



Stiffy and Deb have retired. Mullet, Dingo and Feral are joined by Patto.

They vow to protect the royal party of Nubia.

It's all fighting and mayhem, along with the usual drudge of raiding sumptuous Egyptian tombs.

As a special treat the 4 older brothers who were sacrificed as babies

to the god Baal make a triumphant appearance.

SPECIAL EFFORT: cracking the tomb of Pharaoh Kahmood

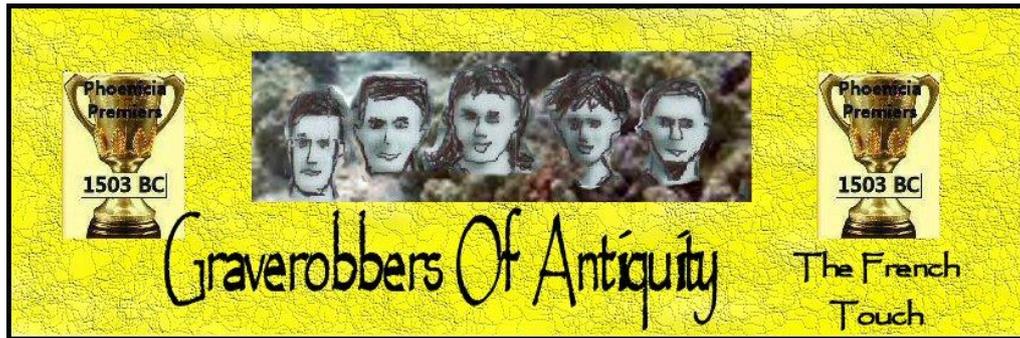
(with the aid of the world-famous human tower!)

This is the second episode of the Graverobbers Trilogy. Enjoy the fun!

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## ACT I, PART 1

### Introduction - Revisit of scene in Film #1 (refer Synopsis)

Music: understated, but grandiose and pompous. Giving the impression that something momentous and stunning will now occur.

#### The antechamber to the large burial chamber of Pharaoh Cheofes.

Cheofes' burial chamber is a huge tomb. The walls are utterly beautiful, and there are some superb stoneworks. The gravegoods are sumptuous, stunning. We see all this as the camera pans about, allowing us to see this delicious setting.

The camera backs away, such that we start off in the dark of the antechamber, with the music becoming faint. This darkness will become dimly lit as Roland and the boys break in from the West. The tones here (in this antechamber) will be sepia, muted.

This is Roland's re-invention of his dream from Film #1:--

- This is not scene progression -- it is merely a comic device to make a start and get the action to progress.
- Sepia tones.
- All actors in this "Introduction" overact to the hilt and speak with gammy French accents. Chips' French accent is totally appalling.
- All actors (except Feral and Roland) wear the same costumes that they wore in this scene of Film #1.

- Feral has a grubby tunic painted with slogans: "Gang #6 rocks" and "Les Pubic Punics Enormes". He wears a red commando bandana and carries a quantity of bunched ropes over one shoulder.
- Roland: his costume is immaculately clean and "point-de-vice" while all around him is seen an ill-dressed and dirty rabble.
- Roland struts and postures outrageously. We derive from this that he, and not Stiffy, is the leader of Gang #6. That is why "Roland" is not given his GOA name of "Mullet" here.

### **Introduction: Humorous Revisit to the Antechamber (Pharaoh Cheofes)**

*We hear noises of knocking, banging and male grunts.*

Roland *voice off*                      My fine fellow Phoenicians, we seem to be in the antechamber to the tomb of Pharaoh Cheofes, at last!

Give to me the torch, if you please, *mon cher Stiffay*.

*Low light appears, lighting Roland's upper torso and face. He is holding the torch up high and looking around.*

Stiffy *voice off*                      I am so afraid. You must reassure me, Captain Moollet.

Roland                                      Come, come! There is no need to fear. I will always protect my men from unknown danger.

*The other men follow. More torches give more light. There is a large, solid door, heavily bolted on the East wall. The men wander over towards the door. A loud banging is heard from the South wall, which causes them to suddenly spin around.*

Dingo *scared*                              But what is that? What could be making that noise? I would feel much safer if you would only investigate the cause of this disturbance, *mon Capitaine Moollet*.

*Roland walks over to the South wall and runs his hand over it. He is not happy.*

Roland                                      I am as yet unsure ...

*A small part of that wall tumbles to the floor, which causes Roland to become alarmed, moving backwards with arms out, in a blocking move. All of Gang #6 back off, deeply concerned that this might be a cave-in. Looking up to the ceiling, they are desperate to see if there is any structural weakness. Chips speaks with the most appalling French accent.*

*Chips voice off*                      *Strike me pink, cher comrades, but there's a chink of light here.*

*More banging. Roland realizes what has happened and immediately relaxes. He shakes his head, hands on hips. The hole in the South wall opens up. Chips' head appears through a gap in the South wall of the antechamber.*

*Chips*                                      *Stone les flaming crows! What have we got here, mes amis?*

*Roland strides about and pontificates.*

*Roland*                                      *Nothing could be clearer.*

*Jacob, son of Modra, has obviously made a mistake in apportioning the work schedule. 'E 'as made the oopsie.*

*Chips*                                      *Oh Merde! But he can't do that!*

*Roland quick puts an end to the discussion. He is magnificent.*

*Roland*                                      *Pooh-pooh! The mistake was made due to a clerical error. C'est ça!*

*The members of Gang #4 climb out of the hole and into the antechamber. That brings more torches and more light. More ropes (slung over the shoulders of Socks, Curl and Knackers) There is hand/arm-shaking, greetings, smiles all around. However, Roland and Chips (the latter having joined Roland at the door) closely examine this blockage.*

*Chips*                                      *Once we get that porte out of the way, she'll be pommes de terre.  
But how do we do that, oh wise Moollet?*

*Camera: close in on Roland's serious face as he works out how to open the door.*

*Out of the blue, to everyone's extreme surprise, there is a loud bang, as of a blast in the North Wall. General alarm in the antechamber. Once again, the fear is that there is to be an imminent cave-in.*

*Dingo, Curl and Donger evidence real concern as they cower from the noise.*

*When Archie and Callum speak, their French accents are totally ghastly and cringe-worthy. All the occupants of the antechamber stare in disbelief towards the North wall. Roland shakes his head in denial.*

Dingo, Curl, Donger      *Oh merde!!*

Archie *voice off*      Fork! You nearly took my hand off then, *nom de chien!*

Callum *voice off*      Get your forking hand out of the way, careless person. If you were to move aside, I might obtain more room to move.

Roland *appalled*      No, no, no! Not Gang #5! *Quelle débacle!*

Tell to me that this is not true ... And please, in the interests of good taste and fine fellowship, please do refrain from employing those profanities which roll with such ease from your tongues.

*Another loud blast, causing a gaping hole to appear in the North wall. The assembled Gangs #6 and #4 shout and yell in unison.*

Squizzy *voice off*      What's going on? I can hear the voices in there.

*A few bangs more in the North wall. General disgust of all concerned in the antechamber. Surprised and amazed, the Gang #5 members clamber out of their North wall hole. Roland (master of the situation) turns his attention back to the door in the East wall.*

Squizzy      What the --

Roland      I divine that the situation may be succinctly summed up thus: Modra takes *les vacances*, and he leaves his less-than-noble son, Jacob, in charge. It is evident that one has made the gaffe and put all the gangs onto the one job.

*Voilà, c'est ça!*

*Squizzy puffs out his chest.*

Squizzy      My presence, then, will ensure the success of this tomb raid, be assured. I am, after all, the natural leader.

*But this pronouncement displeases Donger, who points accusingly at Squizzy.*



*There are several murmured comments of admiration. "Quel héros!" Then they relax and gather around the door to watch Roland and Royal. They gasp in awe as Roland and Royal wander about in the glorious burial chamber. Fade out.*

END OF SCENE, END OF "DODGY" RECOLLECTION

## Return for a brief moment to 1933, Roland's home:

*Back to Roland seated at his breakfast, re-reading his journal (which represents the rehash of his dream, Film #1). It is very well-worn. He is ignoring his breakfast and sits gazing out into space, with head resting on hand, in deep reverie. Reaches for his coffee then pauses in the act of drinking.*

Roland *dreamily* *Mon cher Moollet ... were it ever possible to be that primitif again.*

How could that be compassed, I wonder ...

Ah, my beloved Egypt ... The Land of the Nile calls to me over and over again ...

END OF INTRODUCTION

## OPENING TITLES

Spooky music, which reminds us of the grandiose themes of the Introduction. The titles and credits will roll through over the top of this following montage.

In Cheofes' tomb again, lit by visible burning torches, as it was in Film #1. Camera pans around, walking along, viewing the absolutely gorgeous golden treasures therein.

Camera stops at a golden bull (as highlighted in Film #1).

With a vision of the golden bull superimposed on the screen, the camera moves on to find a superb

statue of a golden lion. This lion statue, along with the bull statue, are superimposed on the screen.

The music is getting really serious and grand.

The camera moves dramatically into the wall, where a giant eagle, with outstretched wings is painted.

As the eagle animates, so do the lion and bull (these two animals are positioned to face each other). The lion rears up in a vain attempt to bring down the huge eagle. The latter circles about, causing the lion to continue rearing-up, and the bull to toss its horns.

The eagle lands gracefully towards the foreground, with the lion and bull watching it warily. The eagle, with wings outstretched then morphs into Professor Phantom (refer first scenes of Film #1) with arms outstretched. He is a late-middle-aged man, who strides towards the camera with easy grace. He is very Biblical in appearance, with long robes, long white hair, and a long white beard. He wears sandals and carries a staff. [We will meet him again towards the end of Film #3.]

By now the music is tumultuous. When Professor Phantom has walked out of camera-shot, the two beasts and the picture of the bird are in focus, as if a trinity.

## **I, Scene i:** A Movie Set Featuring A Smokey Dive Marseilles 1933.

*A filmset in Marseilles, depicting a seedy corner of a smoky dive in 1933. A young glamourpuss (Lisa) sits seductively, smoking and drinking. Some cluttered background noise and shadows pass in front of the table where Lisa sits.*

*The 1930's movie-making equipment, surrounding the claustrophobic set. Remember that this is only 1933, so the gear will be out-of-date, big and kludgy. There will be folding chairs, film equipment, and various staff bobbing about.*

*The title "Marseilles 1933" appears on the screen for long enough to be read and taken in by the viewing audience.*

Director Louis-Jean  
*voice-off*

Then Dani, you come on. Approach this woman and make love to her with your voice and your eyes. And: ACTION!

*Dani strolls into the filmset and stands beside the table, looking down at the girl. He takes a long, impressive drag on his French cigarette.*

*Lisa (the actress) looks up at Dani through her lashes: sexy and seductive.*

Actress Lisa                      Max! I thought that you had left for Dauville with the others.

*Dani is very suave in his role. He uses his eyes to gain extra expression.*

Dani                                  No, my precious one. Can you have forgotten that I hold at my breast the thing that you most desire?

Actress Lisa                      You've got it? The airplane ticket?

Dani                                  Of course. Could I ever disappoint you?

*Lisa (the actress) overacts to the hilt.*

Actress Lisa                      And so now I can escape from my prison of passion to be with my true love, Raoul.

Dani                                  *Ça ça!* You believe in your heart that you can only find happiness and love with that man. But I too can give you all that your heart hungers for.

Actress Lisa                      Max! He would shoot you. I'm so frightened for you.

*Dani tries too hard. He is over-doing the passion, and fairly throbs.*

Dani                                  And I for you.

*Dani grabs the actress's hand and kisses it passionately. The girl (Lisa) acts as if she is almost overcome with arousal. We see a close-up of Dani's face. He looks ludicrous and clown-like in his overdone makeup/greasepaint, and his schmaltzy smile is utterly false.*

*The director Louis-Jean angrily bursts into the scene, throwing his rolled-up script onto the floor in a fit of temper. The actors are surprised.*

Louis-Jean                      No, no! This is filthy shit! Where is Polglaze?

*Louis-Jean turns into the arc lights and is blinded by them. He is enraged.*

Louis-Jean                      For God's sake ... get me that crank Yankee and let me set my

dogs onto him. Where is that viper? Tell him that LeBarron demands a complete rewrite of this vominous trash.

*There is general confusion. The actors simply stop in their tracks, looking about. Several backstage people set up a hue-and-cry for Harry Polglaze.*

*Here, this scene fades out as the next scene fades in. Theresa's voice-over will flow from this scene straight into the next.*

Theressa *voice off* Dani? Oh, no. That's all off. I mean, he'd love to be touring Egypt with you and Roland and Father ... Of course he would.

The thing is ...

FADE OUT, SEGUE INTO NEXT SCENE

## **I, Scene ii:** The Chateau Of Miles And Theresa Renauld Tarbes 1933.

*The party is in the sitting room: Demelza, Professor Summerhill, Roland, Miles and Theresa. They are partaking of coffee and cakes as Theresa completes her voice-over.*

Theressa *voice-off* The thing is that his latest lark is movie-making. From what we can gather, he's scored a juvenile lead in one of LeBarron's cinema epics. You know the kind of thing ... positively ghastly. But LeBarron packs them into the movie-houses with this rubbish, so there must be **something** to it.

*Now Theresa is in shot. This is a convivial gathering of Theresa's father, step-mother, husband and friend (Roland).*

Theressa *bright* This one's about smuggling priceless artefacts from Cairo into Marseilles. A Monemet classic --

Miles *scornful* Which will be almost unrecognisable after that philistine LeBarron has ripped it to shreds, I've no doubt!

Theressa *amused*                    Anyway, no-one knows just how on Earth dearest Dani got the part, but there it is. Tied him right up. So rather than bone-up on Egyptology first-hand (which he devoutly wishes for), he'll have to make do with picking our brains, I'm afraid, via the telephone.

*Miles turns to Demelza (his step-mother-in-law).*

Miles                                    *Un malheur n'arrive jamais seul.*

As well, Dani has bought a small aeroplane. It will be his undoing: I know it.

Demelza                                Really?

Theressa *thrillingly*                Isn't it a hoot?

*Roland cannot believe what he has just heard and stops in his tracks.*

Roland                                 An aeroplane? Not from the proceeds of his acting career, certainly!

Theressa *laughing*                 Not a hope of it, I'm afraid!

Roland                                 *Alors.* Where then did he come by enough money to buy an aeroplane? Last time you mentioned him, he was next-door to being a pauper.

Theressa                                You know what he's like. Isn't it thrilling, though? Flying about in the clouds --

Miles *bitterly*                         And probably breaking his damned neck.

Roland *worried*                      You didn't finance this venture, of a surety!

Miles                                    But no. It is that he met a man who knew a man who met a man ... resulting in a long-shot coming home the winner at Longchamps. And so, instead of paying off his many debts, he invests in a contraption that will no doubt finish him off.

*Demelza swiftly changes the direction of the conversation as she realizes that Miles is working himself into a bad mood.*

Demelza                                   And where is your sweet baby?

Theressa                                 She's sleeping just now, the dear precious lamb. We'll tiptoe in and have a look at her later.

Demelza                                 And you're making lots of renovations, I understand. I hope we won't be in the way. It's only for one night.

Roland                                   Our arrival is not inopportune?

Miles                                     By no means. No, no. They have hardly begun their work, these artisans.

*Roland attempts humour. He makes a large sweep of his arm.*

Roland                                   Do you have any spare room in this barrack for an old soldier to bed-down, heh? If that's at all *convenable*? I promise to be such droll and entertaining company.

Miles *laughing*                         Of course, *mon cher*. Stay a week or two.

Roland                                   But no ... *Merci*, but I must embark tomorrow as planned.

  You see, comrade, I (like your brother Dani) find that Egypt calls to me.

END OF SCENE

### **I, Scene iii:** The Film Studio, "The French Touch" Marseilles 1933.

*The set is empty of people, except for the two protagonists: Louis-Jean and Harry.*

*All the gear (cameras, sound equipment, and so on) is lolling about as before.*

*Louis is arguing with Harry about the appalling script. They are almost coming to blows so the anger here needs to be very obvious. They talk over each other at times, given their advanced state of fatigue, frustration, annoyance and temper.*

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*By preference the role of Harry is played by an American coloured man. He is tall and has a most commanding aspect.*

Harry -- You can't change the --

Louis-Jean *angry* I'll change what I like! All you have to do is stop being precious and keep up with me.

Harry *also angry* You dance around like a fart in a bottle. Nobody can keep up with that!

Louis-Jean I'll thank you to keep your coarse Yankee vulgarity out of this conversation, if you don't mind.

My "French Touch" flick is to be focused on gangsters now. That's my last word.

*Pleading, trying to get through. Holds forward a well-worn old book.*

Harry "*La Touche Française*" is Monemet's most evocative work. This is a love-story, Louis-Jean. It's a love-triangle, with a tragic ending. It's about *real* people who are caught--

Louis-Jean -- about real people who carry machine guns and wear shoulder holsters, and who speak out of the side of their mouths, and who shoot each other up. And always, they wear their hats dipped low over their eyes.

That's what the public is craving now. Nobody wants to see polite drawing room scenes these days. It has to be tough guys and their molls. And that's what "The French Touch" will be about.

Set in Marseilles, in the seedy side alleys, where a lone trumpet wails and sailors fight for a harlot who smokes s-o-o-o slowly as she leans seductively against a streetlamp.

Harry *revolted* Ugh! This is crazy!

Louis-Jean We'll see how crazy that is when I have a box-office hit on my

hands.

Go away and sober up and write me that dialogue, just as I have described to you.

We meet again our three old friends who worked for Knackers.

***Peewee, Topper and Lion as PV, Chapeau-Haut and Leo***

*Three toughs arrive from casting. We see only their backs. They are the actors who play Peewee, Topper and Lion, dressed as American gangsters, holding prop submachine guns under their arms. But we only see them from the back and so we are not aware yet that that is who they are. They do not talk in their usual Cockney. In 1933 they now have Chicago accents.*

Louis-Jean *frowning*      Who are you people?

Peewee/PV                      We just been sent over to you from casting. We're the hoods for your picture, Mr LeBarron.

Louis-Jean *pleased*        Excellent! That's exactly what I was looking for. Yes, yes ... very good.

*Harry, shaken with rage, slaps the rolled-up script in his hands on the table and roars with rage. The three hoods all take a menacing step towards Harry, with their shoulders squared. This reaction hugely delights Louis-Jean who points at the hoods.*

Louis-Jean                      Ha! You see that? Even these actors know what this is all about. Well done, my brave friends, well done! Bravo!

*[Claps his hands together once, very loudly]*

That's what you'll write for me, you. Aggression, violence, sex and --

*Harry is still very angry. He points the rolled-up script at Louis-Jean.*

Harry *savage*                Alright, Monsieur LeBarron, I'll script this crap for you, and I'll make my best effort to tie in all these numerous loose ends that

you've left for me, frayed and twisted as they are. And --

Louis-Jean *interrupting* With a stroke of your pen, you'll wipe that greasepaint off Renault's face and write for me a **he-man** with rugged, tough good looks, and not some limp-wristed draper's dummy.

Harry And may Monemet's ghost plague and worry you for the rest of your miserable life.

*[As he turns to storm out]*

But you'll **never** win the President's Film Award with this rubbish.

*[Striding away, yells back over his shoulder]*

You'll have the critics saying about you what you really are!

*The camera angle moves to show the men to be Peewee, Lion and Topper. Louis-Jean turns to the 3 heavies and winks at them.*

Louis-Jean Ah, a very crazy American writer, that one. All the same, he will write me a winning screenplay for my flick ... *[Winks]* Wait and see ...

END OF SCENE

**Reprise:** sepia tones.

- Music: a lone flute playing haunting, evocative notes
- The desert, on a sparsely-vegetated hillock
- A camel and some underfed goats wander about, grazing where they can
- A man in Biblical garb, his clothing blown by the strong breeze, looks out over the desert, with the camel's lead-reins in his hand
- A red sun rises behind him and the grazing goats

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Segue the burning red sun into the fire in the fireplace in Scene iv below.

**I, Scene iv: Miles' Library at Night Time Tarbes 1933.**

*A good fire burns brightly, and there is a superb ambience in this stately old library. Now, standing by the window in Miles' study, we find Roland and Miles. They each hold a balloon of whiskey in their hands, and smoke cigars. The reason that they are near the window is so that we can see their reflections as well as see them.*

*Soft music which becomes stronger with Roland's last words.*

*We need to feel that they have both been meditating; thinking of the old times in Egypt (hence, the reprise).*

*With a sigh, Roland snaps out of his reverie.*

Roland                      So, with this Army promotion and the unexpected success of my travel book, I should feel as great as King Mithradates. But not so ...

Miles                         It's been very difficult. I know that myself.

Roland                      *Ou!* But, I mean, for you: you had the so lovely Theresa to marry, and this place to put back into a viable situation. And then your darling baby daughter to love and cherish.

Miles *meditative*             The little counter-irritants soon drag the mind away from ... from other things. Yes, I agree with you ... it must have seemed easier for me.

Roland *bracingly*             Well, I didn't come here to rehash those old Army memories. Be assured.

As those Englishmen say, "Let's get down to tin tacks."

*Roland's mood changes. He becomes serious and stern.*

Roland *bracingly*                   Something dark and worrisome plays on my imagination.

Two years ago, I know for an absolute certainty that in those few days when you were missing from the Palace ... I know that you took recourse to Mahala's magic concoction. I know that ... so don't deny it!

Miles *shrugs*                       Mahala told me when I came to that I had almost died. It was a very close thing ...

Perhaps I should have --

Roland                               Listen, I'm not trying to coax that particular story out of you, Miles. Understand that completely, I beg of you.

No. That all will come out at some later date, I know you well enough for that.

That's not why I have come to your Chateau, Miles.

*Roland moves restlessly, pausing thoughtfully.*

Roland                               No, Miles ... I cannot stop searching for answers.

Miles                                 We saw and did so many things that defy "answers", *mon ami*.

Roland *nods*                       *Ecoutez-moi!* It's that Moollet, that outlaw, that ruffian ... he does not leave my thoughts. I am haunted by his aggressive machismo. By his funny voice, his amusing ways.

*Roland sighs and stares at his reflection in the window, shaking his head, searching for the words that he wants to speak.*

Roland *very low-voiced*       Martin and Vincent ... they both feel as I do. About their alter egos, I mean.

Miles                                 Ah! Now I think I understand why you stumble.

Roland *trying to explain*       It's all about missing pieces in a gigantic puzzle ...

*[Turns to Miles]*

In short, that's why I return to Egypt. There is more, much more,

that lies undiscovered there. We sail tomorrow, from Marseilles, we three. Your wife's parents and *moi-même*.

And I intend most earnestly to revisit that Mahala woman.

*Miles is moved. He turns away and then turns back.*

Miles                      Funnily enough, I quite agree with you. Those visions that we had ... they surely pointed to some unfinished business, for Moollet, and Stiffay, Dingo and Ferule.

Roland *close up,*                      And just so for Miles, Vincent, Martin, and me ...  
*whispers*

Miles *nods*                      Just so ...

