

**And as the man could have said: "Let's get ready to crumble!"**

**Our many graverobbers converge on Crete for the fabulous**

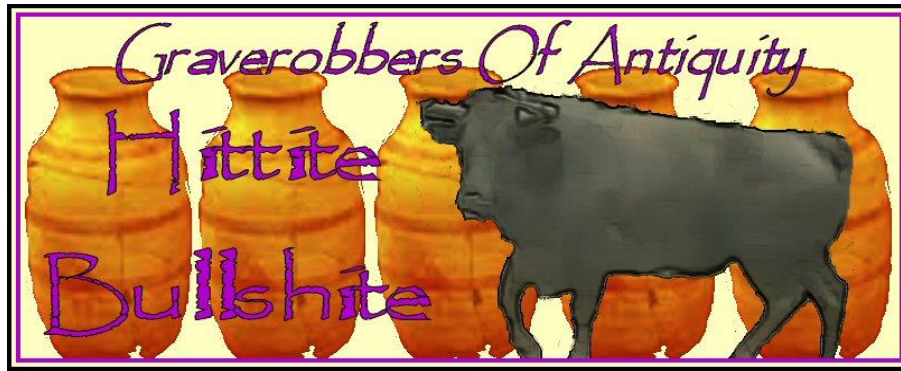
**Leather and Pigskin championship.**

**King Jethrodates is also involved in the final crisis**

**as eagles, lions and bulls run amok in Spain.**

**This is the third (and last) episode of the Graverobbers Trilogy.**

**Enjoy the fun!**



## PROLOGUE and ACT I

### PROLOGUE

**Scene i:** Vincent's bucolic cottage in Ousel, Spring 1934.

*This is a dream sequence: Vincent is dreaming.*

*We see the interior of a very sweet but untidy French cottage. The sun streams through the windows.*

*Vincent, whistling through his teeth, puts the finishing touches to his invention. It is a misshapen, highly coloured machine, which he starts with a crank-handle. When started, the engine makes a very loud chugging sound, and emits sundry noises, steam, smoke and dust.*

*With a frightening crash, the machine runs amok and destroys the front wall of Vincent's house, then slams across the cobbled road of his village (Ousel), causing widespread chaos.*

*Vincent screams after it. He does everything he can to stop the wild progress of the machine while people shout and scream at him in French. Then, there is absolute silence, although the people still seem to be yelling.*

*A beautiful and sexy girl slinks up (wearing a silken sheath) and then she grabs Vincent's overall. Without pause, she kisses him passionately. Vincent responds immediately and whole-heartedly. The kiss goes on and on, while the villagers seem to rant at him in silence. Their faces are reminiscent of a film-noir nightmare sequence.*

*... And then Vincent wakes up.*

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*In his small, but adorable bedroom, again with the sun streaming through lace curtains, Vincent gets out of bed, drags on his dressing gown and strides over to the wall which he inspects. There is no damage. Vincent smiles, and shakes his head.*

*The cottage is cluttered and untidy, but it could be sweet and charming with care and attention. Vincent stands with his hands deep in his pockets and sighs loudly.*

*Then Vincent goes to the dust-encrusted china cabinet (in which there are only a couple of discoloured football trophies and a riding crop). Thereon stands the photo of the four friends (which we saw in ACT IV of the first movie). He reminisces over the photo.*

Vincent longs to return to his life in Cairo.
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*Vincent whispers to himself in a dreamy voice.*

Vincent                      Egypt ... I want to go back to Cairo ...

*Vincent sighs heavily as he wanders about, aimlessly.*

*He opens his front door and inspects his small, grotesque garden, which is choked with weeds. A massive grape vine covers the porch. The village is a superb, bucolic affair with cobblestone streets. Vincent's hands are jammed firmly in the pockets of his dressing gown as he watches the village folk drift by. Again, Vincent discusses his situation with himself: meditative.*

*Vincent looks up as he watches a small flock of birds fly by.*

Vincent                      Ah ... to fly as do the birds ...

I could fly to Cairo, if that could be arranged ...

Or I shall marry the worthy and affluent Mademoiselle Caronforse.  
A true daughter of France who will undoubtedly turn me into her  
fawning lapdog.

*He rocks back and forth on the balls of his feet.*

Vincent                      Or at least, make her an offer. She'll refuse me, *naturellement*. I'm

not good enough to marry her, this goddess.

*Vincent looks about in the sky for more birds. There are not any to be seen. He sighs.*

*Vincent wanders back inside, leaving the door open so that the morning sunlight streams into the cottage. He strolls back to the china cabinet, his hands still jammed into his pockets, and stands looking thoughtfully at the framed photograph of a girl with a very stunning Gallic face.*

Vincent                    I'll make her an offer which she may in all probability accept.  
Regrettably, I have led her to believe that my loneliness is  
shrouded in my love for her. My fault. I blame myself. And so, we  
march onwards ...

*Vincent sighs once again as he wanders to the cabinet nearby and randomly takes a coin from a cracked bowl of coins thereon. Vincent prepares to flip the coin.*

Vincent                    Heads, I return in triumph to Egypt. And tails, I tie myself neck  
and crop to a very good young Frenchwoman, who will be a  
comfort to me in my old age, and bear me many, many sons.

*He flips the coin and studies the result.*

Vincent *whispers*                    Tails.

*[Aloud]*

Best of three then.

*He flips again. And then again.*

Vincent *frowning*                    Alright ... just to be fair, best of five ...

*He flips, and stares for some time at the result.*

Vincent                    So, I will propose to Mademoiselle Caronforse **after** I return from  
Cairo. Perhaps I should write to the lady.

*Pleased with himself, Vincent chucks the coin back into the bowl.*

Vincent                    Dingo ... I'm Phoenician. I wonder if I'm the same man: so strong  
and brave. An ancient graverobber from Phoenicia with arms of

steel and nerves to match.

Was I indeed *Monsieur le Dingo*? Yes I was, and named after the so brave native dog of *Australie*.

*Vincent seems to stand taller. He draws his dressing-gown belt tighter around his waist, and marches quickly into his bedroom, where he hauls a battered suitcase down from on top of the wardrobe. As he chucks a variety of clothes into the suitcase, he muses over his own situation, and his future.*

Vincent I'll start off by telephoning to Martin Leveque. He may want to accompany me on my glorious quest.

Or he may not.

It's no matter if he does or does not, for I can leave Martin to his own devices, and call on the redoubtable Roland Ferrier.

Ferrier was always my friend. A true friend, a noble officer of the corps and a fine gentleman. Wise and clever.

But ... he's only just married, no?

*Vincent sits down on the bed, his eyes and voice dreamy.*

Vincent Lying in bed, in the Middle East, on this inspiring morning, with the sun beaming onto his pillow. That bride beside him in his bed, naked and soft ...

*Vincent shakes his head violently. He speaks very fast, as if to clear away his thoughts.*

Vincent *revolted by his imaginings* No, no, no, no, no! And no! Not Roland.

And for the same reason, not Miles.

Heh ... What to do?

Ah, *oui*. Martin Leveque ... I will not waste time on the telephone.

I will immediately visit his domicile in person. *Toute suite!*

*The camera rushes from the sunlit country cottage into the garden. Vincent's modest car is visible behind some bushes.*

SEQUE IMMEDIATELY INTO NEXT SCENE

**Scene ii:** Martin's Sprawling Bungalow 1934.

*Vincent springs into his car which is parked lopsidedly in his garden. Vincent drives along pretty country roadways which provide the approach to Martin's bungalow. Vincent can vaguely be heard to be singing some popular 1930's French tune as he drives his modest motorcar along these roads.*

*The sun has risen high in the sky and Vincent's automobile drives up to the front door of Martin's bungalow. Vincent steps out, looking about him with contented ease. The bungalow is set among rolling hills, with an out-of-control garden threatening to engulf the house.*

END OF SCENE

**Scene iii:** Martin's sprawling bungalow, a darkened room 1934.

*Vincent has entered Martin's residence. He picks his way across the darkened room. He inadvertently steps on slumbering people as he gropes his way to the curtain. He apologizes but is obviously frustrated at the litter of bodies blocking his path. Finally, on reaching the curtain, he drags it noisily along its rails, allowing warm sunshine to spill into the room.*

*This action is met by moaning and restlessness among the bodies, both male and female. He turns to gaze over the throng (on the floor or draped over furniture). Empty bottles and dirty plates and so on are strewn about everywhere. There has been an all-nighter.*

Vincent *outraged*

Could this be the future of *la belle France*?

Awaken, my savages! Where is it that I may find Lieutenant Leveque, former officer of the French Army, and a gentleman of the very highest esteem?

*A female voice is heard to answer Vincent. That voice is slurring: uninterested but loud. There is a very strong French accent.*

Female voice                      Asleep in the bathtub if you must know.

Vincent *stern,*                      We'll see about that.

*purposeful*

Meanwhile, I suggest that you all rise to your feet, and make a walk to the front door. Then you can all let yourselves out.

I will inform Monsieur Leveque that you have all regrettably been forced to **leave** his premises. And that you have left your most gracious compliments to him for his so generous hospitality.

Goodbye to you all! Bohemians all of you!

*This diatribe is met with much laughter and rude cat-calling (in French).*

END OF SCENE

#### **Scene iv:** Martin's Sprawling Bungalow, The Bathroom

*The bathroom is dingy and mouldy: quite awful. Lying back in the empty bathtub, wearing only an undershirt and snoring heavily is Martin whose face sports a 5-o'clock shadow.*

*Vincent bursts in. He hovers for a moment with the door open, then his expression softens. He gently closes the door, and smiling, places a toy ocean liner strategically on Martin's groin. Then he pushes the plug into the plughole, and begins to fill the bath, feeling the temperature of the water.*

Vincent *kindly*                      Wake up, dear fellow. The sleeping is over.

Is this really the man beside whom I fought the terrors of those ancient Egyptian tombs?

*The water in the bath awakens Martin, who looks owlishly at Vincent. His mouth is so dry that he cannot speak. He can only mouth Vincent's name.*

Vincent                      You must take a quick bath, and a shave if you possibly can wield the razor without slitting your throat. I'll get you some clothes for the immediate need, and I'll pack a valise for our trip.

                                 We make for Marseilles. *Immediately.*

*Vincent nods to the bemused man, marching out of the bathroom, full of purpose. Steam rises from the bath as the water level rises. Unthinkingly, Martin pushes the ship through the water. "Toot, toot!" is all that he says.*

END OF SCENE

### **Scene v:** The Steam Train To Marseilles. 1934.

*Vincent (facing the back of the train) sits opposite Martin, who sits next to the window. The countryside of southern France flashes by. Martin looks extremely piquey, whereas Vincent is alert and hugely contented.*

Martin *ill, confused*                      So where do we go? I have already forgotten ...

Vincent                      Marseilles. And thence on the SS Cartinue to Cairo. She departs from the dock at 8 hours tonight. There are several stops on the way, which might prove diverting, but in a couple of days' time we will set down again, our feet touching the Cairo soil.

*Martin's mouth drops open. He is incredulous.*

Martin                      I don't believe you.

Vincent                      But yes! Why not?

                                 And who on Earth were all those carcasses in your home?

Martin *squints*                      Carcasses?

Vincent                      Gypsies and such like! A more discreditable bunch of reprobates



has yet to be seen. Why, one could not move from one wall to the other without stepping on hands, legs and faces.

Martin                      Reprobates ...?

Vincent                     Well?

Martin                     Er ... I recall that ... Er ... There was a rehearsal for a theatrical performance. "Salome", I think.

Vincent                     Amateur theatricals?

Martin                     I believe so. Yes, that's it. They came to my bungalow and I fed them. Then we rehearsed.

Vincent                     They were as drunk as Louis XIV's servants!

Martin                     Apparently so ... But you must know, Vincent, that I've been bitten by the bug. The theatre! Since we performed the farce with Mrs Trilbeway. I mean, Madame Renauld, as she is now. Yes ... acting is in my blood, my friend.

Vincent *unimpressed*      Pshaw! You can perform on the stage and win the *Priz de Grace* whenever you choose. But not now!

*Vincent leans forward. He is afire with energy.*

Vincent *eager*                *Ecoutez-moi!* That rich young woman who has been making the chase after me for so many months has now finally caught me. But before I make the most advantageous of matches with this *belle femme*, I must be in Egypt once ... just **once** more!

Then she can have me – and good luck to her!

Martin *nods*                 Ah! ... The marriage ...

Vincent                     Exactly so.

Martin                     And the beauties Egyptian.

Vincent                     *Oui.*

Martin *nods wisely*            Good! It is clear to me now. That is why we shall voyage to Egypt.  
That is why we must cross the Mediterranean one last time.

Vincent *pleased*            I'm so glad that we are in total agreement.

*Camera backs off from the men and takes in the journey of the train through the countryside from a distance.*

*And then into the titles.*

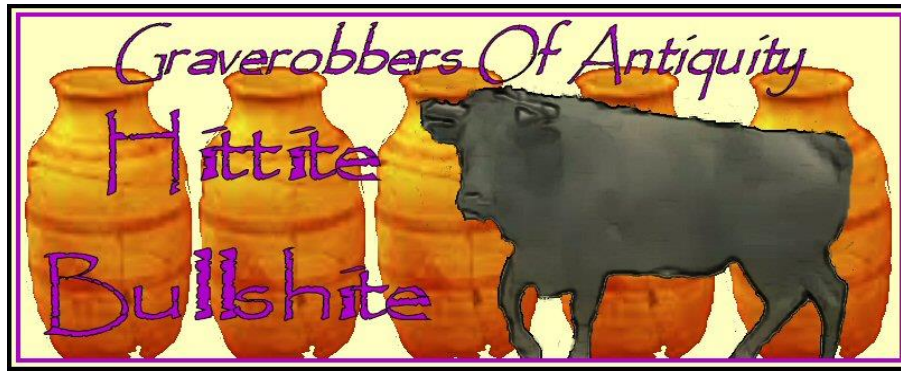
**OPENING TITLES & CREDITS**

*The titles and credits can roll through here, while the two French gentlemen make their way to Cairo.*

*Magnificent music as we follow the journey of the steam train through the French scenery and on to Marseilles.*

*Then, we find Vincent and Martin on board the SS Cartinue, strolling about on deck. Vincent leads the way. As they pass other passengers, Vincent raises his hat and bows. Then Vincent strolls on: smug and self-important. But Martin is more inclined to stop and chat, especially to the pretty girls.*

*Last of the credits and wind-up of the music finds Vincent and Martin walking easily down the gangplank. The ship has docked at the Port of Cairo.*



## ACT I

### **I, Scene i:** The Hotel Excelsior, Cairo 1934.

We meet the overwhelming Adeline at the Hotel Excelsior in Cairo.

*Adeline leads the way into the Hotel Excelsior, Cairo. It is very grand, formal and well-appointed, in the manner of British-run 5-star hotels of the 1930's.*

*The patrons wandering about in the large, ostentatious reception area turn to stop and stare at her.*

*She is a bosomy but well-proportioned: very beautiful woman, with her fair hair tied back in a bun.*

*On her head is a pith helmet complete with khaki veil. She wears a manly shirt and cravat, vest and 1930's-style jacket (the sort that is fitted with back gathers and a back "belt"). Jodhpurs and long riding boots complete the ensemble, and she carries a riding crop. She has a monocle on a cord around her neck, and from her belt swings a large bag, filled with maps, compass, and so on.*

*Adeline's voice is a rich, honeyed contralto, with a smooth, enchanting French accent.*

*Her cargo of luggage is severe, corded and heavy. She clicks her fingers imperatively at those servants who follow her. A retiring female companion is seen in the background.*

Adeline                      In here. *Vite, vite!*

*She marches up to the reception counter and rings the little bell sharply.*

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*Adeline pronounces "Service!" in the French manner. The Maitre d'Hotel has a decided English accent.*

Adeline                      *Service! Service!*

*A busy hotel Maitre d'Hotel in uniform bustles up to the counter.*

Maitre d'Hotel              Pardon me, Miss. May I assist you?

Adeline                      I call myself the Mademoiselle Caronforse. Are the rooms I ordered ready for my occupation?

Maitre d' bows              Of course, ma'am.

Adeline                      Good. And the private salon would be ... ?

*The Maitre d'Hotel begins moving about purposefully. He signals to the hotel porter and to other servants with eyes and head movements. They obey promptly.*

Maitre d'                      Please follow me, ma'am. I'll have the waiter attend you. No doubt you are requiring refreshment after your journey. Your servants and baggage will be taken to your rooms, never fear. Everything quite in order.

*The Maitre d'Hotel holds the salon door open for Adeline. As she enters the salon, Adeline stops in the doorway and addresses the Maitre d'Hotel.*

Adeline                      When the Frenchman Lorent arrives, you will direct him to this salon, *s'il vous plaît*. He calls himself the Vincent Lorent.

Maitre d' bows, solemn      But of course, ma'am.

*Adeline enters the salon and the door closes behind her.*

oooooooooooooooooooooooooooo **Break** ooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

*Vincent, dusty and sweaty rushes into the hotel. He looks about him, keen and excited.*

*He walks smartly to the counter. Another man (assistant to the Maitre d'Hotel) is checking some lists. He looks up as Vincent approaches.*

Vincent                      *Alors, my name is Vincent Lorent. I was summoned here. Perhaps Captain Ferrier is ... ?*

Clerk                        *No, assuredly, it is not a "captain" who awaits you Monsieur, but a very dignified lady. She has booked the best parlour and is to be found there at this very moment. May I direct you, Monsieur?*

*Vincent searches for inspiration. It comes.*

Vincent                      *Ah! A lady? Not perhaps Madame Ferrier? I most certainly hope so.*

*The clerk leaves the reception desk and ushers Vincent to the salon.*

Clerk                        *Here, sir. The lady awaits within.*

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene ii: Private Salon in The Hotel Excelsior, Cairo 1934.**

*Vincent steps into the salon. Adeline (her hat and veil removed) is posed at the mantelpiece, one foot on the fender, in a somewhat manly stance. Her head is back as she theatrically takes a drag on a cigarette which sits in a mother-of-pearl cigarette holder. She turns her gaze towards Vincent and looks him up and down in a measuring way.*

*Vincent is floored. He hardly knows what to say.*

*Adeline reaches over to a small bell on the mantelpiece, and rings it sharply. An Egyptian servant enters and bows humbly.*

Adeline *imperative*              *Two dry sherries. And a cigar of Cuba for my companion.*

*The servant bows again and disappears through the door. Vincent clears his throat, attempting to open a conversation with the overwhelming young woman.*

Vincent                      *Mademoiselle Caron*forse ... My dearest Adeline.

Adeline                      Thank you for joining me here, Lorent. Won't you sit?

*She gestures to the furniture. They both relax into cane chairs. Adeline retrieves a folded letter from her pocket.*

Adeline                      We must discuss **this** correspondence which I received from you prior to my embarking on my journey to Cairo.

*Adeline flips the letter onto a nearby coffee table. Vincent stares at this letter. He becomes weak at the needs and trembles.*

Vincent                      It is my proposal of marriage to you, my own Adeline, couched in the very humblest, most heartfelt language which I could muster.

*They are interrupted by the servant. After the business of the drink-waiter, Vincent and Adeline salute each other silently with the sherry glasses. Vincent signals to the man that the bottle should be left within his reach. Then there is the business of lighting the cigar. Vincent savours the cigar and it seems to calm him somewhat. He relaxes. Before the servant has had time to efface himself, Adeline responds.*

Adeline                      As to your marriage proposal: that is absolutely not possible. If I feel for you the love, the ardour, the heat ...

*[Her hand goes to her bosom]*

... then I school my mind to govern these thoughts and crush them.

Vincent *gasps*              Adeline! *Mon ange* ...

*Vincent (in shock) claps his own hand to his heart.*

Adeline                      It was not your ridiculous proposal which aroused my interest, Lorent.

It was Cairo. To set off for Cairo, and to visit this city (at once historic yet beautiful) has become my heart's only desire.

I sent word to your charming villa, to advise you of my

movements, only to discover that you also had evacuated France for this place.

*Ainsi*, I come.

Vincent *confused*,  
*crest-fallen*

And so my proposal of marriage has been refused, *ma chère* Adeline?

*Adeline sips sherry. She deals with Vincent in a casual, off-hand manner. She is almost brutally frank.*

Adeline

But of course. What could be more natural? Even though my heart beats strongly in my bosom to think of your manly form (you *primitif!*) ... yet, refuse I must.

Now, onto the glories of Egypt. Where must I start? Where do I find the treasures?

*Vincent is utterly deflated. He tugs at his collar.*

Vincent

Ah, well ... as to that ... There are of course museums ... I could escort you --

Adeline

*Bon!* But, we may have to soil our hands as the archaeologists do. That is to say, we might be forced to dig.

*Adeline is a drama queen: she leans in towards Vincent.*

Adeline

You may not be aware, Lorent, that I had my fortune told to me by a viperous old gypsy woman. Oh, it was many weeks ago now; at a *fête* in your so charming village of Ousel. There she sat, in a mean little tent, swathed in many shawls, gazing at the Tarot cards. Pshaw! Such stuff!

**"Gold", she said in her throbbing voice. "A wealth of gold buried deep within the rocks will be yours, my dear girl."**

That's what she told to me. Huh! So, if one believed in that alluring trash, one would come to the Land of the Nile to see for one's self. *N'est-ce pas?*



*Vincent has faded to the point where he is making conversation just for the sake of it.*

Vincent                      And no doubt some gold passed from you to her in payment for this sage advice?

*Adeline is enjoying herself. She shrugs as she sits back in her chair, looking mischievous.*

Adeline                      *Oui. It did. Naturellement.*

And if you tell to me that a fool and his money are soon parted, I'll thrash you with my riding crop.

*Adeline grins: she is joking. Vincent is not sure however that this is so. He pauses in the act of refilling his glass.*

Vincent                      May God strike me down if such a thought should ever --

Adeline                      You'll dine with me here at the Excelsior tonight, yes?

Vincent                      I'd like that. *Merci.*

Adeline                      We'll make our plans then. Er ... Do you stay here also?

Vincent                      Me? The Excelsior?

No, no ... too rich for my blood. No, Martin and I are less than adequately quartered at the Sadi Raf Hotel. Martin jokingly names it "The Sausage Raft". It smells that bad, so he may be right.

*Adeline nods as she stands to go to the mantle. The business of placing a cigarette in the holder enthrals Vincent.*

Adeline                      I must suppose that this Sadi Raf place reminds you a bit of your Army days; of the crude quarters you brave men shared?

Vincent                      Just so ...

*For the first time we hear warmth in Adeline's voice.*

Adeline                      How my heart ached to think of you risking your life in those times for the Tricolour. You were my hero then. I wanted to rip open my bodice and crush your precious head to my breast.

*At these words, Vincent almost chokes on his cigar, and resorts to more sherry. Adeline begins to pace about the room.*

Adeline                      So, I will wear a lovely peacock blue gown this evening, and we'll dance until our feet ache. And eat the most sumptuous of meals. And drink vintage *champagne*.

                                    I wonder if they have heard of the "high life" in Cairo.

                                    That may pull you out of this ill-humour which I find has settled on your brow.

*Vincent is anything but happy at the treats which Adeline has in store for him.*

Vincent                      *Oui, Adeline ... Just so ...*

*Vincent looks up, sad-faced and utterly crushed.*

END OF SCENE

### **I, Scene iii: A Back Street At Night, Cairo 1934.**

*Martin stands in a Cairo back street. All kinds of unsavoury people pass by, watching him.*

*He stands outside the dingy Sadi Raf Hotel, lighting a cigarette. He looks about quickly, not displaying any fear but nevertheless, wary. He strides off up the street, and we follow him to what passes in Cairo for a taxi rank. After a few Egyptian words flung in through the open window, Martin gets into the cab and it slowly takes off.*

Martin (as passenger in a taxi) reviews his situation.
--

*Martin looks out of the taxi window, talking to his reflection In so doing, the driver believes that Martin is conversing with him. Martin sets him right.*

Martin *to himself*              Phaw! Such a stench, that hotel.

So, my friend dines in state at the Excelsior. *Bien sur!* Such style and magnificence is his.

But my lucky star found me stamping my feet in the most disreputable quarter of old Cairo.

Driver *to Martin*

*Non parlez Français.* No speak. No speak.

Martin *annoyed*

Keep driving, you! Never mind about me. The only wholesome soul available to me is myself. So, I discuss my problems with my most dedicated auditor: *moi-même*.

*Tiens!* I'll be lucky to survive the evening without having my throat slit, either by myself or by some other mortal.

*[Gestures irritably]*

Drive on!

END OF SCENE

#### **I, Scene iv:** At Mahala's, Same Night, Cairo 1934.

*The taxicab comes to a stop at what was Mahala's house, in outer Cairo. Martin knocks firmly on the solid door. [Note: the servant is new and has not yet met the Ferriers. There is a misunderstanding: Martin is admitted and given the drugged cigarettes due to the servant mistakenly believing that Martin is Roland.]*

Martin

At least here I will receive a warm welcome, no doubt.

*The new male Egyptian servant answers the door. He has never met Martin before.*

Male Egyptian servant

**Subtitle: Are you the French officer who has married the daughter of Mahala, who was mistress here?**

*Translate those words into Egyptian.*

*Martin's knowledge of Egyptian allows him to understand every word of the servant's speech.*

Martin                      Is Mahala's daughter at home? I desire an audience with the lady, if you please. Perhaps Captain Ferrier is also in residence?

Egyptian servant           **Subtitle: And you are that French officer, are you, sir?**  
**Truth is, we are not permitted to admit any other than the esteemed Ferrier.**

*Translate those words into Egyptian.*

Martin                      Did you say Ferrier? Roland Ferrier? Yes, of course I know him well. Take me to him.

*The servant is relieved, thinking that Martin has identified himself as Roland Ferrier. So the servant steps aside to welcome the guest.*

Egyptian servant           **Subtitle: Welcome to you, Officer Ferrier. The cigarettes are in the box as described to you previously. We have been strictly instructed *NOT* to touch them on pain of death.**

*Translate those words into Egyptian.*

Martin *to himself*           Talkative *garçon*, that one.  
  
*[To the servant.]*  
  
Where are the Ferriers? Are they out?

*The servant does not understand. He gestures to the other room, where the cigarette box awaits Roland Ferrier.*

Egyptian servant           *Les fumées.*  
  
*gestures*

Martin                      Don't mind if I do. And a drink.

*Martin performs a mime of drinking.*

*The servant gets the idea. He nods and leaves the room. Martin follows him.*

*Martin is supplied with a drink of brandy. The ormolu box in which are to be found the three*

*cigarettes is pointed out to him by the servant, who bows his way out, leaving Martin alone. Unlike his usual sunny temper, Martin is in a dark mood.*

Martin *browned-off* This is a wretched affair. There I was, portraying with such evil menace, such lust, the very personification of King Herod, who leered from his throne upon the sensuous Salome as she performed the Dance of the Seven Veils for him. Cavorting before the evil king for the head of *Jean Baptiste*.

