action if required).*

Trent

Ah! There y'are!

Are you the President of the United States of Thingo or what?

Taylor *sighs*

Yeah, well I thought I was.

Trent *with gestures*      Okay then.

Whatever was wrong with Hawaii is now all sorted out. You can go back to being confident about that. All fixed! Fixed or it's free!

Wayne Thingamebob downstairs has cleared up all the problems and outstanding issues. Nothing further to do. All clear. Close the ledger. Tig-a-lock.

Taylor *appalled*      Hawaii? What?

Trent *soothing*      Captain Cook and the flag and that – all sorted out. You can go back to sleep on that one.

### THIRD WICKET REVIEW

*[Page 5]*

Kerriane                      You threw up? How unbelievably gross!

Staffy *groans*                No. Lost my lunch. In the Gents.

Kerriane *shocked*            What? What did you say?

Staffy                        I had a (oh shit!) I had a Chicko roll in my pocket and me and me mates --

*[trying to sound more sophisticated]*

(my mates and I ... my fellow cricket aficionados and yours truly) went into the Gents for a collective slash and next thing, my Chicko roll floated away in the urinal. In the River of Piss. Bobbing about like a --

*Kerriane reels back in horror.*

Staffy *shame-faced*        I seem to remember that I tried to fish it out.

*Kerriane is appalled.*

*Staffy tries to stand and fails. He flops back into the chair with a huge groan and an even louder fart. Kerriane moves quickly away, continuing her rant. Then we see Kerriane from behind Staffy belting him across the head with a rolled-up newspaper. She passes about in the background spraying Glen20.*

Kerriane                      So! I've been ringing and ringing and ringing your phone. And that mysterious, weird lady's disembodied voice keeps telling me that you are unavailable. So! What's that all about? I mean you never don't answer your phone.

Staffy *reasoning*            You can buy a pack of 4 frozen Chickos for around \$5 or \$6. At the SuperDooperMarket ... What's that come to ... ?

*Staffy punches numbers into a calculator on the laptop screen.*

Kerrienne Your **phone!** I urgently needed to --

Staffy That's in the realm of \$1.50 each. \$1.50 each! Do you know what I paid for that sucker? \$8.00! That's highway robbery. The Queen should knight the Cronulla Ladies' Auxiliary for services to rip-offs.



[Page 35]

Male #1 *voice-off* Ah ... Something has obviously been said. Thornside has evidently taken ... oh dear ... Thornside must have taken offence at something that has been said. Unfortunately, the captain of the South African side has a nasty habit of ... oh dear ...

*To the total surprise of everyone Hal shoves the end of his bat (which he had lately been banging into the ground) towards the stomach of Hauer. Hauer however reacts quickly to the intended assault, grabbing the bat in his hands. Hauer pushes Hal back (via the bat). The announcers try to give a calm coverage of this unusual savagery but are unable to do so. The push and shove and the shouting on field continue.*

Male #2 *voice-off* I'm sorry. Apologies to all viewers around the world for this ... um ... spectacle. I would prefer that we go to an ad break now (if that's possible) ...



[Page 44] *A note of alarm is now discernible in the voices of the commentators.*

Male commentator #2 *voice-off* Disgraceful! I don't think that this can be tolerated ... We've witnessed some very distasteful behaviour not normally seen on a cricket pitch ...

The Umpire must intervene here. This is beyond what is acceptable in a game of cricket. These two men will be coming to blows at any second. It's disgraceful ... It really is.

This clearly brings the game of cricket into disrepute and is quite unacceptable. No better than sheer thuggery.

- Male commentator #1 I must admit to being somewhat appalled. And perplexed!  
*voice-off* What I can't understand is what Thornside thinks he can get out of this. What can he achieve? How can he --
- Ah, the Umpire has touched Thornside on the elbow and is indicating the dressing room to him.
- Male commentator #2 This is very awkward. The Umpire should never have had to go  
*voice-off* to these lengths in order to call a halt to ugly scenes, such as we've witnessed in this session.



[Page 86]

- Paluke-Joshua Every time I mention the possibility of you having sexual  
*impatient* intercourse with untried nubile girls, you salivate. Are you crazed, boy?
- Oringshay *shrugs* No ... I wouldn't say that ...
- But that was my favourite subject in my sorcery classes. I always got good marks for screwing virgins – more than for any other subject. You know – I'm really good at it!.



[Page 50]

- Luke *urgent* Wait a minute! The captain of the Proteas punched you?
- Hal Sure. That's what I said. I gotta have a shower.
- Hal goes to move off again and is again corralled.*
- Matt Hang on, will you?
- Luke But ... But you never said --
- Hal He's going to be the special guest on tomorrow night's cricket show. I know this because he rang me tonight just as I was leaving the hotel to come here. Told me all about it. And you

know what the prick is going to do? He's going to announce to the cricket-lovers of the world that he king-hit me.