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene v:** The Galaxy Clip-joint, Seedy Jazz Club "La Galaxie" Marseilles 1933

*Music: marvellous sensuous jazz music: slow, moody, charismatic.*

*This is a really seedy dive, as atmospheric as anything that Louis-Jean LeBarron could dream up.*

*On a tiny stage, a few musicians (appearing to be poverty-stricken) play jazz.*

*Sleazy men and down-at-heel woman dance/move slowly, intimately to the jazz music. Their hands hang low. The women lean on the chests of the men; it is almost as if they are seconds from sleep.*

*There is little light but lots of smoke, no room to move between the tables and chairs, but lots of patrons swanning about to flirt, talk, argue, shout, or cry into their beer. A couple of waiters in dirty aprons carry trays of drinks, coins clink into china plates and no-one in the joint really looks all that happy. It is a real crush of humanity.*

*When we meet up with Harry, Dani, a Bohemian couple and two actors, they are draped over and around a table, which is covered in dirty glasses, empty bottles and overflowing ashtrays. They are in*

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*the middle of a heated discussion about 19th and 20th century political philosophy. They all talk over each other, gesticulating wildly, as people bustle by, knocking them and their table.*

*Esme speaks in a fashion that is wildly passionate. She thumps the table and screeches her words.*

Esme                                    No! That's **not** what he is saying, *imbécile!* He declares --

*Harry shouts back at Esme.*

Harry                                    -- it's virtually impossible to have industrialism alongside democracy because both cancel --

*Esme is incensed. Almost standing, she points with venom into Harry's face.*

Esme                                    Have you even **read** the "Science of Logic"? Or were there not enough coloured diagrams in it for you?

*Dani tries to add his mite to the conversation, but he is bleary and incoherent.*

Dani                                    Genius! You can write "genius" onto the scraps of paper, but the worker still is pushed to --

Harry *to Esme*                            -- cancel each other out. You can't have a viable industrial base without a chain of command. And **that** finishes Democracy forever!

Dani *vague gestures*                    Freedom can never be true. But just think how very "unfree" you are behind the wheel of an automobile. Why? You are hemmed-in on all sides by rules ... the traffic rules.

Esme's bohemian partner *despising everything*                                    It's all shit anyway. Crap, shit. There's nothing. I am nihilistic because it is all crap.

*Esme turns her diatribe onto her partner.*

Esme                                    That's because people like you are apathetic and *stupid*.

*Still throwing his weight into the discussion, Dani drags himself unsteadily out of the chair and almost manages to pull on his jacket. Rocking from side to side, he slurs as he speaks.*

Dani To interfere with the class struggle is immoral and --

*Harry keeps on with his side of the debate, then shoots quickly out of his chair, waving goodbye to the others, who maintain the debate as the other two leave. Harry shakes his finger in the air, disgusted by many aspects of the conversation.*

Harry *leaving* Socialism is the absolute and only possible way to organize the society. That is positive. That has been proven. I leave you with that truth. *Adieu* then, nightingales.

*Harry and Dani weave their way out of the club, being button-holed by patrons as they leave (it is obvious that they are regulars). Esme screams in French after Harry: a catalogue of French obscenities and insults. Harry turns and makes a very rude gesture to her. Harry and Dani stump out, between the enthralled dancers, not caring whom they almost knock over. Once outside, they roll along, stopping at a large wall to urinate, cough and maybe whistle.*

*Then they head off, hands in pockets, breathing in the fresh air, and not really caring about whether they get to their destination or not. Harry remains angry and bewildered, as if he has lost his way in life.*

Harry What the Hell am I doing, Dani? What is all this about, damn it?

*[Doing some soul-searching]*

I want to emulate Shakespeare and Goethe, but LeBarron (who has the cultural depth of a flea) screams for the stuff of a dime-store novel.

Look at me! This constant battle with our prick of a director is ripping me apart. God, no wonder that I spend every waking moment in some gin-soaked miasma ...

If I don't pull myself together, they'll haul me off to the St James infirmary.

*Dani signals with his thumb over his shoulder.*

Dani ***That's*** what you should be writing about for LeBarron. Drunks and parasites.

Tell me, why did you red-rag that Esme woman?

*Harry is dismissive, disgusted.*

Harry Ahhhhhhhhg!

Dani I will bet you ten francs that the slimeball with Esme is really her pimp and not her husband.

Harry No takers. You're right, for once. So-o-o-o right.

Dani *shrugs* I'm always right ...  
*fatalistically*

*Dani stops and slaps Harry on the shoulder. Harry is surprised and stops to blink owlshly at Dani. Once again Dani points backwards towards the sleazy bar.*

Dani *definite* **That's** your milieu, right there. **There's** all of your plot. This overlord LeBarron, who makes our lives a living Hell, wants you to ... to ... -

Harry Prostitute my craft ...

Dani *almost bouncing* But no! You won't sell yourself short ... you just won't do that. You'll write him an opus which soars above the celestial canopy.

Harry Ain't gunna happen, buddy ... not in my lifetime, anyways.

Dani But every day in the newspaper is the proof. In your own country, the bootleggers and hoods are giving to you the fodder for your tale. You could just use those real-life stories, Harry, as the basis for your screenplay. LeBarron won't know the difference, surely?

Harry *snarling* He's not gonna drag Monemet's masterpiece through the gutters with me at the helm. I'll tell you that for sure, Danny-boy.

Dani *fervent* I've got the great ideas. I'll help you to bulk it out.

Harry Don't bother. Thanks and all that "*mon cher Dan!*" ... but just don't bother, okay?

Dani But Monemet provides the necessary skeleton for your script. You

know ... What could be more emotive than saving the life of your bitterest enemy? And he cannot ever slay you because of the moral debt he now owes to you.

Harry You can't speak of "honour" and "gangster" in the same breath.

*Dani is eager and inventive. He fairly bursts with new-found energy which is at direct odds with his drunkenness.*

Dani Sure you can. What about that old saying: "Honour among thieves".

*[Plotting aloud]*

Here's what you will do. You will investigate the tempers and backgrounds of both men (Max and Raoul), as well as the disposition of the doxy. That is just as the author intended. It's a vicious love triangle, which brings all 3 people to the very brink of destruction.

Harry All in the midst of a beer-baron-brawl? Nah, that's pure melodrama and I don't buy it.

Dani *stops, imploring* Won't you listen, Harry?

*Harry shrugs off, not interested.*

Harry Too tired to listen, too rude to be polite.

Dani You can't always stand by your convictions, your principles. You have to be flexible (*un peu*) ... when the forces around you so demand.

Harry I don't wanna argue with you anymore, Frenchie.

Dani Harry, don't walk off ... You can do this, Yankee boy! I can and I **will** help you ...

*Harry is soured by fatigue and drunkenness.*

Harry I'm tired. Can't you see that? I'm tired, and I'm gunna go to my

bed.

*Dani stands, irresolute, watching him as Harry slouches out of camera shot.*

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene vi: A Disreputable Boarding House Marseille 1933**

*In Harry's mean and skimpy room at the boarding house, Same Night*

*Harry snores noisily on the small bed. He lies on his back, still fully dressed, and he clutches an empty bottle to his chest. Nearby, sitting in a small chair, is Dani, scribbling madly onto stray bits of paper. His only light is from the bright streetlights, through the small, dirty window. Dani is absorbed, thrilled and utterly pleased with his work.*

Dani -- with his activities including extortion (stand-over, violence, menaces, threats) and protection. What about prostitution and white slavery: taking factory girls by force and sending them on ships overseas to be house-slaves, factory-slaves and sex-slaves in ... in ... oh, somewhere over the waves, I think.

And the suave *gentilhomme* in the smoking jacket with his silk cravat and his pomaded hair, whose effete drawing room is even now crammed with those precious Pharaonic grave-goods ... the contraband ... mysteriously falling into his hands via his depots in Marseilles. *Excellent!*

*[Suddenly looks heavenward]*

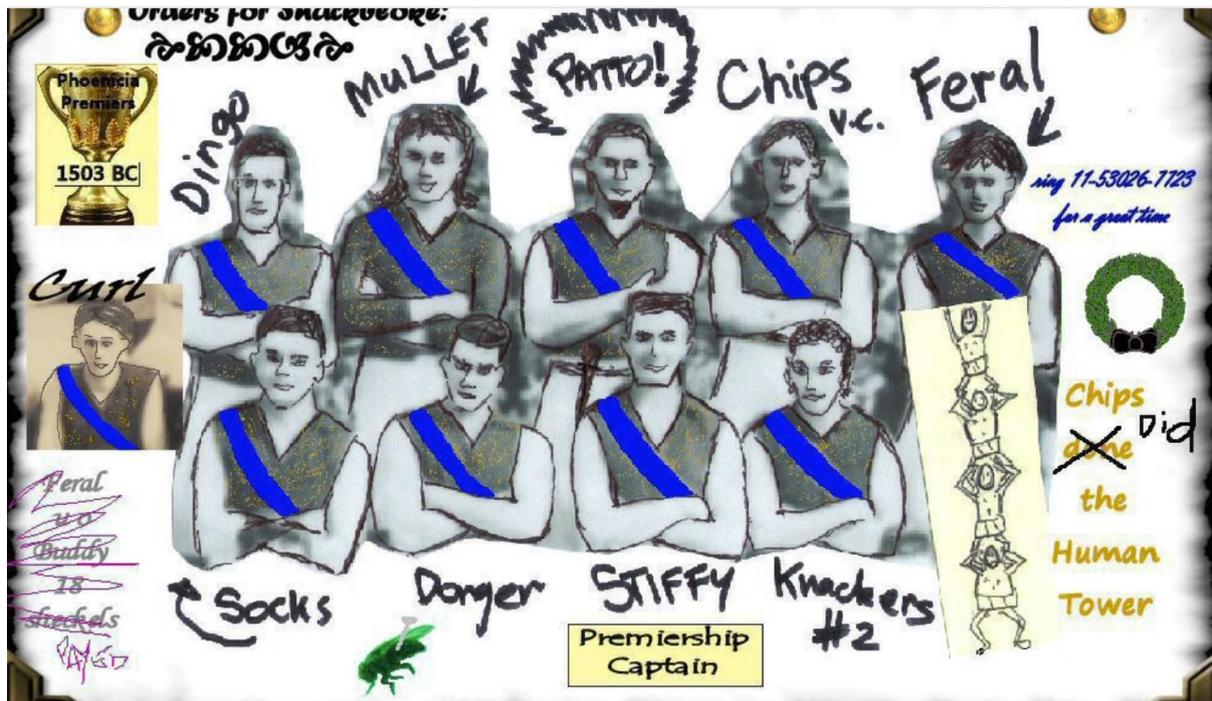
Ah! ... You up there ... Monomet! You will be proud of what Dani Renauld extracted from your creation, *non?*

END OF SCENE

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## I, Scene vii: Miles Recalls His Time As Stiffy in Byblos 1500 BCE



*This is not an "experience" as such. ACT V of the first film "The Curse" is preceded by this scene: Miles is simply fondly recalling it [in spite of the fact that we have not seen it yet.]*

*The Phoenicians of Gang #6 and their mates have won the Leather and Pigskin cup for 1503 BCE. They are having their team "photo" taken by an artist who uses stylus and clay tablet. Stiffy (as captain) calls his team into position (as per the photo above). Patto is played by the same actor who plays Dani and will be introduced to us soon.*

Stiffy *very pleased*

Goodoh! The winning team of 1503 BC in the Leather and Pigskin grand final are ready to have their Martin Places etched forever in clay. The premiers!

*All the men clap, shout and cheer.*

Donger

We can make a poster of it and stick it up on the office wall.  
Where Buddy hangs out. How's that sound?

*Stiffy looks about, worried.*

Stiffy                               Where's Curl?

Chips                               He's off sick. Ate a dodgy prawn or somethink. The man of physic who come to look at 'im reckons it's a bad bout of *Annus Horribilis*.

Stiffy                               Aw ... righto.

*Stiffy turns to the artist.*

Stiffy                               You'll have to do him from memory then.

Okay. Sharpen your stylus and get drawing!

*The men all hold their smiles as the artist draws.*

Patto                               Hey Bro! Shouldn't we have the cup in the team drawing? You know – the actual cup that we won?

Stiffy                               No go. It's been whacked off.

Chips *disgusted*               You mean someone stole it? Bloody bastards!

*The men all continue to hold their smiles as the artist draws.*

Mullet                              Hey, Stiff. That's what I meant to ask. I mean, I know what "1503" means ... but what does "BC" mean?

Stiffy                              I dunno. It's just what ya say. It's just what ya say when you wanna know what year it is.

What am I? A friggin' Greek professor? Why don't ya ask Curl's man of physic? He'll be on top of it.

*[Slight pause]*

Okay! And when Rembrandt here has finished our glorious memorial portrait, we'll find something that's oval in shape and we'll run around it. Training!

And ***then*** some of us have to flex off to Byzantium to sort

***everything*** out to ***everyone's*** complete satisfaction.

Mullet Uh? Rembrandt?

*All the other men in unison (including the artist) say sharply "Never mind"!*

END OF SCENE

### **I, Scene viii:** The Bedroom Of Miles And Theresa Renauld Tarbes 1933.

*In the bedroom of Miles and Theresa, it is night-time, and they are in bed. Miles has his arm slung over the form of his wife. She is still awake, staring at the ceiling, and fiddling with the sheet.*

*Miles also stares at the ceiling, in deep reverie. He blinks several times to stare lovingly at his beautiful wife, smiling at her.*

Miles Can't you sleep, *Cherie*?

Theresa Not much ...

*Miles snuggles closer to Theresa, caressing her.*

Miles What troubles you, *petite*?

*Theresa is unsure how to explain herself.*

Theresa It's nothing at all, really. Well, it ***is***, but ...

It's just something that Demelza told me just before we came upstairs.

Miles You had better tell it to me ...

Theresa *sighs* Did you ever see a huge eagle flying over Cairo? At about the time I arrived there? When we first met?

Miles No.

Theressa A huge, man-sized eagle. It was lazily riding the thermals.

Miles No. I didn't see that thing.

Theressa And nobody mentioned -- ?

Miles I might have heard some people talk of such a bird ... yes. Why?

Theressa Well, on the very day that I arrived in Cairo, Demelza took a photograph of it, but it didn't turn out. Just sky.

She never thought another thing about it. Then, quite recently, somebody blurted out, after a bridge game, that the same thing had happened to them.

Miles It's hard to focus on birds in the sky, of course, when one tries to --

*Theressa quickly shifts up onto her elbow.*

Theressa No, Miles. Listen! I mean it was that very same eagle. Flying over Cairo 2 or 3 years ago, just before I disembarked. This person whom Demelza met was fascinated by the giant raptor (just as she had been) and tried to photograph it, too. And nothing! *Rien* ...

*[Lays down again, looking up at the ceiling]*

A huge eagle, the size of a man, and seen only once. And the photos not turning out. Isn't that a bit strange?

*[After a slight pause]*

Demelza was naturally somewhat concerned ...

Miles I can't explain it, my darling.

Theressa *takes a big breath* I was thinking about all the business of the builders and the workmen stomping about. Such an infernal racket they'll make, and all the ghastly lumber and dust and mess simply everywhere.

And how we haven't had holidays for goodness knows how long.

And then --

Miles *Les vacances*, is it?

Theressa We really should try to get away. Relax. Take it easy.

Miles You were wondering if we could not visit the airfield and hire some brave *garçon* to fly us to Cairo.

*Surprised at her husband's percipience, Theressa sits right up, looking in wonder at her husband.*

Theressa How on earth did you guess that that's what I was thinking?

*Miles strokes Theressa's arm gently.*

Miles Because, *ma petite cherie*, I was thinking of it also. Our friends will depart tomorrow. But if in a few days, were we to fly there and join them, we won't have missed too much of the fun.

*There is a pause. Miles drops easily back to sleep, but Theressa lies awake, fiddling with the satin edging of the blanket.*

Theressa *softly* I wonder if the enigmatic Madame Mahala is still lording it over the well-to-do of Cairo, as ever? Hmmm ...

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene ix:** A Disreputable Boarding House Marseilles 1933

*In Harry's mean and skimpy room at the boarding house. It is the next morning.*

*Dani, untidy, unshaven and tousled, must have nipped out for some bakery goods. And he has brewed a strong pot of coffee. Both men have steaming cups of black coffee on a small table, which is otherwise covered in rubbish.*

*Harry, also untidy, unshaven and tousled, bites hungrily into a pastry, and takes a cautious sip of the scalding coffee. The men stand over the table, with the chairs being covered in debris. Also, having*

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*them standing makes it quicker to pour over Dani's scribbled notes.*

Harry *thickly* Hey, this is very good. If you get turfed out of the flick, you can come here and work as my French maid.

*Dani laughs, shaking a finger at Harry.*

Dani Don't put the knock on French maids, you. I happen to be madly in love with the most angelically lovely French maid that you can possibly imagine. Ah! *Quelle beauté*. She works at the ducal chateau of my brother at Tarbes.

*Harry is reading the scribbled notes.*

Harry Well, good for you.

What's this say?

Dani *owlish* I'm not enough well to decipher my own notes, *mon ami*. Did I perhaps poison myself with alcoholic substances last evening?

Harry *laughs, but no sympathy* No, no ... just a sip of sherry. Honestly.

Dani It feels much worse. More like a crate of gin.

Harry *musling* The wastrels who make up the aristocracy ...  
Is your brother really a Duke?

Dani My brother! *Mon Dieu!* You've just reminded me that I'm supposed to contact him ...

*Dani grabs the papers and walks about as much as he is able amid the lumber choking Harry's room.*

*Dani reads aloud from the notes.*

Dani *reading* We have the payback slayings and exemplar killings.

Harry I get it. Blood-thirsty brute, ain't you?

Dani Ah, I owe it all to my privileged up-bringing. *[Both men chuckle]*  
Okay, here we are. Now, your respected and loved Monemet will

applaud this, *je vous assure*.

So, there is a gunman (that's my character) working for the boss, and he gets jealous of the boss and decamps to start a rival gang.

Soon, former friends become the bitterest of enemies.

What makes it worse is that the former girlfriend of the boss switches over her affections to the gunman.

The result is a shoot-out which the gunman wins, the boss is killed and the girl, rushing to the body of her former lover, is accidentally killed.

*Ca, ça, ça* ... Various sub-plots involving the henchmen and underworld deals ... And the smuggling operation from Cairo to Marseilles ... Oh, etc etc.

That gives you scope for action, clever speeches and a tricky romance. *Et voilà!*

*Harry is gorging himself on the pastries, so Dani grabs what is left. They gulp down the coffee. Dani hands the paperwork back to Harry.*

Harry                    Hey! It might work. Dammit, it might just work at that. Max, your character, is the gunman. Right?

Dani                     Yes. Previously, this Max was a bit of a Nancy-boy, a milksop. Soft and ... what is it that you call it? ... A "lounge lizard". Now he has the balls. He is tough and uncompromising.

Harry                    With a heart of gold.

Dani *shrugs*             If you like.

Harry                    Dani, you are an unmitigated scoundrel! You want me to write you a bigger, better part! That's what the Hell this is all about, isn't it?

Dani *fires up*            Ha! *Sapristi!* I'm only trying to keep you on the payroll, *mon cher*.

Harry *appeasing*        Hey! No offence meant ... Alright, I'll type this up for LeBarron's

approval. I'll add drug-runners, sub-machine guns, crooked cops, an evil sorceress --