But before one could speak "Jack Straw", the so affable, so valiant ex-officer Vincent Lorent descends upon one in one's ablutions and whisks one off to Egypt. The SS Cartinue, was it? Huh! A bucket!

*Eh puis!* My role of Herod will be taken over (no doubt!) by the stocky Oscar de Frais. Ah! He comes up only so far as my armpit. But that is fine ... so long as Lorent is happy to drag me here ...

That same Lorent then dumps one unceremoniously into a Sausage Raft Hotel, and so on, and so on, leaving the guest such that Lorent may now follow his own expensive interests. Well, his Adeline reminds me too much of a Teutonic heroine. May they both rot!

*[Snaps his fingers]*

*Ça va!* To Hell with you, Monsieur Vincent Lorent! And the same goes for that goddess, Caronforse.

*Martin swills down the brandy. Then he spies the ormolu cigarette box.*

Martin Give me those cigarettes.

*Martin scrounges around in the ormolu box and removes the entire contents of the box. That is, he takes three roll-your-owns.*

Martin Not Craven-A, but then the meek of this noble world cannot expect the tailor-mades.

My God! If Lorent were to walk into this room now, I'd give him such a *coup de poing*, and right in the schnoz, too.

I'll have one for now and save the other two.

*Martin has worked himself into a fine old mood. When he speaks now, it is with heavy sarcasm.*

Martin                      *Merci, Roland and Dorothea. Merci, Vincent and Adeline.*

*Martin pockets the two extra smokes. However, the third cigarette will be smoked immediately.*

*Martin stretches out for the candle and lights the smoke. He draws back deeply, and finally looks contented There is a brandy bottle nearby. He refills the brandy balloon, and smoking contentedly, wanders about in the room, warming the glass in his hands.*

*Taking another deep draw from the smoke, Martin suddenly stops dead. His voice is now hardly more than a whisper.*

Martin                      Good God! I've felt this lightness before ...

**FLASH-BACK TO FILM I, ACT III, scene iv -- actually lifted from that earlier film.**

#### **ACT III Scene v: Egypt 1931. Martin Leveque's quarters in the palace in Cairo**

**The room is large and comfortable, furnished sparsely but substantially. In the middle of the room, Martin stands, wearing a long nightshirt. He holds a thick green glass, the contents of which he swallows down. He looks for a long time at that empty glass, smacking his lips.**

Martin                      **And now to journey to Egypt, to raid the tomb of the mighty Pharaoh Anoheth. To be the lynchpin around which all the other actors play. The brave and strong Ferule. He laughs at danger, and scorns despair.**

***[Yawns mightily]***

**And above all, this man-mountain craves the sleep ...**

***[Dives into his bed, under the mozzie net]***

**End of FLASH-BACK**

*Martin looks aghast. He is reliving that time of three years ago. He sees himself flying into the bed.*

*He looks at the cigarette with great suspicion. He throws it to the floor and stamps on it. Then, staring at the crushed cigarette butt, he falls limply to the floor, sending the brandy balloon rolling over the carpet, spilling its contents as it does so.*

*Music: swirling, exciting. The music gushes into the following scene but then fades off.*

END OF SCENE

**Start of MARTIN'S EXPERIENCE**

**I, Scene v:** The Antechamber Of AFT (Another Effing Tomb) Egypt 1500 BCE.

The tomb contains the mummified corpse of Queen Niverini and her fabulous grave goods.

*The men already in the tomb are: Curl, Dingo and Feral.*

*The men arriving at the tomb, entering via a narrow, dark tunnel are: Chips, Mullet, Socks and Donger.*

**Dingo's GOA Winch:**

This is a wooden contraption which looks like a siege engine.

The object is to wind up a length of very stout rope under its own "steam": using counterbalances, pulleys, etc.

Dingo will smash a pottery ball, which then proceeds to spill sand down into a pottery "bucket".

When full, the weight of the bucket will cause the winch to begin to wind up the rope.

As explained by Chips, each man is secured to the rope. The orange smoke of the counter-curses will cause the men to become disoriented and distraught, such that they will not be able to leave the tomb.

The rope therefore is intended to pull the men back into the antechamber.

The original use of the orange smoke is found in Act III of Film #1.

*Dingo is in EXACTLY the same pose as his alter-ego Vincent was right at the beginning of this film, in the Prologue: crouched over his latest invention (the winch), whistling through his teeth. Torches illuminate the antechamber. One of the torches is held by Feral, who is watching Dingo with a worried expression. Curl just watches.*

*Feral sighs, blowing as if in frustration.*

Dingo *enthralled in his work*      What are ya gettin' ecksy about? Am I boring you?

Feral *sotto voce*      Come on, will ya!

*From the tunnel, Socks calls out.*

Socks, *disembodied voice*      Ding! You there?

Dingo *still engrossed in his project, answers off-hand*      Yeah, mate.

Feral      He's here, mate.

Socks      How are they hangin'?

*Feral grins, watching Dingo.*

Dingo *still engrossed in his project, answers off-hand*      Yeah, yeah ... Long, loose and fulla juice, Socks.



*Socks, equipped with torches and ropes over his shoulder, clambers out of the tiny entrance to the antechamber.*

Socks *bright* Are ya nearly there, mate?

Dingo *snappy* Can't ya see? I'm flat-out like a lizard drinkin'.

Feral Awright, don't arc-up at everybody.

Dingo Anyhow, there's not much I can do until the rest of youse blokes get here, is there?

Feral Awright, keep yer shirt on.

Curl Here they come now.

*Mullet, bearing heavy nets and ropes, clambers out of the tunnel. He is followed by Donger and Chips. There is general pleasure and delight at their appearance. Arm-shakes and back-slapping all around, except for Dingo, who works on.*

Dingo Hey mate! How are ya? How's married life?

Mullet Yeah, it's a bloody bewdy. I'd recommend it to anyone.

Feral I 'spose you're all shagged out, are ya?

Mullet *grins* Just about.

Socks *nods in Mullet's direction* He reckons he come here to have a break.  
*[General laughter]*

Dingo What have ya done with Doxia?

Mullet Aw, she's staying with Stiffy and Debbie at the vineyard.  
*[Smirks]*

She's all interested in babies and all that woman stuff. So Deb'll no doubt take her under her wing on that score.

Feral You've never potted her already?

Mullet *blushing* Yeah, matter of fact, she's up the spout. Yeah ...

*More general congratulations and back-slapping. Chips takes charge.*

Chips                      Alright, alright. We can have our bubbly chin-wag later.

Dingo: is she right, mate?

Dingo *finally stands*      As right as she'll ever be.  
*erect*

Chips Mullet, you're in charge of the counter-curses. There's about 50 of them.

Mullet                      Yeah, righto.

[illegible]

Rightio. Now I'll give you the good oil before we start so that everyone knows what's what.

Is every man securely attached to the rope? If not, you'd better get a wriggle-on.

*Those men not attached to a rope follow this direction immediately.*

Chips                      Awright ... bit of a history lesson for youse.

The chick who is buried here opened her legs for all comers – except your truly. Queen Niverini died last week from some twat disease (naturally) and we got the good oil to come down here and rake her tomb out. So here we are. This is what we gotta do in spite of the 852 curses slapped on the grave.

*All manner of rude comments and inappropriate catcalls ring out from the men. Chips makes himself heard and continues with his speech.*

Chips ***But!*** (and this is a big “but”) ...

When we did over the Cheofes grave, we used the wizard's counter-curses. And if you can remember back that far, there was an interesting side effect. We were all put into a trance by the orange smoke and couldn't control our legs. Stiffy's wife had to rescue us.

But we haven't got Debbie to help us this time. So here's the go.  
Youse all have to get into the grave quick as lightning as soon as  
Dingo gives the word. Run like stink. Grab anything decent that  
you can lift, if it isn't nailed down, and ***hold onto it for dear life!***  
Don't let go of it whatever yer do.

*There is discussion and agreement among the men. Chips has to be heard again.*

Chips

Awright brothers.

The winch thingy that Dingo has made will drag us back when the  
sands run out. Youse all know what to expect: weird and  
wonderful things will hover around, but they can't getcha 'cause of  
the counter-curses. Just grab the treasure and hold onto it.

Awright, Mull, over to you, mate.

*Mullet and Socks stand at the entrance to the tomb, removing the caps from the small packets and  
chucking them into the tomb. The other men join in. We can see through a chink in the entrance that  
the familiar plumes of orange smoke pervade the thick atmosphere of the tomb.*

Mullet *yells*

Ding, the counter-curses are away.

*Dingo raises a small hammer over the apparatus.*

Dingo *loud*

*One – two – three!*

*Dingo smashes the hammer onto the pottery ball, causing the sand to start spilling over into the  
bucket.*

Dingo *excited*

Go!

*Exciting, thrilling music.*

*The men, tied at the waist to the stout rope, race into the grave, which is tiny in comparison to tombs  
we have visited previously. The loot is piled up and this causes traffic snarls. The men all carry  
torches.*

*The men trip over each other as they snatch the goods such that the golden treasures are pinned to  
their chests. Some of them fall and roll about. Things are becoming a mess, as the rope proves a  
gigantic handicap. Also, the orange smoke makes their legs unworkable. They yell and shout.*

*Meanwhile, swarms of horrors (ghouls, ghosts, decomposing bodies in shrouds, monsters and dragons) surround them. None of the men is frightened, as they are more concerned with getting to their feet and/or keeping upright.*

Return to Dingo's apparatus in the antechamber, such that we can see the sand filling the "bucket" which nearly reaches the "kick-start" mechanism as was the intention.

Then ker-lunk! The winch kicks in and starts to noisily wind the ropes in.

*Return to the tomb. The ropes are being reined in.*

*This has the effect of dragging the men backwards. There is a pile-up at the tiny door-way and no-one can get out.*

*So we have a huge cacophony of:---*

- *the thrilling music reaching crescendo*
- *the howls and whoops of the "in-your-face" monsters*
- *the whirring of the winch*
- *the shouting and yelling of the trapped men.*

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene vi:** The Horse-Traders At The Contemplation Garden. Byblos 1500 BCE.

*Music: starts off delightful, idyllic and evocative. Later on (when the contemplator-guy is ticked off by the horse-traders) the music grinds to a grizzly stop.*

*Irrespective of whether their menfolk are relaxing in the gardens, or involved in the horse-trading, this scene opens with a lovely group of ladies (plenty of beauty and colour) under the trees, taking*

*whatever passes in those times for tea and cakes. A few children play in the background with a bevy of female slaves to attend them.*

*For the men, it is a vastly different story.*

The Contemplation Garden	The Horse-traders
<p>The garden is utterly beautiful, with lawns, shrubs, palms, statuary and seats/benches: both marble and stonework.</p> <p>It is like a mini Hanging Garden of Babylon. Truly stunning. There are peacocks and peahens, doves and fawns. Twisting paths and delightful nooks with sylvan ponds abound.</p> <p>Philosophers sit in this earthly paradise and quietly read from papyrus scrolls or clay tablets.</p> <p>Other men, with white hair and beards ponder the world, strolling about with hands behind backs, or examining the foliage.</p> <p>A large marble sign bears the clear inscription "Tranquillity Gardens of Byblos" and the music is gorgeous.</p>	<p>Against this Elysian beauty, and right in the midst of it, the horse traders have set up a market in a cobbled area at the end of some brick-dust tracks. Horses of all types are led (using jute halters) along the brick-dust to the cobbled area.</p> <p>Using seats or tree stumps as platforms, horse traders shout out prices for the animals. There is a lot of noise, conversation and shouting.</p> <p>The language is choice.</p>
<p><b>The result is that the men in the Contemplation Garden are much annoyed by the horse traders and give them dirty looks. The horse traders could not care less.</b></p>	

*An angry contemplator shouts towards the cobbled area in a refined English accent.*

Contemplator

I say! Can't you chaps keep it down?

This is supposed to be a peaceful retreat for reflection and contemplation.

*The horse-traders derive great amusement in answering back (in rough Aussie accents).*

- The horse traders
- Pull yer head in!
  - Aw, piss off!
  - Bite yer bum, pooftah!
  - Why dontcha turn yourself into a donkey and get onto yourself?

*The contemplator looks embarrassed and harassed. He wanders quickly off to another part of the garden. The music grinds to a halt here.*

*Walking along the cinder path, following a led large roan stallion, we find Dingo and Feral. They have obviously been chewing the fat about the latest grave robbery fiasco. As they near the cobblestones, the background noise intensifies. Dingo is downcast, blaming himself for the pile-up.*

Feral                                Listen! At least we got most of the gravegoods out in the end.

Dingo *downhearted*                It was a shambles.

Feral                                Chips and Donger managed to scramble out and rescue everyone.  
No sweat!

Dingo *downhearted*                It went crap.

Feral                                No, mate. The ropes were a t'riflic idea. Anyway the ghoulies and ghosts couldn't touch us, so there's no problem about getting cursed. That's a good thing.

Dingo *pissed off*                    Ahhhhhhhh ...

Feral                                We got paid. We got paid heaps. Stop smacking yerself over it.

Dingo                                Aw mate. I'm gutted. Fairly gutted, I am. The winch should have -  
-

Feral *sick of it*                    Yeah, yeah. The fucking winch was basically a good idea, but the situation was dodgy.

Dingo                                I should have --

Feral                                Look, if anyone's at fault, it's that prick wizard of Chips who can't get the counter-curses right. Pooter, they call 'im. He's yer main

offender, if anyone is.

Dingo No, I just feel --

Feral Come on, get over it, give it a rest. If I have to go over this ground again, I'll chunder a jugful.

Dingo Sorry ...

Feral Anyway, why are we going to the HorseMart? Are you after a nag?

Dingo Nuh, I've gotta see a bloke. About a numbskull.

Feral *confused* Uh?

Dingo Fergus and Callum, which is all that's left of gang #5, are pulling a swifty and a lot of heavy people are getting narky about it. They've got some racket going. Spanish bulls or something. Mullet knows all about it. I've gotta discuss options with a bloke called Asekrah. He's the second-in-command to the King of Persia, so he's pretty high up.

Somebody's gotta do somethink about the numbskull on Crete who's off-loading these dodgy bulls. Mullet reckons that he's not all that bright. When you speak to him (Mull reckons), ya need to draw diagrams, 'cause he's so clueless. Anyway, I think we've drawn the short straw. Sounds like we've been put up for the job.

Feral Wha'd ya say this bloke's name is?

Dingo The bloke on Crete? I dunno. "Dumbshit", I suppose.

Feral Naaaah, the one you've gotta meet at the HorseMart.

Dingo Oh, Asekrah. I think that's how ya pronounce it.

Feral Sounds like "Arsecrack". How ya gonna know which bloke he is?

Dingo Mullet told me that he looks like he's in pain. Stomach ulcer. And he --

*[Switches to a Texan accent]*

-- talks like this, like all the Persians do.

*[Switches back to Aussie accent; shrugs]*

Together, him and me have gotta sort out this prick on Crete. I just wish Mullet was doin' this and not me. But he spends all his time with darling Doxia now.

It'd be just like those Hittites to have a go-between who's a brick short of a load.

Feral                      Typical. Hey! Remember when they were on a suicide mission for Lady Ulpia? They couldn't even get that right.

Dingo                     Yeah. They're a sorry bunch alright.

*Dingo and Feral have reached the cobblestones, where they find a throng of men and horses. Noise of trading, arguing and the odd deep laugh and cough.*

*Looking around, Feral spots Topper with Peewee and Lion seriously studying the mouths of a pair of big, sturdy bay packhorses. He nudges Dingo, and the pair of them stroll over to Topper, Peewee and Lion. The two Phoenicians stare unsmilingly at the three Babylonians, in the manner of a face-off. They all take up aggressive, confronting postures. Except for Topper, who is off with the fairies.*

Dingo *nods*                Peewee, Lion, Topper.

Lion *nods*                 Lads.

Feral *nods*                Topper, Lion, Peewee.

Peewee *nods*             Mornin', lads.

*They face-off for a couple of seconds, except for Topper, who pats the neck of one of the horses. Then all four men stare at Topper.*

Topper                    'Ullo boys. What a lovely day to buy a 'orse.

It's funny. I was finkin' that it was a shame that we 'ad to waste our invites to King Jethrodates' feast. And 'ere you all are, walkin' out of the Contemplation Gardens just in time, like. We'll give you our lunch tokens, since we can't use 'em. Can't say fairer than



that, can ya?

How are you, lads? It's been a while since we 'ad the pleasure of your company. I 'ope young Stiffy is 'appy on 'is farm with all 'is family around 'im. And Mullet's got a little bubba on the way. That's wonderful. At least, 'is wife's havin' the bubba; not Mullet, of course.

Yes, it's sort of funny. Knackers wants us to get kitted out, like, and ride off into the sunset so that we can --

Peewee Shut ve fuck up, Topper. Vey don't need to know our business.

Topper That's right. That's right. The excitement of seeing old friends again made me lose me bearin's.

Lads, give your lunch tokens to Feral and Dingo. It's silly to waste them.

*Topper hands over his token to Dingo. Disgusted, Peewee hands his token to Feral. Mullet wanders up.*

Mullet What's cookin'?

Feral Do you wanna token for King Jethro-what's-is-face's beano?

Mullet *shrugs* Yeah, I'll be in it.

Feral *to Topper* Give us another token. When did ya say it is? Lunchtime?

*With a racked sigh, Lion reluctantly hands his token to Mullet.*

Topper *winking* That's right. It should be a good spread, knowin' how fond King Jethrodates is of 'is food.

We'll be thinkin' of you lads. It was lovely to catch up with you again and --

Dingo Have any of youse seen a little Persian who looks like he has chronic indigestion? Goes by the name of Arsecrack ... I mean Asekrah.

Topper Now, that's funny that you should ask that question because --

Peewee *impatient* 'E ain't 'ere. Come on, lads, let's make our purchases and be on our way. Nice to catch up wiff you lads. Toorah ven.

*The three Babylonians take their leave. Of course, Topper wants to shake hands and wish them well, but the other two hustle him away.*

*Feral flips his token over and over, whimsically watching the retreat. Dingo looks around, wondering what to do about the absent Asekrah. Feral watches the Babylonians depart.*

Feral You'd never guess from hearing him jabber, jabber, jabber.

One of the most ruthless killers in the known world, that Topper. But you'd never ever guess it to hear him blather on like that.

Young Patto was telling me ... Topper walks up to a bloke that's got a hit on him ... see? ... and he gushes away like that, then murders the bloke without skipping a beat in his conversation.

*[Imitates the Cockney accent of the Babylonians. Appears to imitate a headlock on some invisible man]*

Got a 'eadache, squire? I was about to tell your good lady --

*[Gestures to imitate breaking a man's neck]*

-- SNAP -- vat a good cure for 'eadache is lavender oil gently applied to ve scalp.

Mullet *chuckles* Yeah, he's a hard case awright. You took him off pretty good just then.

Dingo *distracted* I'm supposed to meet some pounce ...

Feral Don't worry. He'll be at this feast with King Jethrodates.

Mullet Let's hope so. I'm starving. Let's hit the food.

END OF SCENE

**I, Scene vii:** The Elamite Feast for King Jethrodates. Byblos 1500 BCE.

*ELAMITE FEAST: like a Barmecide Feast but more fun.*

*So: the table is the shape of a huge squared C. At the serif-end are Mullet, Dingo and Feral. There are loads of white plates, bowls, cutlery, cups; but none of them contains food or drink.*

*Along the long side, and higher than the others are King Jethrodates and the other dignitaries. Our three heroes look around, watching what is going on. The dignitaries carefully roll up their loose sleeves and bathe their hands in elegant bowls which are presented by slaves. Then the slaves carefully pat the hands with towels. The slaves bow and retire. The conversation continues.*

*King Jethrodates is a huge, blustery man. During the Elamite Feast, he watches the Phoenicians with a mixture of respect and annoyance.*

*Feral has a private word with Mullet.*

Feral                      We're a bit out of place here, aren't we? Half a dozen Greek philosophers and a couple of kings and all those other poofers. What on Earth were Peewee and his boys doing with invites to a show like this?

Mullet                     Babylon. There's a push to appease the Babylonians. They're getting noisy.

*Dingo has a private word with Mullet.*

Dingo                     Which one of these dudes is Asekrah?

Mullet                     Uh-uh. Not here. Strange ...

Feral                      This just isn't right. There's no tucker; just all these empty bowls and plates. Something is fishy here, but --

*Feral has a eureka moment. Triumphantly he snaps his fingers and thumbs.*

Feral *excited*             -- Wait a tick! I know what this is ... this is an Elamite Feast. Bewdy!

Mullet *surprised,*        Ya reckon?  
*bemused*

Dingo *pleased* Yeah, you're bloody right, Fer. It's an Elamite Feast!

*Dingo rubs his hands together: he is delighted.*

Dingo What a ripper! Those toffs won't know what hit 'em.

Mullet Fair dinkum? You think this is one of those disappearing feasts, do ya?

Feral Course it is! I wish Stiffy was here: he was the champion.

Dingo No, Fergus was the champion.

Mullet When's it gonna start?

Feral *pointing* I wouldn't mind betting that that Greek philosopher there with the long white beard is the ringleader. Watch him like a hawk, and if he so much as twitches, we're on.

Dingo And are we gonna play fair, or up on the table?

Mullet and Feral Table! Up on the table on all fours.  
*together*

*Dingo nods, delighted.*

*The boys focus intently on the philosopher Yalta. He moves to shoo away a fly, and the boys jump up, clambering on the table, faces down in the empty bowls.*

Dingo Whoa, sorry, false alarm.

*The boys have in fact picked the wrong philosopher. Another (Zeno), with a bulldog face, flicks his flyswat imperatively and food magically appears in all the bowls.*

The Elamite Feast.
--------------------

*The boys, on hands and knees, make pigs of themselves, not touching the food with their fingers but only with their mouths. After two seconds of this gorging, the food disappears. The boys wipe the food from their faces into their mouths. Laughing and doing high-5s, they jump agilely to the ground and flick the stray food from their tunics.*

*Meanwhile, all the dignitaries stare, open-mouthed at the boys, as they (the other guests) have been frozen in the pose of reaching for the food. The philosophers smile benignly, and King Jethrodates clears his throat.*

*Now the boys focus on bulldog-face. He teases them for a moment with his flyswat and they twitch as if right on the edge. Then he flicks, the food re-appears and (after jumping agilely onto the table, and gobbling) they get stuck into the food. When the food disappears again, Feral appears to have over-filled his mouth and can hardly chew or breathe. Again, the dignitaries have stretched out, and taken nothing. While our boys congratulate themselves, laughing and helping Feral to down his mouthful, the toffs sit glumly, looking tragically into empty bowls and plates.*

*King Jethrodates looks at the boys keenly. When he speaks, he has a slow Texan drawl.*

King Jethrodates            This is a fine repast you've spread before us, Zeno.

Philosopher Zeno           Yes, thank you, your Majesty. It had been a feat of supreme excellence by our kitchen staff.

King Jethrodates           I'm very keen to sample the dishes.

Philosopher Zeno           Most wise, most perspicacious, Majesty.

King Jethrodates           And yet ...

*We focus on King Jethrodates, the philosopher Zeno flicks, the food appears, and the boys leap into it yet again. King Jethrodates watches in awe, and some jealousy.*

King Jethrodates           I have a question for you, Yalta. A question of universal significance.

Philosopher Yalta           Your Majesty has only to ask and I will attempt to answer.

King Jethrodates           Well, it's this. How come those boys at the end of the table are getting something to eat, and I'm well nigh starving here on the main table?

Philosopher Yalta           King Jethrodates, Your Majesty, this is a mere trick of the eye. The young gentlemen do not partake of food.

King Jethrodates           I can clearly discern traces of foodstuffs on their faces and

clothing.

Philosopher Zeno *airily* Sophistry. Illusion. Smoke and mirrors, only.

*King Jethrodates rises to his feet. He is obviously dissatisfied with the Philosopher's answers to his questions.*

King Jethrodates I jest might mosey on over to that part of the table. Hopefully, I can discover how those boys are managing to revictualize with jest "smoke-and-mirrors".

*King Jethrodates nods slightly in recognition of the fact that most of the guests at the head table have risen in his honour. Then he strolls nonchalantly around to where the three Phoenician boys are laughing and finishing off their food (since the food has vanished again).*

King Jethrodates How y'doing there, friends? Would yawl welcome another member into your feeding frenzy? If I don't digest some comestibles ver' soon, I'm like to pass out on the ground.

Mullet Yeah, come on. Join in. Do ya know how it works? You up for it?

King Jethrodates Yes, young man, I'm certainly up for it. I think I've picked up the gist of the modus operandi from watching yawl.

Dingo *bows* Ya ready, Yer Madge? Watch wrinkle-face. He's got the whip-hand.

King Jethrodates Well, when that starting signal goes off, you guys might have to lend an arm or two getting me up there into that buffet.

Mullet Righto. Hey! He's flicked! Let's go!

*Food magically appears in all the dishes and again the toffs elegantly reach out for it. Together, the boys haul King Jethrodates up onto the table, and he dives in, his face submerged in a noodle dish. To everyone's amazement and disgust (except for our boys, who cheer and barrack) King Jethrodates comes up for air as the food disappears, and he is a mess of noodles and sauce. The slaves descend upon him to tidy him up.*

*King Jethrodates is entirely pleased. He nods and smiles open our 3 Phoenicians.*

King Jethrodates            Come on, friends. Let's hightail it out of this august company. I want to talk to yawl.

Philosopher Yalta  
*calling after him*            And your proposed hand-to-hand combat with King Luxes of Kanesh, Your Majesty?

King Jethrodates            I'll leave that to you philosophers to sort out. Schedule it for this afternoon, won't you?

*The four men saunter off, looking about them at the beautiful surrounds.*

King Jethrodates            Now, boys, between you and me, I dislike the less-than-straight answers I've been getting from those learned Greeks. If I was asked to give an honest opinion, then I'd have to state that your Phoenician directness appeals to me in a much greater degree.

Feral                         Aw, they're just running a dodge. Gets the tourists in.

King Jethrodates            A dodge? What would that be, my friend?

Feral                         You know. Scheme, scam, swifty (as in "pulling a"), rort, touch, fast-one. A dodge.

Dingo                        He's saying that they're tricksters.

King Jethrodates            Well, I can see that for mahself.

Mullet                        And what's the go with the hand-to-hand combat, King Jethro? What's that all about?

King Jethrodates            The Greek philosophers have convinced me that war is a waste of time and manpower. At least we all agree on that tenet. It's common sense.

So they've suggested an all-in wrastling match between mahself and the much-vaunted King Luxes of Kanesh. No holds barred. And I of course will anoint myself in several unguent oils just previous to the event. Luxes might be slippery, but I'll be slipperier.

Dingo                        And the prize is ... ?