*[To each man in turn]*

He's going to say that he started it and finished it.

Live to air.

On the TV show.

Tomorrow night.

*There is a ghastly hush. Hal nods to the four men before he heads for the showers.*

Josh *awestruck*,                      You're joking ...  
*whispers*

*Hal turns towards his fellow countrymen just as he is about to disappear into the Gents.*

Hal *dour*                              And the word "War" will be mentioned.



## TORRES STRAIT

*[Page 7]*

*JP delivering the end of an anecdote*

... anyway, he didn't have a bloody clue which road to take in Sydney (he was from Adelaide) so he hired a taxi to drive to the wharf and followed him in the semi-trailer. Paid a taxi to lead the way! That's a dead-set fact!

*The men laugh amiably.*

*JP winding down*

There's a taxi with no passengers whizzing around Sydney, closely followed by a South Australian hick truckie in a Mack truck.

*Mark nods. JP becomes thoughtful.*

*JP*

If I was in my usual rude good health, we'd be leaning on the bar in some hotel or other, drinking lager beer and laughing too loudly, amidst a pall of cigarette smoke. That's all gone now ... Everything's trendy and sissy and no-one's allowed to smoke unless they can find a clump of pampas grass to hide behind. God I hate what they've done to the world!

*Mark*

I can remember when I was a little tacker being taken to the pub with Dad. I barely came up to their knees: all the tradies and workmen. There was a smell of beer and ciggie smoke. And the noise of all those blokes talking at once was overpowering.



*[Page 91]*

*Mark*

I can give you a life. That's easy done.

Do you want to tango with me in the horizontal plane?

*Sheryn confused*

Aeroplane? What?

Mark No. Two-dimensional plane. Rumpy-pumpy. Rooty-tooty. Having a naughty. Swinging the wedding tackle. Throwing the leg over. Letting sweet Nature have her way. You know: that stuff. Man woman. On the beach.

Sheryn *amused* What did that old buzzard say to you?

Mark JP?

Sheryn Of course JP! No! I mean Arthur Askey. Come on, out with it! What did that miserable whinger say to you?

Mark *shrugs* Not much ...

Sheryn About screwing me on the beach?

Mark Yes ... That was to be my highlight of this trip, actually. I wouldn't have bothered to come here but for that.

Sheryn *laughing* Do you have the slightest idea what –

Mark What about over there, in the shade of those pandanus palms?

Sheryn Some people call them "screw pines". How utterly appropriate! Alright ... We'll strip off everything and lay all the clobber on the ground, and then lie on top of the clothes. To avoid getting sand into our pink grotty bits.

Mark Fine! Do you want the top berth? The power position?

Sheryn Yes, but ... But my tits will swing in your face.

Mark *chuckles* Great! Let's go!



*[Page 148] The camera backs away further. A Roman artist is using a piece of charcoal on parchment. He creates a lightning sketch of Tudio.*

Roman Artist                      Sorry, Sir. Not much longer. As this sketch is intended for statuary, I will need to capture the dimensions, as well as the look.

May I compliment you on your horse? A magnificent beast!

*Tudio looks pleased and tries to improve on both the physicality of the pose, and the smile. The artist, with a few more strokes, is finished.*

Roman Artist                      There you are, Sir. Thank you for your patience. I only hope that our marble effigy does you and your mount justice.

*Tudio pats Acron. He nods to a slave, who grabs Acron's reins and walks the animal off. Meanwhile, Tudio stretches, and strides up to the artist.*

Tudio                                  Give us a decko.

*Tudio inspects the finished sketch.*

Tudio *pleased*                      Not bad! That even looks like me ...

Roman Artist                      Sir, have you considered changing your cognomen to "Gallicus"? Following in the footsteps of "Scipio Africanus"?

Tudio                                  No, mate ... I can't.

Roman Artist                      Oh ... that's a pity! I should have liked to see the bronze plate on the finished statue lauding your triumph.

Tudio *somewhat shamefaced*                      Yeah ... would have been good. But the Missus and her sisters have just finished embroidering some tunics ... you know

*[Gestures to indicate a slogan]*

**"Tribulates -- Go You Good Thing!"** Can't let 'em down ...



*[Page 176]*

Caesar *calling back to Paul in resonating tones* Caesar is an eagle who laughs at the fierce, burning Sun and who scorns the terror of the storm.  
Fly, Tudio! Take wing! Soar above these mortal men and take all the glory this little world can offer.

Paul *savagely gritting his teeth* For Caesar! For Rome!