Dani *laughs reluctantly* *Fermez la bouche, idiote.* No magic, no witchcraft. Just read your daily paper and regurgitate anything you can find there about American hoodlums.

~~~~~ **Break** ~~~~~

*Then we see flashes of Harry typing on an old Remington manual typewriter. He is smiling, smoking: he is looking happy and chuffed.*

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene x:** LeBarron's Tiny Office Marseilles 1933.

*A few days later.*

*Harry leans back in a wooden chair, arms akimbo, legs stretched out. He wears a cheeky expression, as if challenging his boss. LeBarron pores over the revised script, many expressions flitting across his face as he hungrily scours the pages.*

Harry                                There it is, just as you ordered. According to yourself, the public will swoon for this pap.

LeBarron                            Let me be the arbiter on that head, my American friend. But I agree with you. This is going to work for me. *Oui.*

So, this becomes a blood-thirsty rampage of crime and lust, heh?

Harry *warns*                        If the censor don't can it.

LeBarron *offended by*        LeBarron does not regard him -- mealy-mouthed dullard. No, he is

*that idea* as nothing. I am an adult; what do I need with a referee of "good taste"!

Harry So what d'you think? Can I have my elephant stamp now, teach?

LeBarron Hmmmmm ... I see many possibilities. *Oui*. Let me chew the cud, as the saying goes. Take yourself to Cairo *immediatement* and work out the layout from that angle. How can I reach you if there's the emergency?

Harry I'll call ya.

That guy who's playing Max --

LeBarron You mean Dani Renault?

Harry Sure. He's taking me off to his old castle for a bit of --

LeBarron No, no. Go to Cairo. I order you to go there. Both of you must go. Leave me to think, can't you? But for God's sake, stay in touch. I plan to restart shooting in 6 days only.

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene xi:** The Noble Grounds of the Chateau in Tarbes, and Interior 1933

**VIEWED FROM A DISTANCE:** *We see Dani's small plane flying low over the trees in the grounds of the Chateau. His sole passenger is Harry.*

*Next, the plane has landed, Dani and Harry disembark in time to meet the majordomo. We can tell by his gestures that something is afoot. The camera is way back so that we do not have to waste time with dialogue.*

**INSIDE THE CHATEAU, The Main Hall:** *Next, Dani and Harry are in the mansion.*

*The background noise is of building: banging, sawing, shouting in French, moving heavy lumber, and*

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*so on. There are piles of lumber and building materials in the way in this main hall. Dani and Harry have to weave their way around these. Harry looks uncomfortable.*

Dani                                 Now, the room we want is the library --

Harry                                You're serious! We're actually going to Cairo in that rig?

Dani                                 -- Books about Egypt.

Harry                                In that tiny little plane of yours?

Dani                                 It's quite okay, Kiddo. We'll island-hop.

*Tiens!* I will go in search of my brothers' estate manager. He'll certainly know where we can reach Miles once we get to Cairo.

It's just our luck to arrive on the doorstep as the master takes off!

*Harry shrugs resignedly and follows Dani, as he weaves his way through the lumber. Once clear, Dani strides off down one of the corridors.*

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene xii:** The Drawing Room, Daytime Tarbes 1933

*From floor-level, a toddler (female) sits on a rug, surrounded by toys. She is crying, wailing, with tears and red cheeks.*

*In the background, we see Dani stop short in the doorway, his eyes riveted on the child. Hesitating, he looks about for inspiration, then uncertainly steps into the room, towards the distressed child.*

*Harry is nowhere in sight, so we understand from this that he is alone in the library.*

Dani *all at sea*                       *Bébé* Violette ... er ... don't cry, my sweet ... um ... where is your Nanny, uh?



*The baby is tired and begins to thrash about, making sooking noises. Mimette sings softly and sweetly a small snatch of a lullaby. The child, sniffing and sighing, closes her eyes and drops to sleep in Mimette's arms. Dani is unable to leave; he stands rooted to the spot, drinking in the girl's beauty. She stops singing and looks up.*

Dani Pardon me, but I never did hear what your name is called?

Mimette I am named Mimette Charliez, Sir.

Dani Oh, you must not "sir" me, Mimette. Do you know that I am Daniel, the younger brother of your boss? It's true.

Mimette Mmmm, I did know that. How do you do, Monsieur Renault?

Dani *moving closer to the armchair* You need not be formal with me when we are alone together. Call me Dani.

Mimette *shocked* But Sir, I could not. It would not be *convenable*.

Dani Mimette. I am an actor in the movies. Not a shining star, just a small asteroid or meteor, you would say. But in that profession, I tell you, there are many, many beautiful women flocking about. There are more starlets all together in one movie studio than there are pebbles on the beach.

And yet, *ma chere Mimette*, I have to tell you, to your private ear alone, that not one of those lovely girls could ever touch you for beauty.

*[Sees her blush and turn away, embarrassed]*

I'm sorry, my dear. It was not my intention to discomfort you ...

*The spell is broken! Harry appears in the doorway, bearing an armful of books.*

*Then, Nannie Olive walks quickly into the room. She sees Mimette with the baby, and smiling, reaches out to the maid. The baby is passed over to her nanny, and Mimette quickly stands.*

Nannie Olive Ah, thank you, dear!

*[Surprise to see Dani. Drops a quick curtsey]*



**I, Scene xiii:** A Dormitory In The Hospice Of The Holy Comfort. Cairo 1933.

*Music: Egyptian, exotic, but subdued.*

*In one of the beds lies Mahala, surrounded by weeping servants. An English doctor (Dr Nettlethwaite) in white coat hesitates beside her bed. We cannot see Mahala, as the servants throng around. The doctor pulls aside one of the weeping men.*

Nettlethwaite *English accent* I'll need a list of Madame Mahala's family; of her next of kin, if she has any. I'm afraid that I can't extract any more information from her, as her power of speech is almost gone.

Servant Abul *weeping* I think ... Madame may have mentioned ...

Nettlethwaite *stern* Pull yourself together, man. Your crying wastes precious time.

*The doctor quickly becomes annoyed at the servant's lack of response. He makes a clicking sound.*

Nettlethwaite *stern* Come along, will you? If you choose to help your mistress, you'll tell me about her family. Was there a husband? A brother or sister, perhaps?

Servant Abul *sobs* Doctor, I'm crushed with such woe.

Nettlethwaite *very stern* See here! There isn't much time. If they exist at all, her loved-ones may wish to hold her hand as the end draws near. Can you tell me who they are?

Servant Abul *sobs increasing* Agh!! The poor Madame ...

Nettlethwaite Can't you think?

*Servant Abul responds finally to the doctor's rising frustration.*

Servant Abul Wait! Yes ... I recall ... a... a daughter ... Madame Mahala spoke to me once or twice of a daughter.

Nettlethwaite *hopeful* Yes?

Servant Abul *wiping* There was an ... an estrangement, you see. The girl was raised by

*tears, sniffing*

someone else ...

*Nettlethwaite grasps both of the servant's shoulders.*

Nettlethwaite            Here in Cairo? Can you direct me to her? Do you know of her name?

Servant Abul            No, no, no. I think ... London. It was London, for sure.

Nettlethwaite            London?

*[Abul nods eagerly]*

Good heavens! And her name?

Servant Abul            If Madame recorded it at all, it would be found written in one of the books in Madame's house. In the drawer closest to her bed. Not the Koran, no ... Er ... You would call it The Holy Bible.

Nettlethwaite            Well, get your skates on and telephone to the residence. See if you can get somebody to read out the name from that Bible.

Servant Abul            But Sir. There is no-one at the home of Madame Mahala. We are all here, praying at her bedside. And as to skates, I --

Nettlethwaite            Alright. You'd better go and get it yourself. Come on, we'll go to the front desk and I'll organize a lift for you. And it had better be snappy ...

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene xiv:** Flying Over Mahala's House Cairo 1933

*Camera sits in Dani's small aeroplane, panning the area around Mahala's house. From above, we see Roland, wearing a ghutra and igal instead of his usual army cap. He is riding an Arabian stallion, cantering towards the house, followed by a plume of dust.*

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*Dani points downwards, then both men (Dani and Harry) signal to each other with thumbs up.*

*Dani puts his aeroplane down on the deserted road. Dust shoots up from the wheels as they touch down. To be heard, Dani and Harry have to shout over the noise of the engine.*

Harry *voice over*                    Hey! Are you allowed to land here? Is this an airstrip?

Dani *voice over*                    Who can stop me, Harry? Who can warn me off? Ha ha!  
*laughing*

🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀 **Break** 🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀

*The plane has now landed. Harry and Dani are snooping outside Mahala's house. Harry stands peering in at a window, with his hands cupping his face.*

Harry                                    Nobody at home. So where's the horse and rider?

Dani                                      Stable's out the back, I guess. Let's investigate ...

*The two men come upon the Arab stallion, still saddled, sweating and on edge. Harry runs his hand over the horse's flanks.*

Harry *musling*                        I guess the captain is not much of a horseman. What I mean is, I normally rub down my mount on such a warm day.

Dani *nods slowly*                    *Moi aussi.*

*Dani stares at the horse. Then he looks about for inspiration.*

*The two men are startled to hear glass breaking. They tear off in the direction from which the noise emanated.*

END OF SCENE

**I, Scene xv: A Room At The House of Mahala Cairo 1933**

*Roland is stretched out on the floor, with Dani beside him looking distraught. Harry, leaning forward over Roland, has his hands resting on his own legs.*

Dani *distracted with worry* For God's sake, wake up, Ferrier! Oh, what devilry is this?

*Abul walks in, looking thunderstruck. Then he sees the face of the man on the floor. Harry and Dani stand straight, looking at Abul in a mystified, wary manner.*

Dani *startled, aggressive* Who the Hell are you?

*Abul does not take his eyes from Roland's face.*

Abul Without meaning to give any offence, I might ask you the same question, Sir. Ah, this is the Lieutenant Ferrier. What have you done to him?

Dani *outraged* What have **we** done to him? He's been drugged with that foul what-do-you-say? Narguileh?

Abul *upset* The hookah? No, no ... he must not smoke that. Madame is so strict about --

Dani *distressed and nervy* Never mind all that! I need to make an urgent telephone call. Can you assist me with that? I don't speak any Egyptian at all.

Abul Yes, yes, Sir. But also, I must fetch the Holy Bible for Madame. The taxi cab waits for me, with the engine running ...

Harry The Bible?

Dani *dismissive* Oh, *bien sur*. Whatever ...

*[Suddenly alert and able to make plans]*

Listen! Get the Bible, then come back to me and we'll make the telephone call to my brother. Meanwhile, my friend and I must carry Captain Ferrier ... carry him to a bed, and then you may be

on your way.

*Abul nods eagerly*      Very good, Sir.

*Abul scurries off. There is a bottle on the floor. Harry picks it up, pulls off the bottlecap, and tosses back his head to take a good drink. Then he hands the bottle to Dani.*

*Dani, harassed and dragging his hand through his untidy hair, swigs down a long swig.*

*As the men stoop to pick up Roland, they murmur to each other. The camera looks down at Roland's serene face as he is carried off.*

*The next thing that we will see in the next scene will be Mullet's face as he rides ferociously in the camel race.*

END OF SCENE

Start of ROLAND'S EXPERIENCE (split into 2 parts due to dramatic necessity)

**I, Scene xvi:** The Camel Race Through Streets And Buildings. Byblos 1500 BCE.

*We open with a close-up of Mullet, riding a camel at top speed.*

*He is wild-eyed, grimacing and excited.*

The Course Of The Camel Race – Lanes, Alleys And Into Houses.

*Music: exciting, dramatic, wonderful and electrifying.*

*The streets of Byblos have been turned into a camel-race track. This looks dangerous, because the streets become lanes, and the race threads along alleys and even along corridors in buildings.*

*There are some amusing scenes where the camels tear past the spectators, who may not be ready for them.*

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*From historical times, the camels race (that is, scramble) along a pre-ordained course.*

*There is the usual skulduggery, trickery, obstacles and handicaps.*

*The result is a thrilling camel race, with people barracking and all sorts of excitement.*

*The riders we are concerned with are:*

*Chips, Mullet, Dingo, Feral, Socks, Donger and Curl.*

*We met all of these characters previously in Film #1.*

*Mullet is the ultimate winner, with Chips a close third. We are not concerned with the second placegetter.*

*Dingo and Donger fall off and their camels run off, and Socks is involved in a terrible scrimmage, which leaves him concussed, and with a broken arm.*

END OF SCENE

**I, Scene xvii:** Catching up at Byblos Demolitions. Byblos 1500 BCE.

## **BYBLOS DEMOLITIONS**

***Purpose of this meeting:***

- *We have to comprehend that Knackers #1 (who at one time was a galley slave) has taken over from the deceased Modra as the fence for the gangs.*
- *Gang #5 (headed by Squizzy) cannot be located.*
- *Following both Stiffy's marriage and the injuries resulting from the camel-race, there are only 6 men available to form the gangs. Thus, Knackers#1 decides to form only 1 group: a super-group.*
- *Being superstitious, Knackers #1 does not like a group of 6, and demands that a 7th man be included. He must be reliable and fit-in with the other boys.*

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Mullet Y'okay mate?

Dingo *in considerable pain* Yeah, no worries, thanks Mull.

Mullet It's just that you sound and look like you're struggling.

Dingo No, no, no ... I'll be right.

*Knackers #1 and Knackers #2 await them, with Lion, Peewee and Topper standing in the background, along with sundry slaves. Feral spots Lion, Peewee and Topper. He speaks to Dingo, under his breath.*

Feral Look at the Three Stooges in the wings.

Dingo What? Stooges? What does that mean?

Feral Doesn't matter ...

*Knackers #1 scowls as he notes which men are sitting at the table in the beer garden (and who is missing). He speaks in his usual Cockney accent.*

Knackers #1 Now, 'oo've we got 'ere?

Where's Stiffy?

Feral He married my sister Debra, then they bought a vineyard and horse conditioning place. Not far outta town. Yeah, they've got some goats, and a cheese-press --

Knackers #1 Feral, I never arsed ya for a dossier on Stiffy's married life, did I? Just tell me where 'e is.

Feral *abashed* Well ... he'd be at home, at the vineyard.

Knackers #1 *sarcastic* Right! So now we know vat. Fank you. So are we expectin' Stiffy to join us? Is 'e still workin' for us?

Mullet I'd say "no". He indicated to me that he was giving up the game.

*Knackers #1 turns to Knackers #2, who makes a note with a stylus on a tablet of pliable clay.*

Knackers #1 Pity ... Pity ...

Where's Chips? 'As 'e give up ve game as well?

Donger No, Dad, he's making sure Socks is okay.

Curl He'll be here as soon as he makes sure that Socks is being looked after properly by someone.

Knackers #1 What's wrong wiff Socks, ven?

Donger In the camel race. He got into a bad scrum coming around The Rising Sun hotel corner, and he took a bad fall. Last reckoning was that he had a broken arm and suspected concussion.

Knackers #1 Did ve Cimmerian jockeys cause vat?

Mullet *scathing* Yeah, of course they did.

Curl *fired-up* Those pricks don't care about winning themselves. They only want to cruel it for everyone else.

*There is general agreement with this statement.*

Knackers #2 Ought to be barred from the event.

Dingo Socks was riding really well. I saw him. But those Cimmerian hoons swamped him. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Knackers #1 So no Socks, ven.

*Knackers #1 turns to Knackers #2, who makes another etching with the stylus in the clay. Knackers #1 then points sharply at Dingo.*

Knackers #1 And you come orf.

Dingo *wincing but stoic* I'm okay. Write me in.

Knackers #1 And Donger? You're okay, Son?

Donger No worries, Dad.

Knackers #1 Awright ... Knackers, what are we lookin' at?

*Knackers #1 clears his throat, and points to each man with his stylus as he counts them off.*

Knackers #2 Okay. We've got: Chips, Donger, Curl, Feral, Dingo and Mullet.

Mullet Two groups of three? That's not enough.

Knackers #1 *shakes head* No, I'm finkin' of settin' up just one super-group, Mullet. What 'ave we got ... is vat 7 men?

*They all count from one to six.*

Knackers #2 No, mate, only six.

Knackers #1 Six? Nah, I don't like six. Vat's a shit number. It's gotta be 7.

Donger It would have been 7 if Socks hadn't been bashed-up by the Cimmerians.

Knackers #1 Seven ... Hmmmmm ...

*[Points to Knackers #2]*

What about you yourself?

Knackers #2 *arcs up* You've got me organizing that harbour demolition in Crete. You know, the one I've gotta drain so that King Joseph's ships will all be high and dry. I can't do grave robberies **and** that at the same time.

Knackers #1 *thoughtful* No, Knackers, no ... No more ya can ...

Feral Hey, what about the Hittites, the Eagle Boys?

Curl Yeah, where are they when all this is going on?

Knackers #1 *firm* Forget vem ... Vey've done a runner. Stuff 'em!

Well, I'll leave it up to you lads to find yourselves a sevenf man. And lads, get me somebody worfwhile, will ya? Let me know when you 'ave, and we'll get started.

*Knackers #1 leaves the table and bustles back into the building where Buddy was working. Knackers #1 is closely followed by Peewee, Lion and Topper.*

*The other boys stay in the beer garden, luxuriating. They continue to drink and eat. Then Chips turns up. The other boys exhibit their pleasure at seeing him.*

Donger Hey, here he is! Third-place getter.

Chips *high 5s with Mullet* I thought I had ya, but you won it fair and square. Good race, Mullet! G'day boys. Give us a beer for Baal's sake.

Curl How's Socks?

Chips He'll be apples. No worries. I left him in the arms of an old bird with tits the size of melons.

*Everyone laughs and enjoys a few crude comments.*

Mullet Chips, do ya know anybody who could join us? There's only six of us and the boss wants a clean seven for his new super-group.

*Chips takes a very long draught of beer. He smacks his lips, and wipes his hand over his mouth.*

Chips Super-group, ya say? Well, I never ...

Matter-of-fact, I do know a likely type. Young Stiffy has a little brother or is it his cousin? Whatever ...

Plays footy. Terrific kick.

Not little in height; I mean younger. Patto, his name is. He was a high-ranked army officer at one stage.

I wonder if we can find him? Stiffy might know where he is. I think he'd fit in with our super-group very well indeed.

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene xviii:** Another Egyptian Grave Robbery 1500 BCE

*This is a very brief scene, to break up the visits to Byblos Demolitions. There are only four participants: Mullet, Feral, Dingo and Curl.*

*The grave looks like a cellar lined with large stones and filled with columns also made of stones.*

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*There are Pharaonic statues littering the scene.*

*The men are groaning, straining, sweaty and dirty, and hard at it. They are dragging nets filled with grave-goods along the floor of this cellar.*

*A couple of nasty ghosts are trying to annoy the men as they work. However, the boys simply brush them aside, or ignore them. Howzat gives a couple of barks, then wanders off, tail wagging.*

*Feral and Curl work together, hauling their net full of grave goods in the background. Dingo and Mullet haul their net with much straining, grunting and muscle-power towards the camera.*

Dingo                      Yeah, but an eagle that size doesn't just appear for no reason, Mullet. It's definitely a sign.

Mullet                      Sign of what?

Dingo                      I dunno, do I? Something's gonna happen, or ... I dunno.

Mullet *frowning*              Is this one of your practical jokes?

*The men stop, dripping with sweat. One of the ghosts turns himself inside-out to scare Dingo. He merely gives it a sidelong glance and flicks it away.*

Dingo *to the ghost*              Piss off, Deadhead.

*[To Mullet]*

No, it's dinkum.

Mullet                      An eagle?

Dingo *excited*                      Yeah! An eagle as big as a bloke, just hangin' in the sky, riding the thermals.

*[Snaps fingers eagerly]*

Hey! I know what it'll be!

It's them Hittites. They're behind it, for sure: the Eagle Boys!

Mullet                      Nah ...

Dingo *adamant*                      Yeah ... for sure! Didn't ya hear "The Knackster" tell Feral that they'd done a runner?

Mullet *now doubtful* Nah, they don't have control over an eagle, do they?

Dingo Yeah, yeah! That eagle is a bloody omen thingo. It's gotta be for the Eagle Boys.

It's the Hittite gold. They've gone after it. The bastards!

*Angrily, Dingo grabs the ropes attached to the net, and begins hauling again. Mullet shrugs, then takes up his ropes to join Dingo.*

END OF SCENE

### **I, Scene xix:** Second Visit to Byblos Demolitions. 1500BCE

*Mullet, Dingo and Curl wander into the reception area of Byblos Demolitions, and find Buddy still busy with his clay tablets.*

*There is a small wreath hanging alone on the wall.*

*Curl wears a hanky with knotted corners on his head. He wanders around, looking closely at everything. The three graverobbers have stripped off to bare essentials, are very dirty and sweat profusely. Buddy (as always immersed in his work) looks up as the boys wander in.*

Curl G'day, Buddy. How are they hangin, eh?

Buddy Good, thanks, Curl. Hard yakka?

Dingo Just a bit. Where's Knackers Senior?

Buddy Both the Knackers have gone to Crete. Made a massive great crater in the harbour there. The locals are shitting themselves (pardon my French).

By what I can work out, the boys are making great inroads into the invention of explosives.

Mullet *pondering,* Go on ...

*impressed*

*Curl suddenly points at the wall where the wreath hangs.*

Curl                                Hey! What's that little wreath for?

Buddy                                Archie, from the Eagle Boys.

Curl                                What? Is he dead, then?

Buddy                                Yes, he is.

Mullet                                Fair dinkum?

Buddy                                Yep.

Curl                                When'd that happen?

Buddy                                Oh, about 10 suns ago.

*[Slightly affronted]*

I sent you all a memo.

Dingo                                How?

*Buddy seems very surprised at that question.*

Buddy                                By carrier pigeon, of course.

*Curl is slightly annoyed at the misunderstanding.*

Curl                                No, how did Archie die?

Buddy                                He was savaged by a lion in Italy.

*Mullet is stunned -- yes, ha ha "Stunned Mullet".*

Mullet                                Go on ...

Dingo                                He won't be missed. Dumb shit.

Buddy *to Curl*                        Didn't you get the pigeon I sent you?

Curl *shame-faced*                I might've done ... I'm allergic to birds ...

Buddy                                Should've told me that sooner, Curl. I would've sent you a

messenger ferret.

*Buddy reaches behind the reception desk for a clay tablet.*

Buddy                      Anyway, Knackers Senior left your instructions, gentlemen:

*[Grand announcement]*

It's Luxor. The grave of Pharaoh Lanil.

*All three boys look closely at the clay tablet handed to them by Buddy. They are basically unable to read but it looks good to appear interested. Mullet looks up.*

Mullet                      ... grave of Pharaoh Lanil ... Any news on the curses there?

Buddy                      Yeah. Knackers reckons it's pretty bad, so you're going to have to get in touch with your wizard friend for protection. Apparently, there's one wraith in that tomb that's the size of Brazil.

Dingo                      What? What's a Brazil?

Buddy                      Doesn't matter. Let's just say he's a very big unit ...

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene xx:** The Human Tower, Practice For The Circus Luxor 1500 BCE

### **The Human Tower:**

Lowest level is Chips, and on his shoulders will be Donger, then Feral, then Curl.  
Chips stands braced.

*Music: bright, happy, jolly, sweet.*

*The boys involved in the new incarnation of the Human Tower practise on a grassy area. Orange grove and palm trees in the background.*

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bells on.

*Mullet notices that Howzat has made friends with Maidenova: there is lots of tail wagging.*

*Mullet gives Curl a hand to get up to his feet. Curl looks utterly defeated. He rolls his eyes at Mullet, who grins boyishly.*

Mullet                               Whose bitch is this? Howzat's taken a real shine to her.

Chips                                 That's Maidenova. We've been training her for the next raid.