King Jethrodates      Kanesh. My esteemed and revered father, King Xerxime, conquered the uncle of Luxes some decades ago. But Luxes will not take his uncle's defeat lightly. So, we fight. It's just that simple.

Mullet      And where's your little mate while all this is going on?

King Jethrodates      My wife? Queen Hepzibah?

Mullet      No, no, no. I mean your mate. Your off-sider. The little bloke who looks like he suffers from dyspepsia.

Feral      Bumcrack.

Dingo      No, he wasn't Bumcrack. He was Arsecrack.

Feral      Oh yeah, that's right. Arsecrack.

King Jethrodates      My former Prime Minister Asekrah was unfortunately taken by a pride of lions while he wandered about in the desert, contemplating the future of my beloved country, Persia. He was eaten alive, I'm sad to relate.

Mullet      Aw, that's crook.

King Jethrodates      Crook?

Dingo *sighs*      Stiff, bad, unfortunate.

Feral      Yeah, but if you are **feeling** crook, that means you're chucking a sickie.

*Totally confused, King Jethrodates looks from one man to the other.*

King Jethrodates      I may have to sign-up for a course in Modern Phoenician language. But until then, gentlemen, I'll need for you to translate for me, if you don't mind.

                                 I have received an urgent missive from ... now let me see ... Here it is ...

*[Produces clay tablet bearing pictograms]*



I understand that a group of Hittites is (now wait up) "passing dodgy bulls on Crete for a bloke who's 'a sandwich short of a picnic'". Now that makes no sense to me at all. However, I am requiring some kind of sensible explanation. And soon.

Mullet

You don't need a translation. We know all about that.

The Hittites were workmates of ours. They're Fergus and Callum. There was Archie, too, but a lion got him.

Good blokes they are, for Hittites. Yeah, they had a leader called Squizzy who was gored to death by a bull in Spain. That's what put them onto it. These bulls are smaller and leaner than your average bull, but they have five times the heart.

So, Fergus got this idea to ship these Andalusian bulls across to Crete and put them in the carnivals and contests there. You know, religious stuff. Basically, just about nothing can beat them. Do you know, they matched one of these Spanish bulls up against a lion just to show how good they are.

King Jethrodates

And the bull beat the lion?

*amazed*

Dingo

Nuh, but it put up a bloody good fight, all the same.

Feral

Just goes to show ya, doesn't it?

*King Jethrodates is bemused: totally at sea.*

King Jethrodates

And ... the bloke ... ?

Mullet

That's the pimp on the Cretan side. Don't know his name, but he's a real hoon. A yahoo, a bodgie ... gone troppo. Thus, he's not very bright. You can forget all about him. He's a no-hoper.

*King Jethrodates still cannot understand most of what the Phoenicians say.*

King Jethrodates

Okay, then. I'd like fine for you very capable and omniscient young men to accompany me to Crete. We're going to clean-up

the bull business and put things back on an even keel.

Feral                      We'll watch you stick it up Luxes this arvo, and then we're all yours.

King Jethrodates        Good! When I whupp that old dude, you boys can be my seconds.

END OF SCENE

### **I, Scene viii:** The Mixed Martial Arts Match Byblos 1500 BCE.

The famous wrestling/boxing match between King Jethrodates and King Luxes.

*Jethrodates versus Luxes, no holds barred.*

*The spectators (all male) form the ring. There is loud and eager barracking and shouting. The obligatory glamour girl slinks by with a small stone tablet bearing some hieratic showing that this is round 4. This is accompanied by wolf-whistles and rude comments.*

*King Jethrodates is fanned by Mullet, while Dingo and Feral patch him up. Mullet whispers instructions, in the manner of any boxing seconds during a bout.*

*A bell rings and King Jethrodates rushes into the fray.*

*Our three boys ride the punches and tricky holds like boxing trainers. All their head movements must be in absolute sync.*

*The camera focuses on the three boys. The two kings come in and out of camera shot. We can hear their grunts and punches.*

*King Jethrodates falls back on our boys. They slip him some bull semen potion while he is in their arms, give him encouragement, then push him back into the fray.*

Mullet                                Go for the body, Your Madge and watch his right knee. He's lining you up for a head shot.

*King Luxes falls back on our boys. While he is in their arms, Dingo gives him a sickening elbow dig in the kidneys (King Luxes groans in agony) and Mullet applies a nerve twacker on his neck. But from the point of view of onlookers, the boys are all concern and care.*

*Needless to say, King Jethrodates is the victor. He dances around, arms up, victorious. King Luxes wallows about on the ground, and his seconds are required to lift him and carry him off, humiliated.*

*Mullet and Feral chair Jethrodates on their shoulders. They head off.*

*Still with a small crowd around him, Dingo collects the winnings from their bets. As he begins to wander along, counting the shekels, he is grabbed strongly by the arm. The aggressor is Peewee. Dingo is taken by surprise.*

Dingo                                Hey! What are ya doin'?

Peewee *conspiratorial*        'Ere, young Dingo. You be very, very careful of yourselves.

Dingo                                What? Hey, let go of me, yer bastard.

*Dingo angrily struggles free from Peewee's grasp.*

Peewee                              You lads are goin' to Crete wiff vat King of Persia, ain't ya?

Dingo                                Yeah. Matter of fact, we are. Swimming in his marble pool first, then a big banquet, then pig-spotting. Tomorrow, off to Crete in his huge yacht.

*Peewee and Dingo speak at the same time. As Peewee grabs Dingo's arm, Dingo just as quickly breaks free.*

*Peewee and Dingo speak at the same time.*

[Peewee] Just be warned by me, right? You be careful of 'im. I'm just givin' you a friendly warnin' out of my respect for ya. I fink you're a decent Jack. I do.

[Dingo] Will you quit doin' that? You should know me better than that, Peewee. I'm not frightened of anything. And I've seen more scary things than most men see in a lifetime.

Peewee *urgent*                      You've been lookin' for vat king's off-sider: one "Asekrah", haven't

ya? And do you know what's 'appened to 'im?

Dingo Yeah. A pride of lions had him for dinner.

Peewee Vat's bullshite, vat is. Vem lions might 'ave picked over ve corpse, but 'e wuz already cold. 'E done 'im in, 'e did. Vat's what 'e did to 'is "trusted" advisor. Vat's what you gotta remember when you skive-off wiff vat mighty king.

Dingo Who told ya that Arsecrack was murdered?

Peewee No need to be told. My mate Topper done ve deed, and 'e did it under King Jethrodates' orders.

You just watch over your shoulder at all times, my good friend.

*Dingo stares at Peewee's departing form, open-mouthed.*

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene ix:** The Pig-Spotting Event Byblos 1500 BCE.

*Music: exciting, thrilling.*

*Dialogue: actor's discretion. Go with what's happening. King Jethrodates tends to give advice like:  
Hey, take it easy boys. You're going too fast.*

*Night-time but with full moon, outskirts of Byblos where the "bush" meets the desert. Trees, shrubs, empty spaces, then sand and stone.*

*There are four chariots and four drivers: King Jethrodates, Mullet, Feral and Dingo.*

*Each chariot has only one horse, but there are two slaves to each chariot: their job is to hold large, bright flaming torches, and also hold a selection of spears.*

*The slaves for our three boys do no more than hang on for dear life and somehow hold the torches and spears as well. Our boys do all the hard work.*

*As for the king, he does very little. His slaves work very hard for him, even to the extent of lining-up the pig for the king to deal the death-blow. There are five outriders on horseback with torches, who accompany and assist King Jethrodates.*

<b>How the Pig-Spotting Works</b>	
<b>King Jethrodates</b>	<b>Mullet, Dingo, Feral</b>
Moderate to genteel pace. His trusted slave drives the chariot. The slaves do all the work. In order to kill his quarry, the king only has to command his slave to pull up his chariot, alight, then drive his spear into the already trapped and netted animal, that shrieks in agony.	<p>Drive their chariots at speed, jinking, weaving, and "turning on a sixpenny-bit".</p> <p>Reckless and care-for-nothing.</p> <p>Accompanying slaves are terrified and a couple go overboard.</p> <p>Both Feral and Mullet overturn their chariots and roll about in the dirt. But they remount, dragging their slaves aboard and continue with their quest.</p> <p>They spear the fleeing pigs while still positioned on the racing chariots and have quite good success.</p>

*Just show enough of this to be exciting, thrilling and funny.*

*The last action in this scene will be King Jethrodates' chariot trotting into the moonlight. The other three chariots go haring past, with clouds of dust and shouts of excitement.*

END OF SCENE

**I, Scene x:** The Royal Yacht Mediterranean Sea, Off Byblos, 1500BCE.

*Close-up of King Jethrodates. He is at sea on his yacht, standing on deck, with the light wind ruffling his hair and "draperies".*

*Jethrodates breathes in deeply and he is utterly happy. **We cannot see the three Phoenicians until right at the end of the scene.***

King Jethrodates

One thing that I look for in a man is introspection.

That's why I made my journey to your beautiful country of Phoenicia from my own equally beautiful homeland, Persia. Your Tranquillity Gardens permitted me to attain inner peace.

It was there, while contemplating, that I made the acquaintance of several Greek philosophers who've made Byblos their centre of operations. And although I was less than generous with those gentlemen in regard to their vanishing feast, I must admit that in the main their counsel was sage and just.

Perhaps you can explain to me the significance of the Elamite feast.

Dingo *voice-off*

Ya find out what your strengths are, Your Madge.

King Jethrodates

Is that a fact? Hmmmm ...

Well, you know that apart from that invisible buffet, the philosophers talked common sense at every turn.

That's the reason why I undertook to match King Luxes in the manly arena of free-style wrestling. Divine intervention on mah behalf, along with the ministrations of you boys, got me through that contest, and saw me crowned the victor. I must thank yawl once again for your worthy roles in my success.

*King Jethrodates waits for a response from one or other of the Phoenicians. It does not come. The King clears his throat.*

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.

*He begins to laugh deeply and uncontrollably at his own joke.*

*Voice-off from the  
crow's nest*                              Land ahead!

   The island of Crete appears on the horizon. Nor-nor-west.

*King Jethrodates tries to compose himself, wiping his streaming eyes. He gestures to the sea.  
Occasionally he chuckles.*

King Jethrodates                      Gentlemen, this bounteous sea will carry us to Crete, where we may get all of our business completed promptly.

   Perhaps when we have finished managing this frustrating bull business, yawl might like to accompany me to the Tigris for some fishing and relaxation.

*There is no answer. The king is red-faced from chuckling. The camera has been totally focused on the king.*

*The camera now moves back. Beside the smiling king, we observe Mullet, Feral and Dingo, stony-faced, all wearing a large amount of bandaging on head, arm, leg and body. Dingo and Feral are on crutches. Mullet wears a sling. The king continues to chuckle at his own joke.*

END OF SCENE

END of MARTIN'S SECOND EXPERIENCE

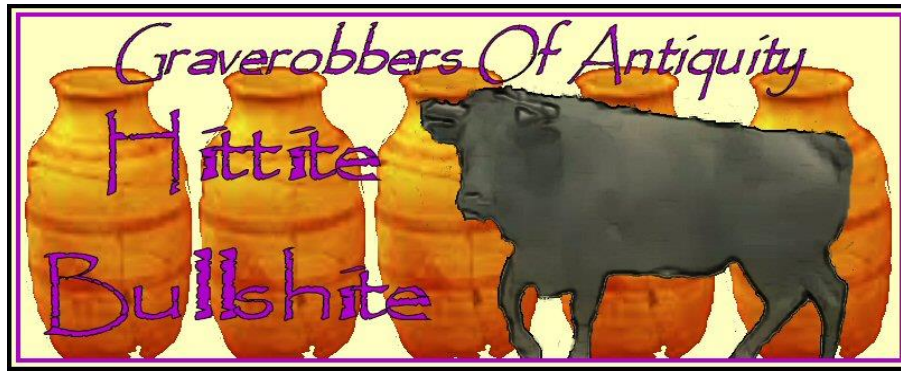
END OF ACT I

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## ACT II

### II, Scene i: The British Embassy Cocktail Party Cairo 1934.

*Noisy, convivial, black-tie. The ballroom in the Embassy is quite a grand affair, seething with wood panelling and atmosphere. Huge sideboards and old-fashioned solidity. Very British. Some chaps are in Scottish highland kilts and there are plenty of Egyptian dignitaries in sheik costumes. A few military types (British officers, of course) saunter about. Otherwise, it is black-tie, with the ladies in gorgeous gowns, complete with sables or pearl-drop stoles and showy ostrich feathers. There is a receiving line (Lady Spasey and the Anglican Bishop of Cairo, along with some Egyptian dignitaries); and Roland, Dorothea, Vincent and Adeline are welcomed graciously.*

*Sir Gavin Spasey is a blustering Colonel: a "type" (whereby "England" equals "Empire"), complete with bushy moustache. Sir Gavin is heavily into the whiskey with no ice. He is smoking a fat cigar. His aide (Adjutant Sampson) is patient and unflappable. Both men speak with extremely correct English accents.*

*Sir Gavin spots the French party and frowns deeply.*

Sir Gavin Spasey *quite put out*                      I say! Who are those bally people who just swanned in? I don't know them at all.

Adjutant Sampson                      Er ... the gent with the monocle would be Captain Roland Ferrier of the *Armée française*, Sir, and with --

Sir Gavin *appalled* Frenchies? What the **devil** are they doing in the British Embassy? Have they lost their way?

Deal with it, Sampson, won't you?

Adjutant Sampson I was about to add, Sir, that his wife is utterly English.

Sir Gavin Oh, well ... That's alright, I suppose. But what's he **doing** here?

Adj Sampson *extremely patient* You'll remember, Sir Gavin, that Captain Ferrier is the author of that most popular book on travel, *Cairo: A Journey Across the Sands*.

Sir Gavin *appalled* A French author? And an Army officer to boot? Never heard such a faradiddle in all me born days.

What is he doing **here**, Sampson?

Adj Sampson He's here at the express invitation of Lord Bellamy, Sir.

Sir Gavin Really? Ah ... As to that ...

*Sir Gavin now backs down. The charms of Adeline are not lost on the raddled old Colonel.*

Sir Gavin Dammit, Sampson, it's not what I like at all. Although, I must say, that young lady with him is a stunner, what? She's not his confounded wife, is she?

Adj Sampson No Sir. I'll introduce you to Madame Ferrier, if you wish. She's only just arrived, I see; and a gazetted beauty in her own way ... the lady in the deep purple gown over there, Sir.

*Adjutant Sampson points unobtrusively towards the radiant Dorothea Ferrier. Then he nods in the direction of Adeline.*

Adj Sampson As to the young lady to whom you refer: she is one Mademoiselle Caronforse.

Sir Gavin Ah? Tell me a bit more about her.

Adj Sampson *impressive sniff* Money. French provincial money, Sir Gavin.

Sir Gavin                      Good! Splendid! And a silhouette to put Juno to shame,  
Sampson.

Adj Sampson *coughs*        The second gentleman in attendance was lately Lieutenant  
Lorent, also of the French Army. He escorts Mademoiselle  
Caronforse.

                                        [*Pause for effect.*]

                                        And is her ... er ... companion.

Sir Gavin *put out*             Hmph! I suppose they're engaged. No tellin' what those  
Frenchies get up to.

                                        Think I'll buzz off and chat with that Howard Carter fellow.

*Adjutant Sampson, relieved, bows gracefully as Sir Gavin heads off.*

The French party cannot locate Martin at the British Embassy.

*The camera finds the new arrivals, gathered near the receiving line.*

Roland *looking about*      I was hoping to find Leveque awaiting us here such that I might hand over his letter of invitation; but it would seem that that is not the case.

Vincent      Where could he be, then? Ah, this is the worst kind of mischance.

Dorothea      You are sure that Martin is not at the hotel?

Vincent      No, I've searched and searched ... *Sapristi!* What a diabolical calamity! What could have happened?

Dorothea      My dear, there's no chance that he has gone to Mama's old digs, is there?

Roland *firmly*      No, impossible. He knows that we are domiciled at the Hotel

Excelsior. Isn't this so, Lorent?

Vincent *Mais oui ...*

Dorothea All the same, I think we might have checked Mama's old place. If I spoke enough Egyptian, I'd telephone. But I barely know these new servants we've had to hire; they're bound not to understand me.

Vincent *makes the French moue* This almost becomes a matter for the local police. If I had faith in them. Which, of course, I don't ...

Roland Hush! We'll discreetly enquire among our fellow guests. Somebody is bound to have seen him. He is a ver' resourceful young man, is Martin Leveque. And he has not the personality to go unnoticed. Be sure! Somebody here will know of Leveque's whereabouts.

Introducing the American actress: Sarah LaSalles.
---

*In another part of the British Embassy, a knot of people is listening breathlessly to an American; a young lady with a slim figure and gamin face. She is utterly attractive, alluring and unforgettable.*

Sarah *animated* -- so, Grandfather very calmly counted to 5, and then, in his most subdued voice, told me to fire the rifle. There never was anything so thrilling in the entire universe. Oh my! All my training and hours of practice just about flew out the door right then and there. It was pure instinct and nothing else.

That black bear snarled as he padded closer. Closer and closer. My grandfather's voice was all that I could hear, and that bear coming right towards me was all that I could see. So I just relaxed, as if that old rifle was part of my shoulder.

Boom! I pulled the trigger nice and steady, just like you read

about in all those library books. That critter dropped like a stone. And Grandfather ran forward, even though he was such an old man.

"Honey, you got old Mr Bear right between the eyes. That was some great kind of shooting," was what he said to me.

But I'll never forget the magic of those few seconds, not ever till I die.

So I can well understand, Lord Bellamy, how you are so all-fired keen to hunt wild game in Africa. You must just get that same excitement that I felt all those years ago with that old black bear.

Lord Bellamy *enthralled*

But my dear Miss LaSalles ... I could never hope to recount the drama of the kill with such expression, such emotion as you've just demonstrated to us. Your skill as a raconteuse is truly formidable.

Sarah

I trust that that was a compliment, Sir. But you must know that I'm a stage performer; a serious New York actress. So maybe that accounts for the fire in the tale.

Female guest #1  
*gushingly coy*

Now, I was told by a little birdie that you are to play Mata Hari in the new Isaacson play in New York. And that *that's* why you are visiting Cairo: to soak in the atmosphere.

Sarah

Yes! That's so true. I want to live and breathe Cairo, so that when I play Mata Hari on the stage, I can faithfully portray her character.

Gentleman *somewhat confused*

But surely ... Mata Hari had nothing to do with Egypt. She was Dutch and flitted about in Europe. Sorry to disillusion you, dear lady; but there it is.

Sarah

Oh, but she danced as if she was an Egyptian.

Female guest #2 *snooty* Stripped more like it.

Female guest #1 I say! You won't be asked to do anything unseemly in this Isaacson play, will you? I mean, nothing too racy?

Sarah Oh, goodness me, no! Why everything is quite above board. The play will concentrate on Mata Hari's extrovert personality, as well as on her struggle to find herself during the Great War. She was shot by firing squad, as you'll remember. You can't find anything to beat that in the New York theatre.

So, while I'm in Cairo I'll be thinking of just how I can recreate Mata Hari's exoticism and mystery. Besides anything else, it should be loads of fun.

Female guest #1 Then I wish you luck, my dear.

Gentleman Yes, good luck, Miss LaSalles. And do try to enjoy your first trip to Egypt. There's such a great deal to see and do.

Sarah *beaming* Thank you. Thank you so much. You're very gracious.

*A string quartet strikes up, providing a relaxing background.*

*The camera backs away, in an upward direction. Overview of the cocktail party. The camera follows Roland, to another part of the British Embassy, where he catches up with Adjutant Sampson. Judging by Roland's gestures, he is quizzing Sampson on Martin's whereabouts.*

*Turning, the camera then spies LaSalles wandering onto the balcony, out into the cool night air.*

A convivial card game at the British Embassy in Cairo.
--

*It appears that the members of the French party have given up on Martin.*

*Some people have been playing bridge in the library, and the roaming camera discovers them. They are engaged in delightful games, according to their laughter and happy faces.*

*Table 1:-- Lord Bellamy, Mr & Mrs Healy, and Mrs Catesbury.*

*Table 2:-- Roland, Dorothea, Sir Gavin Spacey, a junior officer (desperate to be helpful).*

*We hear only skat conversation from these people.*

*At the entrance to the library: Dr Marell and Dr Nettlethwaite have a friendly discussion on medical matters, cocktails in hand. Again, we only hear the odd word or two.*

*Just outside the library door, the string quartet continue to play.*

*Vincent, Adeline and Lord Bellamy are inspecting a display of Egyptian treasures in the library.*

*Back to the card tables. As the cards are being re-dealt on table 2, the two doctors (Marell and Nettlethwaite) pass. Dorothea sees Dr Nettlethwaite and reaches impulsively back to grasp his jacket sleeve. The doctor turns, surprised, whilst Dorothea remains seated, turned towards him.*

Dorothea *all apology*      So sorry to disturb you, Doctor. But may I speak with you for a moment?

Dr Nettlethwaite      Of course, Mrs Ferrier. How are you keeping?  
*gracious*

Dorothea      As you see, I'm in excellent health. The rewards, I suspect, of being busy along with copious travelling around the Mediterranean.

Dr Nettlethwaite      That will do it!  
*laughing*

Sir Gavin *jovial*      Excuse me. Are you playing, Madame?

Roland      My love?

*Dr Marell sees that there is a slight hitch, and gallantly steps in.*

Dr Marell *touching*      My dear Madame Ferrier. May I take your place at the table of  
*Dorothea's arm*      cards such that you may enjoy a cosy chat with my colleague?

Dorothea      Oh! That's so kind! Thank you.

*[To Roland]*

Do you mind, my dear? I just need to confer with the good doctor

about Mama's effects.

Roland *enthralled in the card game*      Shoo! Shoo! Our friend Claude will prove a more than adequate replacement at North, I believe.

*As Nettlethwaite and Dorothea move away to one side, the card players banter in the background. We only hear skat conversation. From time to time during the conversation in the foreground, we hear a shout of pleasure or dismay from the card tables. Our attention is on the doctor and Mrs Ferrier.*

Dorothea *low voice*      Thank you once again for your unstinting care of my poor mother in her last hours, Doctor.

Dr Nettlethwaite      Not at all, my dear Madame Ferrier.

Dorothea      Her bible. I didn't ever retrieve it from --

Dr Nettlethwaite *apologetic*      Ah! Yes. I must return that to you. It's been in a drawer in my rooms. Thank you for reminding me. I'm so sorry that I --

Dorothea      No, no. I stopped you just now, not to ask for it back, but to tell you that I want you to keep it.

Dr Nettlethwaite      Keep it?

Dorothea      As a memento. Yes. I can't think of better gift. Despite all her dabblings into the occult, magic and what have you, Mama seems to have been a very pious lady. That bible was very dear to her, I'm told.

Dr Nettlethwaite      Then ... should it not be retained within your family for the future generations?

Dorothea      You know that there was a long-standing estrangement between mother and child.

Dearest Doctor Nettlethwaite. I haven't been quite open with you. You asked me how I was, just before. Well, I strongly believe that I'm with child, actually.



Dr Nettlethwaite But that is the most wonderful news!  
*thrilled*

Dorothea If Roland and I are lucky enough to have a son, he'll be named for you. And we'll ask you to sponsor him as your godson, if we may.

Dr Nettlethwaite Of course! I'm overwhelmed! Thank you for this honour.

Dorothea So would you keep my Mama's bible in favour of his future needs? What do you say? Bargain?

*They clasp hands.*

Dr Nettlethwaite It's a bargain! And if you have a little daughter, I'll stand sponsor for her, too!

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene ii:** The Scene on the Balcony at the British Embassy 1934.

*The balcony is very luscious, in the manner of the grand balconies of 5-star Singapore hotels. White-jacketed servants carry trays of cocktails. The hubbub of the main room can easily be seen and heard through the French windows.*

*Sarah has managed to escape the attentions of several swains. She stands on the balcony, admiring the stars, smoking lazily, and nursing her arms against a slightly cool breeze.*

*Martin (bathed, shaved and cleaned-up) scrambles up a vine and vaults athletically over the balustrade. Sarah blinks at him as he dusts off his white jacket.*

Martin *apologetic* *Je m'excuse, Mademoiselle.* They denied me entry, those British guards at the front door. But they mistake me for a malefactor.

*Sarah is too astonished to speak. Martin bows and then moves closer to Sarah, such that they can converse.*

Martin *smiling* I am indeed a guest at this noble *soirée*; however, my card of invitation is in the possession of one of my companions. At least, I hope that it is so. He is a guest, you know, my dear lady.

*[Laughs awkwardly.]*

Truly, I am an *invité* at the Embassy this evening.

Sarah *smiling kindly* Surely. I believe you. I really do.

Martin *looking about* *Ah, bon!*

My friends will be most concerned as to my whereabouts. And I most urgently require the conversation with them, on the matter of --

So, if you will excuse me, so gracious Mademoiselle, I'll go to find them now.

*Sarah smiles, nods, smokes and rubs her upper arms, looking again at the stars.*

*Martin seems about to leave her (after bowing), then hesitates.*

Martin But you are feeling chilled, Mademoiselle? May I not lend to you my dinner jacket?

*He strips off the jacket and places it on her shoulders. She is surprised and touched. She blushes, rubbing one hand along the material of the jacket.*

Sarah Thank you, sir! You're too utterly kind. So, gallantry is not dead after all, it seems. But you've just gotta stop calling me "Mademoiselle", or I'll have to throw myself off this balcony. My name is Sarah: Sarah LaSalles.

*Martin is smitten. He takes Sarah's hand and kisses it.*

Martin *Enchanté, Mad ... er ...*

*Sarah is also smitten. She smiles enchantingly at Martin.*

Sarah "Miss LaSalles", if you must, my bold cavalier.

*They look at each other for longer than would be expected. Martin is impressed with her beauty and her open manner. Sarah is impressed with his manly demeanour and athleticism.*

Sarah *becoming uncomfortable* Um ... your friends ... you mentioned that your friends were --

Martin *snaps out of it* But yes! Please keep my jacket for me. It gives me the perfect excuse to find you again.

Oh, and I am so very hungry. Is there food, do you believe?

Sarah *pointing to the French windows* Sure! Just follow the noise in there and you'll come upon a buffet table that is just on collapsing under the weight of all the delicious food placed upon it. And I'll bet your friends will be there, too.

Hey! You know what? Better still, the library has been dedicated to the bridge tables. They may be found in there, your friends. Check it out, why don't you?

Martin *Merci.* And one desires that this is not an Elamite feast, *n'est-ce pas?*

Sarah *frowns* I beg your pardon? I didn't catch that.

Martin *blushing* Oh ... I was thinking aloud. Doubtless my empty stomach.