*Paul braces himself. He strides forward at a run towards Caesar, and leaps into the air on reaching him. He launches himself up from the back of Caesar's horse. With this spectacular mark, Paul grabs the ball, as it skims over the tops of the many outstretched fingers of the other players going for the mark. Tightly gripping the ball, Paul falls earthwards, his fall being broken by other players. Paul lands with a loud "Whoof!". He is hauled to his feet by Wondong players, who scream at him in a jumbled confusion. [Later, the replays will show McDermid climbing up the backs of players to take the mark, rather than on Caesar's horse.]*

Allan Bryant *voice-over, screaming* McDermid has marked! He's taken an absolute screamer! The siren will blow at any second. That's it for Croydon; they can't win now. All Macca's fellow Wondong players have rushed up, urging him to be calm. He walks back to take his kick -- But it's all over, it's all over ...

## WONDERLINGS

[Page 121] "Oh, I'm sure Lady Steers-Barclay will run about and manage something. I say, you're not a 'keeper, by any chance? We're rather short of a wicket-keeper just now. Gerry unfortunately took our last 'keeper, although in all honesty I found that his mind was never wholly on the game."

Reg responded: "Bad luck." He was thoroughly sick of this messing about, so he gave it up. Without any further effort at grace and refinement, he took the whole wedge of cake and shoved it into his mouth in one go. Thankfully, if anyone had seen him, they chose to turn away. When he was finally able to speak again without spraying cakecrumbs on his audience, Reg assured the Vicar of his delight at the prospect of squatting frog-like behind the batsman, risking life and limb.

"Splendid!" the older man crowed, before he and his satellite trailed off to find another victim.



[Page 21] At this time, the Bower contained a bench and some stools. Eorl, the Mere Folk chieftain, looked very stern. Through his long, grey beard, he asked: "Elwyd, are you willing in your own mind to take this woman, Fynne, to wife? Say to all who can hear you that you have come into this Bower willingly, and without duress."

The tall young man nodded, as he stepped forward. "I have come freely to this wedding."

The old eyes turned to the bride. "Let no man constrain any girl to part with her maidenhead unless she be fully and wholly in agreement to be wed. Does Fynne come willingly and without force of any kind, from any man or woman to Elwyd's love?"

Wulfes spoke. "She does."

Hildoffa, chief of the Hill Folk, stepped forward, to address Wulfes. "What does the daughter of good-Gress-that-was bring to the marriage?"

Wulfes enumerated the 2 milking cows, 2 pigs, 6 bushels of grain and the 8 fleeces that comprised Fynne's dowry. Hildoffa already knew this, but it was necessary to publicly enumerate the bride-goods.

"A goodly stash", nodded Hildoffa. "Let these two join hands in wedlock."

Then, in great solemnity, the three chieftains guided Fynne towards her bridegroom. There was a moment of panic as the girl drew back. The three older men, practised and patient, easily dealt with these bridal nerves. Elwyd, however, had to master his trembles on his own, for his side (his half-brother Cempa) was off somewhere on the black stallion, and had not been seen since the previous night. Soon, Elwyd had captured the two little hands between his, whilst around this link, the chieftains entwined their own hands and arms in a symbolic rope.

Hildoffa spoke loudly, so that the crowd outside could hear him. "By the covenant of the god Seaxneat, these two shall be known as man and wife so long as they both live."

Eorl followed with: "Let no man nor woman come betwixt or between this pair in their wedlock, until the cold earth swallow up the one or the other."



[Page 170] Sitting side-by-side in the gloom, Arthur grabbed the girl's hands in his. "Quick. I've such a lot to tell you. Those people. Those folk from the Old Times whom you've all been dreaming about. They're tormenting me. Daily now. It's become much more frequent."

Anne could not disguise her shock: "**What?**"

"Just today, I was heading for Major Tonkin's office, when your cousin rushed toward me. He was dressed à la Saxon, carrying a spear and buckler. Charles literally pushed me out of the way, in the manner of protecting me from something. Just as well he did, I suppose. For then, I felt the blade of a large, menacing sword swoosh by us, just shaving our heads. It only lasted an instant, a split second."

"But ..." Anne was lost for words.

"Quick as lightning, I jumped to my feet. A couple of chappies nearby laughed at me. You know ... telling me to 'Mind your step, Beau', as if I'd simply tripped. No mention of Charles, or of the mystery swordsman, which they naturally would have done if they'd seen them. I'm not being very clear, am I?"

Anne was enthralled. "You say that my cousin sprang out of nowhere, bringing you to ground, just in time to save you from slaughter. Then instantly he was gone?"

The Captain took a long breath. "So, I just pretended to laugh it off. But when I squatted down to retrieve my folder and pen, there were samples of mine and Thorrock's hair lying about. And if you look here, you can see where some of my hair is missing." Charles pointed vaguely towards the right side of his head. "I should imagine that Thorrock has a bit of a bald patch, too."

"But, Arthur, that's just impossible!"

"No more impossible than you and I having a wedding night together before we'd actually met."