*Donger holds Chips' hands then nimbly steps up onto Chips' shoulders.*

Chips                                 Hup!

Mullet                               When are we up for that?

Chips *teeth-gritted*               As soon as Patto rocks up.

*Feral climbs up onto Chips' legs, then Donger gives him a hand up onto his shoulders.*

Donger                               Hup!

Mullet                               You managed to find him, then? Someone said he was running amok in Nubia.

*Chips can hardly speak. His entire body shakes under the pressure.*

Chips *clenched teeth*           Yeah! He was, but we got hold of him.

*Curl, very gingerly and without any joy, tries to clamber up the tower. His voice carries no confidence: he is nervous and unsure.*

Curl                                 I don't think I can do this ...

Feral                                 Aw, watch where ya put yer feet, ya mongrel ... Hup!

Mullet                               And so we're all set for the next job?

Chips *straining*                 Yeah.

Curl and Feral                   ***Ahhhhhhhhhhh!***

*Curl goes flying over Feral, who comes down too. Both men land heavily. Donger and Chips stay in place. Mullet grins. Howzat runs over to lick Feral's face.*

Chips

Aw, stone the flamin' crows, Curl! Get a grip, will ya? What have ya got in your loincloth? A dick or a map of Tasmania?

Start again ...

*The men rally around Chips, who looks aggrieved. He takes up his braced position, as Donger climbs up on his shoulders. Mullet grins.*

END OF SCENE

## **I, Scene xxi:** The Grave Of Pharaoh Lanil At Luxor Egypt 1500 BCE.

### **Monkeys:**

*The original single monkey was increased to a troop on suggestion from a kind friend.*

*Because of the Pharaoh's curse, the men cannot enter the grave. They are using capuchin monkeys and the two dogs (hitched to wagons).*

*The intention is that the monkeys will load the goods into the nets, or into the little doggie wagons.*

*The scene opens with Howzat in the antechamber, hitched to a little wagon, howling. In the background, we can hear men saying "Ouch" at intervals, over the constant chatter of a roomful of Capuchin monkeys.*

*Re-Introducing Patto (whom we briefly met in ACT II scene vi). Patto is one of the men balancing three monkeys on his shoulders and arms.*

***The actor playing Patto is the same actor playing Dani.***

*Patto is resourceful, clever, energetic and athletic.*

*Mullet squats down beside Howzat (fractious) to comfort him.*



Chips

Welcome to Patto who yuz all know from the footy field. Dodges bulls like a champion.

*[Sundry welcoming remarks from the other men.]*

It's all yours, Mullet. Get the dogs going!

***Men, it's Monkey-Time ...***

*Music: bright, catchy, breezy and delightful. Eg Whistling the Dog (aka The Tailwaggers Theme).*

*This scene is really amusing and could be side-splitting if the monkeys can co-operate.*

*It starts out quite well:*

- *The men have to urge the monkeys into the grave via the door.*
- *Mullet happily whistles as a shepherd would, instructing his dogs how to move, "Come up, come round, get up"; he looks very satisfied and in control.*
- *The monkeys begin alright, rushing about filling the nets and tying the ropes.*
- *They stack goods into the wagons and the dogs happily trot out the door, to be unloaded, then to return*
- *The men begin alright, hauling the heavy stuff via the door (which they can do because of the ropes tied by the monkeys).*

**So far, so good.**

*THEN THE GRAVE GODS, APPARITIONS, MUMMIES, GHOSTS, GHOULS, MONSTERS, DRAGONS, HAINTS, WRAITHS and so on START TO APPEAR, FRIGHTENING THE MONKEYS. This implies loads of great colourful CGI. There will be roaring, screeching and earth trembling.*

*Music: So now we get racy, edgy, metallic music, giving the feeling of unbalance.*

*Comic results:*

- *The monkeys run amok, screeching and trying to hide behind objects, or in objects, or under objects, or just wrap their arms over their heads.*
- *Mullet goes ballistic trying to whistle.*
- *The men give urgent advice and encouragement to the monkeys, but with little success.*
- *The little doggie wagons are overturned, with the result that it is very difficult for the dogs to*

*stand up again.*

- *The incommoded dogs try to push the light stuff to the door with their snouts.*
- *The monkeys start to rush out the door, bang into the men, and try to cling to their legs and arms, screeching.*
- *The ropes are now completely knotted at the doorway, causing more chaos for the dogs and monkeys and men.*

The mummy case -- good spot for humour

*There is dust, chaos and pandemonium with monkeys screeching about in terror and men trying to catch them.*

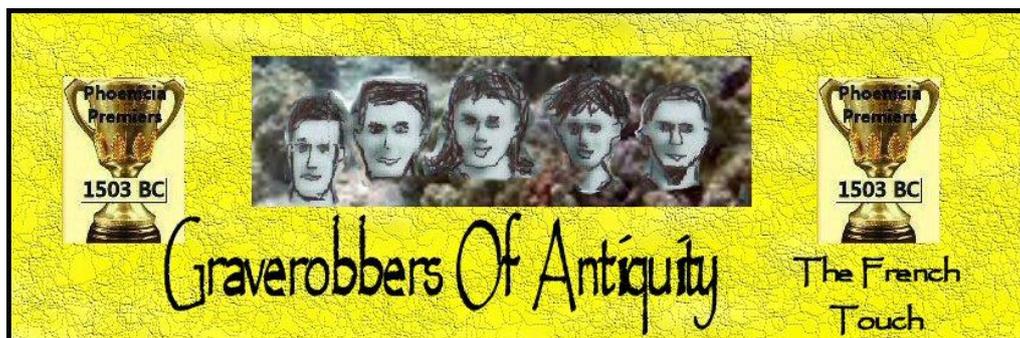
*The last thing is that the mummy case which was standing erect in the antechamber teeters, crashing loudly in the dust, on its back. The lid flies open and 4 or 5 terrified monkeys leap out. The mummy sits up, dusts himself off says "Hmph" then lies down again, with the lid flying shut of its own volition. Little clouds of dust puff up around it as the music crunches to its final chord.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT I

*[Note: we will now switch back to 1933, and this dream-experience continues in ACT II.]*

END of ROLAND'S EXPERIENCE (for now)



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## ACT II

### II, Scene i: Return to a Bedroom at Mahala's, Cairo 1933

*Roland lies on a bed, under a mozzie net. He wears a beatific expression. Nearby stand Dani and Harry, looking seriously concerned. Miles is taking Roland's pulse. Then Miles withdraws his hand and carefully fixes the mozzie net.*

*Dani watches, frowning.*

*Suddenly, Dani makes a frustrated movement, slapping himself on his leg.*

Dani                                Ah! What *is* this? Miles, what can have happened to him? I can't believe it.

*Miles looks at Dani, then at Harry.*

Miles                                You say that he smoked from a hookah?

Dani                                Yes!

Miles                                Did you also smoke?

Dani                                From the hookah? No, no, of course not.

Harry *firmly*                        No, Sir. I did not.

*Dani is distracted. He drags his fingers through his hair.*

Dani                                *Sapristi!* That stuff was drugged, was it not?

Miles                                Maybe not ...

Can you tell me anything more about this?

*Dani slumps into a nearby chair with his head in his hands.*

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

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

*[Quickly looks up]*

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

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

Dani *triumphant* Exactly so!

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

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

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

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

Dani *snaps finger and thumb* *Oui*, that's it, in a trance.

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

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

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

Dani Absolutely no-one, I tell you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Miles *frowns deeply*   *Tiens!* Servant? You said that there was no servant.

Dani *explaining*       One of the servants turned up. Thank Heavens! I could never have telephoned to you without his help.

Miles                 Where is he now, this servant?

Dani                 Gone again. He had a motorcar waiting for him, with the engine still running hot. Something about religion ... Bible Studies, who knows! Oh, Miles, it is such a *brouhaha!*

                          There is the Madame Mahala (whoever she is) dying in the Hospice, and this poor weeping servant is sent back here to collect her Bible, perhaps to read Psalms over the sufferer's bed.

                          But his arrival was more than opportune, to say the least: to put me in touch with you. And there lies your friend, who hasn't moved a muscle, and barely breathes. *Mon Dieu!* What is this about, Miles?

Miles *nods*             Ah! I begin to see ...

                          It is very regrettable that Mahala is dying. I became very fond of

the old buzzard, after all.

*[Thinks for a moment]*

However, if what you said regarding Roland is so, *cher Dani* and Harry, then I think we may see our way clear.

Harry                   What? But the man is in a coma, Sir!

Miles                   No, he's not.

*[Takes a big breath]*

*Messieurs*, settle down. He will wake, I promise you.

And when he wakes, he will tell to us the most fantastic story that you ever have heard, about his visit to ancient lands during his sleep.

Dani *astounded*       You can't know what he'll say, or what he is dreaming, Miles.

Miles                   But in this case, yes I do know. He'll tell to us that he has been living as a Phoenician, at around 1500 BC. I calculated once that that is about the date of all this fantasy. His name was Moollet in that time.

Harry *shaking his head*   No. Not possible.

Dani *to Miles*           What? Are you crazy too?

Miles *shakes head*       He's there now, in ancient Phoenicia, or perhaps Egypt. Roland was a graverobber. So was Vincent. So was Martin.

*Dani looks scared. Perhaps Miles might be crazy.*

Dani *distraught*       Move over, Roland, I think I'm going to pass out, too.

Miles, you're my brother ... how can you speak such trash?

*Miles looks hard into his brother's eyes, then into Harry's. Finally, he speaks in a deep sombre voice.*

Miles                   So was Theresa, and so was I!

Dani                    You ... and Theresa ... ? Oh, God!

Harry *whispers, totally disbelieving* No ... no ...

Miles While we await our friend's recovery, I'll tell to you the whole story, as I know it.

*Camera backs off, such that it can focus on Roland, smiling in his sleep.*

END OF SCENE

Continuation of ROLAND'S EXPERIENCE from end of ACT I, B

## **II, Scene ii: Egypt, The Crowded Market Place in Luxor 1500 BCE.**

*Mullet and Patto move briskly through the crowded streets. Patto carries about three unlit torches, and both men carry heavy daggers on belts. They continue to talk as they scurry along, weaving through the crowds and past the camels, donkeys, goats, children and so on.*

Mullet Patto, don't get put off by that crappy robbery yesterday. All them monkeys going troppo. What I say: it was really humming along until the spooks turned up.

Patto *stops to argue* You blokes all act as if the thing was a complete failure, but we really got tons of good stuff. I was fair dinkum impressed, mate.

Mullet stops likewise I'm gonna find out who supposedly trained them monkeys and give 'im a great smack across the chops for his trouble.

Patto Aw, they took fright, poor little mites. Who can blame them?

*Both men head off again.*

Patto *reasonable* Look, if you divide what we trawled out of that cave by 7, each

man did a really good job.

Mullet                    Yeah, but ...

Ya see, when my Dad (and his Dad before him) was a graverobber, they just marched in and hauled out the loot. There was no stupid curses or nothink like that. Just get yerself your TAGRATL union ticket and Bob's yer uncle.

But all the graves now are packed to the hilt with death-wishes and paybacks ... They've taken all the fun out of it. That's why we have to be so careful now.

Patto                    You don't really believe that mumbo-jumbo, do you? It's just boogieman stuff to scare the lags away.

Mullet                    No, mate. That's what we thought at first. But a lot of good men died ...

I just didn't want yer to get the wind up because it looked like we were a mob of no-hopers.

Patto                    Hey, man, I'm cool. No sweat. Listen, I've got to --

Mullet                    Dingo and Feral are putting on a barbeque before we head back to Byblos. Do you wanna come? There'll be goat and sheep on a spit. And loads of beer. If you wanna come ... More than welcome ...

Patto                    I can't mate. Wish I could.

That's why I'm tearing off like this. In here.

*Patto veers off from the winding alley, into a dark, open doorway. Then through more doors. He stops to light his three torches from a flaming torch on a wall bracket. He hands one torch to Mullet.*

*Using a series of twists and turns of 6 handles (in the manner of a primitive safebox), Patto opens a well-hidden trap door. Now they head down a ladder. Mullet follows him without hesitation. They are now in a narrow, low tunnel, which means they have to stoop down. They scurry along.*

🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒 **Break** 🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒🔒

*And now they come to a higher, wider area, still dark, except for their torchlight. There are some statues and the walls are covered in hieroglyphics. Both men stand up and groan, their backs are aching from the stooping.*

Mullet *puzzled*                      What's this all about? Are we knocking-off a grave on our own?

*Patto looks about keenly.*

Patto                                      Nuh.

*Patto is searching for something, running his hands over the hieroglyphics.*

Patto                                      Actually, I got onto a girl.

Mullet *pleased*                      Ah! So we're here to get a root. Good! It's about time I threw the leg over. Good way to celebrate yesterday's --

Patto *amused*                      No, Mullet, not yet. The girl gives me information, not sexual favours. That's how I know about this place, through her.

*Mullet looks abashed. Patto now finds what he's after and pushes hard on a certain area of the wall. A large door noisily slides open*

Patto                                      This is the Pharaoh's turf. I've gotta keep my eye on some people. They may need a bit of muscle-work done on their behalf. They've got to beg the Pharaoh for help; but I don't much like their chances.

*Patto gives a head-signal to Mullet such that Mullet should follow him. They head along a further tunnel. This time, the tunnel is professional. It is wide enough for four men to walk abreast and well over 6 feet high, so they can stand up straight. There's some light up ahead. The two men douse the flaming torches they carry and stash them neatly against the wall to avoid detection. Patto indicates that they should talk quietly. Both men speak softly, but loud enough for us to hear them.*

Mullet                                      Did you drag me along to give you a hand?

Patto                                      Stiffy reckons you're good in a rumpus. I hope he's right.

Mullet

'Spose so ...

*[Disappointment]*

That means I'll be late for the barbeque, and no root neither.

Patto *evenly*

Yeah, well ya can't have everything ...

*[Stops, steps back, whispers]*

Sh! Guards ... and we can't let them see us. We have to do this in total secrecy.

*Music is low, somewhat thrilling: "something-is-going-to-happen".**The boys have to crawl to the vantage point without being spotted by the heavily-armed and gloriously-uniformed Egyptian guards. There is a sound from some distance away of lions roaring.**They look down over the edge of their vantage point, unseen by any guards.**The camera looks up at their faces. We see their eyes almost pop and their mouths open in disbelief.*Patto *awe-struck*

Shit! Do you see what I see?

Mullet *awe-struck*

You'd better pinch me, Patto. What the fuck ...

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene iii:** The Noble Procession Before Pharaoh Jethpa Egypt 1500 BCE.

*NOTE: To get the full impact of this scene, you have to revisit that 1934 Cecil B. DeMille film ["Cleopatra"] where Claudette Colbert plays the lead. Her lover (Mark Antony) has to take a long, long walk down the barge to get to her. There is a great drumbeat which keeps time with the steps he takes. Along the way, Mark Antony passes a veritable zoo of carnivores (well, women dancing as carnivores, if you get my drift). We are going several times better than that...*

- Music: stately, sumptuous brass, as would be heard in any good quality film related to Ancient Egypt.

- Drumbeat in time with the steps taken by our five visitors.
- Sumptuous and breath-taking royal music, over which Patto will speak, and note the trumpets at the start of the procession (see below).
- We have the magnificence of the Pharaoh and his retinue.
- The huge LION throne held up by eight 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 scattering petals and dancing.
- The architecture, the length of the aisle up which the visitors walk.
- The group of five visitors (described by Patto below)
- Mullet and Patto in hiding, able to see the scene, and Patto doing a voice-over, describing to Mullet the characters of the 5 people in Basrani's retinue.
- As Patto gives a brief appraisal of each of the five, the camera zooms in on that person, as each proceeds along the aisle.
- The conversation between Jethpa and Basrani.
- The evil Mandro in the wings.

*I guess we have to do a sweep of the whole aisle from the Pharaoh back to the group of 5 standing in the sunlight outside the imposing entrance to the Pharaoh's "reception hall". Otherwise we'll miss all the panoply since the camera will be focusing on the faces.*

- *Now add a formation of trumpeters who herald the beginning of the procession.*

*The procession of the five commences, led by an old, haughty courtier, bearing Basrani's credentials. Before him, a couple of little girls, skipping as they spread rose petals.*

*The camera is devoted to Queen Basrani.*

Patto *voice over*                      That bird with her arms crossed is Queen Basrani. There's only one word for her: bitch.

Mullet *voice over*                      She's bloody beautiful.

Patto *voice over*                      Yeah, yeah ... looks like a dreamboat ... But ...

Cold as a maggot. She loves herself. Got tickets on herself, she has. Have **nothing** to do with her.

Mullet *voice over* Awright. The other one's not bad-looking, either. Nice tits.

*The camera is devoted to Doxia.*

Patto *voice over* She's Doxia. That's the girl I was telling you about who gave me the gen on this place. The one you wanna root so badly.

Mullet *voice over* If you behave yerself, I'll let you watch us at it.

And what's her connection to Queen Bitchface: sister?

Patto *voice over* Nuh. Some sort of noble lady who helps look after Basrani. She's a good sort: lots of irony and sarcasm when she talks.

Mullet *voice over* What's that mean? Ironing and what ...?

Patto *voice over* Doesn't matter ...

*The camera is devoted to Bruan.*

Patto *voice over* The tall, dark dude is Bruan. He's like the Prime Minister. Does all the work and gives all the orders. He's a real piece of work. Talks like he's royalty, with a plum in his gob.

*Camera is devoted to Phooey. With this, Patto's voice sounds very happy.*

Patto *voice over* See the big chap with no neck? Now, this bloke and I get on really well. He's called Phooey.

Mullet *voice over* He's an impressive unit.

Patto *voice over* Yeah, he's a real top bloke. He's the muscleman, the Protection. Y'oughta get him playing sports ... aw, he's a terrific guy!

*Camera is devoted to Stewie.*

Patto *voice over* And last but not least we have Stewie ... Cluey Stewie. He's the brains of the outfit. But he speaks with a really interesting dialect and it's hard sometimes to make out what he says.

*Camera covers the entire Nubian party.*

Mullet *voice over*            So, is Queen Whatsit going to marry the Pharaoh? Is that what this is all about? I forget what you said.

Patto *voice over*            Nuh, they're Nubians, suing for peace and for a better deal with the grain embargo.

Mmmm ...

But I can smell a rat from 40 paces ...

*By this time, the party of 5 has reached the Pharaoh's throne and Basrani steps forward, about to speak. She and the rest of the party are ushered (by Mandro) into a room behind the throne.*

*Patto's brow becomes furrowed with worry.*

Patto                            Shit-a-brick ... Something's goin' screwy.

Mullet                         That oily bloke has taken them into a room there, on the side.

Patto                         And our pleasure cruise is fast becoming a shipwreck! Come on! We've gotta find out what this bizzo is all about.

*Patto and Mullet depart in haste.*

END SCENE

END of ROLAND'S SECOND EXPERIENCE

## **II, Scene iv: Mahala's Kitchen Cairo 1933.**

*It is late at night.*

*Miles, Harry and Dani sit about in shirt sleeves in Mahala's kitchen. They have found some wine.*

*There are lights, as well as candles burning, and evidence that they have been smoking: a lot. They have made a night of it. Dani leans on the table, idly playing with bottle tops.*

*Harry is stretched out in his chair, hands behind his neck. A fat cigar is clenched in his teeth. He emits*

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*a soft grunting sound.*

Harry                   That's ... that's really ...

Dani                     But it's so very exciting. Pirates, galley slaves, murder ...

Harry                   You actually broke into the tomb of an Egyptian pharaoh who was just freshly buried?

Miles                   Yes. We breached several tombs, *en effet*.

Dani                     How did you not tell to me this epic adventure before this?

Harry                   That must have been ... phenomenal. The wealth ... the treasure ... I just can't take it in ...

Miles                   And you understand, do you, what this implies?

Dani                     Why, that you all had alter-egos. You were all Phoenician criminals a long, long time ago.

Miles                   Yes, that is so. But you're missing the point, *mon frère*.

We took some sort of elixir which drugged us into having these dreams. The lady who owns this house (Mahala, her name is called) drove us in that direction for her own ends. Amazingly, we all saw connecting visions, as if these episodes were parts of a whole picture. It became increasingly important to reveal to each other what it was that we each had seen, beginning with my Theresa. And ending with myself. Only I've not exactly told my tale yet.

But, it all hinged on this woman, Mahala.

Harry                   The woman who owns this house?

*Miles nods. Harry sighs, looking up at the ceiling. They drink. For a moment there is silence.*

Harry                   I just remembered something.

Dani                     *Quoi?*

Harry                    You forgot to tell your brother about something that the servant mentioned.

Dani *lost*                Did I? The servant?

Harry                    Yeah. Don't you recall that Abul fella telling you some important news? Or maybe you weren't listening.

*[Turning to Miles]*

See, the doctor believed that the dying woman was grimly hanging onto life in order to take leave of her only living relative. Hence, the Bible.

Miles *eager*             Yes? What are you saying?

Harry                    Her daughter. The search was on, led by the doctor, one presumes, to find Mahala's long-lost English daughter.

*Close-up of Miles looking fascinated but thoughtful.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene v: Kew Conservatory of Plants, a Glasshouse 1933**

Introducing Dorothea Lanier (played by the Doxia actress).

*An attractive, sensible-looking girl appears, very smartly presented in a flattering shirtmaker dress, divine straw hat decked out with flowers, expensive pumps. She carries a basket. This is our first glimpse of Dorothea Lanier (except that we have seen her as Doxia in the continuation of Roland's continued dream.)*

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*This scene is quite unnecessary for the plot but helps to discover Dorothea's character and special talent.*

Lonsdale Ah! Glorious day, Miss Lanier. I've got most of those specimens you asked for in a cupboard here. Excuse me, won't you?

Dorothea Thanks ever so, Mr Lonsdale. You may now feel confident that you're doing your bit to help the ladies of London scrub-up divinely.

*Lonsdale bends down to an out-of-the-way cupboard. As he speaks he retrieves a small parcel wrapped in damp newspaper.*

Lonsdale Hmph! To my practised eye, most of 'em look as plain as they ever did. Present company excepted.

Here you are. Keep them damp, won't you?

*Dorothea receives this parcel which she stows in her basket.*

Dorothea Ta muchly. If the ladies of London would bother to visit Madame Genoa's exclusive and expensive salon, then you can be sure that they'd become more becoming.

Lonsdale If only!  
So, what are you working at this time? Another anti-ageing cream?

Dorothea What else? What else on this Earth matters more to rich ladies of a certain age?

Lonsdale Well, good luck with your brewing in the pursuit of eternal youth. Don't blow up the laboratory, now.

*Dorothea laughs as she turns to go.*

Dorothea It's hardly as grand as "laboratory". I've merely been allocated a bench at the back of the shop.

Thanks again. I'll telephone if I need anything else. Ta-ta!

Lonsdale                      Bye for now.

*Dorothea walks off briskly, smiling and swinging her basket. Back on the street, she scurries off to catch her bus.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene vi:** On a Busy London Street, the salon of Madame Genoa 1933

*From her trip to Kew, Dorothea arrives back at the salon and steps inside.*

*Her boss, Madame Genoa is a large, very Junoesque woman.*

*When Dorothea enters the salon, a flustered Madame Genoa is in close conversation with a police sergeant and policewoman, all obviously awaiting Dorothea's return.*

Genoa                      Ah, Sergeant! Here is Miss Lanier now!

*[Putting her huge arms about the girl]*

*Ma pauvre!* You sweet, innocent girl. I'll find you a glass of sherry.

*As Genoa floats off Dorothea speaks to the police. She appears confused and worried.*