*Jusqu'à ce que nous rencontrons encore, Miss Sarah LaSalles.*

*Martin heads inside sans jacket, leaving Sarah watching him reflectively. She then looks over the balcony at the vine which Martin used to scale the wall.*

Sarah *coquettishly, to herself* You didn't tell me your name, my French guy. Maybe it's in this tux? Oh well, ...

*[Musing]*

... he's quite *sportif*, that one ... not bad looking ... I might be interested, Monsieur. Maybe ...

*Camera backs off. Sarah is seen to rifle through the pockets of Martin's jacket, pull a cigarette out of the pocket of Martin's jacket, then light it from a candle ensconced in a decorative Chinese lantern.*

*Slowly, the camera pulls further back, with the lovely string quartet playing on in the background.*

*Sarah continues to smoke, then slumps onto the balcony floor.*

*The remainder of her cigarette (not scrunched down at all) is seen to roll a little way from her.*

END OF SCENE

## Start of SARAH'S EXPERIENCE

### **II, Scene iii:** Crete, around 1500BCE A Wild Stormy Evening

*Music: wild, racy, stormy and all-consuming.*

*Several rag-tag figures of both sexes race towards a cave during a raging thunderstorm.*

*Some of these people carry spears.*

*Out of the violent weather, the soaked young people pour noisily into the warmth of the cave, in which a large fire burns. Most of the folk gather around the fire. Older people were awaiting the younger ones. There is a joyousness about this homecoming. This is a thieves' lair, and many of the incoming people bear food which can be shared out. Others have scored more exotic loot, which is held out for the others to see, in the firelight. Other stolen goods include jewellery, clothing and small statuary. The music now tapers off.*

## Introduction to Boy and his sister Kala

*Out of the fire's glare, a boy and his "kid brother" (played by the same actress who plays Sarah) crouch in the shadows. They watch as a young girl and a boy begin to kiss passionately. Both the boy and his "kid brother"([that is, Kala) look worried. As Phoenicians, these two youngsters have Australian accents.*

Boy *whispers*

I've heard about a Phoenician gang that's just arrived in Crete that's looking for a couple of helpers. A **real** gang of grown men;

organized and making shit-loads of gold stripping tombs. I think we ought to give it a try.

Kala *whispers*

They won't want a couple of kids on board.

Boy *whispers urgently*

I'm not a kid! Look! We've got skills that a group like that could use. Anyway, we aren't doing any good here.

Kala, *downhearted,*  
*almost in tears*

We aren't going to do any good anywhere like this.

Boy *trying hard to*  
*persuade*

Yeah, that's what I mean --

Kala *sighs*

No, you're not following my drift.

One of the guys made a comment today about my small feet.

*There is a long pause. The boys watch the merriment of the others as they laugh, drink, eat and dance about the roaring fire.*

Boy *off-hand*

Actually, I noticed your tits in the rain. You'll have to strap them up. They're getting bigger.

Kala

That's the problem, isn't it? Am I going to be able to fool these worldly-wise men that I'm a scamp of a boy? No way! They'll notice my small feet, too. And no face-stubble. And if anyone sees me piss ...

*The older brother slams his fist angrily.*

Boy *whispers angrily*

Awright! Awright! We'll just do the best we can.

It's our best option, obviously. Even if I have to leave you out of it, for the moment. I'll focus on joining up with these guys: these "Pubic Punics", I think they're called.

Anything to get out of these rags ...

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene iv:** In The Primeval Forests Of Ancient Crete, Dawn Approaches

*Dawn is breaking. Hacking their way through the thick undergrowth of this fantastic, verdant semi-tropical rain forest, Boy and "Kid Brother" move down a steep slope towards a rocky creek bed. Due to the recent rain, the rapids and cataracts are swollen with icy, racing water.*

Boy, *pointing to the right* I'm going up that way, towards the hills. With any luck, I'll get some news about these Phoenician guys. But it's too dangerous for you.

*[Points left.]*

You will head back towards the beach. There's a little village there.

You've got enough gold to buy some food and shelter. Don't talk to any strangers if you can help it and always pretend that you are male.

And for Baal's sake, be careful!

"Kid Brother" *worried* How --

Boy *urgent* I'll come to the village and collect you. Go!

*The camera follows the "Kid Brother" as she proceeds with difficulty down to the creek, to follow it towards the coast. Birds begin to herald the sunrise. The girl (picking her way over the rocks in the creek bed) stops suddenly, looking with deep concern ahead of her, into the pre-dawn gloom.*

*Three men approach (Dingo, Feral and Mullet), bearing flaming torches. As usual, they carry many ropes and nets over their shoulders. They also carry an impressive array of weapons. The girl looks wildly about her. Should she let these men see her? Or should she hide in the undergrowth?*

*The girl has been spotted.*

Feral *excited* That's mine! We'll eat it for breakfast.

Mullet *shouting as Feral hares off* I think it's human, mate.

*Panic-stricken, "Kid Brother" hightails into the undergrowth, followed by Feral who is armed with a spear. There is an exciting chase, with Feral bringing "Kid Brother" to ground. Raising his spear, Feral is stopped by the girl's urgent pleading.*

"Kid Brother"                      Don't kill me! I'm only a kid.  
*desperately pleading*

~~~~~ Break ~~~~~

*Mullet and Dingo stand aside, watching dawn break. The noise of the birds is overpowering. Feral and "Kid Brother" walk out of the brush, into the creek bed. The other two turn to watch them.*

Feral *proudly*                      Okay. Here's the deal.  
  
This lad is the kid brother of an older boy, whose name  
refreshingly-enough is "Boy". Now, Boy's scarpered up ahead,  
looking for us. He wants to join up. Thinks we're a crack unit.

Mullet *shrugs*                      We **are** a crack unit.

Feral                                  Yeah. So I was thinkin' ... if we take this kid along with us, he  
might be good value. Until we find Boy, 'course.

Dingo *sceptical*                      If the older one is called "Boy", what's this one called?

Feral *turns to Kala*                      Dunno. "Kid Brother", isn't it?

*Kala nods. Frowning, Mullet stares hard at "Kid Brother".*

Mullet                                  Aw! Whadya mean "kid brother"? That's a **girl** ya got there.

Feral                                  What girl?

Mullet                                  That's a girl. Take a decko at her arms. Her wrists and hands are  
female.

Feral gives Kala's figure a thorough going-over. He is unimpressed.

Feral                                  Rubbish! If she's a girl, where's her tits?

Dingo *scowling* Aw, she's got 'em all strapped up, I 'spose. Who cares?

Piss 'er off, ya galah; we've got work to do. We can muck around with "skirt" in Knossos later on.

Kala *pleading* Let me come with you! I can climb walls, shinny down pipes and I'm ace with ropes, nooses and knots.

Feral *delighted* Wey-hey! Hear that? We could use this chick, Mull! Let me keep her. She'd be handy to have around.

Mullet You've changed your tune, Sunshine. I can remember someone whose name rhymes with "Beryl" saying: "Girls only make trouble".

Feral When? When did I ever say that?

Dingo When Stiffy was recruiting your sister. Don't yer remember?

Mullet *imitating Feral* "Nah. I don't wanna take a girl along. They only make trouble."

Feral Did I say that?

Mullet Yeah. Blood oath, ya did.

*[To Kala]*

It's hard yakka, Darl. And if you can't keep up, we'll dump ya. Sorry to sound brutal about it, but we're not a welfare society. Come on. We'd better cop an optic at this pirate cave.

*[Raises voice]*

And there's no curses or that because this is a pirate treasure we're after. There's no mummies; and thus, no ghoulies.

Kala *eagerly* You wait and see. We'll meet up with Boy and you'll be rapt. He's a terrific worker.

Dingo *dismissive* Yeah, right ...

*Feral grabs the girl's hand and leads her along with him. Feral is smiling like a cat in the sunshine.*



END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene v: The Pirate Cave**

*Early morning. The sun is now up, and the primeval forest is superb, breathtaking. Feral's tuneless singing is all that we can hear. Kala tries to look appreciative. Dingo looks like he's in pain, and Mullet merely smirks.*

Feral *singing*

We love ya, Phoenicia!  
You piss on all the rest.  
Phoenicia! Phoenicia!  
You are the very best.

Dingo *cheesed-off*

What is that crap you're singing?

Feral *proudly*

I've decided that our fantastic country needs a National Anthem.  
So I've made one up.

Mullet

Wha' for?

Feral

The Hittites have got one. Why don't we? Theirs is a ra-ra: a gee-up, a call to battle.

Remember that fight between Timros the Thunderclap and "Boom-Boom" Yuprex, Hands of Stone? That Hittite anthem really struck a chord. Made me think that we should have one, too.

Dingo *scathing*

Yeah, but the Hittite national anthem went longer than the fight. Timros got K.O'ed in the first round. Remember?

Feral

Still ...

Mullet *kindly*

Don't worry, Fer. We'll learn the words off ya and sing it at the next prize-fight.

*The creek bed widens. To the left stands a cliff, complete with a cave. The entrance to the cave is a mere sliver. Mullet, Dingo and Feral drop their weapons, ropes and nets. They gather with Kala at the mouth of the cave, touching the smooth, creamy-grey rock.*

*"Dumb-shit" has left a cuneiform message on a small patch of clay. The four companions squat down around the message, trying to read it.*

Mullet I can't understand the lingo. Can anyone else make it out?

Feral *very attentive* Can you read this mess, Darlin'?

Kala I think it says: "Couldn't squeeze into cave. Gave up. Gone to the L and P. See you there." I'm pretty sure that's the general drift of the message. The spelling's not very good. Sorry.

Mullet *lost* "L and P"?

Feral *hopeful* Lions and ... panthers?

*The men are lost. They look from one to the other. Then Kala's eyes brighten and widen. Kala snaps her fingers.*

Kala *excited* I know what that is! It's "Leather and Pigskin". That's on today. When Boy finds out, he'll be right in the thick of it. Loves his footy.

*The three men look disconcerted, and turn from one to the other, still squatting. Then they slowly stand. Realization dawns. Mullet rubs his hand over his face.*

Mullet Fuck! We're in that. Is that today?

Kala *nods* Usually in the afternoon.

Mullet *bustling* Right! Come on then. Let's get moving. We can't miss the "Leather and Pigskin".

Dingo *studying the gap in the rock* None of us will **ever** get through this crack in the rocks. It's too mingy. Is that the only opening? Or do we have to widen it?

Kala *hopeful* I might just make it. Do you want me to try?

Mullet *shrugs*                      Awright. Give it a burl ...

Feral *brightening*                Hey! What's your name, so's we can sing out to ya ...

*Kala begins to squeeze through the very narrow aperture. She looks back at Feral.*

Kala                                  It's Kala.

*Kala disappears into the cave, while Feral nods happily. He feels that he now has a pretty girlfriend, which explains his goofy, lovesick smile.*

*Once inside, ropes, nets, leather pouches and a flaming torch are passed through to Kala.*

*The pirate cave is a limestone cavern, complete with stalactites and stalagmites. It is very beautiful. After looking about for a few seconds, Kala stumbles upon the treasure. It consists of gold coins, some gold cups and plates, and a few jewels.*

*Kala calls out to the men that she has found the stash, secures the torch upright, and then promptly begins to load the treasure into the nets provided.*

*Camera backs away. The last thing that we see is the three men busily receiving the plunder via the narrow chink in the cave wall.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene vi:** The Leather And Pigskin WAFL Game

*In contrast to the sylvan tranquillity of the pristine forest, Knossos is alive with a bustling, carnival atmosphere. The streets throng with all kinds of carnival performers and food vendors. People jostle each other in high merriment.*

*Amongst the crowd, it is clear that many young men and boys are dressed as if for battle. Some wear a red sash, whereas others wear a blue sash.*

*These competitors head for the central podium, on which stand a few dignitaries. A large WAFL sign can be seen. One of the dignitaries is armed with a huge conch shell. He blows mightily into the shell, producing a trumpet sound. The young men and boys stir excitedly. The dignitary is a Phoenician,*

*having a strong Australian accent. The AFL football which is held aloft by Gus is an AFL pigskin football, with a cuneiform version of "Sherrin" on the side.*

Dignitary                      The West Assyrian Football League welcomes all players to this year's Leather and Pigskin competition. The challengers, Phoenicia, are taking on the current champions, Mycenae. So good luck to both sides, and let's have a nice, clean competition. Phoenicia won the toss, so they're kicking to the wharf end of the market. That means the champs are kicking to the hilly end.

*There is a roar of encouragement for Phoenicia, matched by shouts of support for the Myceneans.*

Dignitary                      Now, youse all know the rules.  
  
The ball must be hand-passed, not thrown. Yuz have to bounce the ball after you've run 10 paces or else pass it on to another player. No pushing in the back, no head-high tackles and if I hear about any Ionian eye-gouging, I'll disqualify the lot of yuz. SnackBloke has kindly volunteered to be the field umpire. Youse all have to do whatever SnackBloke says: he's the boss.

*There is a huge roar of approval for the presence of SnackBloke. We see young men giving "power" signals with their clenched forearms. Many people chant "SnackBloke!"*

Dignitary *points to the crowd as he speaks*      When I blow the siren, Gus will bounce the ball, and then you're away.  
  
At the same time, the bulls will be released, so remember to keep an eye out for them while you're playing. Anybody who gets gored by a bull is no longer eligible to play and must immediately retire from the game. Especially if they're dead.  
  
Awright. Gus is ready to bounce the ball. Off yuz go.

|                               |
|-------------------------------|
| The Leather and Pigskin game. |
|-------------------------------|

*The players are poised like crouching tigers, ready for the bounce. The camera finds Buddy, Chips, Curl, Donger, Socks, the younger Knackers, Dingo, Feral and Mullet (all wearing blue sashes over their brief warfare attire). They are grouped together, as keen as mustard for the play to begin. The loud trumpet sound is heard, and Gus marches into the centre of the players, bouncing the football as at the beginning of an AFL game. There is a roar of excitement.*

*The WAFL Leather and Pigskin game now begins. From now on, the game is just like an AFL footy game, combined with a running of the bulls event.*

*Music: racy, exciting, as befits the action.*

*Camera shots: random, quick, busy.*

- *The players tackle, take marks, and hand-pass with electrifying speed.*
- *Buddy, Feral and Donger are amazingly good players.*
- *We see some players jinking and weaving through the market, jumping onto and over trestle tables and stands, bouncing the ball and hand-passing.*
- *Buddy kicks an amazing goal, while at the same time, the other Phoenicians keep the bulls at bay.*
- *More exciting play, with bulls goring several players.*
- *Feral takes a spectacular mark off the back of a bull, and we see a goal umpire dressed in what looks like a toga giving the goal sign (2 index fingers pointing forward).*
- *Boy has turned up, playing for Phoenicia. He runs, bouncing the ball, which he then hand-passes to Chips. Boy sees a bull charging toward him, which is certain to take him (that is Boy) out. But Boy stands his ground for a heart-wrenching second, then leaps athletically over the bull at the last nanosecond, cartwheeling over its back as it charges onwards.*
- *Dingo has been slightly gored by a bull and is dragged aside by a burly Hittite guard. Blood oozes out of a nasty wound in Dingo's side, causing a large red stain to appear on his clothes, yet Dingo is clearly angry and abusive at being dragged. Suddenly, he is confronted by SnackBloke, who pins him against the Hittite guard.*

SnackBloke *shaking his*      Hick bat fong loo tot Jethro bammie gray.  
*finger at Dingo*

**Subtitles: You must beware of King Jethro.**

Dingo *not  
comprehending the  
warning*

Look! I'm hardly bleeding. You can't disqualify me just for that.

SnackBloke

Peewee dan fillum bang sot won. Hick bat Jethro bammie gray,  
Peewee dan.

**Subtitles: Peewee says to take heed. That King Jethro  
cannot be trusted, Peewee states.**

*Dingo dabs at his nasty wound with his fingers. He is in a passion of anger and disappointment.*

Dingo

Aw, fair suck of the sav, Umpy. It's nothink. Just a little scratch.

*SnackBloke signs to the Hittite guard that he must remove Dingo from the field. Last seen, Dingo is  
struggling and angry as he is hauled off.*

- *Back to the footy. A huge "stacks-on-the-mill" melee has broken out, with players from both  
sides rushing in to pull the combatants apart.*
- *Bulls rush through the rumpus, mostly ignored, as the fight continues.*
- *Buddy lines up for another difficult goal, and the Phoenician boys jump about with huge  
delight.*
- *The siren is heard, accompanied by an eruption of delirious celebration by those wearing blue  
sashes (that is, the Phoenicians).*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene vii:** The Celebrations Continue at Byblos Demolitions. Byblos 1500 BCE.

*This is the same "Byblos Demolitions" which we visited in Film #2. There is a big sign outside the  
building. Some days have passed.*

*Coming from off-screen, in the beer garden, we can hear the drunken rendition of the Phoenician  
national anthem, which Feral made up.*

*Drunken male voices,* We love ya, Phoenicia!  
*off-screen* We **piiss** on all the rest.  
Phoenicia! Phoenicia!  
You are the buckin' fest.

*In the dimly lit reception area, Buddy (in his usual long robes) whistles along with the tune (what's left of it) as he organizes clay tablets. He grins to himself. On the wall, the small wreaths have gone. The WAFL gold cup has been suspended in their place, hanging amateurishly by a jute cord. Some players have hung their blue sashes from the jute cord.*

*Boy enters, followed by Kala. She is now dressed as a wealthy Phoenician maiden, in shimmering silks, laden with expensive jewellery.*

*Buddy turns to the new arrivals, grinning. Boy frowns. He points towards the beer garden.*

Boy Is this normal?

Buddy Yeah, when we win, it is.

Nice bull dodge. I saw you do that. Awesome!

Boy *embarrassed at this praise* You can talk! Those goals you kicked were magic.

Buddy Thanks. I love m' footy.

Well, anyway, your bit of clever footwork has scored you a spot on the team. Your sister is invited along, too. On account of the assistance she gave at the pirate cave.

All told, the boss is --

*Once again, the squiffy men rouse themselves to another chorus of the national anthem. Buddy laughs.*

Buddy In brief, the boss wants everyone to sail immediately for Spain.  
That's where the one-time members of Gang #5 are. That's where the bulk of the grave goods have been transported.

Your team mission is to exterminate Fergus and Callum (and

whatever constitutes their gang), get the loot, and bring it back to Byblos from Spain.

Are you up for it?

Boy *eager*

Sure! No worries.

*Buddy nods, then turns to the girl and lifts an eyebrow. Kala nods vigorously.*

*A group of six burly Hittite guards enter. Buddy has apparently been expecting them.*

Buddy

Ah! You're here. Good. They're out the back. Got a wagon or something?

*The Hittites nod.*

Buddy

Righto. You'll have to carry them, because they're legless just now. They need to be carted down to the dock. Put them on board the Shastra. It's tied up there, I understand.

*The Hittite guards look from one to the other, bemused. Then they burst out laughing.*

Buddy *frowning*

Why are you laughing? What's funny about that?

Hittite guard

Nothing, Old Cock, nothing.

Buddy

No ... What's wrong with the Shastra?

*Shaking their heads, and continuing to chuckle, the Hittites refuse to tell Buddy any more.*

Into the Beer Garden.

*Boy and Kala follow the Hittite guards through to the outdoor courtyard which is done out like a really atmospheric and beautiful beer garden. The big table where the men would normally sit is covered in mess, amphorae and empty beer mugs. The men (Mullet, Dingo, Feral, Chips, Donger, Knackers #2, Socks and Curl) lie about, drunk.*

*Taking his arms and legs, two of the Hittites pick up Chips, carting his limp body back into the office (and thence, presumably to the cart). The biggest guard throws Curl over his shoulder, then heads off. Another two Hittites cart Mullet out. Two guards begin to remove Dingo.*

Dingo *groaning*

I'm gonna chuck a bucketful ...



*Without hesitation, the guards drop Dingo unceremoniously, and instead, cart out Donger.*

*Feral begins to sing again, hopelessly mish-mashing the words of his beloved national anthem.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene viii:** The Deck of the Shastra

*Without either care or dignity, the limp bodies of the inebriated Phoenician graverobbers are tossed into a spare corner by the Hittite guards. They loll about, in the manner of hopeless drunks.*

*Boy and Kala stand to one side, watching uncertainly as their new friends are brought on board. One of the Hittite guards winks at Boy, then chuckles as he moves off. Boy and Kala glance at each other, worried. A voluptuous woman, dressed ostentatiously as a Goddess approaches. Boy and Kala look awestruck. The woman (Nona, played by the same actress who plays Adeline) is captain of the Shastra. She stands looking down at her guests with lips tightly pressed together.*

Nona *shouting*                      We make for the Iberian Peninsula. Due West. Cast away! Full  
*commands*                      sail! Oars at the ready!

*Music: dramatic crescendo as the camera backs away from the Port of Byblos.*

END OF SCENE

END of SARAH'S EXPERIENCE

## **II, Scene ix:** The British Embassy, where Sarah Awakens. Cairo 1934.

*In a room at the Embassy, a large knot of people laugh, sip cocktails and talk animatedly. Martin has apparently caught up with everyone just beside the bridge tables. Martin is gripping Dorothea's hands between both of his.*

Dorothea *to Martin*            Darling! Aren't you going to rescue your jacket from your fair damsel?

*Martin kisses Dorothea's hands before releasing them.*

Martin                        But of course, Madame Ferrier. The young lady is so beautiful ...  
However, may I get you some food, perhaps? Or ... another drink?

Dorothea *laughing but firm*            You are in your shirtsleeves! Retrieve your jacket, my friend. If only you were aware of the scandalized looks being laid upon you by these very correct, very proper Britons ...

Martin *dismissively*            *Ah non!* They will learn to love my *insouciance*. I live by the creed of *L'Entente Cordiale*, you see.

*[Secretively]*

I've only just discovered that my so-delightful *demoiselle*: she is an American. Such a droll lady ...

Yes, yes ... I see from your beautiful eyes that I must obey you.  
At once!

Ver' well. At your insistence, I will find my beautiful lady. When last seen (I'm told), she was studying the starry night sky from a secluded balcony.

*The smiling Dorothea pats Martin's hand. Martin kisses that hand.*

*Martin, smiling with great satisfaction, heads off in the direction of the balcony, watched in awe by the guests he passes (due to the absence of jacket).*

*Upon his arrival at the balcony, he is perturbed to find Vincent, watched by a few worried guests, squatting over the inanimate form of Sarah LaSalles. Aghast, Martin forces a path between the concerned people, himself squatting quickly beside Vincent, eyes only the girl.*

Martin *all concern*            *Tiens!* What is it that marches here?

Female Guest #1            We've no idea, Sir. This poor lady seems to have suffered some kind of fainting fit.

Female Guest #2            So unfortunate ...

Female Guest #3            She wouldn't be expecting a child, would she?  
*whispers*

Female Guest #1            This gentleman can't revive her.  
*pointing vaguely*  
*towards Vincent*

Female Guest #3            I have called for Dr Nettlethwaite, of course. I cannot think why  
he is not at my side by this time.

*Martin glances at Vincent, whose eyes bore back into Martin's eyes. Aghast, Martin feels the girl's arm, following the limb down to the hand. Despite the fact that there is no evidence of it, he realizes, appalled, that she has found a spiked cigarette which he had placed in the jacket pocket (and forgotten about), and that she has smoked it.*

*He rocks back, eyes bulging and hand smacked over his mouth.*

Martin *appalled*            *Merde! Dog's balls ...*

*Dr Marell bends over towards the girl, next to Martin. Roland squats beside Martin.*

Martin                        *Monsieur le Docteur.* It is as before, when you --

Roland *worried*            Did she sip some of our evil concoction, do you think?

*Dr Marell is taking the girl's pulse.*

Dr Marell                    She is merely in a very deep sleep, gentlemen. I'd like to get her  
up from this stonework, however. Help me, if you will --

Martin *firmly*                No, no! I'll deal with this.

*Martin carefully rises with the girl in his arms.*

Martin *to Roland*            Would you be so kind as to snatch-up my jacket?

*Roland picks up the dinner jacket along with what he believes is her discarded cigarette stub (scrunched down).*

*Roland notes the assembled crowd of onlookers.*

Roland I'll do my best to clear away the spectators.

*Roland smiles warmly and herds everyone off with outstretched arms.*

Roland *forceful* Now, there is no need for further concern. The young lady is comfortable now. We are quite well-equipped to deal with this little drama. Thank you. Thank you.

*Roland heads for the balcony wall and places the scrunched butt there. He flicks it off the edge, watching it fall into the dense undergrowth.*

*The onlookers disperse as Martin carries his American beauty to a quiet salon, where he deposits her with great care on a chaise longue. Dr Marell, Roland, Dorothea and Vincent accompany him, with Vincent closing the door behind them.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene x:** A Private Room Within The British Embassy, Cairo 1934

*The party stand around, looking at Sarah. Then, they all begin to look at each other, with worried expressions.*

Dr Marell *looking about at the people* You don't mean to inform me that this young lady's collapse has anything to do with the remarkable incidents already observed in the passing of a twelve-month?

*This is met by an uncomfortable silence.*

Dr Marell *aghast* No! *C'est impossible!*

Roland I'm afraid that we are in the dark so much as you are, Doctor.

*Roland gestures to Martin. All eyes are now on Martin, who drags a hand through his hair, then slumps into an armchair.*

Martin You all know the longing ...

I have set it about that, to all intents and purposes, Vincent ***dragged*** me here. Back to Egypt ... as if I had been the most unwilling victim... but *non!* ... *Non* ... I was not dragged ...

Left to my own devices, I made the journey to Mahala's house, and there I managed to take into my possession three cigarettes.

Dorothea *aghast*                      Tell me that you don't mean the fags which were left in a beautiful ormolu box at my mother's house?

*Martin looks discomposed and makes a noise in his throat.*

Dorothea *appalled*                      Oh, Martin! You didn't!

Vincent *snorts*                              Of course he did!

Martin *shrugs*                              What can I say? I smoked one of these weeds.

You can guess the rest. As soon as the first whiffs of smoke wafted into my lungs, I knew that I would return ... Back to those former times. The luxury of Egypt, and those fascinating tombs we raided (so uncaring as we were) ...

*There is another profound silence. Martin cradles his head in 'is hands as if he has a migraine.*

Roland *gently*                              Well, *mon am?* Tell us what you saw there.

Martin *drags in a long breath*                      We (that is Dingo, Moollet and myself) have met up with the King of Persia. Among his cortege, we sail to Crete.

The "dodgy" bulls, you know. We must stop the evil trade of Andalusian bulls to the Cretan *religieuses*.

Dorothea *points to Sarah*                              And you lent your tuxedo to this lady, who then found one of the drugged cigarettes in the pocket. She smoked it and ...

*Dorothea looks at the men. They are all looking back at her, with enigmatic expressions on their faces. Roland, staring at his wife, shrugs.*

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene xi:** The Excelsior Hotel Cairo 1934.

*Dorothea sits in an upright chair as she reads a magazine. She is seated in a superb bedroom, such that she can keep an eye on Sarah, who continues to remain asleep. Between Martin's carrying her, and a taxi ride, Sarah has been transferred from the British Embassy to a room in the Excelsior Hotel.*

*Dorothea turns a page, sighing loudly. Sarah blinks awake, and looks at Dorothea, measuringly.*

*Dorothea glances up from the magazine pages. Both women stare at each other. Then Dorothea smiles reassuringly.*

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene xii:** The Back Stairs, Excelsior Hotel. Cairo 1934.

*Dorothea precedes Sarah (bathed and dressed) down the back stairs. As they reach the bright light spilling through an open door, Dorothea pauses.*

Dorothea                    It's highly likely that you may recognize these gentlemen from your dream, my dear. And if you do, please acknowledge them. You see, it's important that we find out what happened on Crete.

Sarah                        I'll tell all, you bet. But you have to understand something. It wasn't a dream at all. ***I was there***, in the flesh. I was actually there, on the island of Crete. A long time ago.

Dorothea                    I know precisely what you mean.

Sarah                        It was beautiful and wonderful beyond words.

Dorothea *somewhat  
sadly*                        The most superb moments of one's life. Yes, I know. Only it was someone else's life, after all.

Sarah                        A petty thief working with a gang of graverobbers, that's who I was.

Dorothea                      For me, it was the handmaiden of a Nubian queen.

Sarah                         No kidding?

                                    Me, my name was Kala. And a guy called Feral loved me.

Dorothea                      Martin!

                                    Well, I was Doxia. I'm Mullet's wife, you know. And as you'll see,  
                                    Mullet and my husband Roland are one and the same.

*Sarah stares at Dorothea, who makes a funny face, then ushers Sarah through the open door.*

*The two women step out into the blinding sunlight. The three men who were seated at a large table under a tree, rise to their feet. The camera focuses on Sarah. As her eyes become accustomed to the sunlight, she looks from one man to the next, at first somewhat puzzled, then smiling broadly, stepping forward towards the camera.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene xiii: The Boules Game at the Hotel Excelsior Cairo 1934.**

*In the delightful, expansive gardens of the Hotel Excelsior, a flat lawn, surrounded by attractive gardens, contains an area set aside for the guests to play at boules. The setting is sheer heaven: palm trees, exotic bushes and flowers, and a well-kept lawn. Egyptian waiters float about, bearing drink trays. British and French hotel guests relax on candy-striped deckchairs and lounges.*

*Our French/English party have commandeered the boules area and play. Pretty as a picture, Sarah LaSalles sips a lemonade through a straw, watched lovingly by Martin. She wears a divine large straw hat decorated with flowers, and her white muslin dress is very pretty.*

*Roland and Dorothea sit under a large umbrella, awaiting their turn to play.*

*Vincent instructs Adeline most assiduously in the game, showing her how to hold and toss the ball.*

Dorothea *to Roland*              My love ... I have something to tell you.

Roland *watching*                      *Oui?*  
*Vincent and Adeline*

Dorothea *shyly*                      I believe that a little Ferrier may be welcomed into the world in a few months' time.

Roland *turns to his wife*      What is that you say, *ma chere*?

Dorothea                              A baby. I think and I hope that I am having a baby.

Roland                                You are sure?

Dorothea                              Well, not absolutely ... not yet ... but I believe that --

*Roland stands, moving quickly to kneel at Dorothea's side, taking her hands in his.*

Roland *heartfelt*                      But that is news of the most --

*Roland fervently kisses Dorothea's hands.*

*Sarah, smiling coquettishly, nods.*

Sarah *to Martin*                      I think that your friend has just been told that he's going to be a daddy.

*Martin does not register what Sarah says. He is engrossed in her beauty.*

Sarah *no longer smiling*      The other lady is not quite so nice. You know what? She's more  
*and looking at Adeline*      American than I am.

Why, I've never met a more rapacious woman in my whole life.

Martin *realizing that*                      I have eyes only for you, *ma chere Sarah*. The Teutonic Juno does  
*she expects him to*                      not have any fascination for me.  
*answer*

Sarah                                      I may have neglected to tell you that Adeline was the captain of the boat taking us to Spain. I only saw her briefly, but I believe that she would have proved to be a cruel mistress.

Thank God I woke up!

Martin *quickly and*                      You tell me that Adeline Caronforse was in your dream?



*keenly*

Sarah                                      Sure!

*There is a delighted shout from the boules players. Vincent bows to Adeline, then escorts her to another table.*

Sarah *impishly*                      Ooooh! It's our turn. Come on, lover.

Martin                                    As you wish. I am your faithful slave, after all.

*Roland, Martin, Dorothea and Sarah prepare for the game. As they play, the conversation hangs on the larger picture of the visions.*

Roland                                  Sarah, you said that our next destination was to be Spain?

Sarah                                    Yes, that's correct.

Martin *carefully*                    As the employees of the man called Knackers? Or of King Jethrodates, perhaps?

Sarah *frowning*                    I don't think that any king was mentioned ... no. But one of the players in the football game was called "Knackers", I think. A young man with longish hair.

Roland *dismissive*                No, that's not our boss. He's just one of the comrades.

Sarah *recalling*                    A tall guy who played sport with you gave us the information about Spain. It was in an office of some sort. It had a kind of beer garden or some such thing attached to it. It was very beautiful.

Martin *eager*                        Ah! Buddy! The Byblos Demolitions, no?

Roland *with certainty*            Then the orders, of course, were from our real boss, Knackers.

Sarah *laughing*                    You guys were so drunk!

Dorothea *changing the subject*                    I was unlucky enough not to meet this Persian King of whom you speak. He sounds very interesting.

Roland                                  *Moi aussi*, come to think of it.

Martin                                    So! It is down to this.

We are headed for Spain, where we are bent on recovering the treasure which was stolen from Knackers by those Hittites who were in Gang #5. Only two of these original men survive: Callum and Fergus.

Sarah                      Correct. That was our instruction: to take those men out and retrieve the gravegoods.

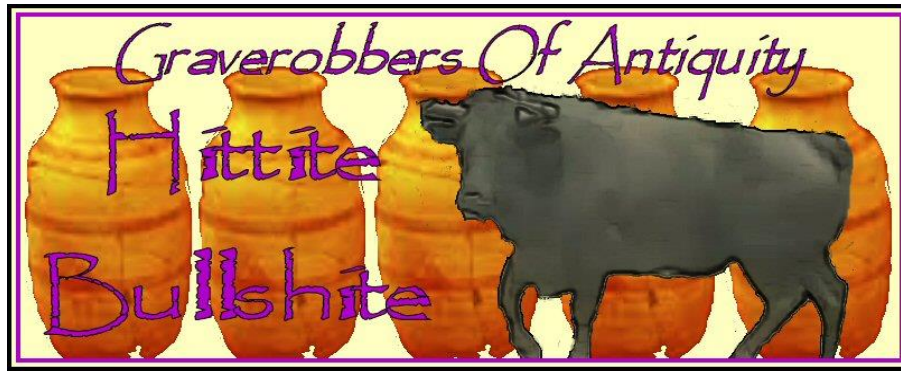
*There is a moment's silence while the game continues. Roland and Martin go after the boules. They stare thoughtfully at each other for a couple of seconds. A full understanding seems to waft over them both simultaneously.*

Roland                    This indicates to me that one of us (that is, Vincent or myself) must brave the possible consequences. One of us must go back ...

*Music kicks in: dramatic, leading us into the next scene, whereby the music tapers and becomes more intimate.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT II



## ACT III

**III, Scene i:** Night Time, A Divine Patio Outside Adeline's Boudoir, The Excelsior Hotel Cairo 1934

*Vincent (out of breath and looking nervous) clambers inelegantly over a low wall surrounding an elegant, expensive patio/balcony of the Excelsior Hotel.*

*Adeline (hair loose and dressed in a glorious peignoir) glides swiftly from her boudoir out through French windows and onto this spacious patio. She is an extremely voluptuous young woman, and her lingerie enhances her superb attributes.*

Vincent *breathless*            I have it.

*Purring, and exuding sex-appeal as she nears him, Adeline strokes and caresses Vincent. He trembles uncontrollably.*

Vincent *whispers*            Adeline! My most beautiful Adeline ...

Adeline *inviting*            Take me! Lift me in your strong arms, my dog of the desert, and carry me to the bed.

*Vincent obeys his beloved up to a point: he is unable to lug her statuesque form for more than a few paces. He struggles along, almost breaking his back, then deposits her back on the floor, with a breathy "Whoomph!" Adeline must walk to the bed under her own steam, merely holding Vincent's hand.*

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*As they lie down on the magnificent bed, Adeline clutches the man (overcome as he is with emotion) to her body.*

Adeline                      Make love to me with unbridled passion, oh primitive pirate!

Vincent *taken aback*        But *mon ange* ... I am no pirate, *grace à Dieu!* I am, in fact, but a humble graverobber.

Adeline *dismissive*        It is not of the moment, *mon cher*.

*Rather than intrude upon the couple's privacy, the camera tactfully retreats to the balcony, watching a stunning tropical flower burst into life. Just as it does so, we hear Vincent imitate a dingo's howling.*

~~~~~ **Break** ~~~~~

*To all intents and purposes, Vincent has been dismissed. He is dressed, somewhat sketchily. However, Vincent looks very discomposd and put out. He watches Adeline wandering about the boudoir, allowing her trailing silks to make her feel important and self-satisfied.*

Adeline *impatient*            Now, go, go, you! And bring to me those ladies. One of them is the amour of your friend Martin. The other married herself to Captain Ferrier.

*Vincent is uncertain. Adeline waves a white cigarette at him, as a final goodbye. Reluctantly, Vincent departs. As he reaches the French windows and the glorious balcony, he turns.*

Vincent *sadly*                I will wish you a good night then, *Cherie*.

*The lady is busy with her possessions and does not respond.*

Vincent *sadly*                I hope that my performance was --

Adeline *impatient and dismissive*        Yes, yes. You are the lover of choice. *Bien sur!* So go! I want to smoke *cette fumée*. Then I will hunt for the elusive treasure.

~~~~~ **Break** ~~~~~

*Adeline lies in elegant, comfortable fashion on the bed (which has been straightened following the love-session with Vincent). Her eyes are closed, her hair has been brushed and styled, and her face enhanced with heavy make-up. She reclines gracefully upon a bank of silk-covered pillows, as Dorothea wafts a spray of perfume over her.*

Dorothea                      There you are my dear.

Adeline *eyes still closed*    Of your goodness, will you light my cigarette, please? And be so good as to remain with me.

*Sally sighs and looks at Dorothea. They quietly laugh. All of a sudden, Adeline sits up demanding more jewellery. As the other two ladies scamper about finding this trinket and that, Adeline lies back in peaceful repose. Then, with the 2 ladies straightening Adeline's gown, the cigarette is placed in her lips, and carefully lit.*

*After a couple of puffs, Adeline's breathing deepens. Sarah and Dorothea, who have stood quietly beside the bed, visibly relax. Sarah chucks more baubles ungraciously onto Adeline's stomach.*

Sarah *with mock salute*      Goodnight, Captain Nona.

END OF SCENE

### Start of ADELINE'S EXPERIENCE

### **III, Scene ii:** A Galley, Sailing/Rowing From Crete to Spain 1500 BCE.

*Camera is very close to Mullet, lying on the rocking deck of The Shastra, a substantial galley, complete with Phoenician sails. Mullet is sleeping and snoring loudly. He is snuggled up closely to other graverobbers, also asleep. All the men have visible stubble on their faces.*

*A bucket of cold seawater is sloshed over Mullet. Mullet stirs, groggily squinting up into the bright sunlight. He is vaguely aware of a person (Boy) looking down at him, arms akimbo. Mullet lifts his head, but then drops it back with a painful grunt.*

Mullet *slurring horribly*      Hey, mate ... Can yer tell the bloke drivin' this boat to go a bit easy? We're gettin' ... you know, the waves are comin' over the edge ...

*Dingo dopily struggles to his feet, then staggers to the railing. He vomits loudly over the side.*

*As the vessel rocks and rolls gently with the swell, the beautiful singing of a female chorus can be heard. The music is enchanting, bewitching. Mullet frowns.*

Mullet *grimacing*      Shit ... sirens ...

*Mullet manages to sit up, such that he can survey his surroundings. There seems to be no sign of any crew-members. Boy continues to stand over him, arms akimbo. The sweet singing seems to be coming from somewhere on the boat, which travels at a steady rate. Mullet is hauled to his feet by Boy.*

Boy *apologetic*      I thought it was fair time that you blokes woke up.

*Boy disappears, leaving Mullet to scan the horizon. Boy returns with the wooden bucket, and once again douses his shipmates with cold sea-water. Dingo continues to hang over the side.*

*The other men regain consciousness. Their heads come into focus as they stand up beside Mullet.*

Mullet *grinning*      How are yuz feelin'?

Chips      I've felt better, mate. What's the story here?

Feral      Where are we?

Boy      Westward from Crete.

Donger      North Africa?

Boy *shrugs*      Maybe. We're going to ... Somewhere called the Iberian Peninsula.

*The men stand about, unsure what to do. They gravitate towards Dingo, in order to offer some relief.*

Socks *concerned*      What's that singin'?

Chips *pointing out to sea*      Dunno. But take a decko at that lot. Wherever we're goin', it's pretty bloody important!

*To the starboard, making great headway, and travelling in the same direction as the Shastra can be seen the ornate boat belonging to King Jethrodates. In his wake follow dozens of large, sturdy galleys filled with horses, camels and Indian elephants. Also seen is a small Phoenician sailing boat belonging to Knackers #1.*

*Carrier pigeons fill the air as they fly from ship to ship. Deckhands on several of the vessels stand at the prow, waving coloured scarves and flags. The vessels speed forward, soon overtaking the Shastra.*

*With a long groan, Dingo lifts his head. He looks totally ghastly.*

Dingo *with effort*                      I can smell cow dung.

Mullet                                      Can ya? Blood oath!

Dingo                                      I reckon this bathtub was used to ferry the dodgy bulls between Spain and Crete.

*Mullet pats Dingo's back in a kindly fashion.*

Mullet                                      You might just be right, brother.

Chips *in an undervoice*              I don't remember Dingo bein' seasick before.

Mullet                                      He's not. He got tickled-up by a bull in the footy match. And he hasn't felt too flash ever since.

Chips                                      That's no good. Them bulls can be a nuisance when they prick ya. Better put some ointment on that wound. Remember what happened to Archie.

Feral *forcing himself to sound patient*              No, mate. Archie was nibbled to death by a lion, not a bull. It was Squizzy who was nailed by a bull.

Chips *not bothered by details*                      Yeah, yeah, yeah ... same bloke, different haircut ...

*Kala appears, and the men all look at her: both due to her beauty and for inspiration.*

Feral *smiling*                              Where've you been, Darlin'?

Kala                                Snooping around.

*Camera looks back at the Shastra. The entire party of Phoenicians watch as the other vessels speed away into the distance.*

Kala                                Here's the gen.

The Shastra has a female master who doesn't like unseaman-like behaviour on board her ship. So you guys had better watch your step.

That aside, I've found out that Captain Nona was hired by your Hittite friends, when there were still 3 of them to sail to the farthest coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The cargo was a huge marble statue, which was hidden under sheets, jute bags and timber. No questions asked.

Chips *very interested*        And was she in on the bulls rort?

Kala                                Yeah, but that was just a blind. Nobody cared a tin flimflam for the bulls. It was the unknown statue that was their focus all along. That's been the subject of everyone's concern for many moons now.

Mullet *heavy sigh*            So that's what we're up for, is it? King Jethro and Knackers and everyone else want us to help find this thingo ...

Feral                                King Jethro promised us a nice sail down the Tigris on his Royal Yacht.

Dingo                                Yeah ... after some heavy spade work.

*Mullet shades his eyes, watching the disappearance of the other vessels. He leans over the side, noting how uneven and unprofessional the oar strokes seem to be. He stands again, scratching his head.*

Mullet                                What's the go? Our oarsmen aren't much chop.

Kala                                Oarswomen.



Donger

What?

Kala

Girls. Yeah, that's them doing the singing. I questioned them about their pay and conditions, and it seems that Captain Nona is a very fair boss. Apart from the fact that they're all stripped to the waist, I'd have said --

*Without pause, every man sprints to the steps leading down into the lower deck. Kala watches them in surprise as they fight to scramble down the ladder. She notes that the Shastra has come to a standstill as the oars stop their movement. The singing has stopped, too.*

*Puzzled, she turns. She is confronted by Captain Nona. Without speaking, Nona raises her eyebrows. Smiling naughtily, Kala points downwards.*

~~~~~ **Break** ~~~~~

*Back on deck, firmly tied to each other with stout ropes, the graverobbers (standing) gloomily watch Captain Nona pace about, in ever-growing anger. A few days have passed, as the men now have sizable stubble on their faces.*

*Posed about, on the deck and in the rigging, are the most beautiful girls of all nations, smiling sweetly to the men. They number about 8 girls (to enable the rowing and singing to continue below decks). Most of them have dragged a toga or shawl over their bodies.*

*Nona with contempt for the men*

Through my good deeds, all these young ladies have escaped torture and/or base-level degradation. They were enslaved as dowry brides (shackled to cruel and rapacious in-laws), or simply married-off to horrid men. Depending on their area of origin, some of them would have been ensnared in brothels or harems, had I not intervened. But for me ...

What do you think, gentlemen? Have I acted wrongly in rescuing these dear girls from their prospective lives of misery and self-loathing? Have I been a pillar of sisterly comfort to these

wretches?

Donger *immediate response*

Aye, aye, Captain. You've acted more than correctly for these innocent waifs.

Mullet *confused*

Is that fair dinkum? They were all shackled to dodgy blokes or whorehouses?

Dingo *thoughtful*

Eh, Feral! Remember when we rescued Queen Basrani ... we got lost in that harem? Those dames weren't all that miserable, were they? Seemed pretty happy ...

*Nona stalks up to the unsuspecting Dingo and delivers a savage face-slap.*

Nona

How **dare** you even **suggest** that sex-slaves could honestly approach happiness!

*She turns on Mullet, eyes blazing.*

Nona *accusatory*

And **you!**

You're married, aren't' you?

So, how do you treat your wife? Are you a pattern-card of kindness and husbandly care?

Mullet *somewhat offended*

Yeah, 'course!

Nona

Do you tell her at every opportunity that you love her? Are her creature comforts your sole concern?

Mullet *tongue-tied*

What are ya ... What's your ... 'Course I love her. She knows that. Hey! I root me missus every night, don't I? She's up the duff as we speak.

*Nona, fuming with unspeakable rage, throws herself onto Mullet, pummelling him, screaming and kicking blindly. Several of the girls rush forward, pulling her back. All the time, they coo soothingly, trying to calm Nona down.*

Mullet *affronted*

Where's your spirit of fair play? Ya can't just jump on a bloke like

that when he's trussed-up!

Nona *spitting venom through clenched teeth*      ***Don't - you - dare - talk - to - me - of - "fair play"!***

Feral *whispers to Mullet*      What? Once a night or more than once?

Chips *whispers, really scared*      Shhhh! I'm gettin' terrified that she's gunna unman us with that scimitar over there.

Feral *getting excited*      If she's gunna take us out anyway, then I'm gunna ask for a last request. I'm gunna demand that I get to root every single --

Dingo *scared*      For fuck's sake, shut up, Feral!

Donger *trying to stop laughing*      What a way to die!

Curl      You said it, old cock!

*Nona, who has been pacing about in gathering fury, stops dead. She signals to one of the more sturdy girls, who is holding a scimitar in either hand. The big-bosomed girl steps forward towards the men. The girl holds up the blades, which wink wickedly in the bright sunshine.*

*Girl's voice disembodied*      Land ho! Land sighted due West, captain.

*Captain Nona and her maidens bustle about, preparing to land the Shastra. The scimitar-girl lowers the weapons such that they are crossed over her groin. She makes a kissing motion to the men as she winks at them.*

*All the men breathe a huge sigh of relief, except for Donger, who laughs out loud.*

*The camera moves back, showing the fast-approaching coast of Spain. The other vessels have long been moored and are rapidly being unloaded of their cargoes.*

END OF SCENE

**III, Scene iii: Coast of Spain 1500 BCE**

*The coast of Spain, on the Mediterranean. We see sumptuous views of the Mediterranean. The countryside is attractive and inviting, in the manner of a park. In one area, rocks are being cleared by an army of slaves. A large pit is being dug by other slaves. The boys from Byblos (except for Boy) are part of the digging operations. All the workers sweat profusely.*

*Over the hill, and down towards the beach march a herd of tamed Indian elephants (brightly caparisoned), led by King Jethrodates.*

King Jethrodates                      Elephants! Elephants! Yawl had better make a gangway for these  
*shouts*                                      elephants comin' 'long up at my rear.

*The elephants (in a train) sway past. We now see that Dingo, Feral and Mullet (picks in hand) are watching the procession as a break in their digging. Boy, however, is surrounded by a crowd of adoring slave girls.*

Dingo                                      How do ya like that? That bloke we just took under our collective  
wing is a bloody chick magnet.

Feral                                        D'ya mean Boy?

Dingo                                        Yeah, that's the one. Chick magnet.

Mullet                                        What's a "magnet"?

Dingo                                        It draws metal objects to it. And they use 'em for compasses.

Mullet                                        What's a compass?

Dingo                                        You know, North, South, East ... It points where yer goin'.

Mullet                                        Nuh ...

Feral                                        What? Yuv never used a magnet? Or a compass?

Mullet                                        Nuh ... Well, I always just use the sun. Are you tellin' me that  
there's another way to work out which way yer goin?

Dingo *shakes head*                      Come on, back to work.

Mullet                                        I suppose them Greeks invented it. They're always inventing stuff.

Feral                                      Not as good as Dingo does.

Dingo *remorseful*                      That winch thingo was a shame, if you want the truth.

Mullet                                      We don't! Back to work!

Feral *shouts at Boy*                      Hey Boy! Bitta spade work for you, mate!

*As Boy saunters over to join his mates, the camera pans the vista to indicate that this is a huge undertaking.*

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene iv:** Walking Through The Landscape, Spain 1500 BCE

*Feral, Mullet and Dingo have deserted the work gang and now stroll about in the dry scrub.*

Mullet                                      Do you reckon Fergus and Callum are in the vicinity?

Dingo                                      Sure. If the treasure is here (and everyone reckons it is), then they won't be too far away.

Feral                                      Aw, mate, this is a big place, this Iberia. Shit! They could be anywhere.

Dingo                                      Yeah. We'd better go back. King Jethro could set sail at any time: don't want to miss the promised treat of a cruise down the Tigris, do we?

*Suddenly, Mullet stiffens, looking up. A carrier pigeon is chucked into the air by someone from high up the nearby escarpment.*