Dorothea                  Oh dear, whatever is wrong? Has someone died?

Policewoman              Miss Lanier, your real mother, your birth mother, is gravely ill.  
*comforting*

Dorothea                  Really? I'd almost forgotten about her.

*The policeman gives a deprecating cough and looks at the ceiling. The policewoman looks severe.*

*Madame Genoa hands a glass of sherry to the girl and invites her mutely to sit.*

Genoa                      She probably never forgot you, my darling.

Drink, drink! It's restorative.

Now, these nice police-people have been sent to find you. They

tell me that your Mama wants to be reconciled with you. She's called you to her bedside.

Dorothea                      How terribly grim! But ... should I go? I mean, she's in some foreign place, isn't she?

Policeman *coughs*                      The afore-mentioned lady may be found just on the outskirts of ...  
*importantly*                                      *[Reads from a slip of paper]*

Cairo. The Hospice of the Holy Comfort.

*Dorothea appears horrified as she gapes at Genoa.*

Dorothea                      Cairo? That's Egypt ... Gosh! And policemen knocking on the door ... how very frightful.

*Dorothea looks about at the people and then takes a deep breath.*

Dorothea                      Very well. So ... I'll pack a valise or 2 and a pith helmet, shall I? Er ... does one catch an aeroplane to Cairo, or ... ?

*Dorothea looks for inspiration and answers from the wooden faces about her.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene vii:** The Bedroom in which Roland lies, Mahala's House near Cairo 1933

*A couple of days have passed. The servants (whom we have just seen at the Hospice) and Miles are gathered in the room. However, Dani and Harry are not present (presumably, they are working on the movie plot). Roland is still sound asleep. He sports a couple of day's growth and is unkempt. Miles looks about at the weeping servants, then addresses them.*

Miles                                      I am very sorry to hear that your mistress has passed into the next life. I know that you will miss her sadly. Would you all kindly remain here until further notice? Everything will be arranged for

you: your wages and so on.

*He signs to Abul and draws him to one side.*

Miles                    Abul, you said that the young woman had arrived? I mean the daughter of Madame, from England? That is, she is actually in Cairo?

Abul                    Yes sir, she's coming here from the Hospice.

Miles                    When Mr Polglaze mentioned to me about her ... I was not at all aware that Mahala had a daughter. I just didn't know that.

But, by what you say, that young mademoiselle was duly located and has managed to find a speedy passage here. Yes?

Abul *weeping*            The young lady arrived not long before the end. Madame had, I believe, been hanging on (by a thread of life) until that time. They held hands and kissed, and both shed many tears. Such a moving spectacle, my dear Sir.

Miles                    And she's even now on her way here, you say?

Abul                    That was her intention. Yes. As the next of kin, she will no doubt sort things out ... And this house will belong to her now, of a surety.

*Miles suddenly realizes that he and Roland are in the young lady's house – uninvited.*

Miles                    My God!

Does she know that I'm here with Captain Ferrier?

Abul                    I spoke nothing to the English Miss, Sir, about the brave Captain, nor about the other gentlemen.

Miles                    You mean by that, my brother and his friend ... Oh, well ... We'll just have to brush through it somehow, I suppose.

*Miles and Abul head out of the room, discussing some business in a mixture of French and Egyptian. Vaguely, we hear a car pull up outside. Through a window, we can make out Dorothea paying off her taxi driver and looking about at the house from outside.*

Roland wakes (alone) in strange surroundings just as Dorothea arrives.

*Roland stirs, then opens his eyes. He is tousled, a 2-day growth on his face. He listens to the voices, and frowns.*

Roland *very weak*                      Miles? Are you here?

*The servants look at Roland with interest, as they still dab at their wet eyes. A key turns in the lock and Dorothea steps through the doorway. She cocks her head to one side, because she can hear the men's voices. Dorothea has had time to acquire a black shawl, which she has draped over her shoulders.*

*Gingerly and a little nervously, she wanders through the house, arriving in Roland's room, where the servants are gathered, just in time to find Roland stirring. She recognizes the servants from the Hospice, so she gives them a half-smile.*

Dorothea *to the servants*                      Hello again to you all.

*They bow in response, eyes wide open. Then Dorothea walks to the bed, and looks down wonderingly at Roland, who looks up at her in amazement. Roland and Dorothea stare at each other.*

*[Remember, that to Roland, this lady is Doxia, handmaiden to Queen Basrani.] And now Roland (seeing his Doxia) tries to focus on her through the mozzie netting.*

Roland                                      Doxia! Am I in Heaven? You must be an angel. In fact, I must have died. There cannot be a more rational explanation than that.

Dorothea *drily*                              Is this **another** deathbed scene? Because if it is, I'd really rather not. I've had enough of deathbeds for one day.

Roland *wondering*                      You're English.

Dorothea Mmm. But French father. And you yourself are French, judging by those mellifluous tones.

Roland I am a captain in the most noble French Army.

Dorothea *nods* Of course, what could be more natural than to find a French officer in the home of one's lately deceased mother? In fact, I quite expected you to be here, you know, having a kip like this.

*A quick footfall is heard. Miles and Abul return. Dorothea turns towards them, totally surprised. Miles has thoughtfully grabbed a clean towel and a flowery robe for Roland.*

Miles *rushing into speech* Ah! Mademoiselle, I must introduce myself. I am Miles Renauld, lately a captain in the French Army. Please accept my most profound commiserations for your maman. Such a sad loss.

Dorothea Thank you ... Captain ... ?

Miles You must wonder at my being here. I can easily explain.

*Miles becomes aware that Roland is now thrashing about under the mozzie net and asks for Dorothea's pardon.*

*Miles bows, then quickly goes to the bed, stripping back the mozzie net, all concern over Roland's welfare.*

Miles How do you feel, old friend? Like you've been hit with a sledgehammer?

Roland Worse. You'll never guess where I've been ...

Miles *warning* Shush, shush, not now.

*[To the servants, in Egyptian]*

Water for the captain. Quickly!

*Roland leaps out of bed, still dressed in most of his uniform. He rubs his chest excitedly. He cannot stop looking with huge admiration at Dorothea (who is very uncertain as to what action she should take).*

Dorothea                      Gentlemen, I'll withdraw so that the captain may --

Roland                      Mademoiselle, allow me to properly introduce myself. I am called Roland Ferrier, and I welcome you to my gracious home.

*Roland bows, kissing Dorothea's hand with enthusiasm.*

Dorothea *agog*              **Your** home? Were you and my mother --

Miles                      No, no, no ... It's not like that at all.

Pardon me, Miss. My good friend is a trifle discomposed. Perhaps if I could be left alone with Captain Ferrier for a short while, as you wisely suggested, I could ...

Dorothea                      Of course! I'll wander about. Take all the time you need, Sir.

*Dorothea gives a forced smile as she turns away. As Dorothea wanders off, Miles (still clutching robe and towel) takes Roland by the shoulders and steers him towards the bathroom. They talk as they wend their way through the house.*

Roland                      *Ah, quelle beauté!* Her name is called Doxia, you know. Handmaiden to a beauteous Queen.

*Suddenly, Roland becomes distracted. He looks about him: confused and worried.*

Roland                      But ... this **is** my home, *n'est-ce pas?*

Miles                      Not so. It is **her** home now.

Come along! A bath and a shave for you, Captain Ferrier. You must disport yourself in one of our late hostess's bathrobes for the moment. The English mademoiselle must forgive your casual appearance.

Roland                      A bath? At a time like this, when I've just kissed the hand of the woman of my dreams?

Anyway, you are right. I'm not at my home at all. I'm supposed to have ridden to Mahala's villa. I can't have got that wrong, Miles. Perhaps there is a note of confusion here.

Miles                                    You **are** at the house of Mahala. Or, in strict truth, it is now in the possession of that young lady you've just tried to impress. Mahala (her *maman*, one finds) is no more: deceased.

*Roland draws in a quick breath and makes the sign on the cross on his chest.*

Roland                                *Grace à Dieu!*

Ah, the poor lady! She might have been a charlatan and a quack but ... *tiens!* Then that angel from Heaven is **her** daughter, you say?

Miles                                    But yes. Never mind that now. Look, you! On an Arab stallion, you rode here across the sand. Then you invaded this domicile with much violence, grabbing a Turkish hookah, from which you immediately smoked.

*Roland watches in a detached way as Miles begins the business of filling the bathtub.*

Miles                                    What possessed you, Sir? Have you run mad?

*Excited, Roland strips off his clothes, chucking them aside.*

Roland                                Your brother Dani! He takes your place in the gang. Only his name now is Patto. There are 7 of us in our new gang.

*[Steps into his bath]*

Is he here? Dani? I want to tell to him all about what we were doing. Chips and Dingo and ... Oh, all the *garçons* were there. Except for **you**, Miles. That is, Stiffay.

Miles *pouts*                            I suppose that Stiffay has died. Now, what would those Phoenician boys say? I've "dived into the dirt", no?

*Roland scrubs himself vigorously.*

Roland                                Not at all, *mon ami*. You and Debbie have a child, and work at your winery and with your horses. No more grave robbery for Mr Stiffay.

Miles That sounds not much different to what I do now, in real life ...

Roland But that was "real life", too. Be assured!

Ah! It was so *good* to be once again robbing the graves,  
managing the monkeys and ...

*[Snaps his fingers]*

Hey! The beautiful maid at your palatial mansion! Your *fillette*: she  
is a Nubian queen.

Miles Who is that?

Roland The ... the ... the one who is so very lovely and who sings ... ah!  
Such perfection.

Miles Ah yes. That would be Mimette, the parlour maid.

Roland But yes ... that's it.

And that lovely creature who just now appeared to me as an  
angel. Do you know? She is the royal companion.

Miles So you have said.

*[Sarcastic]*

Wonderful! My parlour maid, along with this Mahala's daughter,  
feature in your dream.

Yet, I warn you to be careful whom you tell of this dream. This girl  
here would not understand. We've only just met her, and after all,  
she begins her bereavement.

*Roland obediently raises his soapy index finger to his lips.*

Roland But of course! Yes, yes ... nothing to be said in front of the lovely  
young English lady.

*The scene stops abruptly as Roland subsides wholesale into the bath with much splashing and  
bubbles.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene viii:** The Kitchen, House of Mahala in Cairo -- Harry's Collapse 1933

*Harry leans against the kitchen table (drinking), while Dorothea stands at the sink. Dorothea drags her finger along the table; looking up at the window and she starts talking to her reflection, even though Harry is in the room, drinking.*

Dorothea                      What a day this has been. Too much, too quickly and no time to

think or plan. A house full of people, none of whom I've known for more than 2 minutes. A French captain who seems ready to throw me over the saddlebow and gallop off with me into the night ...

*Diabolique*, indeed ...

Suddenly I own a house, stables and horses. A fine collection of vintage French wine and some rather handsome volumes which would grace any elegant library shelves. And that servant, Abul, hints that there is a treasure-trove of jewels which must come to me as the sole heiress. This from a lady who preferred not to be bothered with me or my existence while she lived.

Now, I'm positive that the French have a word for that ...

Careful, girl, you're sounding bitter and twisted, to the nth degree.

Harry *amused*

You can afford to be cynical now. And yes, the French do have a word for it. Amazingly, they seem to have a word for everything. In this case that word is: Fate.

Dorothea *turns to Harry*

"Fate" ...

I'm sorry. I shouldn't be hauling you into my affairs.

Harry *equably*

Lady, I'm an author. I thrive on being roped into "affairs" that are none of my concern.

I'm here in Cairo only on the off-chance that I'll uncover some hitherto unplumbed depths. You see, human frailty fascinates me more than just a little.

Dorothea **And** you must work on your film script.

Harry That too. That most of all. But if I can imbibe the wisdom of the pharaohs on the side, well ...

*Dorothea is too tired to converse, and a bit out of her depth. She smiles slightly at Harry.*

*Giving herself something to do, she opens cupboard after cupboard. Then she reaches for a small bottle the size of a vanilla essence bottle. She squints at the label.*

Dorothea *reads* Dr Lilliban's Patented Sleeping Draught. This is what I need. Something to help me to drop off.

*Dorothea shakes the bottle somewhat playfully at the American.*

Dorothea *lip trembling* Mama, my real mama ... I've inherited so much from her. I don't mean just ...

No tears, Dottie, no tears. What if the gallant French captain were to see you crying?

*Dorothea tries to wipe her tears away with her sleeve. Harry moves forward to gently remove the small bottle from her grasp.*

Harry Leave that. You don't need it. And I probably do ...

And don't worry. I'm not going to enfold you in my manly arms in order to comfort you.

I'm one of those men who watches women cry as a spectator sport. With no reluctance.

*Dorothea smiles, blushing. Harry steps back, and stoppers up his bottle of grog, putting it to one side.*

Dorothea *whimsical* And I'm the woman who cries where no chaps can watch her. Goodnight, Mr Polglaze.

*Dorothea walks from the room.*

*Left alone, Harry picks up the small tonic bottle, turns off the light, and is seen by the moonlight filtering through the window. So we can't actually do more than vaguely make out Harry in the moonlit gloom. Harry drinks a good mouthful of the tonic, then goes into a coughing fit.*

Harry

Wow! Has that sleeping draught got a kick!

Say, what is this?

*[Scared and confused]*

Wait a minute! What in Hell is going on?

I'm bound-up in chains, for God's sake! My hands are tied behind me, and I'm hanging from a rope ... I'm in some kind of dungeon ... Whoa! They're gonna boil me alive in that cauldron. Shit! I gotta get out ... of ... here ...

*Harry drops to the floor heavily.*

END OF SCENE

Start of HARRY'S EXPERIENCE

## **II, Scene ix:** Successful Rescue of the Party 1500 BCE

### Background:

*We left Queen Basrani's party at the end of Roland's dream having reached the stage of bargaining with Pharaoh Jethpa. Then, they were ushered into a room. Patto and Mullet sneaked down and realized that the party of 5 had walked into a trap. We left them going for men. Although we have not absolutely detailed all this, there was no dramatic value in Jethpa, so we shall skip straight on to this scene in the torture dungeon.*

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|                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| The torture chamber: Bruan, Stewie and Phooey |
|-----------------------------------------------|

*Basrani and Doxia are locked away with the women of Pharaoh Jethpa's court. Being a macho man (he wishes!) Jethpa does not believe that the Queen is anything more than a mere puppet.*

*The real villains have been murdered, (we'll hear about that later) and their robes stolen by Patto, Dingo and Mullet. Feral is disguised as Marzan, the infamous GutBuster: major torturer of Jethpa's jail.*

**The characters featured here are:**

*The three Nubian men (Bruan, Stewie and Phooey), and the Phoenicians: Mullet, Patto, Dingo and Feral.*

*Also featured are Mandro and a troop of his armed guards (12 men). Recall that the Nubian men know Patto very well, and they will assume that the other three Phoenicians are his mates (and on their side in the fight).*

**The Torture Dungeon:**

*Stewie and Phooey are chained to the walls of a dungeon, awaiting torture and death. Such is the case for Bruan, except that he is bound and hanging from a rope on a pulley. The 3 men hang their heads. They look up anxiously as the heavy barred door noisily grates open.*

*The "torturers" (heavily robed) enter with great ceremony, wheeling-in a huge cauldron of boiling pitch. Before them, strolling in with insouciant grace, is Mandro (who is Jethpa's right-hand man). He is suave, effeminate, precious and insolent. When Mandro speaks he is unctuous and vile (complete with snaky smile).*

*Music: dramatic, hinting at some awful danger.*

Mandro *sophisticated*      Gentlemen of Nubia: welcome to the torture chamber of Egypt's most fair and just ruler, Pharaoh Jethpa.

I trust that all your physical needs are being catered for during your short stay here?

Phooey *desperate,*  
*angry*

Where's Queen Basrani and her companion, you bastard? What have ya done with them?

Mandro *titters*

Oh, the ladies ...

Well, you see, our august and highest being has divined that ladies (females in general) do not really have all that much say in affairs of state. So the two females to which you refer have been housed with the Pharaoh's own women. For the moment.

He may wish to inspect them more closely at some later date.

*Feral (in his disguise as Marzan the Gutbuster) jumps about like a witch doctor. Feral/Marzan shouts in a deep voice with a ghostly constipated German accent.*

Feral/Marzan

Ouyay eakspay Igpay Atinlay? Ellway, etgay onay ithway itay, uoyay uckingfay oronmay!

***You speak Pig Latin? Well, get on with it, you fucking moron!***

*Mandro is completely taken in. He is mightily impressed and pleased by Feral's imitation of Marzan.*

Mandro

As you can see, Marzan the GutBuster, our torturer-extraordinaire is all too keen to begin his exercises in terror.

Let me explain. The torture is boiling pitch. Each man in turn will be bound and lowered by ropes on that pulley apparatus above us into the boiling pitch, as you see. He will scream terribly until he dies. As a punishment for offending the almighty Jethpa, this is quite a *coup de grace*.

*The three prisoners grit their teeth and try to prepare themselves for death. Each man attempts to go into a self-induced trance. Meanwhile Feral/Marzan dances about, shouting urgently.*

Feral

Etgay ethay uckerfay ootay earclay ethay ardsgay outay.

***Get the fucker to clear the guards out.***

Patto *resplendent voice*

Lord Mandro! Marzan the GutBuster requires that the guards move

outside into the corridor ... er ... as the death-screams have a better resonance out there.

*Mandro claps his hands effeminately, and pouts deliciously.*

Mandro

Splendid! Men! Leave the cell on the double!

I must remain to ensure ... um ... fair play ...

|                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Feral (in his role of Marzan) gets rid of Mandro forever. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|

*The guards troop out, and close but do not lock the door. Meanwhile, Feral dances around in front of Bruan, who is lowered centimetres from the pitch by Patto, Feral and Dingo. Bruan holds himself together, not letting his fear show.*

*Without warning, Feral starts shouting and screaming, as if he were a tortured prisoner. Pulling a glistening sword from his robes, he leaps at Mandro and hacks his head off without blinking.*

*Music: very racy and exciting.*

*The other guys chuck off their robes. Then they free our three Nubians, who take the hint and start to pretend to be screaming and yelling for mercy (even stuffed shirt Bruan). Feral chucks off his ornate costume. He is still screaming as if being tortured.*

*Dingo searches for Mandro's head. Dingo speaks to the severed head whose lips still move slightly.*

Dingo

Can you still gesture hypnotically? Pick a card, any card. What? No wanna play "Find the Joker"?

*Dingo performs a beautiful place-kick with the head.*

Dingo

I'll give you "Joker", you jerk-off.

*Feral stops his dancing and screaming very suddenly. Everyone else stops dead still to look in wonder at Feral. Later, we will learn that Feral caught the head when Dingo kicked it, and that he bagged it.*

Feral

What?

Phooey

Keep going. You had me fooled.

Stewie *to Feral*

That wanker you beheaded is only Jethpa's right-hand man.

There'll be a shit-load of trouble coming from this.

Mullet                                Never mind that now, boys. Swords! I hope youse can all fight, 'cause we're 7 against about 12 out there.

*The men all grab arms from near the cauldron. Shouting and roaring, the 7 men burst out of the cell and start a magnificent sword fight with the guards. The music is lusty and vibrant to accompany the fight.*

*Patto, Dingo, Feral and Mullet are handy with the large, heavy swords used in this scene. Phooey is very powerful and well-trained. He acts as a shield for Stewie, who is not really much good at the manly arts. He just holds up a couple of swords and mostly fends off blows. All the men take only minor hurts, but many guards are killed, decapitated and mutilated. A couple of guards are forced back into the cell and fall screaming into the boiling pitch.*

*The surprise-package is Bruan. He is tall, strong and a master swordsman, reminiscent of Basil Rathbone, who was Hollywood's top fencer. Taking on three at a time, he clears away those guards who block their retreat.*

*Bruan holds his sword aloft, triumphant.*

Bruan                                I suggest that we make our way to the women's quarters and retrieve Her Majesty and Lady Doxia. This way, men.

*Feral is still fighting manfully. He imitates Bruan's toffee-nose accents.*

Feral                                Rightiho! And pip-pip, old boy!

*Phooey spots Stewie cowering in real terror. Phooey drags Stewie to his feet.*

Phooey                              Come on, Cluey! It's time to change your nappy.

Stewie                              I haven't shit my knickers yet, boyo, but I've come pretty close.

*They run out through the corridor into the garden beyond. Phooey still tests his arm with some grunts and roars, as if he is still fighting.*

Mullet                               Where do we find the girls? Do you know?

Bruan                                Yes, this way.

*We will revisit this scene in ACT III, Scene vii. Recall that Dingo kicked Mandro's head after Feral beheaded him. Then Feral, unseen by the others, fortuitously caught the head. He bagged it and had it with him, even while raiding the woman's quarters. So Feral will need to have a cumbersome bag hanging off his girdle.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene x: Bursting into the Pharaoh's "Harem" 1500 BCE**

*Not Islamic architecture (this is 1500 BCE, remember!), but a superb and beautiful scene, nevertheless.*

*A bevy of beautiful women, in all stages of undress, lounge about an indoor pool, reclining on cushions. Our seven heroes (less Phooey and Stewie who stand guard) burst through a low bamboo roof (sun-shelter) to the screams of the ladies, who scatter.*

Dingo                                Mullet, M-A-A-A-T-E! Pinch me! Am I dead or dreaming?

Feral *overjoyed*                    ***You bloody bewdy!*** Let me at 'em. Can I have any one I like?  
Can I've two?

Mullet *calling*                    Your Madge? Lady Doxia? Are youse here at all?

*Feral and Dingo dive into a knot of ladies, setting them screaming and scurrying off. Patto searches frantically. He sees Basrani, wearing a diaphanous robe (almost see-through) at the top of a long flight of stairs. He bounds up these three at a time, as she flits down towards him. They grab each other's hands as they meet on the stairs. Mullet and Bruan follow Patto, also taking the stairs three at a time.*

*Queen Basrani is breathless and scared.*

Basrani                                      Captain Patto! You are just in time!

*Basrani sees Mullet and points to a room at the top of the stairs.*

Basrani                                      In there! Help Doxia! Oh please, help her!

*Mullet storms up the remaining stairs and into the room, where Doxia, all but naked is being chased around the room by a fat, naked Egyptian courtier. The man is discomposd and shocked at the interruption. Before he can say "I beg your pardon, sirs!", Mullet floors him with three superbly delivered punches.*

*Bruan, who has entered the room in Mullet's wake, grabs as many garments as he can (disdainfully stepping over the unconscious Lothario) and hares downstairs. Scooping Doxia into his arms, Mullet rushes out of the room, following Bruan, Patto and Basrani downstairs.*

*Phooey and Stewie have mounted guard at the door, to which everyone heads.*

*Mullet whistles shrilly, which causes Dingo and Feral to sprint up, each bearing a nubile wench on his shoulders.*

Stewie                                      Oi! Put them lasses down! No touchy, understand?

Feral *arcs up*                                      Why not? Mullet and Patto have got one each. Why are they special and we're not?