Mullet                                      What's that? What do ya reckon that is?

~~~~~ **Break** ~~~~~

*Our boys find the two remaining Hittites, hiding up in a cave, in an escarpment.*

*Our three Pubic Punics stand about in sparse scrub, looking up. They shade their eyes with their hands.*

Mullet *nodding*                      They're up there.

Dingo *calling up loudly*       Hey! Fergus! Callum! Long time, no see! How have ya been, you bastards?

Mullet *calling up loudly*       Do you realize that you've got half the known world on the hunt for youse blokes?

Feral *calling up loudly*       So, we were all sorry to hear about Archie.

South African voice  
*from above*                      Yes, he was a damned good man. Quite a team-player.

Feral *calling up loudly*       We're not sorry about Squizzy, though.

South African voice  
*from above*                      No, neither are we.

Everybody in unison              Opinionated prick!

Dingo *calling up loudly*       So, did you lot get landed with Lady Ulpia and Lady Cynthia?

South African voice  
*from above*                      Yuk! What did you have to go and remind me of **that** for? Yes, the lovely ladies decided to cleave to us after Squizzy's death.

Dingo                                  And now?

South African voice  
*from above*                      We discovered within the first week that they were surplus to requirements, Dingo.

Mullet *calling up loudly*       They've done the big dirt dive, then, have they?

South African voice  
*from above*                      Don't quite know ... we had a choice of garrotting the dear ladies or trading them in for The Shastra. We now own the Shastra, if that gives you a clue.

South African voice              Last heard they were redecorating their new home: Jethrodates's

*from above* harem in Persia.

Dingo *calling up loudly* And Queen Hepzibah would be ... ?

South African voice Under sedation.

*from above*

Dingo *calling up loudly* And so you guys own the Shastra? To be employed in your ... ah ... cattle transporting needs, no doubt?

*The conversation dies. The three men in the scrub shuffle about, kicking this bit of wood or stone, and then that one.*

Dingo *calling up loudly* Okay, so where's the treasure?

South African voice Bite your bum!

*from above*

Feral *calling up loudly* Come on! Most of that stuff was **ours**, anyway!

*The three boys look up. There is no response. Then Dingo and Feral start chucking small rocks up towards the cave. Something disgusting is tossed down beside them, along with a couple of spears.*

Feral *calling up loudly, derisively* Ya missed!

*A volley of spears and rocks follow, all of which are wide of the mark. After chucking up more rocks, and looking aggrieved, the three friends troop off, towards the camera.*

Dingo So ... what have we got?

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene v: On The Yacht Belonging To King Jethrodates, The Tigris River 1500 BCE**

*The promised trip down the Tigris is in progress. Along the Tigris, the scenery is verdant, almost tropical and inviting.*

*Feral, Mullet and Dingo lie back on banana lounges made of cane. This furniture is randomly positioned on the deck of King Jethrodates's yacht. A silken sunshade is festooned over the deck. Judging by the nearby tables, our boys have been more than adequately provided with food and drink.*

Nona *voice-over*                      These pestilential boys (these Pubic Punics) had been promised that they would sail with King Jethrodates down the River Tigris. Heedless of the warnings of Peewee and of SnackBloke, these incautious young men risked all for the promise of gratuitous pleasure, as is the way of all young men.

To my way of thinking, these boys thoroughly deserved the fate that awaited them. And yet my heart bled for them when later I heard how badly they were treated by this mightiest of kings ...

*From a lower deck, King Jethrodates calls out. The music is poignant.*

King Jethrodates *calling*    Hi, there, my fine Phoenician fellows! How yawl doin', there?  
*up*

*Rather than answering the King, the boys simply hold up their amphorae of XXXX beer.*

*The King roars with laughter.*

King Jethrodates                      That's the spirit! You boys are gonna have a high old time in Persia.

*The boys settle back again to their drinking. Mullet watches Dingo closely.*

Mullet                                      Whatsa matter? You still crook after the footy game ... ?

Dingo *grimacing*                      Nuthin special.

*Dingo realizes that his on-going illness is not leading to a convivial drinking session, so he promptly changes the subject.*



Dingo                      So ... what have we got?

Feral                      In terms of ... ?

Dingo *reasonably*                      The mighty King of Persia has left his slaves, his elephants, our co-workers and sundry other identities to dig up the Hittite treasure. Now, he reckons that, should he find it, he'll give us our fair share.

Feral *doubtful*                      Will he, though?

Dingo                      Say he doesn't. Have youse put anything by?

Mullet                      Of course. My stuff's hidden in a cave under the ground near Byblos. I oughta move it up to the hills, near where Stiffy lives.

Feral                      Mine's under the stones, under me trophy room.

Dingo                      And mine's buried near where boat is moored.

*The men drink.*

Feral                      That means ... that means we're alright, if King Jethro **does** find the loot, and then does the dirty on us.

*All three men lazily watch the shimmering landscape float by.*

Mullet *shrugs*                      Reckon ...

END OF SCENE

END of ADELINE'S EXPERIENCE

### III, Scene vi: Coast of Spain, 1934

#### "The Eyrie" aka "L'Aguilera"

Background: *Adeline Caronforse has purchased the picturesque stone villa which was once an artist's community. It is perched on a rocky, dry, unattractive hillside. However, the views of the*

*Mediterranean are superb. From very long shot, our camera picks up Martin, Roland and Vincent nimbly trekking a dirt track which leads from the beach up to the villa, through dense bush.*

*Then we move inside.*

*Interior of the villa: Adeline marches about inside the villa, looking very pleased with herself. Her strides are loud, due to the emptiness of the sparsely furnished rooms.*

*Voice off Sarah*                      My goodness! These views are just the cat's miaou, Addie.

*Adeline stops, looking about her with smug expression. She marches out of the room in which she stands back to the main room, where Sarah and Dorothea stand at a picture window. The view of the Mediterranean, on this sunny day, is to die for.*

*Dorothea*                              You must have paid a king's ransom for this haven.

*Adeline firmly*                      It is of no matter. Of most importance was the position: this is where the Hittite gold came.

*Sarah and Dorothea glance at each other.*

*Dorothea carefully*                I'm not sure that --

*Adeline definite*                    I am Nona, as I told you. I know.

She and her crew of misfit girls came **here** to this coastline. This is where a huge cargo was unloaded with the timely assistance of friendly natives, to the so great chagrin of King Jethrodates.

Somewhere ... It is here somewhere, still buried under the ground for all these many centuries. Jethrodates did not find it. The Phoenicians did not find it. Therefore ...

*Sarah*                                  Yes, but maybe these dreams we all experienced were just ... well ... hallucinations.

*Adeline*                                You think that the gold does not exist? That there is no treasure?

No! Everything that you have all told to me has acted as a shining light. There is a great horde of gold, jewels, precious statues ... those Hittite graverobbers stole everything, and hid it in the wings

of an eagle. And I was centrally involved in bringing it here, to this ver' place.

Dorothea

But --

Adeline

Why else did we all have these crazy dreams? One vision following from the one preceding it and then leading to the next? What would be the point, do you think?

*Adeline puts her hands on Dorothea's shoulders.*

Adeline

*Ecoutez-moi.* Hundreds of men and women throughout the ages have tried to find this massive Hittite treasure and failed. But your Maman, your birth mother Mahala: she came the closest of all. And I understand from what you all have said that she wanted to obtain the treasure through Miles Renault. Is that not so?

*Adeline stares hard into Dorothea's face, then lets her go. She moves over to a small, overladen table, and lights a cigarette. Deeply moved by the rationale of what Adeline has said, the other two ladies stare at her.*

Adeline

You yourself showed to me the sketches made by your Mahala. Professor Summerhill and his so lovely daughter spent months rifling through the catalogues looking for the gravegoods depicted in those sketches. But what did they find? ***Rien!***

*Pourquoi?* Why can these treasures not be found in any collection in the entire world? Because they are still buried under the ground, trapped in a large eagle, constructed of marble.

Waiting for us to find. ***Ici!***

An old hag, a gypsy, foretold this to me.

*Adeline imitates a raddled old gypsy. She overacts in doing so.*

Adeline

"My lovely young woman," she said. "A wealth of gold buried deep within the rocks awaits you."

Mistakenly, I thought that the gold of which she spoke was hidden

in Egypt. But the "rocks" she spoke of were Spanish. These Spanish rocks. What else is one to think?

*[With an elegant sweep of her hand.]*

And we are close. I have known it of a certainty, *moi-même*, since I became Nona.

*The three women stare out the window at the sea, Adeline smoking ostentatiously. Her words have unsettled the other two ladies.*

Adeline *bright*

Ah! Here come our menfolk. Let us prepare coffee and cakes for them.

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene vii: A Small Room At L'Aguilera. 1934.**

*The room is dimly-lit. There is a mattress laid out on the floor amidst a welter of lumber. The mattress is made up as a bed, with all the best intentions, but the litter strewn about makes the room unattractive. Vincent sits on the bed in his pyjamas, idly turning a cigarette butt over and over in his fingers. His expression is hard to read: he is musing deeply.*

*Music: eerie, evocative music seeps into the scene.*

#### **FLASHBACK:**

Below: flashback to the balcony scene of Act II. We didn't actually see this; however, we now get to see what really happened.

*Sarah LaSalles has fainted and is in the midst of her dream. Vincent, smoking, wanders out onto the balcony, pulling up suddenly on seeing the lady lying to one side.*

*He rushes forward, chucking his own half-finished cigarette onto the ground, grinding it under his shoe. Then he squats over Sarah.*

*Vincent very concerned Mon Dieu! Miss ... what has passed here? Miss! Miss!*

*Looking very worried, Vincent takes in the fact that this is Martin's jacket which lies under the prostrate woman. Frowning deeply, he mouths: "Martin". Gently taking the lady's hands, he begins to rub them, only then finding the rogue cigarette butt.*

*As other guests arrive on the scene, voicing their concern over Sarah and Vincent, the latter slips the butt into his top pocket.*

*We see him shrug as he looks up innocently to the onlookers.*

*[Footnote: thus it was Vincent's own cigarette butt which Roland vehemently flicked off the balcony wall. Sorry to be boring in labouring this point; but we really must establish that Vincent's theft of the unused portion of Sarah's doctored cigarette was unknown to everyone else.]*

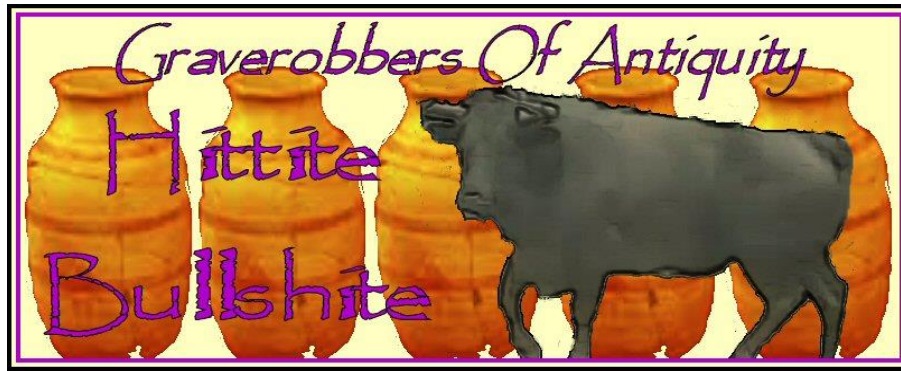
END OF FLASHBACK

*Vincent continues to sit on the bed in his pyjamas, idly turning the cigarette butt over and over in his fingers. It is as if he has thought long and hard about whether or not to go through with his plan to smoke this weed.*

*He then picks up a cigarette-lighter and flicks a bright flame into existence. The flame lights his face, showing that he is in a thoughtful mood. Without further delay, Vincent lights the cigarette stub with which he has been playing. He draws deeply, leaning back. The music builds. Vincent draws again.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT III



## ACT IV

Start of VINCENT'S SECOND EXPERIENCE

**IV, Scene i:** Vincent's Dream, Various Quick Scenes: Egypt, around 1500BCE

Music: racy.

*The following collation of scenes are quick but entertaining. Boy has joined the super-group: Mullet, Dingo, Feral, Boy, Chips, Curl, Donger, Socks. The idea here is to give the impression that they are all flat-out working; that is, working for Knackers (Telzer).*

- *In a torch-lit cave, Boy (covered in Pooter's green slime) is thrown one sack of coins after another. Hard yakka.*
- *Knackers #1 and Knackers #2 dole out gold coins to the men, with Buddy in the background.*
- *Chips, Donger, Feral and then Boy provide a new version of the Human Tower. When each man reaches the shoulders of the man above him, the lower man shouts "Hup!" Boy, on reaching his perch, does a handstand. The audience below roar their approval.*
- *Chips and Mullet Indian-wrestle with huge intent, watched by the others, who have obviously wagered on the outcome.*
- *Maidenova has a litter of pups, with Howzat proudly looking on.*

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- *Dingo and Curl (both covered in green slime) stretch their tired limbs in a low torchlit cavern. A couple of ghouls torment them. Without a sideways glance, both men punch the ghouls (knock-out blows), and then continue with their work.*
- *Buddy plays kick-to-kick with an AFL football, taking high marks and kicking long kicks.*
- *Wearily, and sweating profusely, the boys (formed into a chain) pass grave goods, one to the next. The action is one of swinging in a rhythm.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene ii:** Tigris at Night, 1500BCE

*The camera is in a "cave", which has been used to form the antechamber of AFT (ie Another F\*%@!ing Tomb). The camera is looking from inside at the 3 huge rocks blocking the entrance to the cave. It is night, thus it is dark. Our heroes are on the other side of the rocks, about to push one of them out of the way.*

*(Once they get inside, they will discover not much in the way of treasures. There is a wealth of statuary, mainly of gods. This cave houses some sort of Pantheistic collection. The boys will be quite unable to account for the reasons for their having been asked by King Jethrodates to break in and steal the contents. Anyway, at this point, they are still outside.)*

*The voices of the men depict their anger. They are evidently pissed-off.*

*Voice off Feral*                      Cocksucker!

*Voice off Mullet*                      Yeah, he's a piece of work alright.

*Voice off Feral*                      He could 'ave lent us a coupla slaves to help with this. Mingy prick.

*When Mullet speaks (voice off) we hear him straining, grunting and heaving. He grimaces with teeth clenched.*

*Voice off Mullet*                      Give - us - a - bit - more - light, - Ding ...

*Voice off Dingo*                      Shove over. We'll give you a hand.

*The camera is still positioned in the cave facing out. We now see the huge rock move slowly across the mouth of the cave (silhouetted, moonlight and starlight behind the men), and we hear the men grunting, groaning and straining as they move it. The rock crashes away, the men stand about with chests heaving, sucking in the big breaths. Now we can make them out, as they have flaming torches. They enter the cave, holding the torches aloft, still sweaty, dirty and breathless. They all wear grim expressions. They all look around at the interior, Mullet more focused than his mates.*

Feral                      So what's the go on the curses here? Do we have that under control?

Mullet                     I don't think that there are any curses. It's just a straight break-and-enter job.

Feral                      No curses? Why not?

Mullet                     Because there's no gold. No treasures. Just artefacts.

Dingo *disgusted*        No gold? Shit! What's the point, then?

Feral                      What are "arty fats" when they're at home?

*Mullet has been studying the walls closely, even going down on his haunches. He runs his free hand over the wall, as if looking for something. Mullet speaks absently as if his search is all that he cares about.*

Mullet                     Artefacts are just bits 'n' pieces, Fer ... Could youse bring your lights over here for a mo?

*They respond to Mullet's request, leaning forward, looking at Mullet's wall.*

Dingo                     What 'ave ya got? You've spotted something ...

Mullet                     No, that's the point. I **haven't** spotted something ... I wish Stiffy was here ... He'd know ...

Dingo *wandering off*    Shit! There's not even a door. Look! Ya can walk straight in. Talk about lax security. No gold, no curses, no nothin'. Just ... what did ya call 'em?

Feral                      Arty fats.



Mullet Knick-knacks.

*Feral shakes his head with meaning. All 3 men stroll into the major part of the cave, which is higher than the antechamber. Not much there. They scout around, looking worried. They are not enthusiastic or even interested in the statues which make up this strange collection of god-figures.*

*Feral imitates King Jethrodates and his Texan drawl.*

Feral Come on boys, I'll take you for a nice jaunt down the Tigris, with all mod cons laid on.

*Feral resumes his normal voice.*

Feral *rancour* Then I'll order youse to break your bloody backs lugging this shit around for me while I lay back in Queen Hepzibah's arms.

Dingo *rancour* Just do the job and shut up, will ya?

Mullet He mentioned somethink about having all the slaves we want when we have finished this work.

Feral *dull, no enthusiasm* Bewdy.

Dingo *also no enthusiasm* Yeah, bewdy. Why can't we have 'em now?

*They start the clearance in a desultory, workmanlike way. They only move a few objects out of the cave before Mullet stops in front of a beautiful male statue. It is of the Phoenician god, Baal.*

Mullet Hey, look at this! It's our own god, Baal. Nice statue. He looks good.

Feral We should pray to him. He's been good to us, all in all.

Mullet I dunno ... We all would've had older brothers if not for --

Dingo What, pray to him? On our knees?

Feral Yeah, why not?

Dingo Without an eli or priest or holy man?

Feral                                Yeah. Come on. Won't hurt. We haven't prayed to Baal for many moons.

Mullet *sighs heavily*            Awright. Dunno what good it'll do, but ...

*After parking the flaming torches strategically, the three men get down on their knees and half-prostrate themselves (if that's the right word; knees still bent, but heads bowed and hands on ground). On the way down, Mullet rejigs his wedding tackle so that he is more comfortable.*

*When Feral prays he lifts his head to address the god in a loud sing-song voice.*

Feral                                God Baal. Thank you for the food, the shelter, the clothing, the nice friends and the money that you allowed us to have. Ya done good, eh.

*Feral seems to have returned to his normal jolly self. He winks at the statue and gives a thumbs-up sign. However, Dingo's bad mood has become darker. He attacks Mullet in a fierce loud whisper.*

*Throughout the next few speeches, the voices of the men will overlap. A fight is brewing between Mullet and Dingo, whereas Feral merely wants to pray.*

Dingo                                What are ya touching yourself for? Ya never stop touching yourself.

*Feral and Mullet speak at the same time.*

**[Feral]** Thank you, oh god Baal, for giving the farmers lots of rain. Thanks also for the camels and horses that you invented to stop our feet from fraying from too much walking.

**[Mullet *testy to Dingo*]** I'm just making m'self comfortable. What's wrong with that?

*Feral and Dingo speak at the same time.*

**[Feral]** And for the cattle, the sheep, the goats, the dogs and cats, and all the birds. Oh, and the fish. I like fishing. It's a grousy way to spend a lazy afternoon.

**[Dingo *aggressive*]** You're always touching yerself. Even in front of our god Baal, you've got your dick in your hand! You're disgusting.

*Feral, Mullet and Dingo all speak at the same time.*

**[Feral]**

*[Not angry, but has to raise his voice to be heard]*

And I pray that the children will be free from harm. Even the first-born sons that have to be sacrificed to you ... that's okay, I understand that one. I'm not havin' a go at yer or nothin'...

**[Mullet *angry*]**

*[Pushes Dingo with force on the shoulder, shouting]*

Hey, I'm just re-arranging the furniture. Nothin' wrong with that, awright? Whew! You've gotta stop sniffing whatever you're sniffing, you moron. Why doncha get well and truly ***fucked***, Dingo!

**[Dingo *shouting*]** Were

you born with your hand on it? Do you think you're Baal's gift to the world, do ya? What are ya: Long Dick Mullet?

*Complete silence. Feral is floored. Mullet just stares savagely at Dingo.*

**Dingo *scathing***

Good on ya, ya prick! Ya said "Fuck" in front of our holiest of holy gods. That's worth a bolt of lightning on your scone for sure.

*Mullet and Dingo begin wrestling and fighting with lots of push-and-shove. There is much grunting and swearing as they tussle, rolling around in sand and dirt.*

*Feral glances at the two combatants and is not sure what to do. Feral keeps going, in a sing-song manner.*

**Feral**

And great god Baal. Please take care of the sickies and the old folks. I would like to get to old age m'self. Eventually. Not much hope of that given the profession I'm in, but.

*There is a long pause whilst the fight between Mullet and Dingo goes on, watched by Feral. Then finally, the combatants are too out of breath to continue. And once again, they suck in the big breaths, chests heaving. Feral turns back to his loud worship.*

**Feral**

Thanks for the trip along the Tigris with King Jethro. The scenery is nice to look at. Er ... well, great god Baal, this is your friend Feral signing off. See yuz later, oh all-powerful one.

Awright youse blokes. Let's get this shit into the cart for King Jethro.

*Exhausted, Mullet and Dingo (looking daggers at each other) join Feral in moving out the statues.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene iii:** The Bullfight Somewhere On The Tigris 1500 BCE

*A group of people lean over an embattlement, looking down and cheering. The camera comes up behind them, then over their heads. Down below a bull and lion face each other. The lion is hungry -- it snarls and pads about. Every so often, someone from the crowd chucks a missile at the lion, often a white-hot cinder -- and the lion becomes incensed.*

*Likewise, the bull is unafraid, and pores the ground, waiting for his chance to gore the carnivore.*

*The crowd cheer and yell encouragement to the lion, which is obviously the crowd favourite.*

*Above all this, a giant eagle rides the thermals.*

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| The bull, the lion and the eagle. |
|-----------------------------------|

*At the strategic point when it looks like the lion is about to go for the bull, the huge eagle swoops down and flies at the lion. Distracted, the lion turns from the bull, which gores the lion savagely.*

*The bull continues to worry the lion, dragging it across the dust because the beast is impaled on one of the horns. The eagle, flying off to a high perch, looks about arrogantly. Next thing, the lion bleeds to death. And the crowd boos, looking disgusted.*

*Dingo shares high-5s in celebration with Mullet and Feral. The 3 men express their delight.*

Dingo                                      Go Bulls! Hey, hey! Big winners. Nice one! Woo-hoo!

King Jethrodates *not*                      I understood that the bull was unlikely to best the lion. In fact, I  
*very happy*                                      placed a hefty lump of 'Gyptian gold on that predicted outcome.

Dingo *nasty smile*                              Winners are grinners, mate. Stiff cheese.

King Jethrodates "The lion is a dead-set shoo-in." You yourself made that call.

Dingo *insouciant* Didn't your mum never tell ya to never believe a Phoenician on the day after a full moon?

King Jethrodates *taken aback* And ... so, was there a full moon last evening? I sure as Heck don't recall that bein' the case.

Dingo *smirks* No idea, mate.

*Dingo looks at the King, measuringly, then shrugs offensively.*

*King Jethrodate's jaw tightens. He closes in on Dingo. The King's voice is now a low threatening whisper.*

King Jethrodates I sure hope that I don't have to mark yawl down as "fallacious", young man.

Dingo *very nasty* Take it on the chin, mate. You lost this round.

*Dingo swaggers off. The King watches him, with jaw tightening.*

King Jethrodates *very threatening* Oh, I don't lose nothin', young man. Never have ... never will ...

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene iv:** The Golden Eagle Swoops in on the Boys' BBQ

*The three grave-robbers (Dingo, Feral and Mullet) are having a BBQ on the banks of a river in Phoenicia. They stand around with amphorae of beer, in a lovely peaceful setting, with Feral turning the meat.*

*The huge eagle spotted at the beginning of Film #1 soars lazily overhead. The camera closes in on the 3 boys squinting into the sun to watch the eagle as it rides the thermals.*

Mullet *disembodied* Big cunt, isn't it?

*voice*

*An old stranger (actually, this is the ghost of Professor Maurice Phanton, from the beginning of Film #1, and during Stiffy's scramble through the marketplace) approaches, striding with easy grace. He is very Biblical in appearance:- long robes, long white hair, and a long white beard. He wears sandals and carries a staff. When he speaks, he adopts a slight French accent and uses theatrical grand gestures.*

*Dingo watches the approach of the Stranger and nods to him.*

Dingo                      Gudday, mate. How are they hangin'?

Stranger                  Many miles have I wandered through the stones of the desert. I have been buffeted by sandstorms and driven to despair by thirst and sunstroke. Long have I journeyed, and long will I wander.

*Feral continues to turn the meat on the BBQ. All three men glance from one to the other, not sure how to take the stranger's words.*

Mullet                    Ya don't say ...

Feral                      Want some tucker? Are ya feelin' peckish, after all yer walkin'? We got plenty.

Stranger                  The creatures of the land followed me, with snarling and with biting teeth. Poison-fanged snakes slithered under my feet. Dogs barked and howled. In the night air, dragons and fearsome monsters spat fire and brimstone, such that cinders rained upon me as I lay in my sleep.

Feral *encouraging*      Do ya feel like a snag ... or do ya want a piece of steak?

Dingo *sneering*          Give 'im a snag. I don't fancy his chances with a chop or a rib. I don't think he's got any teeth left.

*Feral piles some food onto a big slice of bread, folds it over and hands it to the stranger.*

Feral                      The great god Baal always counsels kindness to strangers.

There y'are, mate. A nice fat banger, some fried onion, runny

sauce and goat's cheese. All wrapped up in Queen Hepzibah's millet bread. Get your laughing gear around that.

*The men start eating, except for the stranger who stands with the food untouched in his hand. Dingo (mouth full) tries to make polite conversation.*

Dingo                      So, where'd ya say you was from again?

Stranger                   Many miles have I wandered through the sharp stones of the desert. I have been cruelly buffeted by writhing curtains of sand and I have been driven to despair by the heat of the sun, and my throat was slaked by a great thirst. Long have I journeyed, and long will I continue to wander.

Mullet *awe-struck*           Go on ...

Stranger                   What manner of men are you?

Feral                        We're Phoenicians.

Stranger                   How do Phoenicians live?

Mullet *winks cheekily*      Sweaty armpit, mate.

Stranger                   What are Phoenician men known for?

*Dingo has become tired of this conversation.*

Dingo                        We're known for havin' big dicks. If ya don't believe me, get Mullet to show you his. He'll do a one-eyed-loincloth-snake for ya at the drop of a turban.

If he's not too busy playin' with it, that is.

Mullet *angry*                Aw, knock it off, Dingo, ya stupid cunt. We're eating here! Give it a rest, will ya?

*There is an awkward pause.*

Stranger                   For long have I journeyed without sleep, through thousands of ages.

Dingo *bored*                      Good on ya. Why don't ya shove some food into yer cakehole and give us a bitta peace?

Stranger *to Dingo*              You who have been cursed will join me on my travels ... one day, you will fly with me. That is your curse.

Dingo *highly disrespectful*        Is that so, Sunshine? I wouldn't snort any more bugs, if I were you. You're off with the birdies, you are.

*The stranger stares at Dingo, then gets stuck into his tucker. There is a lull. Dingo, abashed, shoves more food into his mouth. Feral passes an amphora of XXXX to the stranger, then continues to cook meat on the BBQ. Mullet goes down to the river and pisses into it.*

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 pounce. 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 everything 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.

When we meet up with Kala again, I'm taking her as my bride home to Byblos. Gunna buy a nice house and settle down. Have a garden and some chooks and a few goats. Run some horses. Kala will like that.

Mullet

Good on ya. You do that.

Dingo

I'm going to give Crete a burl. Manage a fleet of fishing boats. Get hitched to some girl or other. Some chick who's into boats, because I'm into fishing. Should work out alright. Dig up my loot first, but.

Mullet

And I'll get back to my Doxia and the unborn child. After I've collected my stash, of course.

Sort of hoping he's not a boy ... 'cause ... you know ... Baal ...

*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. Long camera shot. Mullet stands dejected, with back turned to his erstwhile mates. Feral then Dingo trudge gloomily off, separately.*

*Camera moves up and away, to depict the full impact of the group's breakup.*

### **SURREAL FLASHBACK:**

Below: we see a flashback (somewhat out of focus) to the Professor's death at the beginning of the first film.

*Both Dr Marell and Colonel Bartholemew glance at each other, then move very close to Phantom, coming from either side of the bed.*

Bartholemew                              *[Gently, kindly]*

Just say whatever you like, dear fellow. Take your time.

*All that we can hear is the rhythm of the death-rattle for a couple of seconds.*

Phanton                                      *[Summoning his last gasp]*

The curse of the Pharaoh is as follows:--

Listen ... to ... me ... well ... the curse ... the curse is ... *Les rêves*  
... Of the *hommes six* ... Of the *femmes cinq* ...

The curse passes to those who ... to those who dream ... Then one will fly ...

*Écoutez-moi ...*

The lion ... the lion savages the bu ... the bull ... and the bull  
gores the lion. *Mais* ... The eagle soars above them on wings ... on  
wings of ... of gold ...

*The old man dies. Dr Marell signs to the Colonel not to speak. Bartholemew stands. The  
doctor ensures the man's death, then covers his head with the sheet.*

END OF FLASHBACK

*The camera then follows the stranger (that is Phantom) for a short while. The Stranger turns towards  
the sun and spreads his arms wide. He morphs into a huge eagle (totally beautiful, with golden  
overtones), which (after a few long strides) takes off into the sky. The eagle soars up, allowing the  
thermals to carry it, as it soars above.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene v:** The Brutal Murders of Feral and Dingo, and Mullet's Suffocation 1500 BCE

##### Author's Note

Yeah, well this is supposed to be a "comedy".

I remember that I sat on our stairs and sobbed uncontrollably when I finished  
writing this scene. It is witheringly emotional. Draining.

The only other piece of writing which affected me in this way was in "Hastings"  
when Snarr had to tell the tale after the harrowing slaughter of Eorl Wegga and two  
of his sons.

*Music: urgent, thrilling, overpowering.*

*The following shots are quick-paced and jump from one scenario to the next.*

*Please ensure that you have access to a box of tissues.*

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**Feral Action:** *In Feral's bungalow (which we have visited before in Film #2, ACT III, scene vi). Feral has used a pick and a couple of crowbars to uproot every paving stone in his trophy room. He has dug several shallow holes in the dirt under the stones.*

*Now he stands, looking lost, scratching his head. Then he drops to the floor, in cross-legged sitting position, with his chin on his hands (as if he is a child having a hissy-fit).*

**Dingo Action:** *On his own, but as if being pursued by 1000 men, Dingo rides his camel at full gallop, constantly looking backwards. His teeth are clenched.*

**Feral Action:** *Feral in a rocky crevice, with pick in hand, works lustily to free the huge rock behind which his treasure is hidden. He wears only a sweaty loincloth. Happy now that he discovered the real location of his treasure. He whistles delightedly.*

**Mullet Action:** *Mullet squats in the antechamber of a grotty tomb, greedily counting gold pieces.*

**Feral Action:** *Sweating profusely, Feral laughs joyously as he retrieves the gold-filled crockery pot from behind the rock.*

**Mullet Action:** *The antechamber begins to creak. Loud bangs. Mullet looks alarmed as the ceiling begins to cave in on him. Palls of dust rise and swirl, engulfing Mullet.*

**Feral Action:** *Looking out over the horizon, Feral sees a camel and rider approaching. Scared, he throws a cloth over himself, ties the stash of gold to the camel and quickly mounts. He urgently slaps at the camel and rides off at speed.*

**Dingo Action:** *Dingo and camel are still galloping over the sand and rocks. Into camera-range appear King Jethrodates in his chariot, along with various armed servants on camels, horseback and in chariots. The King neatly throws his pig-net over Dingo, hauling him bodily from the camel.*

**Feral Action:** *Feral rides as if on fire, with Topper beside him, also on a camel.*

*Feral shouts, gasping for breath*      *Can't stop, mate! Somethin's come up.*

*Topper, in his element*      *I'll 'elp you. Ve great god Baal counsels men to 'elp veir fellow man.*

*As they ride shoulder to shoulder at speed, Feral sees Topper pull out a wicked curved sword from his apparel. The blade glints wickedly in the sunshine.*

Feral *terrified*                      ***No, Topper, no!***

Topper *pleasant*                      Seriously, I'm doin' you a favour --

*Topper slices the blade accurately through Feral's neck. The head bounces on the ground.*

Topper                                  -- mate.

*Topper manages to grab hold of Feral's camel, just as the headless trunk flops to the ground.*

*Without a backward glance, Topper heads back in the opposite direction, holding onto the camel bearing Feral's loot.*

Topper *looking skyward*                      Ooooooh! Look at vat! .... a vulture. Quick, aren't vey?

**Mullet Action:** *Mullet is suffocating in the cave-in. He calls desperately to Stiffy, Feral and Dingo to save him. The sand covers over the man, and all we can hear are choking coughs. Then silence. The frenetic music grinds to a halt.*

**Dingo Action:** *No music. Just the lonely whisper of the desert wind. Camera stationed on the ground, beside the figure of Dingo squirming frantically in the pig-net. King Jethrodates' sandalled feet come into view as he steps out of his chariot. We hear Dingo groaning. The King lines Dingo up like a pig, then spears him, laughing heartily. Dingo yells in pain.*

King Jethrodates *voice-off*                      That's a lesson that maybe you forgot on your mama's knee.  
"Never trust a Persian King on a day ending in a 'Y'".

**Mullet Action:** *Cross to wherever the pregnant Doxia is. The dog Howzat begins to frantically dig the ground, howling and barking into the hole.*

*Doxia looks worried.*

Doxia *frowning*                      What is it, boy? Howzat ... what on Earth is wrong with the dog?  
*The dog paws at the hole, desperately whimpering. Then the dog throws back his head to howl.*

**Dingo Action:** *The camera is under the net, as if positioned with Dingo, looking up through the net at Peewee's face. Dingo's relief is palpable. However, he has hardly any voice left.*

Dingo *voice-off*                      Thanks, mate. I knew that somebody'd come to rescue me.

*Peewee roughly rolls Dingo about such that the net comes free, with Dingo moaning as Peewee does so.*

Peewee                      No, old cock, I'm saving vis net. It's always 'andy to 'ave a good net like vis, i'n't it?

*Peewee stands, taking up the net, which he folds into his arms. He continues to look down at the camera.*

Dingo *weak, voice-off*    Help me ...

Peewee *nasty*              I **did** 'elp ya. I warned ya twice about vat King of Persia, but you didn't bovver to listen, did ya? Didn't suit your notions of honour and bravery, seems like.

Dingo                      Twice? At Byblos ... yeah ... after that fight ...

Peewee                      And ven I sent SnackBloke to warn you off. 'E told me later vat 'e definitely delivered ve message to ya. At Knossos.

Dingo                      Help ... me ...

Peewee                      I **did** 'elp ya. And no fanks for it.

Dingo                      I don't understand ... what SnackBloke ... says ...

Peewee                      Vat's your problem, boyo.

See ya in ve Everafter, Sunshine. I'll just take me new net and go. And don't worry, I know where yer treasure's 'id. Me and Lion are just goin' for it, so don't bovver gettin' up.

*Peewee makes as if to leave and then turns back.*

Peewee                      Oh, and speakin' of Lion as we were ... just between you and me, me old Cocksparrer, vere's a nice pride o' lions headed straight vis way, and ve odd vulture lookin' down at you from on 'igh.

Just fought you'd like to know .... See ya. Turrah ...

Dingo *at his last gasp*    Put me out ... of ... me ... misery ... Pee--

*All is silence. The desert breeze is all that moves.*

*Dingo faints away as we hear Peewee ride off. When he next opens his eyes, he is about to be mauled by a huge male lion. Several lionesses roar nearby. The lion's head is very close to the camera.*

*Dingo's voice is too dry and raspy to scream or yell properly. He just gets this lot out, screaming as best he can.*

Dingo

M-A-A-A-A-A-A-T-E !!

Oh, shit! Mullet! Feral -... save me! Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh ...

END OF SCENE

END of VINCENT'S SECOND EXPERIENCE

#### **IV, Scene vi:** Vincent's Poky Bedroom L'Aguilera 1934.

*In the dark, Vincent awakens with a violent start. He makes a desperate gasping sound.*

*There is a moment's silence, then we hear the sounds of a man sobbing.*

END OF SCENE

**IV, Scene vii:** South-East Coast of Spain, 1934.

*Remember: up until now, the scary, CGI stuff has been included only in the times of antiquity. In these final scenes, we will be seeing the very scariest, most harrowing scenes in 1934, rather than in ancient times.*

*The south-east coast of Spain. Sweeping views: the Mediterranean Sea is observed in the distance, but not far away. Sour weather, about to rain. The road is rough, bumpy and the car travels at moderate to slow speed, with the occupants of the car clearly being jolted somewhat.*

*A superb limousine (late 1920's) is moving at moderate speed. A correctly uniformed chauffeur drives (he is Merrin). The four passengers sit 2 x 2, with the men facing towards the back of the car. There is a "privacy" partition separating the passengers from the chauffeur. However, the glass window behind the driver (that is, where Dani sits) can be slid open so as to give the chauffeur instructions. Harry rides a motor bike; he can be seen from time to time travelling either in the vanguard or following the limousine.*

*The passengers are: Theresa and Mimette, with Miles and Dani. We can see that the ladies chatter, Dani smokes whilst carefully studying a map. He also has a whiskey in a tumbler, from which he occasionally sips. Miles stares out the window, deep in thought. Dani wears the kind of impressive clothes befitting a Hollywood star. Mimette is dressed elegantly. Through choice, Miles and Theresa dress in a more subdued and well-worn "country squire" fashion.*

*Theresa is flipping through a magazine. She stops and laughs at something she sees on a page.*

Theresa *delicious giggle*                      Oh, do look at this advertisement! "Trilbeway Consumables." How very a propos!

That's where all my delicious money came from. You know, my dears, that I was the widow of ...

*Theresa suddenly realizes that this is not the moment. She clears her throat.*

Theresa                              Mmm, yes.

Purveyors of Spices and Condiments to the greater British Isles



and the Dominions. How droll!

"Peto Verum Intus"; that was the Latin motto.

Miles *mus*ing

"Seek truth within."

Theressa

Yes ... Seek the truth within ...

Well, I can't see that this Spanish countryside is all that different to France.

Mimi

Are they spots of rain that I see?

*Dani glances up from the map which he has been closely scrutinizing. And then he drops his eyes again.*

Dani

This parched land needs all the rain it can get. And no, I don't find that there is any resemblance to France at all.

Theressa

You're jaundiced, Dani. It's only a line on a map, after all.

*Dani is still riveted to his map.*

Dani

But the second that we left France, the roads became foul. Did you not notice that? Why, this one appears to be little better than a goat-track.

*Dani twists in his seat such that he can and does slide open the window/divider behind the chauffeur.*

Dani

Just keep going on this road, Merrin. I'll advise you before the turn-off.

Chauffeur

*Oui bien*, Monsieur Dani.

*Dani drags the sliding window closed. He folds the map.*

Dani

We shall soon reach the township of Canisae. This was an old Roman encampment, we are led to believe. Perhaps we'll stop there to stretch the legs.

Theressa

Coffee and cakes. A stroll down the boulevard, nodding politely to the natives.

*Mimette wriggles and grins with delight.*

Dani                                I very much doubt that we'll find anything so sophisticated as a boulevard, *ma chere soeur*.

Mimette                            There are always shops. We'll shop!

Dani                                Hah! Then you had both better give to me your purses before we ever reach this Canisae. Fleecing the tourists is probably a bigger earner here than the agriculture.

*They chuckle.*

*Miles is observed to still stare unseeing through the window. The drops of rain on the glass become more frequent. Then he takes an audible breath and turns to Dani.*

Miles                                Instruct Merrin to stop the automobile. I am alighting here.

*There is surprise and concern among the other three passengers as Miles reaches over and opens the door while the car still moves. Dani shouts imperatively, almost haughtily. Dani bangs on the interior window.*

Dani                                Merrin! You will stop the car now, *s'il vous plait*.

*The chauffeur brakes steadily, switching off the engine. Miles alights swiftly and moves away from the car, pacing. Harry circles him on the motorbike, then pulls up at a distance.*

*Merrin also steps out of the car, standing beside the driver's door, uncertain what to do, and glancing up (grimacing) at the rain.*

*Dani sidles over the seat and unwinds the passenger window.*

Dani                                What is it, Miles? Have you sickness?

Miles                                No. I must think a little.

Mimette *to Dani*                    Oh ... was our chattering a disturbance, then?

Theressa                            What do you suppose this means? Are we out of petrol, perhaps?

Dani                                What is wrong, *mon frère*?

Theressa                            Just look at him in the rain. I don't think that he even realizes that

he's getting wet.

*Three anxious faces can be seen looking out of the car windows, while Miles paces about in the steadily falling rain. Theresa opens the door and alights.*

Theresa                      Shall I go to him?

*Theresa hovers nearby. Dani alights to stand next to the car, and Mimi looks anxiously from the window. The rain beats down on them. Harry and his bike remain sheltered under a tree.*

*When Miles sees his wife looking all concern, he swiftly takes her shoulders in his hands.*

Miles                      Be Debbie and I shall be Stiffay again. Can you remember those times?

Theresa *misty-eyed*      Oh, Miles. Do I ever think of anything else?

Miles                      What did you think of the bold Stiffay? I mean, what did you think of him as a man? He was the kind of wise man who could be thrown into the streets of Marseilles and still rub along quite adequately, no?

Theresa                      Yes. Streetwise and resourceful. Yes.

Miles                      And Moollet? A good lieutenant, you would say. He was loyal, brave ... a good friend to have beside you. Do you agree with that snapshot of Moollet?

Theresa *doubtful*        I ... Yes, I suppose so ...

Miles                      And the funny Ferule. He was your brother. Life for him was a joyous game. And he lived it well, laughing and playful. Do you read his character that way?

Theresa                      Well, yes.

But Miles ... it's so very wet now. The rain, you know. We're getting quite wet. Don't you wish to discuss these matters in the shelter of the car?

*Miles is totally oblivious to the rain. He ignores the interruption.*

Miles                                So now we come to Dingo. What can you say of him? Didn't you find him different to the others? He was moody and difficult. Always at odds with everyone else was *Monsieur le Dingo*.

*Dani has vacated the car. He now steps up to his brother, still holding the tumbler of whiskey, and is patting Miles on the back; looking concerned.*

Dani                                Come on, old fellow. Why not motor to Canisae, there's a good chap. We could take –

Miles *urgent, insistent*        I feel the great concern for Vincent. I cannot explain to you ... We must get to this next village and make the urgent telephone call to L'Aguilera. To Vincent.

Dani *astounded*                Miles!

Miles                                Something does not gel ... What do the English say? The word is "unravel", no? Very well. The world for all of us "unravels". We must make the telephone call.

*[Imperative to Merrin]*

Merrin, you will need to put the foot flat on the floor for the maximum speed. Never mind if we have the bumpy ride!

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene viii: A Small Spanish Village 1934.**

*In a busy street, Merrin has parked the car. The rain is squally and annoying. Miles and Dani run back to the car and jump in. Merrin fires up the engine. Harry starts his bike likewise.*

SEGUE INTO NEXT SCENE

**IV, Scene ix:** The Interior Of The Limousine As Merrin Drives 1934.

*The sisters-in-law appear tired and bored. They sit very close to each other.*

Theressa                      Any luck?

Miles                         The phone does not connect. The line is dead.

Theressa                      Oh ... I do hope ...

*Mimette, Dani and Theressa look to Miles for guidance. He is stone-faced. Merrin asks an inaudible question, to which Miles gives an inaudible reply: the camera backs away, to watch the car disappear from view.*

END OF SCENE

**IV, Scene x:** "The Eyrie" aka "L'Aguilera", Twilight 1934.

*In the room with the large picture window, the four ladies sit about on ancient, unappealing furniture, sipping coffee and making desultory conversation. Mimette flips through Theressa's magazine.*

*The gentlemen (clutching brandy balloons) join them, remaining unseated. Without pause, Adeline rises to her feet, ready to spring her instructions.*

Roland *bowing*              That was a most pleasurable dinner, Mademoiselle Caronforse.  
Merci!

Adeline                        You are a most honoured guest, Captain. I am truly delighted to  
have you all here.

However, now that we are together, it is time to discuss the  
business at hand.

I suggest that we begin at first light in the morning. Given the  
many details collated by all of us over the past several years, we

must now be able to locate the eagle of the Hittites, which we know was buried here on this coast, very close to this villa.

Dani If such an eagle exists.

Adeline Oh, it exists. Of that there can be no doubt.

We all went back to that time and joined these graverobbers of antiquity. One of us at least knows the exact position of the giant eagle, not to mention its precious contents.

Theressa *standing* There'll be some provenance to guide us. A peculiar rock form, perhaps, or the shape of the coastline.

Harry I agree with you, Madame Renauld. One of us saw this. It's just a matter of going back over what we all did in those times.

Dorothea Added to which, Theressa's father, dear Professor Summerhill, sent pages of very useful --

Adeline *rude, bossy* Come! Come! Monsieur Harry Polglaze hits that proverbial nail on its proverbial head. "One of us saw this!"

So ... Perhaps it was I. When Captain Nona sailed across the Mediterranean, she came here to Spain. The cheeky graverobbers were in the thrall of the mighty King Jethrodates – King of Persia. He transported something huge and unwieldy in a large vessel. We sailed with him in a flotilla. The large object was buried by hundreds of sweaty men – here! No doubt all the treasure which the various graverobbers had taken from the holy crypts of Egypt fell into the hands of this Persian King. He buried it. *Voila. C'est ça.*

Martin *thoughtful* I met King Jethro. This is just what he would do ...

Adeline *swift, remorseless* And its exact location, this treasure? He told it to you, yes?

*Sadly, Martin shakes his head. Theressa turns to Adeline.*

Theressa                    You just now spoke of a "large, unwieldy object" ... Could it perhaps have been in the shape of a large bird, with wings outstretched?

Adeline *shrugs*            I did not recognise it as such. Knowing the wily King, it was well-disguised. But ... it could have been just that.

*Apart from Miles, the assembled guests sigh and wriggle about. They feel that the puzzle is now all solved. Miles has gone to a window and stares into the gathering darkness.*

*Behind Miles the guests make sundry noises. They are saying their goodnights. But before they can vacate the room, Miles turns towards them.*

Miles                    Martin! You went back to ancient times twice, did you not?

Martin                   Er ... yes ... Yes, I did. Firstly, I begged the potion from Madame Mahala. She gave in, but only on the understanding that I told my story to ***you***, dear Miles.

Miles                   Which you did. Blow by blow, as the saying goes.

Martin                   *Oui!* The second time was a complete accident – a surprise. I smoked a cigarette and –

Miles                   And you went back to the times you loved so very much. And there you again became Ferule (just as before) and enjoyed the rollicking life of the fit young working man.

Roland                   *Moi aussi.* Some time ago I ventured to the house of Madame Mahala. I felt drawn to the hookah.

Miles                   Thus, you went back for a second time?

Roland *nods*               Once more to frolic about as the dear Moolet.

Dani                    Let us go to bed, Miles. We are going to be quite busy in the morning.

Miles                   Just a moment, Dani.

Dani *annoyed*            We've discussed this over and over until our heads spin.

Miles                               No. I am bothered by the curse. I can count to eleven.

*The assembled guests stare at Miles. Suddenly, Harry realises what Miles is trying to fathom.*

Harry                              Six men and five women – that's your problem!

Okay, let's see now ... The six men were Lord Bruan, Mullet, Feral, Stiffy, Patto and Dingo. Fine!

But the five women were: Debra, Kala, Doxia, Nona and ...

*Roland now also "gets it". He snaps his fingers.*

Roland                            That's the snag! *Mon Dieu* how did I not see this! We need the fifth woman! But ... ?

*The assembled guests turn to Mimette, who trembles at the realization of what is being suggested.*

*Miles nods.*

Miles                              Queen Basrani. She is the fifth woman. We cannot finish this until the fifth woman goes back.

Dorothea                        Has anyone written down the exact words of the curse? The words uttered by Professor Phantom at his death?

Miles                              No need. I have memorized them. There was such significance placed on those words ... I thought it best.

*Every eye is on Miles.*

Miles                              The curse is *les rêves* . The dreams.

Of the *hommes six* ... Of the *femmes cinq* ...

The curse passes to those who dream. Then one will fly.

The lion savages the bull and the bull gores the lion. But the eagle soars above them on wings of gold.

Mimette *small voice*        Are you saying, sir, that to complete this thing I must go back to ancient times as Queen Basrani?

Miles *shrugs*                 It is inevitable.



Mimette To tell truth, I had a little of the jealousy to listen to you all speak of the visions you had had. The past sounded to me to have been very beautiful.

Sarah Gorgeous beyond measure, in fact.  
I'm so sorry, Mimi. I didn't realize that you hadn't ...

*There is thoughtful silence. Miles shrugs.*

Miles *Alors.* Is there any remaining of your mother's potion, Dorothea?

Dorothea No. It's all been used up ages ago. The very last drops were in the hookah; and Roland smoked that one.

Adeline Only the cigarettes are left, then. That is all. *C'est tout.*

Sally But they have all gone up in smoke, haven't they? There were only three. Martin (one), me (the second) and Adeline (the third).

Martin I have only the *demi-fumée* left ... When I woke (before I rushed to the British Embassy) I found what was left of my smoke and put it here in my cigarette case.

Dorothea *thinking*  
*aloud* Wait ... Yes, wait ... I seem to recall ...  
There was a tiny phial, given to Lloyd Bartholemew by Phantom, just as he lay dying. Phantom, that is. Bartholemew willed it (untouched) to my mother, and on her death it came to me. When I investigated, it was already empty.

Harry So basically we have nothing left but Martin's half-smoked ciggie. Is that right?

Harry Well ... There it is. If you give to Mimi your stogie (Martin) she can smoke it and then tell us all in the morning what transpired. If smoking someone else's discard is not too gruesome for you?

*A knot of eager guests surrounds Mimette, except for Vincent (who hangs back). Vincent tries to speak. Dani claps a friendly hand on Vincent's shoulder.*

Dani                                    Ah now we can solve the mystery. Pity you didn't go back a second time, Vince. It was all fun and games ...

*Dani quickly moves on, to support his wife. Vincent is distraught. Only Theresa notices this.*

~~~~~ **Break** ~~~~~

Miles                                    The last one. The last chance to meet once more the graverobbers of antiquity ... Ferule, Moollet, Dingo and perhaps even ...

*Dorothea, smiling in a motherly fashion, leads Mimette from the room, holding the precious stub.*

*Dani follows, solicitous.*

*In another part of the room, Theresa lays her hand on Miles' arm.*

Theresa                                   Miles ... Have you noted that Vincent is ...

Dearest, what was behind your concern for Vincent, when we drove down here with Dani and Mimette?

Miles                                    I can't explain to you what I felt. Perhaps I simply feared that he would become Dingo again.

Theresa                                   And what would be the bothersome issue there, my love?

Miles *relieved*                        I ... It's of no matter. Nothing has passed ... I worried for nothing ... evidently ...

*Miles smiles reassuringly at his wife.*

*At this time, on a sudden impulse, Vincent stands and reaches out to Mimette as she passes him. She stops, looking at him inquiringly.*

Mimette                                   Yes, Vincent?

Vincent *totally lost*                    *Rien ... rien ... Say "Bonjour" to Queen Basrani for me, won't you?*

Mimette *smiles sweetly*            And to ... Dingo, is it? Your best wishes I shall give to Dingo.

*Vincent looks like he has been dragged over broken glass. His face wears a harrowed look. Almost unable to control his emotions, he whispers "Oui" and tries to nod.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT IV



## ACT V

### **V, Scene i:** Dr Nettlethwaite's Consulting Room, Cairo 1934

*Under a banker's lamp, wearing spectacles, Dr Nettlethwaite is studying Mahala's bible. He looks concerned, turning one particular page over and back as if something has caught his attention.*

*There is a knock at the door. Nettlethwaite looks up.*

Dr Nettlethwaite                      Enter.

*The door opens. Dr Marell pops his head around the door. The frown melts from Dr Nettlethwaite's face.*

Dr Nettlethwaite                      Ah! Claude. I'm sorry to drag you away from your work. Do come  
*welcoming*                                      in.

*Dr Marell rubs his hands together, eagerly.*

Dr Marell                                      *De rien.* What is it, Bryan, *mon ami*?

*Dr Nettlethwaite indicates the open bible with a sweep of his hand.*

Dr Nettlethwaite                      It's a bit of translation, if you can bear it.

Dr Marell                                      Egyptian? Oh, but I am (how do you say?) a bit lousy with the  
hieroglyphics.

Dr Nettlethwaite                      No, no ... French to English, if you would be so kind.

*Nettlethwaite rises, gesturing that Marell should take his seat. Dr Marell does so, lowering himself as he places his hat on the desk. With his index finger, Dr Nettlethwaite indicates on the bible some elegant handwriting, in French, running along the top of a page in Samuel. The writing trails down the margin and over the page.*

Dr Marell *enthralled* ... Yes, I see ... I see ...

*The camera focuses on Dr Nettlethwaite as he gazes musingly out of the window shades. Music: rising hypnotically, "something-is-about-to-happen".*

Dr Marell *voice-off* Old-fashioned ... *personnes* do not speak or even write in this old style in these days. It's quite in keeping with the biblical tone, though ...

*Dr Nettlethwaite continues to stare unseeing out of the window. He rocks himself on the balls of his feet. Finally, with a ragged sigh, he turns towards Dr Marell (who watches Nettlethwaite's restiveness).*

Marell I have it now. Shall I read?

*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.*

Dr Nettlethwaite              Yes, of course. I'm just going to slip next door to my little cottage, and I'll snaffle something very potent.

Meanwhile, would you add to your kindness? Use my telephone to make a connection with Renault's chateau. The number is on the card there in front of you.

Dr Marell                      *Ecoutez-moi!* That would be a most pointless act, *mon ami.* I 'appen to know without doubt that the French officers and their spouses have moved on to Spain.

Dr Nettlethwaite *nearly*      Then telephone anyway for a contact number in Spain. They can

*out of the door*                      help us at least that much, I'm certain.

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene ii:** Dr Nettlethwaite's Small Cottage, Next Door To The Surgery

*The music is now bold, grand, racy and overpowering. Almost as if we are in the midst of a dizzy-spell, we see Nettlethwaite in his house grabbing for a large bottle of whiskey. He pauses several times, to rewind some voiced flashbacks:--*

- *More like poetry -- blank verse, you'd probably call it ... she spoke of the bull -- no the lion ...*
- *"As a wild-dog is slain" ...*
- *Why, it's the legend of Telepinu. He flies home on the back of an eagle, and prosperity returns.*
- *And they that did worship idols of stone shall die in great agony.*
- *... believed in the Eagle as the deliverer of Telepinu, and thereby, the deliverer of the people.*
- *The wild-dog must be slain ...*

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene iii:** Dr Nettlethwaite's Consulting Room

*Dr Nettlethwaite throws open the door and steps impetuously inside. Dr Marell has only just hung up the phone. He turns towards the other doctor.*

Dr Marell                      The Spanish phone number does not connect. There is some fault,  
as our luck would have it.

*Mais, I've left a message at the Renault household, in case of ...*

Dr Nettlethwaite              What message was that?

Dr Marell *stolid, worthy* *Bien sur!* I 'ave understood your thoughts, *mon ami*. My message stated that the once-*Lieutenant Lorent* is in the very gravest of danger.

*Close-up of Dr Nettlethwaite still poised in his own doorway, his face working. The music roars into its uplifting final crescendo.*

END OF SCENE

### **V, Scene iv:** At L'Aguilera; Mimette Has Disturbed Sleep.

*The camera focuses on Mimette, sleeping. She is watched by Dani and Theresa. There is a calm loveliness in her face.*

*Our music was strong, uplifting. Now it eases down, down, down: becoming sweet, soft and beguiling. Something poignant and lovely before the tumult of the final scenes is what is needed here. The music will meld into the more commanding themes of the next scene.*

SEGUE INTO NEXT SCENE

### Start of MIMETTE'S EXPERIENCE

### **V, Scene v:** Egypt 1500BCE; Supplicants Before Pharaoh Jethpa

*Mimette's dream/experience opens with a grand, dramatic, stunning re-visit of Film #2, ACT II, Scene iii: The noble procession before Pharaoh Jethpa.*

*A small group of Phoenicians (Stiffy and Buddy) and Nubians (Basrani, Bruan, Phooey and Stewie) are gathered at the entrance to the Pharaoh's throne room. The combined Phoenician/Nubian delegation could not be more impressive. All the men wear traditional, ornate costumes of shimmering gold,*



*blue, black and orange, including headdress. Queen Basrani wears a sumptuous gown of peacock blue, aqua and gold.*

*A couple of Egyptians chat privately with Stiffy, who stands apart listening intently. He nods to the Egyptians as they move off; then Stiffy re-joins his companions.*

Stiffy                      This ought to be interesting. You'll never guess who Pharaoh Jethpa has as his second lieutenant?

Bruan                     Who?

Stiffy *laughs*             An old pal of mine: Knackers #3.

Patto *interested*         Was he the one whose 4th wife was a real good-looker? A real goer, she was?

Basrani *somewhat scared*      Sssssh! This is supposed to be serious.

Patto                      I just think that that's good news, Love. It works in our favour. He'll talk us up to the Pharaoh. Tell him what good blokes we are. Underneath ...

Stiffy *looking about*      Hey! Where's Feral? And come to that, where's Mullet and Dingo? I thought they were gonna be here?

Patto                      They're on a footy clinic with Buddy, aren't they?

Buddy *stepping forward*        No. I'm here. They're not with me.

Patto *shrugs*                Yeah, well I don't know where they are then.