Phooey                                      Basrani and Doxia are on the list. Your ladies aren't. So chuck 'em away. You don't know where they've been.

Dingo *pissed-off*                                      Aw, what do ya have to do around here to get a root?

*Feral and Dingo kiss their erstwhile girls a teary goodbye, then run off as the party of 9 hustle each other out of the "harem".*

END OF SCENE

## II, Scene xi: Exciting Chase 1500 BCE

*Cannot really script this: it is a standard chase sequence.*

*This scene is a medley of chase scenes, allowing the five Nubians and four Phoenicians to escape the wrath of the late Mandro's guards.*

*The two girls are dressed now, compliments of Bruan, who scored them some clothing.*



*The chase darts in and out of alleyways, buildings, down into cellars, across rickety rooves, as our party of 9 must escape the Egyptian guards who chase them. Finally, the party (breathless and tired) find a cul-de-sac near the wharf.*

*Patto and Phooey will soon go off to organize a boat.*

Patto *breathless* Whew! That was a good work-out. I needed to stretch my legs ...

*[Laughs, but still exhausted]*

Okay, Phooey, let's nick off and organize a boat to get us back to Phoenicia.

*Patto and Phooey promptly leave. Meanwhile Mullet gasps for breath, leaning back against a wall.*

Mullet We're gonna have to hide yuz.

Feral Well, they can all stay at my new place. Nobody'll think to look for them there.

Mullet *frowns* You got enough room?

Feral Yeah, course I have! I got about 20 beds.

Mullet Why so many?

Feral Aw, they're for me concubines.

*Mullet is concerned. As usual he is adrift with Feral's weird conversation.*

Mullet Concupines? I didn't know you were setting up a harem. So how many have ya got?

Feral *shrugs* So far? None yet.

Mullet *dumbfounded* None? So ... what's the idea with all the beds?

Feral Well, I'm on a long-range plan, eh.

*Feral suddenly remembers his cause for chagrin.*

Feral *angered* Shit, Mullet! I nearly got me first one when we rescued Queenie, but Phooey made me throw her away.

*Mullet looks around for confirmation that his hearing is not defective. He scratches his head, while Dingo delivers a loud crack of laughter. However Dingo finds Feral's refreshing outlook as very amusing. Dingo slaps Feral on the back as he laughs loudly.*

Dingo Good on ya, Ferret-face! Ya dag!

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene xii:** The Dodgy Grave, already raided by Gang #4 (Chips' Gang) 1500 BCE

**This is the famous last resting place of Pharaoh Kahmood.**

*Here is another tomb which has been raided previously, by Chip's Gang. There are the usual hieroglyphics, a few mouldy statues, columns and pillars, some of which are broken and/or on their sides, and dust and sand everywhere.*

*Chips and Donger are wandering around looking very bored. They whistle, sigh and look at the walls.*

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*Curl, however, sits on a fallen Egyptian god, like Rodin's thinker.*

Curl *heavy sarcasm* I spy with my little eye somethink beginning with "beer".

Chips Yeah. Sounds good to me.

Curl *annoyed* Listen, I've had a gutful of this "on-again" "off-again". Are they coming or aren't they?

Donger Settle down. They'll be here.

*Noises off: the others are arriving.*

Curl What's that? Can I hear something?

Chips At last! ... The Lost Boys ...

*Dingo, Patto, Phooey, Mullet and Feral stroll in, casual as you like, saying "G'day" to the three boys from Gang #4. Curl stands, looking amazed at the extra and unexpected people, as do Chips and Donger. Following our 5 boys are the two girls and Bruan (haughty and disgusted by everyone and everything), then Stewie, who is absorbed in the hieroglyphics.*

*While the speeches below progress, Basrani joins Stewie. They pour over the hieroglyphics in total concentration, muttering to each other.*

*Chips looks askance at the 4 Nubians.*

Chips Oi! Hold yer horses: who are these hangers-on?

Mullet *slightly aggrieved* They're our guests.

Patto This is Queen Basrani and her retinue.

Dingo What yer call "political outcasts".

Mullet *nods* Displaced persons.

Feral *winding up* Flotsam and jetsam, refugees, wanderers on the Earth, the Unbelonging, the scaff and raff of humanity, the --

*Donger stop's Feral's catalogue by the simple expedient of clapping his hand over Feral's mouth.*

Donger Good on yer Feral! Nice one. That'll do, mate. Settle down.

*Curl is put out and displeased.*

Curl Well, I don't care **what** they are, you can piss 'em off right now.

Dingo *arcs up* Just wait a bit. We're minding them because Patto's minding them.

*The situation has now become quite serious.*

Chips Did you take a Vow to Protect, did ya?

Patto *nods, solemn* Blood oath.

Chips *mouths the words* A ... blood ... oath ...

Donger *bracing* Aw, they're alright. They may as well stay. Long as they pitch in and help. Just get on with it. We've been waiting forever for yuz.

*Curl points his finger accusingly at Patto.*

Curl Patto, you've gotta vouch for them.

Patto *dismissively* Yeah, yeah, yeah ...

*Mullet looks around, running his hands.*

Mullet So what's the story? What are we looking at?

*The camera focuses on Stewie and Basrani. They are running their fingers along the walls. All the others have stopped to watch and listen to these two.*

Stewie This inscription here is most interesting.

Basrani I'm getting this one out: "On long legs, I will tower over the Lion Throne, and my wings shall shelter the people of the Black Land."

Stewie Gibberish?

Basrani Sounds like it. Idle boasting, almost ... But how very odd ...

*Focus back on Chips, who has obviously decided that Basrani and Stewie can be left to their own devices. Chips watches Stewie and Basrani sceptically.*





went to all this trouble, and then also started building another crypt at another locale, the lads would get suspicious, now wouldn't they?

The movers and shakers around Pharaoh Kahmood must have come up with this plan to put you graverobbers off the scent. Stands to reason.

I'm betting on "down below" in preference to "above us". Yep, it will be underneath us, the true vault will. I got a strong feeling about it ...

*Everyone wanders about. Curl and Chips try to move a rock. Dingo goes over to help. With a bit of effort, the rock is rolled out of the way. Nothing. But then, mystically, the rock beside it wobbles dramatically and then rolls to the side. The three men peer into the hole which is now revealed.*

*The camera follows their eyesight down.*

Dingo *voice-off* Yo! We hit pay-dirt!

*The others can be heard to rush over. Chips lowers a flaming torch on a rope down into the hole. Those looking down gasp in wonder. We can see glinting gold and jewels, as we hear the graverobbers express their awe.*

Chips Goodo! Another robbery, another challenge. We all up for it?

Donger *sing-song* We better had call on Pooter ...

*Without speaking, the assembled group watch Donger as he dances like an Egyptian and sings his inane ditty about Pooter.*

*Feral, to go one better, pretends to be a rock-star and violently plays an air-guitar. Feral sings.*

Feral We - better - had - call - on - Pooter ...

*There is laughter and merriment amongst the group.*

*Chips struts past Patto (on tip toes), shaking his finger and dancing as if a jitter-bugger during World War II.*

Chips *singing falsetto* Pooter, Pooter! If you only had a scooter (rootin'-tooter) --

*Patto shouts a crack of laughter. He calls after Chips.*

Patto                                      Who's this Pooter bloke? Is he your magician?

*Chips has moved almost out of earshot.*

Chips *calls back*                      Yeah! He's the man who waves a mean wand.

*Patto shakes his head, smiling.*

Patto                                      They told me that he was in jail for fraud. Not much of a wizard, then.

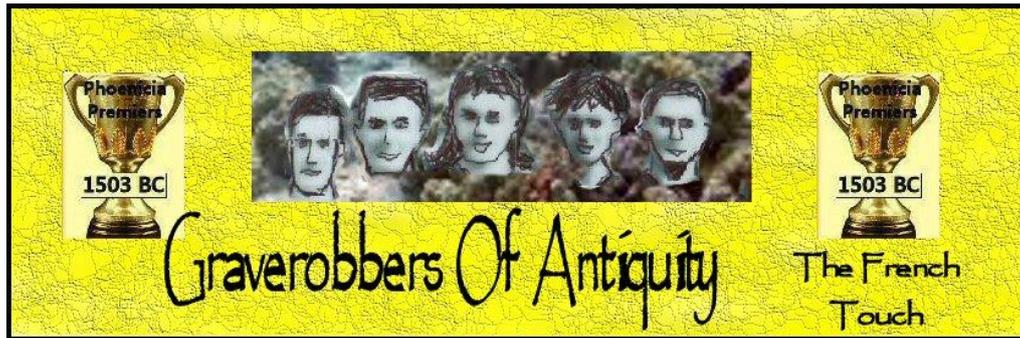
Curl                                        Well, actually, he should have been done for indecent exposure. So he's come out of it alright. They've only strung him up for a few days on the uttering charge. They cut yer dick off for flashing, but.

*Curl wanders off, with the others in tow, and Patto watches, scratching his head.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT II

HARRY'S EXPERIENCE continues into ACT III



## ACT III

Continuation of HARRY'S EXPERIENCE from ACT II

### III, Scene i: Visit To Pooter In Jail

*Carefully (trying not to be seen) Donger, Dingo, Feral and Bruan slip behind and over walls, along the edge of large imposing building and around to a rabbit warren of old equipment, junk and lumber.*

*Bruan is with them because this is Harry's dream after all. Our excuse for his presence will be that he is an amateur magician.*

*Then they creep up to a grill which is cemented firmly into the base of a wall. The four men squat near the grill. When Pooter the Wizard speaks, his voice echoes scratchily. We do not see him at all.*

Donger *loud whisper*      Hey, Pooter! Ya there mate?

Pooter *voice-off*          Who's that?

Donger                      It's Donger. I'm here with Feral and Dingo. And I've also brought along a mate of ours who's sort of in the same profession as your good self. Name of Bruan.

Pooter *voice-off*          G'day, boys. Day, Bruno.

Bruan                        Mr Pooter. Compliments of the day.

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Feral                                 Yeah, g'day, Pooter. How are they treating you?

Pooter *voice-off*                 Not too bad, mate. I'm getting jack of being strung up in chains, but apart from that, I'm cruising along.

Donger                                Hey, Pooter --

Pooter *voice-off*                 I haven't got any. I know what you've come after and I haven't got any.

Donger                                What's that?

Pooter *voice-off*                 Those orange smoke bombs I made for ya. I run out. Have to make some more when youse blokes spring me out of here.

Donger                                Listen, mate, it's a bit urgent. We really need something to ward off the baddies. We've got a big job on and we need something quick. We can't use dogs or monkeys or women. Has to be us blokes and we have to have some protection.

*[Small pause while Pooter thinks]*

                                          Ya still there, mate?

Pooter *voice-off*                 Yeah, yeah, yeah ...

                                          Where else could I be when I'm chained to a fuckin' stone wall.

                                          I was just thinkin' ... we can be a bit clever, here.

                                          Why don't youse go to my house and get some goo I made. I've been experimenting with it and it looks like a goer. No side effects.

Donger                                Sounds alright. You still living in the same place, are ya?

Pooter *voice-off*                 Still there, when I'm not incarcerated in this hole, that is.

                                          Get hold of the goo, it's a slimy paste, and make sure that you put it all over yourselves. Hair, arms, legs, back, stomach, neck, ears: everywhere.

Dingo                                 Ask him what colour it is. You don't want to get the wrong stuff.



Bruan *aside* This I have **got** to see!

*Feral appreciates this humorous burst from Bruan and smiles broadly. Donger is also amused.*

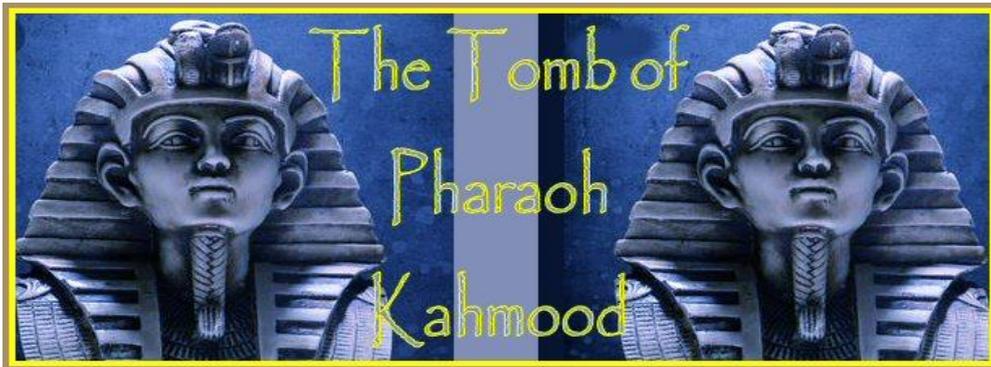
Donger *grinning* Righto. We'll get if for ya ...

Pooter *voice-off* Ta. And good luck.

END OF SCENE

### III, Scene ii: The Actual Robbery Of Pharaoh Kahmood's Tomb

*Well, apart from anything we did before, this scene is grand!*



**NOTE: This cave, raided by the GOAs, was to become Jealousy Phanton's greatest disappointment (that he found it empty in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century).**

*Start off with a scramble of "scenes": we want to fly through this because what comes next (when the large party moves down one level) is utterly brilliant. Unless stated, skat vocals only. Use facial expressions to convey meaning.*

- Arrival in the antechamber, the men loaded with rope nets, chains, ropes and tackle. They drop these with heavy sighs, grunts and stretches.
- Feral carries a wooden bucket filled with vivid lime-green goo.
- A huge number of people are present: Chips, Curl, Donger, Mullet, Dingo, Feral, Patto, Bruan, Phooey, Stewie, Basrani, Doxia.

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- The two girls go well away to put on their share of the goo (carried in a small basin).
- Except for Phooey (face and upper torso only), the men strip off (even Bruan under sufferance, it appears) right down to the nuddy (we don't need to be too personal here) and they liberally cover themselves in goo.
- Clothes back on: they all look weird, glowing.
- They move the rocks, uncover the hole, lower torches, secure the ropes, start getting everyone down, men help the girls (we'll hear someone say that the women had to come in case the antechamber was sprung by someone else).
- Phooey stands guard over the hole: he is well-armed.
- All the equipment is dropped down in the bottom cavern. This includes nets, ropes and torches.

*The crowd of people (minus Phooey) slide down into another superb crypt, but this time it is a genuine cave with very uneven rocky walls.*

*Lots of fun with the goods slipping out of everyone's grip because of the slime.*

*Stewie and Basrani are in heaven with the superb and telling hieroglyphics.*

*The men work quickly to fill the nets. Surprising to everyone, Bruan does his fair share without comment or complaint.*

*THEN THE GRAVE GODS, APPARITIONS, MUMMIES, GHOSTS, GHOULS, MONSTERS, DRAGONS, HAINTS, WRAITHS and so on START TO APPEAR.*

*Of particular interest is a huge and vicious lion-ghost, which is really scary.*

*Loads of great colourful CGI.*

*Music lifts and starts to sound menacing.*

*Ground rumbles. Eerie wisps of grey gas filter into the scene.*

*Phooey shouts down from his vantage point on the upper floor. His voice echoes.*

Phooey                      What's going on? Are youse okay?

Mullet *shouts up*                      Yeah, mate: the gods and ghouls are kicking in. This is where the

fun starts.

*With an almighty rush of poisonous gas, more gods and ghouls and so on pour into the chamber, trying to get at everyone. Great CGI and very exciting.*

*The two girls scream and cower, holding onto each other.*

*Stewie looks up, grinning in complete pleasure, enjoying every minute.*

*Bruan looks concern.*

*The other men (used to it) just keep on working, flicking away the gods and assorted ghoulies as if they were pesky flies. They start to work on getting goods and people up, away from the steadily rising poisoned air.*

*But the gods, with gleaming gold daggers cut the ropes up near the hole, wearing evil grins as they do so. Dingo falls from his rope into the poison and has to be rescued by the others, coughing and spluttering. One net full of goods crashes back onto the rocks.*

Dorothea *concern*            What is that awful smell? I don't think it can be safe for us to breathe ...

Chips *real alarm and panic*            It's not. We're being poisoned. We've been double-crossed.  
Hey! Those flamin' haints have cut the bloody ropes on us!

*Donger shouts out in desperation as he looks wildly about for another escape route.*

Donger                        We have to get out of here now!

*Amid the general terror, Donger shouts up to Phooey, whose lime-green, glowing face is hovering over the edge of the hole.*

Donger                        Phooey, throw down more ropes, mate!

*Phooey shouts down from above with his voice echoing.*

Phooey                        I haven't got any, you've got 'em all down there. Do you want me to go and get some more?

Patto No way ... we'll be dead in a few moments. How the fuck can we get out of here?

*The men stand about looking at each other, terror etched on their faces. Everyone is coughing. The grey poison steadily rises.*

Mullet *angry* This green slime is supposed to protect us --

Donger *shouting* From the curses, yes! But they've got smart, these bastards. We weren't prepared for poison, were we?

Feral Wish I'd known. I'd have brought me extendable ladder that Ding made for me ...

Mullet Shit a brick! I wish Stiffy was here. He'd know how to knock together a ladder.

**Donger has his brainwave.**

Donger *sudden* Human Tower! The Human Tower might get that high!

*brainwave*

Quick boys! Chips! Come on, mate ... get under the hole. Curl can get himself up high enough for Phooey to pull him through. And he'll carry some ropes.

*Donger shouts up to Phooey, whose lime-green, glowing face is hovering over the edge of the hole.*

Donger Phooey! Mate! We're coming up to you, so brace yourself!

*Donger points urgently towards Curl.*

Donger Curl, you'll carry as many ropes as you can manage up to Phooey. He'll drag you out and up. Then the two of youse can get all of us and the nets out.

Dingo Hurry up ... this is killing us!

Revisit the HUMAN TOWER.

*Exactly as before in Roland's dream: the Human Tower will form. The lowest level will be Chips, and on his shoulders will be Donger, then Feral, then Curl. Chips stands braced under the hole. Patto remembers the ropes and starts handing ropes and rope ends (those attached to the nets) to each man, with the most going to Curl.*

Patto                                      Ropes! Take the ropes up with yer.

Chips                                        Good idea, mate.

*Donger holds Chips' hands then nimbly and very quickly steps up onto Chips' shoulders.*

Chips                                        Hup!

*Feral climbs with athletic ease up onto Chips' legs, then Donger gives him a hand up onto his own shoulders.*

Donger                                      Hup!

*Curl stands frozen.*

Feral                                        Come on, Curl. Up here on me shoulders, mate. You can do it.

Everyone else                              Come on mate!

We'll be dead in a couple of ticks if ya don't move.

It's easy, you can do it.

Curl ... come on!

*Curl stands frozen. Curl looks up at Feral and at Phooey's limegreen head sticking through the hole. He is still frozen, despite everyone urging him on. All they need is for one more person to mount the tower such that Phooey can grab them and haul them up, with attendant ropes.*

Basrani *desperate*                        Curl! Curl! We need you more than ever, now. It's time for you to be a hero.

*Curl stares at Basrani unseeing, dry lips apart. Basrani touches the ropes which lie over his shoulder. She starts coughing again.*

Basrani *begging*

Please!

Basrani saves them!

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

Feral *delighted*

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

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

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

Feral *shouting*

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

*When Phooey successfully drags Basrani through the hole and then starts lowering ropes for the other men, Feral follows first, as Phooey will need some extra muscle to help take the strain on the ropes. Donger jumps down athletically from Chips' shoulders. Phooey and Feral lower the ropes, bracing themselves while Basrani ties the ends securely to rocks.*

*Everyone is coughing badly. Those in the higher chamber get Doxia and Stewie out after Feral, then everyone else follows, except Chips and Patto who ensure that the nets of goods get away okay. Coughing and having difficulty breathing, they are finally lifted free just as the torches burn out, setting the cave back into darkness.*

The HUMAN TOWER proved a resounding success.

*In the higher chamber, still coughing and spluttering, there is laughter and groaning. This is a huge and heavy haul, so every man is braced and straining. All they have to do now is to drag up the nets.*

*As they heave, Patto turns on Curl, who is very ashamed and self-conscious.*

Patto *utterly scathing and derisive* So, you let a little girl like that do your job for ya, did ya? She might've fallen!

Chips Nets up! We can just about retire after this one. Heave! Heave!

*The men now strain to drag the nets up. It is back to business after the great scare.*

*The men haul up the nets, which are filled with sumptuous grave-goods. They almost lie on the ground as they heave on the ropes. Chips yells constantly.*

Chips *almost out of breath* Heave, men! Heave! Heave! Heave!

*It is over. The heavily-laden nets flop onto the floor of the upper level. The men suck in the big breaths, and loll about. There is coughing and small laughs of relief.*

Bruan Is anyone able to explain to me why the grave-ghosts did not just keep cutting our ropes? Even after our gracious Queen had reached Phooey?

*No-one seems to know. Patto leans down on his knees, gasping for breath.*

Patto My educated guess is that they weren't prepared for the bravery of a mere woman. Did you notice how they faded away when Her Majesty reached Phooey? It was all about shame in the face of such selfless heroism.

*Curl looks uncomfortable. There is general agreement that Patto has it right.*

Bruan *majestic* That must be the truth of it!  
Queen Basrani's noble deed will be recorded for all time in the annals of Nubia. When we return to our country with our share of this raid, I shall sacrifice 12 virgins on the altar as a glorious celebration.

Dingo *appalled* Strewth! Bit of a waste. Nice to have 12 virgins at the ready.

Mullet If it was Phoenicia, he'd be lucky to find **one**, let alone 12.

*Feral speaks aside to Phooey, although his eyes are focused on Bruan.*





the wharves?

Dani                                   A strong liqueur will sort you out, *mon ami*. Sort us both out!  
Come on!

*Harry looks around, and spots 2 bellboys who bear an uncanny resemblance to Phooey and Stewie. He takes a couple of steps in their direction, his face lit with instant recognition.*

Harry *awestruck*                   Phooey? Stewie? Well, I call this a bit of an odd coincidence, don't  
you?

*The bellboys seem to be unable to comprehend. The bigger one begins to ask polite questions in Egyptian. Harry looks confused, then makes a dismissive gesture, turning to re-join Dani.*

*As Harry and Dani stroll off, switch camera immediately to point inside a telephone booth at the back of the foyer. We won't be able to hear Mimette's answer, so we'll have to improvise that. Miles stands patiently outside the booth.*

Theressa *listening*               Ah Mimette! I've the greatest favour to ask of you, dear. We're at  
*intently*                               sixes and sevens.

Now listen. It's all very confusing, but I need you to come immediately to Cairo. I need you to act as the duenna to a young English lady here. No maid of her own and in a house full of men. Not good form at all. Can't speak a word of Egyptian, naturally, so a local lass would be next-door to useless. Poor thing!

Now, when you were in your last position at Palace D'Accord, were you required to hold a valid passport?

Ah, good! I had hoped that would be the case. Well, that simplifies things considerably.

It should of course be my personal maid, but poor old Marthe is quite terrified of flying about among the clouds, and anyway, she doesn't have anything even remotely like a passport. Which means that you've drawn the short straw.

Pack absolutely everything, Mimette. You may be here for weeks.

I'll telephone to you again once Miles has organized your flight details. He'll do that now.

Good show! I'm ringing off now but stay close to the telephone.

*Theressa gives a brief smile as she hangs up the phone. She steps out of the booth, smiles at Miles and nods. He steps into the booth and begins his call.*

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene iv:** Cairo, The Terrace (Garden Lounge), Great Britain Hotel 1933

*Roland is joined by Dani and Harry and then by Miles and Theressa. Miles imperiously summons a waiter as they sit.*

Theressa                      Right! Now out with it. What has happened? Start from the beginning, do!

Dani                              You'll have to listen with both ears, *ma belle-soeur*. It's all a bit complicated, as you may imagine. Roland?

Roland                         *Oui*. I was the first, by grace of the Turkish *narguileh*.

Harry                            And then myself. A small sip of a tonic designed to induce sleep.

Theressa *hopefully*            Dreams?

*Harry nods slowly, eyes downcast. Theressa tenses thrillingly. Miles looks measuringly from one man to the other.*

Miles                            Mahala strikes again, I take it?

*Roland, face set, also nods slowly.*

Theressa *gasps*                But ... she's dead, isn't she? Surely it can't be possible.

Roland                         Something inexplicable urged me to return here, to Cairo. And to



...

*There is a lull while everyone takes this in, sipping the drinks provided by the waiter, smoking, or looking about.*

Dani                                So, your plan is to station that so beautiful maid with Miss Dorothea, is it? Out there at that strange house on the edge of the desert? The one that belonged to that lady who is now dead?

Theressa *dreamily*                Mahala the Mystical.

Miles                                *Oui*, that's the current plan.

Roland                              There's no risk that either of those ladies is destined to go off to Ancient Byblos is there?

Theressa *apprehensive*        Good grief! Is there any chance of that?

Harry                                I discussed with Miss Lanier the danger of taking anything from any of the cupboards. No drinks, no medicines: nothing.

Miles                                So you must then believe that she is supposed to dream as well?

Harry                                We haven't mentioned anything regarding visions or dreams in front of Miss Lanier, Sir. I informed the staff that they were to act as food-tasters. Nothing suspect is to be administered to her.

Dani                                 And the servants can be trusted?

Roland                              I think not. Why, they slipped Theressa a spiked juice, *n'est-ce pas*, which started off this whole affair.

Theressa                            No ... you're mistaken, Roland. The villainesses of that time may have been the maids allotted to me at the Oak Nut Hotel. Or else that ghastly Doctor Lilliban. Don't you remember?

Miles                                It is of no moment. Let us hope that Miss Lanier (a clever, sensible woman, it would appear) will be quite safe until the maid arrives to be her little guardian.

Dani                                 And there's another matter. I don't even understand how your

serving-girl *is* a servant. Why, it is obvious immediately upon speaking to her that she was born higher than that.

Theressa Yes ... I was wondering about that, too. And have you heard her sing? She possesses a most perfect coloratura.

Harry What a waste! I hate seeing real talent lie hidden.

Theressa Funnily enough, her wages seem to be devoted to her singing lessons. Our ancient Doctor Leeumtraup, the village music master, is training Mimette. I've heard nothing but glowing reports.

Dani She is enough good-looking to take on any operatic role. I'm already more than half in love with her.

Miles Shouldn't you recall your social standing, my dear brother? It's bad enough, *mon Dieu*, that you disport yourself as an actor.

Dani Hah! To you, she is just "the maid". But to me, she is my queen.

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene v: Cairo, 1933 A Room at Mahala's**

*Music: very muted, interesting.*

*A great effort has been made to tidy up the house. Dorothea sits under a ceiling fan in a cool, dimly-lit room. It is daytime, but the blinds have been closed to keep out the heat. A couple of Egyptian females sit in the room, out of the way, whispering to each other. Dorothea is trying to interest herself in a French magazine.*

*The tea-tray has been brought in. Abul supervises.*

Abul My instructions were to have all the food and drink tasted before it was served to you.

Dorothea I've no idea why. Who on Earth would bother to poison me? Or did my mother have some secret life of which I'm as yet unaware?

Abul *sternly* Your mother's secrets have gone with her to the grave, Madame.

Dorothea Oh, yes ... Of course ... But then ... Captain Ferrier passed out for some reason ... and then Mr Polglaze ...

But I'm sure you're right. I'd better be careful.

*Abul bows. He leaves the room, glancing at the two Egyptian females, who are obviously in awe of him.*

*Dorothea relaxes into the couch, sipping tea. She idly rearranges the cushions beside her. The music picks up the pace: eerie, "something-is-about-to-happen".*

*Replacing her teacup in the saucer, she looks concerned. In moving the cushions, she has uncovered a white linen handkerchief, lace-edged, bearing the embroidered "M" of her mother. In its folds lie a small phial of perfume. Dorothea turns the phial about in her fingers. She looks across at the 2 young Egyptian women who stare at the phial. The music builds. Dorothea opens the phial and sniffs it.*

*Music now dramatic. The two females rush to the couch, chittering away anxiously in Egyptian. "The poor lady! What can have happened?"*

*Dorothea has passed out. The music follows into Dorothea's dream.*

END OF SCENE

Start of DOROTHEA'S EXPERIENCE

### **III, Scene vi:** Feral's Bungalow: Mandro's Head (Feral's Joke On Dingo)

*Recapitulation:*

*We need to cast our minds back to the rescue of the three Nubian men from the torture chamber. Recall that Dingo kicked Mandro's head after Feral beheaded Mandro. Then Feral,*

*unseen by the others, fortuitously caught the head. "Ugh!" He bagged it and had it with him, even while raiding the woman's quarters.*

*Queen Basrani and her attendants (Doxia and Bruan) now wear rich, expensive silks and stunning gold jewellery (compliments of our Phoenician boys).*

*Basrani reaches out to Doxia, with forearm upturned. Doxia smiles, and rescues a small phial of perfume from her goody-bag. Doxia smears a very small amount on the undersides of both forearms (Basrani's). Basrani smiles, and thus Doxia repeats this on herself. Basrani sniffs the perfume and breathes in rapturously.*

*Bruan steps forward, bowing majestically.*

Bruan                                These people seem to think that you are some kind of dinner guest. They do not comprehend that it is unfitting for you to dine in their company.

Basrani                                Minister, I cannot offend my rescuers, be assured of that.

*[Looks about, not best pleased]*

This home of Feral is not what one is used to, of course. But as an anointed Queen, I must defy my personal tastes.

Doxia                                    It really is very kind of these people to guard us.

Dingo *voice-off, yelling*        Dinner's up! Come and get it! Chow time, everybody!  
*at the top of his voice*

*Bruan closes his eyes and groans, as if this is the lowest moment of his life. Basrani gives her companion a roguish look.*

Basrani                                Oh dear ... my poor stomach ...

*Trying to make the best of it; Doxia links her arm through Basrani's.*

Doxia                                    It can't possibly be any worse than the pond scum we ate last night. Surely?

*With Bruan marching in stately manner behind them, the ladies walk, arm-in-arm, towards a long table, set for dinner. Mullet sits beside Stewie, blankly watching Stewie sketching a complicated*







Phooey *winks* Nah, mate. Not sophisticated enough for 'im.

*Phooey spits meditatively, then wanders off to sit down on some nearby rocks, chuckling, leaving Feral with gaping mouth.*

*Meanwhile, Mullet approaches Doxia, extending his hand. Doxia blinks up into the blinding sunlight behind him; then, smiling she takes his hand. Mullet pulls her out of the pool such that she stands by his side.*

Doxia *shyly* We ... that is, Her Majesty's party must return to Nubia with our new-found wealth.

Mullet I'll escort yuz.

Doxia *smiling up alluringly* That's very kind of you.

Mullet *evenly* No worries.

*They stand together, looking lovingly at each other, still holding hands.*

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene viii: Mullet And Doxia Make Love**

*Music: Smooth, romantic*

*The moonlight streams into a very private part of Feral's house. There is pallet bed on the floor. The camera discovers Doxia and Mullet naked, making love. This is the most beautiful, tender moment. When they kiss, there is a long, superb clinch. Mullet moves up and down, and the passion is intense. The music grinds to a sudden halt.*

*Snap! Feral blunders onto this spot, with flaming torch in hand.*

Feral *oblivious* Hey! Have any of youse seen my Minoan fishing gaff?

*Laughing slightly, Mullet buries his head in Doxia's neck.*

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Feral *worried* I thought it was with the fishing tackle, but it's not. Where is it?

*Feral ferrets around in a small cupboard, watched by Doxia. Mullet has rolled onto his back and shut his eyes.*

Feral Might be in here.

Nuh ... dunno where it is. Phooey wants to try some moonlight fishing. Nothin' else to do is there?

*Feral strides off.*

*Doxia laughs as quietly as she can, but Mullet looks thoroughly pissed off.*

Mullet *shouts, angry* ***Fuck off, Feral!***

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene ix: Byblos, On The "Road", Full Moon at night**

*The overriding noise is of men all about the district whistling in a variety of ways.*

*Our boys (not including Patto) are outside at night on what passes for a road, whistling and laughing.*

*A full moon can be seen in the sky hovering over the water. The boys have been looking up at the moon as they whistle.*

*Then they stop, listening intently. Another chap (older, more relaxed) is seen to be leaning against a wall, whistling melodically. The boys look disgruntled.*

Dingo *yelling* Hey Woofer! Tone it down will ya? Yer making us look ordinary.

*Woofer ignores the abuse and continues to whistle mellifluously. Feral kicks at a stone, just as Stewie and Phooey wander up. Our boys continue the whistling, joined by Phooey (who uses his hands as part of a bird whistle). Stewie merely looks about placidly.*

Feral *evenly to Stewie* You wanna know what's with the whistling, doncha?

Stewie *know-it-all* Full moon plus men whistling is a guarantee of fertility.

Feral *smiles broadly* Yeah! Good on ya, mate! Is there anything ya **don't** know?

Dingo *challenging* What about howling then? What do we use **that** for?

Stewie No idea at all. I wonder if it's a means of making friends with the local dog pack.

*All the men laugh heartily at that.*

Phooey No, Stewie, we save "howling" for a thunderstorm.

*Mullet and Phooey give each other a high five.*

Dingo *challenging* Yeah, but what's it in aid of?

Phooey *grinning* Same thing. Fertility. Just about everything we do for the gods that isn't tied-up with feeding the peeps is geared to making sure that us blokes can get big hard-ons.

Mullet *staccato* And - long - may - that - con-tin-ue, mate!

*All the men, laughing and whistling, shake hands with each other. There is also much back-slapping. The whistling is interrupted by laughter and coughing. We revisit the older guy, who unperturbed is merrily whistling away as the full moon hangs over Byblos.*

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene x:** At the Dockside, Byblos. [SnackBloke and The Boat To Nubia]

*There is a wrestling match going on in the background. The spectators have their backs to the camera. Right in front of the camera, Mullet and Doxia are smooching, with eyes only for each other. In the background, rising above the noisy crowd of spectators, a male torso appears, seeming to leap/jump onto another man, as in professional wrestling. When this happens, the crowd cheers wildly.*

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Feral *looking lost*

But ...

Dingo

How come you were able to organize our getaway with SnackBloke if you can't understand him?

Feral *pleased*

Aw, that was easy. I just drew pitchas in the dirt.

*Stewie has been standing in front of Dingo. Stewie turns.*

Stewie *patiently*

He said that Nubia is at war with Egypt as it is believed that Queen Basrani has been executed by our erstwhile acquaintance, Mandro. Her cousin Qlin has taken the crown in her stead. So we'd better shake our shambles and get her home so that she can reclaim her throne.

Dingo

War ... that means weapons and armour, fighting, glory --

*SnackBloke (smiling broadly) nods eagerly.*

Feral *working up*

Hearts aflame, shoulder-to-shoulder, friend versus foe, a distant light shining on the valley of blood, the iron (oops! I mean "bronze") bowels of --

*Feral takes off at speed.*

Stewie *to Dingo*

Where was he going with that warrior spiel?

*Dingo grins, shaking his head, and glances sidelong at Feral.*

Dingo

Ah, he's harmless. My guess is that he's got himself so excited that he'll run barefoot across hot coals given half the chance.

Stewie *reasonably*

And with burned feet he won't be able to take part in the battles. Pity, that. He should stick to the Haka, or something like that.

*Dingo says nothing; and Stewie wanders off. Dingo watches the wrestling for a moment then shakes his head again.*

Dingo *to himself*

Feral on his own doing a Haka? I just don't wanna think about that.

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene xi:** Twilight, The Boat to Egypt

*Music: grand, heroic.*

*This is a very heroic scene. In the twilight, Captain Patto stands four-square on the bow of the small boat as it ploughs through the churning Mediterranean waves. He has one foot up on a crate. He is square-jawed, fully armed for war, and stares towards the approaching coastline. The breeze ruffles his hair. He is every inch a magnificent, classic hero.*

*Near Patto, Basrani stands quietly, also looking out to sea. She is beautiful, dressed in the finest Phoenician silks which ruffle in the breeze. Her face wears a serene, relaxed expression. Not far away sits Doxia, busy with knotting cords in the manner of repairing nets.*

*The camera moves past these three, into the guts of the boat. Here, we find Bruan and the rest of the men in a heated discussion. They talk over each other and argue vociferously. We will keep this argument going (albeit in another part of the boat) whilst Patto indulges in remembrances.*

Bruan                                My forces can't beat the Egyptians.

Stewie                                Technically, they're our Queen's forces: not yours.

Phooey *passionate*                With this swag of gold under our wings, we **can** flog the Jippoes.

Bruan                                We are talking about an organized, methodical military unit which will sweep across our precious land and --

Dingo *bored*                            Who cares what the Egyptians do, anyhow? We can beat anybody, no matter how orgie-ized they are. No worries.

Feral *nodding*                        Yeah! We've taken out Minoan Pirates, Sea People, West Assyr --

Dingo                                What's the bandages on yer feet for, eh? Did you burn 'em, did ya? Ya stupid rabbit! Will you be able to fight?

Feral                                Yeah. I got a tin of salve. Works a treat. It's called "Goanna Oil

Paste".

*Queen Basrani walks over to the heated discussion and calmly brings everyone back to reality with a few quietly spoken words. They all bow to her and disperse, except for Dingo, who watches Patto, still at the bow of the boat, staring doggedly out to sea.*

*Scratching his head, Dingo wanders over to stand beside Patto.*

Dingo *carefully*                      What's the go between you and Queenie, mate? You reckon she's a bitch ... but she's not really. There's some sort of history between youse two, isn't there?

*Patto's jaw stiffens. Eventually, he speaks, without changing his gaze out to sea.*

Patto                                      Yep.

*Dingo waits for a bit, then grins.*

Dingo *quietly*                      Are ya gonna tell me?

*For the entirety of this flashback, Patto will voice-over, pausing where applicable such that the described scenes have time to evolve. So this is more a medley of scenes rather than a specific set piece. Occasionally, Dingo will put in a comment.*

### ***Scene: panoramic view of the Nile valley, south towards Nubia.***

Patto *voice-over*                      I'll have to rake-up a whole lot of old memories. I could spin you a yarn, I s'pose, but for you, Ding, I'll tell the exact truth.

### ***Scene: pitched battle, highlighting Patto fighting manfully.***

Patto *voice-over*                      The wars between Nubia and Egypt would never end. The Egyptians wanted the Nubian gold and the Nubians traded that commodity for Egyptian grain. The usual bartering setup.

### ***Scene: flashback to the five Nubians bowing before Jethpa.***

Patto *voice-over*                      Delegations of Nubian kings and queens gave homage to the Pharaohs. They were seen as tributaries; the lesser district of the

Black Land.

***Scene: pitched battle, highlighting Patto fighting manfully.***

Patto *voice-over* I fought for the Nubians. You see, I was in the special position of being a first-born son who (as a baby) had been spared Baal's wrath. Being younger, and full of my own importance, I believed that I was on a divine mission to bring Egypt to heel. And I fought many battles, as a fearless military leader. Conceited, self-important and indestructible: that was me!

***Continued Scene: pitched battle, highlighting Patto fighting manfully.***

Dingo *voice-over* Yeah, Stiffy mentioned that you were a first-born son. Must be scary ...

***Scene: Basrani awarding medals at a huge regal feast, where the captains flank Basrani, Doxia and Bruan (Phooey and Stewie).***

Patto *voice-over* Queen Basrani gave us captains gold medals. There was a special ceremony and a grand dinner. We (the captains) sat at the high table, gorging ourselves on the best food and the best wine. We were feted by all the dignitaries.

***Scene: Patto at the feast, looking blackly at the sight of Basrani dancing in a set step dance with the other captains.***

Patto *voice-over* But not me. Not by her. Not Basrani. She danced with this bloke, and chatted with that bloke, but she never came near me. I'd risked my life for her, and she just walked past me with her nose in the air. Just a cold, nasty bitch: that's what she is.

***Scene: Patto and Basrani face-to-face, with the man towering over the girl. She looks up at his mulish expression: she seems confused and uncertain.***

Patto *voice-over* Anyway, later, I had a go at her about it, and Bruan jumped in

and started to put the heavy on me.

***Scene: Close-up of Bruan as he watches Patto tackle Basrani.***

Dingo *voice-over* Bruan? Funny, I got the impression he liked you.

***Scene: Bruan's guards hurl Patto into a filthy, dark jail cell.***

Patto *voice-over* Yeah, well he was acting under orders, wasn't he? The upshot was that I ended up in the clink. I was imprisoned for threatening the life of Queen Basrani. And she never took a step to save me. I, the most loyal and brave captain of the Nubian armed forces was thrown into jail with a death sentence over my head, just for asking the Queen a few questions.

***Scene: Patto staggers up into crawling position, chest heaving.***

Dingo *voice-over* Shit! So ... what happened? How'd you survive that?

***Scene: Patto crouches as he scurries down a dark, narrow chute, which serves as his escape route.***

Patto *voice-over* I escaped.

***Continued Scene: Patto crouches as he scurries down a dark, narrow chute.***

Dingo *voice-over* Maybe Basrani organized it so that you could get out of jail?

***Scene: out of the narrow passageway, Patto flattens himself against a stone wall, at night.***

Patto *voice-over* No possible way! She wanted me dead and out of the way.

***Scene: Patto escapes into the darkness.***

Dingo *voice-over* But why?

***Scene: Close-up of Basrani's face, worried and concerned.***

Patto *voice-over* Who knows ... Maybe she just can't stand Phoenicians.

END OF FLASHBACKS

*The flashbacks have stopped. Patto finally turns towards Dingo, his face etched in sorrow. Just then, from somewhere else in the boat, Basrani begins to sing softly. She has a divinely lovely voice. Patto turns in the direction of the singing.*

Patto *wealth of emotion*                      And you know what? It doesn't make it any easier being forced to bring her here and take her there, and rescue her from all these crappo situations ... My guts feel like they've been whacked with a cricket bat.

Dingo                                      What's that? What's a cricket bat?

*Patto gives a wry smile, and pats Dingo on the shoulder. As he leaves, he mutters.*

Patto                                      Don't worry about it, mate.

END OF SCENE

END of DOROTHEA'S EXPERIENCE

### **III, Scene xii:** Cairo, 1933 A Room at Mahala's

*Dorothea wakes with a violent start, gasping for breath. She jumps to her feet, her hand over her mouth. She has to steady herself against some piece of furniture.*

Dorothea *aghast*                      But she loves you, Patto! Just as Mullet loves me!

*Trying to regain her balance (both physical and mental), Dorothea staggers to the moonlit window. We can see tears streaming down her face.*

Dorothea *crying*                      Oh, what on Earth has happened to me? I cannot ever be myself again after that ... My world is all upside-down.

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*All of a sudden, the Egyptian maids appear, and fuss over her, chattering all the time in Egyptian (which she can't understand).*

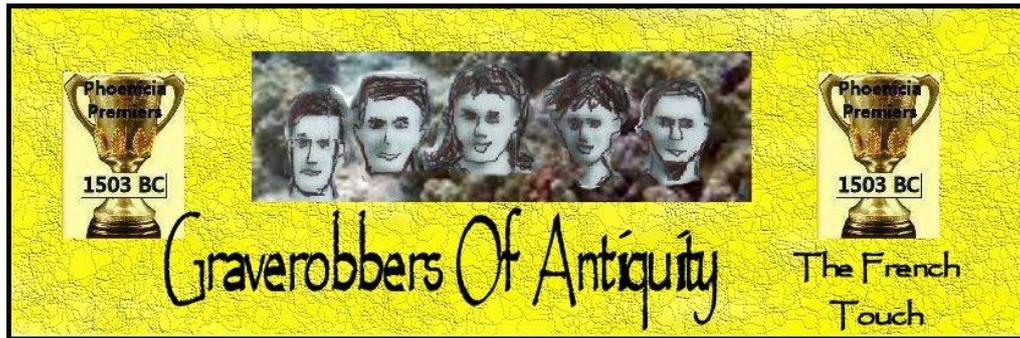
*Dorothea sobs in earnest, as the two young women escort her, presumably to her bed.*

END OF SCENE, END OF ACT III

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## ACT IV

### IV, Scene i: Marseilles, 1933 Shooting The Gangster Movie

*Music: befitting a violent gangster movie, with a French flavour.*

*Here follows a collation/melange of quick scenes.*

*There is minimal dialogue, and when there is, it is in French.*

- *Some of these scenes show Harry and LeBarron amicably discussing plot changes (visual only). LeBarron pats Harry on the shoulder, indicating that the story is swimming along nicely, in his opinion.*
- *The three toughs (PV, Leo and Chapeau-Haut) burst into a room and shoot up many men with Thompson machine guns.*
- *Dani (as Max), with cigarette butt clenched between the corners of his lips, grabs hold of a man's lapels, and slaps his face back and forth. Close-up of his face: he is a mean, masculine dude now as opposed to the powder-puff we saw in the opening scenes of ACT I.*
- *A vintage car slews about the streets of Marseilles, as the driver and his passenger fight for the steering wheel.*

*In very slow motion, an irreplaceable Egyptian relic is knocked to the marble floor, smashing into 100s of pieces, as two men scuffle in an ornate hotel corridor.*

Topper is still a ruthless killer even though he is playing the part of Chicago

gangster Chapeau-haut. This scene expands on Topper's character as well as providing some entertainment.

*Topper/Chapeau-haut is very chatty (as is Topper's custom). Although he speaks with a Chicago accent it is clear that Topper (in his role as Chapeau-haut) is very much the ruthless killer. He speaks directly into the camera, as he pulls a knuckle-duster onto his fingers. Throughout, we will not see his victim (Doulan) but we shall hear him groan and mutter incoherently through a glob of blood in his mouth.*

Topper/Chapeau-haut    You must realize how I hate to do this. My boss has been training me. "Too soft", he calls me. I ain't naturally bad; just been led astray by stronger minds.

*Topper/Chapeau-haut presses his lips together, and viciously punches "the camera" with the knuckleduster.*

Topper/Chapeau-haut    I gotta learn to do this with real conviction. My boss will just have to keep training me, I guess.

*Again, Topper/Chapeau-haut viciously punches "the camera" with the knuckleduster, a look on his face of great determination.*

Topper/Chapeau-haut    Tsk, tsk. And here I am forgetting to ask you (before you slip into unconsciousness) ... where have you hid the money, Doulan?

*Again, Topper/Chapeau-haut viciously punches "the camera" with the knuckleduster.*

Topper/Chapeau-haut    Oops, there I go again, being too "soft" on ya. Maybe you'll tell me where the money can be found? Go easy on yourself, Doulan, before I learn to do this properly.

Huh? What's that?

*Topper/Chapeau-haut leans right up to the camera, turning his ear to it, as if listening.*

Topper/Chapeau-haut    You saying something, Doulan? Where did you say the money can

be found?

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene ii: Sir Percy And The Proposed Proposal Cairo 1933**

*Theressa, Roland and Miles are strolling back from somewhere or other.*

*The street is chock-a-block with trams, vehicles of all descriptions, horse-and-carts and soon. People of all nationalities mill about. Our little party weaves through the crowd. A small group of Egyptians yell at a European in safari outfit and pith helmet, who has been trying to drive at snail's pace along a side alley. There is also tooting from a couple of cars and a truck. Idly, Miles and Roland look at the car. The driver (Sir Percy) who now has the bonnet open and is poking about with his riding crop, is completely oblivious to the abuse. He looks at Miles and Roland. A monocle is screwed into one squinty eye.*

*The hubbub continues as Sir Percy, Miles, Theressa and Roland converse.*

Sir Percy *exhausted,*        I say, you chaps! Couldn't lend a bit of assistance here, could you?  
*short of breath*            One's motorcar seems to have, for want of a better description,  
                                      become dysfunctional.

*Miles and Roland unthinkingly grab each other's arms. Sir Percy is Squizzy to the life.*

*[Recall that Theressa did not see Squizzy in her vision. However Roland met him during the triple-booking for the Cheofes robbery and Miles saw Squizzy in the African mask, Biblos.]*

Roland *harsh whisper*     Squizzay ... My God, this is the Hittite, Squizzay ...

*Miles recovers first.*

Miles                         You mean, Monsieur that your vehicle does not go. Is that it?

Sir Percy                     I say ... good show. Got it in one!

*[Becomes dubious]*

You chaps aren't Eyetalians, are you?

Roland *almost  
offended*

No Monsieur, we are French. Allow me to introduce you to the members of my party. This is Madame Renault.

Theressa

How do you do?

Roland

And this is Miles Renault, her husband, lately a Captain in the Army.

Miles

A true pleasure to make your acquaintance, Monsieur.

Roland

And I myself am called Captain Roland Ferrier.

I sincerely hope that we may be of service to you and enable you to drive your motor without further difficulty.

Sir Percy

Eh? That's dashed good of you, I must say. French, did ye say?

*[Sighs gustily]*

Forgive and forget, I always say. Can't help it if our two nations have been at each other's throats for eight centuries, can we?

Theressa

But, sir, I am an Englishwoman, born and bred. I find that the historical animosity between Great Britain and France now resides only in History books.

Sir Percy *bows  
magnanimously*

Well put, Madame, well put!

Now, my name is Sir Percival Brindle. Left me ruddy chauffeur back in the Motherland, dash it all. Came away in a bit of a rush, don't ye know.

*Miles and Roland have edged towards the car and have begun to investigate. They both remove their jackets and hand these to Theressa to hold.*

Theressa *amused*

You came *ventre á terre* then, sir?