*A sonorous, commanding trumpet blast heralds the beginning of the procession. The men and Queen Basrani take up their positions. Then, in strict formation, as described below, the delegation begins the long, long march towards the Lion Throne.*

*As they make the triumphal procession to the Lion Throne, the party march (in step) in haughty manner, with arms crossed over their chests. Basrani's palms lie flat on her costume, displaying her magnificent collection of rings: the men (all wearing short golden vambraces) have fists clenched.*

*Basrani is at the front, in the middle.*

*To her left is her husband, Captain Patto.*

*To her right is her husband's brother, Stiffy.*

*To Patto's left is Phooey, and Stewie is on Stiffy's right-hand side.*

*Buddy (being very tall) marches behind, such that he can be seen between Basrani and Stiffy.*

*Bruan (equally very tall) marches behind, such that he can be seen between Basrani and Patto.*

*Just to recap on that earlier scene:--*

- *Sumptuous and breath-taking royal music; note the trumpets at the start of the procession.*
- *We have the magnificence of the Pharaoh and his retinue.*
- *The huge LION throne is held up by 8 eunuchs.*
- *There is a magnificent live lion sitting up on the throne, behind the pharaoh.*
- *All the animals along the way, held by slaves: hyenas, leopards, cheetahs, tigers, lionesses. They roar alarmingly.*
- *Apart from the animals: slave girls are scattering petals and dancing.*
- *The architecture is superb, enhanced by the length of the aisle up which the visitors walk.*

*As the party nears the throne, Stewie and Phooey gracefully bow, then slip backwards and aside such that they are no longer part of the advancing delegation. Likewise, Buddy and Bruan slow down to allow the other three to step right up to the throne.*

*Knackers #3 calls out*      Who comes to hear the counsel of the mighty Pharaoh Jethpa?

*Patto steps forward.*

*Patto in grand voice*      To honour your bounty and majesty, oh Pharaoh, comes the  
beauteous Queen Basrani of Nubia, with attendants from her  
home of Nubia and from the much-loved country of Phoenicia.

This noble, wise and patient ruler of the South Land does come  
before you, Great and Good Pharaoh Jethpa, to sue for peace,

following our lately witnessed strife and warfare.

*Patto steps back, and the majestic lion perched atop the throne roars loudly. The trumpeters produce a resonating fanfare. The members of the delegation stand firm.*

*His jaw working angrily, the Pharaoh appears to be about to deliver the most punishing arbitration, when suddenly, his voice devolves into a very cultured and refined London accent.*

Pharaoh Jethpa            I say, I'm most **frightfully** sorry about the **ghastly** treatment meted out upon you dear people on the previous occasion when our paths crossed. I truly don't know what came over me!

Tell you what, confidentially, that chap who was in charge of my affairs in those days just wasn't up to scratch. Not worth a crumpet! Not a crumpet!

So here you find me, a penitent who humbly craves your pardon, and who will hear your supplication with friendly ... nay, with **supportive** ears.

Basrani *proceeds as planned*            Oh, mighty Pharaoh, King of the Black Land and of the life-giving river which --

Pharaoh Jethpa            Now, I've always leaned towards annexation of Nubia under the Egyptian umbrella. Sort of an amalgamation of the Nile lands. What do you think of that notion?

Patto *flatly*                No dice!

Pharaoh Jethpa            Didn't really think you'd warm to it.

What about a loose Federation, with open borders at Elephantine, then? Exchange of people and ideas, and what have you. Open up the trade routes so that Egypt can wander about, plundering and pillaging other nations via Nubia's great sea-gates.

Stiffy                        You're getting warmer.

*Jethpa is pleased. He claps his hands such that the 8 eunuchs who hold up the Lion Throne lower it gently. Acrobats tumble forward and form themselves into human steps, so that the Pharaoh is handed down to floor level in an elegant, regal manner. The lion atop the throne roars impressively.*

*Jethpa approaches the party of Nubians/Phoenicians. His face is wreathed in smiles and he opens his arms wide, as if to embrace his new-found friends.*

Jethpa                      Good show, what!

Basrani *glowing with happiness*      Pharaoh! Your offer of peaceful co-existence is most warmly received.

Jethpa                      Yes, it's a grand plan, isn't it? And everyone happy. You lot down South are blessed with a mineral wealth, and especially all your lovely gold, which makes any sacrifice worthwhile.

And we poor, wretched Jips are farming the black soil like mad, trying to hold it all together. Well, it's only common sense that we link arms and join forces. What-ho!

*The Pharaoh warmly shakes hand with the men and kisses the hands of Queen Basrani.*

Jethpa *rubbing hands together*      Spot of luncheon? I'm so ravishingly hungry that I could gobble down a Moabite's midgy. Ha-ha! Oh, begging your pardon, my dear Queenie.

And, whilst we partake of the sumptuous feast I'm laying on for you Southerners (and you Northerners of course -- not to be forgotten!), I'll hold forth on my other Grand Design, which is to rid the Known World of that scourge, King Jethrodates of Persia. Talk about Extreme Cage fighting! That man's a menace to Civilization.

*The party follows the Pharaoh, who wanders along pointing out this or that beautiful treasure, especially the glorious murals. Suddenly, the Pharaoh stops, turning briskly back upon the members of the party. He is frowning deeply.*

Jethpa *frowning*              Two things I must make clear.

First, you boys are to cease and desist with the tomb looting. The TAGRATL union is to be disbanded, and all Egyptian burial sites are to remain hermetically sealed. You've had all the gravegoods you're ever getting, lads.

And second: when you Phoenician boys return to your lovely homeland, a new law is to be enforced forbidding the murder of first-born sons in honour of Baal.

Patto

Sir --

*Jethpa is adamant. He holds up his hands as a sign of finality.*

Jethpa

No! That is my final word. With one stroke, Egypt and Nubia become bosom-buddies, warfare ceases, the dead will be left to toddle-along in peace, and all the male babies live on.

I hope I've made myself clear.

*The Pharaoh Jethpa (King of all Egypt) tittups along through the many rooms of his palace, happy and over-bright once again. He is keen to show the lovely Nubian queen his massive wealth and possessions. Bruan tags along very closely, hoping to curry favour, whereas Stewie is lost in admiration for the stunning magnificence of the surroundings.*

Patto

Gee! I was only gonna ask him if he could send an envoy along to the powers-that-be in Hazor. Our word won't be enough to get that Baal thingy in motion.

Phooey

Bloody good idea, but.

Always thought it was a shame about our older brothers ...

Stiffy

And what will our boys do for a crust if the graverobbing lurk is closed down? Feral, Mullet and Dingo: they'll all have to stick to fishing and farming, I suppose.

Somehow, we're going to have to warn them ...

Buddy

I'll send 'em a snake-mail if you like. Let 'em know which way the

wind is blowing.

Phooey Snake-mail?

Buddy *matter-of-fact* Yeah. The pigeons gave some blokes the hives, and the ferrets turned out not be watertight. The latest technology is TMV.

Phooey What?

*Buddy is pleased to be up with the latest fad.*

Buddy Snake-mail. Tattooed marine vipers. They work a treat. Can even find you in the dark, or if you're in a transmission black spot.

Phooey *lost* Oh ...

Buddy *to Stiffy* Yeah, and Stiffy ... don't worry too much about getting the blokes in Hazor to warm-up to the Pharaoh's edict on the first-born bubs. Me Uncle Eric is a kingpin there and he'll stitch it up for us. No worries ...

*Stiffy moves in the direction of the dining room.*

Stiffy Yeah, mate. Whatever it takes ...

Phooey Kingpin?

Buddy You might know it as a "swivel pin".

It's very exciting. One day, some bloke is going to invent a way for wheels to turn by themselves and --

Phooey You know what? It doesn't matter. I've heard enough ...

*Phooey has had enough. Phooey walks away dismissively, waving Buddy away. Buddy watches the others traipse off in Jethpa's wake, then rushes off to catch up with them.*

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene vi:** A Large Room in the Pharaoh's Palace

*Reprise of the Elamite Feast (ACT I, scene vii). A large table is covered in finely-crafted tableware. But there is no food to be seen. As the members of the group sit down, Stiffy frowns, his eyes sweeping the table.*

*Stiffy suspicious*                      Wait a bit ...

*Jethpa eyes ablaze*                      Y-e-e-e-s ... ?

*Stiffy eyes boring into*                      Is this a ... ?

*Jethpa's*

*Jethpa voice of*                      Someone hinted that you were the best. But I've been practising.  
*mystery*                      And I intend to take you on, Mr Punic. Let's find out who the **real** champion is!

*The other guests look about, confused and unsure, as they try to follow this conversation between Stiffy and Jethpa.*

*Stiffy with a touch of*                      I wish Fergus was here. He was the outright champion, ya know.  
*sadness*

*Jethpa*                      Pooh, pooh! He's only a Hittite, and when could a lowly Hittite ever --

*A gong sounds ominously. Jethpa stiffens, watched closely by Stiffy.*

*Suddenly, the empty bowls and plates fill with the most delicious of dishes. Whereas the Pharaoh attacks the bowls by leaning over the plates to gorge himself, Stiffy leaps up onto the table on all fours. As in the earlier scene, the other diners reach out for the buffet, but they are too late.*

*When the food disappears, leaving spotlessly clean crockery, Jethpa rounds on Stiffy. He is most put-out. Both men are spattered with food. Stiffy has noodles on his face, in his hair and on his clothing. Slaves speedily tidy up both men using wet facecloths and towels.*

*Jethpa angrily*                      I say! That was a low-blow, Mr Stiffy! Up on the table, is it? You don't play fair!

*Stiffy bows*                      Majesty! That is how I became so proficient at the art. Please

forgive --

Jethpa *airily*                      No matter! We'll simply begin again.

*They try again. This time, the lion (of the Lion Throne) joins them, jumping up on the table. Stiffy backs off, so that only Jethpa and the lion feast. The lion is prim about the way it attacks the food. Jethpa crows loudly that he has won, as the food magically disappears. When the slaves rush forward to clean Stiffy up, Stiffy grabs the wet facecloths and pushes the slaves away. He rubs his face and body briskly with the cloth.*

Jethpa *beaming*                      That was rather fun! Have you ever before competed against a savage beast, Mr Stiffy?

Stiffy *shaking his head*              Not once! Don't think I'm up to it. You're definitely the outright winner, Oh mighty Pharaoh! No worries!

*The men shake hands. The other guests look about blankly, having eaten nothing. Bruan seems to be most put out. Bruan slaps down his napkin onto the table in a fit of pique.*

Bruan *bristling with sarcasm*                      Majesty, the roast pork was absolutely tender and succulent. Your *chef de cuisine* is surely a genius!

Jethpa *pleased*                      I'm so glad that you enjoyed such a delicious --

*The Pharaoh looks about him in surprise. Then he is embarrassed.*

Jethpa                                  Ooops! Somebody has let the bulls out. What a shame! They'll be leaving dirty, disgusting whoopsies all through the palace.

*Stiffy looks about. Some large, glossy-coated bulls with massive horns are walking about in the palace. Several male slaves converge on the animals, trying to shoo them back outside.*

Jethpa *in a dither*                      Boys! I beg of you to clear the area of livestock immediately. This is not very convivial for our guests, you know.

Stiffy                                  Y'oughta get hold of a cattle dog.

Jethpa *pulls a comic face*                      Er ... dogs and large cats ... not good bedfellows.

*Jethpa tries to look as if he is helping.*



Jethpa Shoo! Shoo, there!

My grandfather, Pharaoh Toth, used to wrestle bulls, you know.  
Quite a "lad" he was, by all accounts.

Patto *curious* Nah, there's something not-quite-right with these animals. Notice how they can't go in a straight line. Their eyes are rolling and full of fear.

Stiffy Could be either a flood coming or a quake. Is that what you're thinking?

Patto *shrugs* Either that or the sun is going to blow up.

*Basrani has wandered into a beautiful hanging garden next to the dining room, not wanting to spend any time with the Pharaoh (whom she mistrusts). Patto follows her, smiling fondly as she touches the various plants. Just as she turns to see him, an earth tremor occurs. The lion, standing at the doorway to the hanging garden roars, then lays down with its head under one paw. Patto gulps, then goes to his wife, taking her hand.*

Patto Time to go, little woman. We're outta here.

*As the earth tremors continue, the Pharaoh and his guests make hurried farewells. Then the Pharaoh has a change of plan to offer his guests.*

Pharaoh Would you lovely people prefer to join me and a few of my associates in the fallout shelter below ground? If there's a quake coming ...

*There are other people running towards the shelter, along with the Pharaoh and his retinue. A woman screams. The lion stands again, roaring proudly, then he too trots off to the shelter.*

SEGUE INTO THE NEXT SCENE.

END of MIMETTE'S EXPERIENCE

**V, Scene vii: 1934, On the East Coast Of Spain.**

Lions and bulls have invaded L'Aguilera. Dani and Mimette are trapped in a bedroom.

*Not only is the music dramatic and overpowering, but it must contend with a series of minor earthquakes, and the cacophony of bulls bellowing and lions roaring. Dani kneels beside his sleeping wife, trying desperately to awaken her.*

Dani *with urgency and fear*      Mimi! Mimi! Wake up, my love! We must leave this place. Come on, my love. Wake up!

*Mimette is groggy. She flops about as if she were a rag-doll, with eyes closed. The sound of lions roaring pervades the bedroom which Dani and his wife share at L'Aguilera. Dani shakes his wife, and then assists her from the room.*

*At the door, Dani peers out, his face etched in terror.*

Dani *with urgency and fear*      Something has gone hideously wrong. The house is filled with lions and ... oh! God! ... Are those bulls? The third part of the trinity was eagles, no? All that we need are birds of prey, for sure!

*[Yells desperately]*

Harry! Whereabouts do you hide?

Harry *yells, disembodied voice*      Come to the sitting room, Dani ... the room with the long windows.

*With his arm wrapped around Mimette's shoulders, Dani flicks his head from side to side, desperately trying to ascertain if it is safe for Mimette and himself to sprint to the sitting room. Around the corner, shotguns in their hands, Sarah and Martin stride purposefully, side-by-side.*

Dani and Mimette are “covered” by Sarah and Martin.

Sarah *utterly calm*            Okay, Renauld. You're "go"! We'll cover for you.

Dani and Mimette join Harry in the sitting room. They are followed there by Sarah and Martin.

*Dani part-drags, part-carries Mimi from the doorway of the bedroom to the sitting room. Harry grabs the hapless pair and drags them inside. Then Sarah and Martin follow swiftly. The door slams shut behind them. Nearby, a lion roars mightily, causing the occupants of the sitting room to shiver.*

Theressa and Dorothea are also in the sitting room. Also in that room is Adeline (having a hissy fit with a dodgy telephone) and Miles.

They are then joined by Roland. It is Vincent who is missing.

*Theressa and Dorothea (in their nighties) sit together on the couch, weeping with fear. Adeline attacks the telephone in an effort to make it work. She screams abuse in French at the contraption as she belts it with a shoe. Miles stands by an open escritoire, as he loads bullets into a small silver pistol. His face is a mask. He completely ignores Adeline.*

*There is a loud male yell, and then Roland sprints into the room. He slams the door shut behind him, panting.*

Roland                        I can't find him! He was not in his room.

Dorothea                     Vincent?

Mimette                      Such chaos! Did I cause this havoc, Cherie?

Dani                            Shush! Shush! It is by no means your fault. We almost forced you to smoke that weed after all.

Sarah *to Martin*

If you and I were to go back out onto the mezzanine, and start hollering for your friend, Vincent, maybe he'd hear us.

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene viii:** The Wine Cellars Under L'Aguilera

*Vincent heads down into the wine cellars. He wanders about, whistling, hands jammed into pockets, as if no possible danger existed. Then he stops, listening intently. There is an intense feeling of foreboding. The camera swings around steadily, as a magnificent, majestic lion comes into view.*

*The lion roars behind Vincent. Slowly, with a grim expression, Vincent turns. The lion tosses its head, looking menacing. It roars again. Vincent, eyes glued on the lion's eyes, backs away carefully. The lion does not follow him.*

*Behind him, Vincent hears a snorting noise. Slightly turning, so as not to put his back to the lion, he sees a macho fighting bull snorting and poring the ground. From various rooms and alleys in the cellars, more lions and lionesses appear. And more bulls. Vincent looks about him blankly. Above all this, he can discern Martin and Sarah calling his name monotonously.*

*Then the ground begins to shake. The shaking becomes horrifying. Vincent, his back to the wall, tries to brace himself. Beads of sweat appear on his face. He whispers a French prayer. Apart from that, Vincent hardly looks scared.*

*With a thunderous crash, the villa caves in over Vincent, who ineffectually covers his head with his arms. Those lions and bulls nearby are either crushed under the huge stone blocks, of which the villa was constructed, or they back off. The bulls stampede, whereas the lions roar and react as frightened cats do.*

*Vincent's voice is too dry and raspy to scream or yell properly. He just gets this lot out, screaming as best he can.*

Vincent *from*

M-A-A-A-A-A-A-T-E !!

*under the rubble* Oh, shit! Moollet! Ferule -... save me! Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh ...

*More earthquakes force the huge marble eagle of the Hittites up from its hiding place underground. As rocks fall, it can be seen that the outstretched wings of the marble eagle are actually made of white clay. The wings are chipped away by the falling rocks, spewing a wealth of gold coins and superb artefacts onto the rubble below.*

*Into this chaos strolls the Stranger (who was in reality the spirit of Professor Phanton). As he looks about himself with detached interest, the Stranger strolls up to Vincent.*

Vincent I saw you ... We were eating the barbeque and you came ... But ...  
But I was Monsieur Dingo then.

Stranger Dingo is dead, as you know.

*Vincent also looks around. He pinches his own arm. Then he nods as he turns back towards the Stranger.*

Vincent And are you not the most esteemed and revered archaeologist  
Professor Maurice Phanton? He who suffered the most bitter  
disappointments – every tomb or catacomb had been raided  
before him. By such like as the Pubic Punics no doubt ... and you  
are now thought to be dead.

Stranger You are probably sick of hearing about the curse which I  
expounded with my dying breath when I was *le Professeur*  
Phanton. And yet it came to fruition.

Five men have dreamed, and five women. The sixth man (you,  
Lorent) will fly.

Vincent *extremely excited* ***That's*** why your body was not ever discovered, Professor.  
Because your mortal remains had ... er ... had transmogrified into  
a giant bird!

*Vincent is bewildered and still excited.*

Vincent ***Sapristi!*** Will ... Will they find my body? My friends ... No! There

will be no remains to find. Is that ... Is that right, Sir?

*The Stranger nods his head.*

Stranger                    They can only know what happened to Vincent Lorent if they look up into the sky. Come! We shall fly together: two esteemed Frenchmen who refused to be merely buried in the earth as are ordinary mortals.

Vincent                    I don't think I can ...

Stranger                    But yes! You will become a traveller in time and nothing will bar you. You could even go back to those old days in ancient Egypt.

Vincent *rueful, ironic*       And I shall chatter (*bavarder*) as did you about my durance vile.

Stranger                    Come! The curse now works its magic.

"The lion savages the bull, and the bull gores the lion. But the eagle soars above them on wings of gold."

*Vincent (not happy about this turn of events) shrugs and nods.*

*Without apparent effort, Vincent pushes the rocks aside as if they are cardboard boxes. He follows the Stranger as the two men walk purposefully towards the huge Hittite eagle. The stranger turns and rushes past Vincent, morphing into a magnificent eagle that flies off effortlessly. Vincent also stops and turns, spreading out his arms.*

Vincent *sadly*                Adieu to you Miles, Roland and Martin ... my very dearest friends  
...

*Vincent steps quickly forward as he morphs into a magnificent eagle, similar to the one which the Stranger became. With a couple of wing flaps, the eagle runs forward, then rises into the air, circling around and up towards the gaping hole in the ceiling of the cellar.*

*Those bulls and lions (which are still alive) panic, running indiscriminately towards each other. Then follows a very grisly, horrifying, blood-thirsty scene of bull killing lion and vice versa.*

*From off camera, voices are heard, expressing terror, alarm, fear. The occupants of Adeline's villa try to locate Vincent.*

SEGUE INTO THE NEXT SCENE

## **V, Scene ix:** The Frantic Search For Vincent In The Cellar

*In the cellar, the lions and bulls have been vanquished, either because they attacked each other, or because Sarah and Martin shot them. Dead, dying and bleeding carcasses lie about in the demolished cellar. The people who are about to enter the cellar will have to crawl over boulders and piles of rocks, under which are squelched bulls and lions.*

*His face etched in terror, Miles rushes forward, clambering over the rocks, calling for Vincent. Sarah follows him and stands with the shotgun in her hands. She begins to pick off any animal which might endanger Miles and those who are to follow him. Martin ditches his gun (leaving it with Sarah as a spare) such that he will be able to assist Miles.*

*Miles and Martin begin a frantic search among the small boulders for Vincent. They push and strain together to move the large rocks aside.*

*Harry soon arrives on the scene, with Roland and Dani in hot pursuit. They are dazed by what meets their eyes. The men quickly pitch in to help Miles and Martin search for Vincent.*

*There is still a cacophony of sound:*

- *The earth tremors continue*
- *The sound of the rocks being thrown aside or moved*
- *The crisp sound of the shotgun and the scrape of the cartridges being loaded*
- *The men shouting in French or English that they need to locate Vincent, are they sure he is here, I hate to think what I'll find, no: this is a bull's carcass, keep searching, keep searching, and so on*
- *The occasional roar of a lion, or bellow of a bull*
- *There is absolutely no music*

*Adeline, Theressa and Dorothea, trembling, appear in the cellar. When Adeline sees the huge eagle, spewing its treasure into the cellar, her whole face is suffused with disbelief and wonder. She staggers forward.*

*Sarah urgent warning*      Be aware that there are still wild animals on the loose, Addie!

*Adeline as if in a dream*      The Hittite gold ... it was here all along ... just waiting for me ...  
I knew that it would be. I just knew it.

*Dorothea*                      Adeline! Be careful! It's just not safe ... Oh, stop her, someone.

*Sarah really imperative*      For God's sake, don't go to it until we've cleared the area!

*Adeline blunders forward, with Sarah at a distance, seriously covering her in case one of the beasts should strike her. Adeline is oblivious. She can only see the gold and jewels.*

*Miles stands to ease his back and wipe his sleeve over his brow. He sees Adeline.*

*Miles sternly*                      No, Adeline and Sarah. You go too far. That is enough!

*The light fades to black.*

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*[This scene in many ways reprises the very opening scene of Film #1 "The Curse".]*

*From somewhere in the darkness, men throw sparkling devices (the sputtering sparks being blue) onto the rubble. Into the gloom emerge four grimy men, all stripped to the waste: Chips, Knackers #2, Curl and Donger. They carry over their shoulders many ropes, nets, some chains and digging paraphernalia.*

*The four graverobbers continue to look about in the gloom. All have very strong Australian accents when they speak, and they persist in gazing about them (not looking at each other as they speak).*

*Knackers #2 worried*              Them blue sparkly things'll stop us gettin' cursed, ya reckon?

*Chips*                                  Blood oath.

*Donger*                                Pooter reckons they're okay.

*Knackers #2*                        Then what's this thing buzzin' around me?

*Curl smacks at something like an annoying fly near his face.*



Donger                      Nothin'. Just shoo it away with yer hand. That's what hands were made for.

*Chips fiddles with his groin.*

Chips                      My hands were made for somethin' else.

Curl *harsh*                Ya bloody galah. Always touchin' yer toolbox.

Donger                      Come on! Work! We gotta clear this stuff before the anti-curse sputter bombs peter out.

*Chips, Donger and Knackers #2 walk out of camera range. Curl sinks to his knees in prayer.*

Curl *sing-song-voice, loudly*                Oh, great god Baal! Greetings from the bounding Bunch of Fives gang to our old cobber Baal – We heard on the grapevine that Pharaoh Jethpa has told us to quit the graverobbing lurk ... But just one last crack, eh? Between friends (wink! wink!)

Knackers #2 *disdainful*    Are we in a slaughterhouse? What's that rank smell?

*Socks wanders in carrying a flaming torch which sheds light on the scene. Curl stands.*

Donger *worried*                Shut up, drop-kick. What's all this?

*The men look about them: they are amazed and disgusted by the appalling sight of mutilated beasts.*

Knackers #2                Aw mate ... What ... This is a bit of carnage ...

Chips *amazed*                Lions I guess and ... Bulls, is it?

Socks                      Cop a decko at this!

Donger *aghast*                What the fuck is goin' on, boys?

*The view widens. In deep background we see the frantic search among the rubble and rocks for Vincent.*

Knackers #2 *excited*                Hey! There's Stiffy! And Mullet! Didn't that corn merchant at Troy tell ya that Mullet was cactus?

Chips, Knackers #2,  
Donger and Socks                Hey Stiffy!! Mullet!! Patto!! How are they hangin'?



Miles *calling out* Hi! Theresa! Are you about?

Theresa *voice off* Yes, my love. I'm up here.

*Miles ascends into the open air.*

SEGUE INTO NEXT SCENE

## **V, Scene x:** The Pile Of Rubble, Overlooking The Mediterranean

*Miles joins his wife atop the rubble. They look about them in wonderment. The earth movements have subsided, and a gentle breeze blows, ruffling their hair. The clouds have moved off, leaving a large patch of blue sky.*

Miles You haven't spotted Vincent, by any chance?

*She shakes her head vigorously.*

Theresa Is everyone else accounted for?

Miles Apart from Vincent, yes. All hale and hearty, as you would say.

*They do not speak for a moment but look at each other.*

Theresa *trying to be positive* He'll be alright, won't he? He's ... somewhere ... isn't he?

*Theresa's worried frown lifts, as she points upwards, animatedly. Two huge eagles soar overhead, gliding effortlessly.*

Theresa *delighted* Oh, Miles, do look at that! I'll bet one of those birds is the same one that Demelza tried unsuccessfully to photograph all those years ago, just as I arrived in Cairo for the very first time. Do you remember?

How long do eagles live, then?

*Miles does not answer his wife but stands staring at the eagles. His brain is working overtime. It seems as if Miles is "getting it".*

Theressa                      And now there are two of them.

*Miles is transfixed by the eagles.*

Theressa *concerned*        Oh, dear! You're worried about him, aren't you? That he's ...

*[Small voice]*

... been killed in the landslide?

*Miles moves forward, as if wanting to follow the birds.*

Miles *to himself*            They fly to the East. Perhaps to Egypt ...

*Theressa edges up to where Miles stands and touches his sleeve. This breaks into his reverie, and he looks down at her, grim-faced.*

Theressa *carefully*        Dearest ... you mustn't climb any more. You'll beetle over the edge, nothing surer. Do come down, there's a love.

*[Earnestly concerned]*

Miles, where is Vincent? Have they not found him at all? What's going on?

*Miles stares at her, unseeing, then looks back at the birds, departing eastwards.*

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 ...

*Nimbly, Theresa 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.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT V

END OF FILM