Sir Percy *squints at her*

Just so, dear Madame Renny, just so.

Roland                   The automobile has run out of petrol. I'll recover your jerrycan without delay and have a local *garçon* fetch enough juice to get you started.

*Roland performs this exercise efficiently and without ceremony. Miles rescues his jacket and puts it on again. Meanwhile, Sir Percy blathers on.*

Sir Percy               Well, dashed if that's not the most Christian act I've ever come across. Awfully decent of you. Dashed if it isn't.

*Sir Percy dabs at his face with his handkerchief.*

Sir Percy *puffing heavily*               Don't know the first thing about motors ... It's this bally Egyptian sun, Lady Renoir. I feel the heat dreadfully.

Theressa               Would you care to accompany us to our hotel? You could enjoy some refreshment under a ceiling fan in the most pleasant surroundings on offer in Cairo. Miles, we'll go. The heat is too much for Sir Percy. He needs to be seated in the shade. Come along, sir, and you'll feel much more comfortable.

*Theressa takes Sir Percy's arm and they head off, with Sir Percy rocking from side to side as he totters along*

Miles                   Roland, we will take Sir Percy back to the hotel with us. He's done in for the day, poor fellow.

Roland               Miles, just tell to me this, would you? How do these people know how to get out of bed in the morning? Do you know that answer, my good friend?

No more sense than a new-born, that one.

And how is he Squizzy? Miles, I nearly fainted when I saw his face.

Miles               Theressa in her episode did not see Squizzy, I think, Martin did not see him either. But only you and I did.

Roland               He was not well-liked, as I recall ... Oh, where is that boy with the

petrol ... ?

*Later, in the delightful and cool garden/terrace, we find Miles, Theresa and Sir Percy taking non-alcoholic refreshment in elegance and style. Sir Percy fans himself with his hanky.*

Theressa Do you visit Egypt for the antiquities, Sir Percival?

Sir Percy Can't stand 'em! I mean, blobs of carved rocks strewn across the desert ... what's the point, eh?

*Sir Percy laughs gustily, causing him to cough again.*

*Roland approaches the table, in time to overhear (Sir Percy is loud) the following. He does not sit down, but merely grabs the top of his chair, arrested by Sir Percy's words.*

Sir Percy No, I'm here in the Middle East (with all its heat and flies and wogs) to find me fiancée.

Lovely filly, she is. But run off to a deathbed scene. Pretty grim, I'd have thought. But, it's not all bad, as it turns out.

She's inherited a thatched cottage and a few goats out of it. Or so I understand.

Must make a push to find her. All the gallants will be queuing up to vie for her regard. I need to secure her affections before some other chappie nips in ahead of me.

Theressa How interesting ...

*Roland is thunderstruck. He grips the top of the chair.*

Roland Ah ... excuse me, please. My friends ... Sir Percival ... I remember that I ... Your automobile awaits you outside, but ... I have to keep an engagement.

*[Bows stiffly]*

Pray excuse --

*Roland turns on his heel and strides out of the hotel, leaving the others open-mouthed at his babbled words and sudden departure. Once outside, he looks anxiously about.*

Roland *to himself*           Where did they go? To the bazaar for lace, was it? What on earth do women want with lace?

*Roland hares off, in the direction of the bazaar.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene iii: Roland's Proposal In The Souk Cairo 1933.**

*There are crowds of people, led animals, stalls, pushy stall-keepers and a riot of goods in all imaginable colours.*

*Roland tears off into the bazaar where (after some frenetic searching) he finds Dorothea and Mimette. Roland silently asks Mimette to allow him a few private moments with Dorothea. Even so, it is hardly private, with all these people milling about. Mimette backs away to look closely at the goods at another stall.*

Roland *working hard to overcome his nerves*   Please tell me, Miss Lanier (and on your answer hangs more than mere words): are you engaged? Are you not affianced to a Sir Percival from England?

Dorothea *surprised*           Brindly-Bee? Oh, him, he's just a sociable insect who plays bridge with Maman. That is, with my step-mother. He's quite a toot, really, but hardly marital material.

Roland *reminding her*       He bears a heraldic title.

Dorothea                       Which emanates from industry ... none of which saw him ever soiling his dainty hands, thank you very much.

*[Chuckles]*

No, his father and elder brother do all the work, besides --

Roland                         Then – Mademoiselle Lanier ...

*Roland goes down on bended knee, much to the delight of the Egyptian women and children in his vicinity.*

Roland Will you do me the honour of becoming my wife? May I claim this little hand, Mademoiselle?

Dorothea *aghast* Get up! You're kneeling in all the dirt! You'll soil your uniform. For goodness sake!

Roland *earnestly* *Je vous adore.*

Dorothea Captain Ferrier!

Roland *very determined and deliberate* Say "yes" Dorothea or my heart breaks. I promise you that.

Dorothea *shy, blushing* Alright, then. Yes, of course I'll marry you. But get up, do!

*Dorothea gestures to Roland, indicating that he should quickly leap to his feet.*

*Blissfully happy, overjoyed, Ferrier rises quickly (as instructed) holding Dorothea's hands firmly in his.*

Roland Does this earn a kiss on the cheek? On the hands? On the lips?

Dorothea *whispers shakily* Not in the main street, Sir.

*Roland brushes down his trousers, then they stroll off arm-in-arm, very much in love.*

*Mimette, grinning, edges forward.*

Mimette *to herself* She should return to the hotel, this little *femme de chambre*. However, that is not at all safe to be an innocent European alone in the *sukh*. So, she will simply follow these lovers along at a careful distance.

*Roland and Dorothea see and hear nothing but their own happiness. Roland whispers something into Dorothea's ear, and she looks away, coy and shy, yet working hard to keep herself from laughing.*

Dorothea I know in my heart, my dear Roland, that you will be unfailingly

gentle with me. I have no qualms at all about our wedding night.

*Roland squeezes Dorothea's hand.*

Roland                    That night cannot come soon enough for me, Beloved. Sometimes, just on the odd occasion, I resemble Monsieur Moollet more than is at all seemly.

*He takes her hands and kisses them, then gathers her to him and kisses her with all his love. They are absurdly happy. Mimette smiles, sighs and tries to interest herself in some lace.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene iv:** The French Ambassador's Palmiery Ball Cairo 1933.

*The Palmiery Ball is held at the French Embassy in Cairo. This is very close to the old Oak Nut Hotel and the French Army Barracks. It is a formal affair, but not grand. The camera glides about for a couple of minutes, taking in the comfortable ambience of the Palmiery Ball.*

- *Background music from a small orchestra.*
- *The conductor is a thin, fastidious-looking man, wearing a monocle.*
- *A few couples dance near the orchestra: small, raddled women in exquisite frocks, heavy-set Egyptian dignitaries, French officers, middle-class Frenchwomen who've gone to a lot of trouble with their presentation.*
- *Also dancing, with eyes only for each other, are Roland (in his dress uniform, but no sword) and Dorothea.*
- *It is a pleasant affair, with people milling about, greeting each other, or arguing fiercely in the Gallic manner.*

*The camera finds Theressa and Mimette ensconced by the wall with some other ladies, gossiping excitedly. A large, elderly lady who is seated on an ottoman is throwing down a cocktail whilst interpolating staccato comments into this cosy gathering nearby.*

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*Vincent and Martin are enjoying an engrossing conversation with a group of French businessmen. Miles and a sheik are discussing some serious matter: Miles nods solemnly at something the Arab says.*

*Dr Marell sips a drink, and ponders a superb, huge painting of some Napoleonic battle. Martin then wanders up, stands beside him, and they begin to discuss the artwork. In the background, Theresa is seen to lead Mimette towards the conductor by way of introduction to Mimette's up-coming song.*

*With the music of the orchestra wafting along, the camera moves out of the area, to the library, and thence inside.*

SEQUE INTO NEXT SCENE

#### **IV, Scene v:** The Action Moves to the Stately Library Palmiery Ball 1933.

*This an extremely long scene (culled as it is to the bare bone), with people wandering in and out of the Library. However, it is totally important to the progress of the plot.*

***The library** at the French Embassy is a robust, old-world affair, in the manner of a very rich man's den. Heavy, expensive walnut bookshelves groan under the weight of leather-bound tomes, all French of course. There is a grand globe of the world, many beautiful Egyptian treasures, and some other bric-a-brac scattered about in no particular order.*

*Harry and Dani have snaffled a drinks tray, replete with decanters of brandy, rum, whiskey and a bottle of crème de menthe. Along with the obligatory soda fountain, there are crystal tumblers and an ice-bucket with tongs. They sit side-by-side at a very imposing walnut desk. The desk is now covered in a plethora of scribblings and pencil drawings, plus crumpled maps and sundry books. Smoking heavily, the two men have created a pall of smoke in the room. Harry scribbles madly with a fountain pen (there is a large jar of black ink near his elbow). Likewise, Dani quickly sketches with*

*lead pencil. They work under the strong light of a banker's lamp on the table. When they speak, the men's voices are raspy from the smoking.*

Dani, *cigarette between lips* -- and then, when Max has whacked the guard at the docks, he can --

*The door swings open. Miles stares into the gloom towards the desk, fanning his face with his hand.*

Miles Do you come to the Palmiery Ball to work, do you? *Mon Dieu*, but you seem to be trying to smoke out a hive of bees.

Harry I'm so sorry, Sir. You see how it is: the hands of the clock are our enemies just now.

Dani These are the final scenes. The dénouement, *oui?* We have to return to LeBarron the day after next. The great man will not accept any more put-offs. What a nuisance, eh?

*Miles, leaving the heavy oak door open to let out strands of cigarette smoke wanders into the room.*

Miles *to Dani* The little Mimette is about to sing for the assembled company. I feel sure that you'll want to --

Dani *standing quickly* My Mimette?

Miles *satiric smile* To speak true, she is **my** employee, after all.

*Dani ignores the sarcasm and runs to the doorway. We hear the first strains of The Jewel Song from Gounod's Faust (Ah! je ris de me voir si belle en ce miroir). Dani is visibly entranced by the beauty of Mimette's voice. Full of apology, he turns to Harry.*

Dani *in little-boy voice and with sweet smile* *Je m'excuse, 'Arry. Mon coeur s'ouvre à sa voix.*

*Dani vanishes. We can still hear the beautiful aria in the background. Miles absently picks up Dani's sketches and muses over them as Harry stretches back in his chair, yawning. Harry wordlessly offers Miles a drink. Miles shakes his head and continues to glance over his brother's sketches.*

Harry *carefully* It's none of my damn business, Sir, but this **is** 1933. Your servant seems to be a very sweet, demure young woman. And young Dani

is more than smitten with her, even if she is your parlour maid.

Miles *without looking up* My brother has his dignities to consider, Harry. He must remember who he is.

Harry *equably* With that beautiful voice, my guess is that she won't be a servant much longer.

*Miles stops, raises his head, and listens to the superb, bell-like tones of the girl.*

Miles You are right, I think. Quite a lovely, lyric soprano voice.

Yes, perhaps I am about to lose Mimette to the greater world.

Harry To your brother.

Miles *firm* No. That will not be. Dani is the son of a Duc, and the brother of a Duc. He won't forget that.

*Harry downs his drink, then puts the crystal tumbler down loudly. He stands as he does so.*

Harry I don't want to hound you, Sir, but in the other place, that young lady is a Queen of Nubia. There was nothing humble about her then, trust me.

*Miles pauses, staring at the wall.*

Miles *musings* *Oui.* And in that other place, I was a thief, of earthy, tough nature. I had no family honour then, and nothing even close to dignity ...

*[Shrugs]*

Very well, then, Monsieur Polglaze. I will speak no more on the subject of my brother's *amour*. He must trust to his heart, as I did. And I shall bow to the inevitable. *Ça va.*

Harry *laughs* This "reincarnation" stuff sure is something! Why, back in days of yore, I was an upright prig of a man. The Nubian Prime Minister, if you don't mind. Would that Lord Bruan could see me now!

*[Laughs again, self-deprecatingly. Then solemn]*

Tell me, if it's not too painful, Sir; what was Stiffy like? I don't

know him at all. That is to say -- Lord Bruan has not met him.

Miles He was *un homme de tout faire*. A roustabout. One who lived for the moment; he did not fear to tackle even the most onerous task.

Harry So ... do I take from that that you liked him?

Miles *musingly* Yes, I did. Yes ... he was a likeable man. A rough diamond who knew no tact. He was impolite and insouciant. But ...

*The singing ends and a burst of applause is heard from the other room. Miles decides that he does need a drink after all and pours one for himself.*

*Dorothea, leading Roland by the hand, enters the room.*

Dorothea *breathless* Here you are!

Why, what a precious angel that child is. Miles! Such a divine voice! Are you proud of your little chamber maid?

*Miles turns towards the new arrivals and smiles.*

Miles Yes, yes. So charming, as you say.

*Dorothea looks about.*

Dorothea May I sit down? I've been dancing about for ages with my fiancé, you know, and I'm teetering near to exhaustion.

Roland *fondly* I offered you a respite, my little Terpsichore, but you would not hear me.

*Harry motions to a capacious armchair.*

Harry By all means. Sit.

*Dorothea, her face wreathed in smiles, sits elegantly with a whooshing sigh.*

Dorothea *girlish, cute* I quite adore saying "my fiancé". Makes me feel quite French already.

*The men chuckle.*

Miles Would you care for a drink, Dorothea? Let's see what we have

here --

*Martin erupts into the library, takes in the scene, and then calls back into the corridor to Vincent.*

Martin *shouts off* I have found them, *mon ami*. They are holed-up in the *bibliothèque*.

*Martin walks into the library, rubbing his hands together. Vincent follows, nodding to all the other occupants. We can vaguely hear a contralto singing an opera aria.*

*Miles has prepared Dorothea a drink, which he passes to Martin. A nod of his head indicates that the drink is meant for the young lady. Martin gallantly delivers the glass to Dorothea. She politely thanks him as Roland and Martin survey the drinks tray.*

*Meanwhile, conversation picks up, as Harry tries unsuccessfully to continue with his work. Harry merely doodles ineffectively. The four Frenchmen discuss some matter sotto voce, speaking in French.*

*Sipping her drink, and looking pleased with herself, and with her fiancé, Dorothea turns to Harry.*

Dorothea Do you want us to clear out, so that you may get on with your cinema script? I know how important it is. What with your Simon Le Gre holding a pistol to your head. And to Dani's head, too, if truth be told.

*Harry smiles in spite of himself. He leans lazily back in his chair.*

Harry No, no, no. It's coming together alright, Dottie. We'll take it back to Marseilles as it is, Dani and me. Should be a fine picture, if you want to know. Our boss is a regular tyrant, but he'll like this. At least, I hope ...

So, how are you enjoying your trip to Cairo?

Dorothea *blissful* Oh, it's been beyond belief, Harry! Meeting my mother (although of course, her demise was somewhat unsettling). My new home. And receiving a proposal of marriage from my darling. It's been marvellous.

Harry *smiling kindly* Good for you!

Dorothea *as an aside* I had the most inspiring dream about you the other night. Such fun!

*The four Frenchmen continue to murmur in French, unaware of what Dorothea has said. But Harry has stiffened, leaning forward over the desk towards her.*

Harry *frowning* I beg your pardon? What was that? I didn't quite catch ...

Dorothea Oh, it was nothing at all, really. You know how it is when you have a riveting dream. You wake up, and you desperately want the dream to drag on. But it fades away immediately.

However, this particular one was very vivid, and I simply can't stop thinking of it.

Harry *carefully* Okay, let's get this clear. You dreamt about *me*?

Dorothea Yes! I mean ... not just you, Harry. Most of the people in our group were present in some guise or other, actually. Little Mimette was a royal personage. Holding her head high. All of you: such interesting, droll characters. Something about ancient Egypt.

*Dorothea has no idea of the effect of her words. She smiles beautifully as she plays with some pleats in her frock. The four Frenchmen have ceased their talk abruptly such that they stare at Dorothea. Harry is motionless.*

*Dorothea looks up, then (concerned) she looks swiftly about.*

Dorothea *uncertain* Dear me! Have I accidentally offended somebody?

Or no! It's that problem which many people have about discussing dreams. Is that it?

I'll not say another word on the subject. Promise!

Miles *gently* Far from it, Dorothea. Tell to me, please, what were the names of the people you saw in your sleep.

*Dorothea points at each man in turn.*

Dorothea Well there was Feral and Dingo.



*The door opens a fraction, and Theressa's head peeks through. Behind her stand Mimette and Dani (who swings the door wide open).*

*Beaming, Theressa steps into the library, followed closely by her two companions.*

Theressa *bright*                    Here you all are, then! What are you shouting about, Rollie?

Dani                                    See? They gather here around the drinks tray, as I predicted. *In vino veritas*. And so they squabble like poultry at dinnertime.

*[To the assembled group, in jovial manner]*

Well, then. *Vite, vite!* Shoo, shoo! Harry and I stand just a heartbeat from presenting to LeBarron the magnum opus of the age. So you must all leave us now, for the literary triumph to be completed with a flourish or two of the pen!

*Harry leans forward, with knuckles on the desk, intense.*

Harry                                 Just a second, Renault.

*[Intense to Dorothea]*

Dottie, did you drink from a small medicine bottle? Or ... maybe you ate something which the servants had not checked first?

Vincent *worried*                    Or sipped from a glass phial? Or smoked --

Dorothea *trying to remember*                    Oh, if only I could remember! Those girls sat opposite to me, staring. I think there was a tea-tray but ...

Oh, this is hopeless! I just can't remember. But it was all so beautiful there in those times ... stunning, gorgeous ...

*Dorothea begins to cry into the lace handkerchief which had belonged to her mother. Roland moves promptly to her side. He puts a comforting arm about her shoulders.*

*Suddenly, Dorothea stops crying, staring open-eyed at the lace handkerchief. She turns it over and sees the "M". Martin (shocked) speaks to the general crowd.*

Martin *shocked*                    Who could have done this thing?

Dorothea *appalled*

It was the scent! Yes, yes! There was a tiny bottle of scent wrapped up in this hanky and hidden among the bolsters on the sofa.

I dabbed my wrists, and then Mimette's.

*[Points to Mimette, who appears to be afraid]*

One second I was seated on a couch in my dead mother's home. And then in the blinking of an eye, I was getting ready for dinner at the home of graverobber Feral.

Miles

And do you still have the bottle of perfume?

Dorothea

It was not ... when I woke up I ...

No ... no, I'm sure that those girls said to me that the phial was thrown into the fire, and exploded there ... sorry ...

*All the men appear to be immersed in the deepest of thoughts. There is silence except for Harry shifting his weight beside the large leather chair on which he lately sat.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene vi:** A Salon at the French Embassy 1933.

*This salon is next to the library. It is a neat, small salon in the French style. A hubbub of voices from the library ebbs and flows.*

*Dr Marell sits, facing the camera. He winces at the sounds of debate overheard from the library.*

*We cannot see her, but there is a lady lying on a sofa, her hand in Dr Marell's. This sofa is situated between the doctor and the camera. All we can see of the female patient (a guest at the Palmiery Ball who has been taken ill with a migraine) is her forearm and hand.*

Dr Marell *softly*

Madame, try to rest, will you? The little slug of elixir you have





will you inform us about the mystery surrounding the death of Professor Phanton? You and Colonel Bart were at the bedside. You saw his life fade away. You both --

Dr Marell

That is correct, Madame. I heard Phanton's final words, observed that all signs of life were extinguished, and drew the sheet over the body.

(And I can guess where it is that you are going with this discussion, Madame.)

*Bien sur!* The death was absolutely ascertained, as I said. We left the room. I closed the door.

And then the corpse of Maurice Phanton was seen no more.

Theressa

That's exactly what the Colonel intimated. But it's so bizarre. How could it happen?

Harry

The corpse actually disappeared ***completely?***

Dr Marell *nods*

It vanished. The body vanished. Gone. *Disparu.*

Dani

How?

*Dr Marell shrugs.*

Dr Marell

How can one say? He died in his own private bed, watched only by myself and the Colonel. Oh! And a *garçon* who wielded a large fan.

*Le cher professeur* kept but a very few servants; and they wandered about in other parts of the house at the hour of the demise. I truly believe that after Lloyd Bartholemew and I left that room, there was no other person who entered it. *Personne!* But when the men from the mortuary arrived, poof! Of the well-respected professor, there was no sign.

*There is a deep effect on his listeners. They are spellbound. Drawing breath, the doctor continues.*

Dr Marell Cairo's draconian policemen (such as they are) interrogated heavily (and I do mean "heavily"!) these wretched servants, but they could not arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. Ah oui -- and they questioned the boy as well. Nothing.

Dorothea This boy? What ... a child?

*Dr Marell holds his palm about a metre above the floor.*

Dr Marell Yes, a boy with a palm-frond fan who could only weep.

Theressa *discomfited* There was a child present as Jealousy Phantom died, then? How very grim!

Dr Marell *explains* I believe that it was simply that he was the son of one of the domestics. He was paid a few pennies to fan the air, for the Professor's comfort. As I recall, it was a very warm day.

Dorothea That's quite understandable. Please go on, doctor. Did this lad see anything?

Dr Marell The little chap wept under the harsh glare of these officious constables. All that could be got out of him was some gibberish about a bird jumping out of the window.  
  
Thus, the body of Professor Phantom simply disappeared, unseen. And that is that!

*The occupants of the room shift about, looking questioningly at each other.*

Miles Doctor Marell, did Phantom say anything ... er ... interesting at the end?

Dr Marell Yes, he did.

Miles And are you willing, or able to --

Dr Marell *challenging* You want to know? Are you sure you want to know? **Really?**

Dorothea What is it?

Dani Are you trying to scare us, doctor? Let me tell to you that you are

succeeding rather well at it, if that is your intention.

Dr Marell

Since you will have it, then, here it is.

*[Takes a big breath]*

Professor Phanton believed himself to have been cursed. And he warned me that the curse was being passed on to others (eleven others, as it happens) in the form of dreams. Six men and five women. Cursed. They were cursed.

*The camera moves around such that each occupant of the room comes into view. Dorothea is the only person who seems to be taking the situation in her stride. She speaks to no-one in particular.*

Dorothea *doubtful*

Am I one of the five women?

But I don't at all feel as if I've been cursed. Far from it ...

*Dorothea frowns. Claude Marell turns to Martin.*

Dr Marell

You, *Lieutenant* Leveque, were under a cloud at one time, some years back. I was called in to ensure your comfort and safety as you came around. At the time I thought you may have been dabbling in narcotics. But later ... later it occurred to me that you had journeyed off into some trance in the footsteps of Phanton.

Martin

Why, yes ... but I ... there can be no thought of a "curse" in this regard.

Theressa

Doctor, it all started with me. The catalyst wasn't Jealousy Phanton, though. Miss Lanier's mother, Madame Mahala, sent us all off to ancient Egypt. She used some magical potion or other.

Dottie, you have that right about the stunning beauty and the general feeling of delight. It was very grand and wonderful, even if the boys were somewhat tiresome.

Harry

Tell us!

Dani

Yes, *ma belle soeur*. What indeed was your part in this?

Theressa I was Debra, Feral's sister. Lieutenant Leveque and Feral were one and the same.

*This is met by a startled gasp from Dani.*

Martin *picking up the theme* This was hard work: finding and then dropping off the loot. And yet, for all that, Monsieur Ferule was the happiest of men. And a complete athlete, be assured. Yes, all-in-all, quite a happy, joyous, carefree life, *non?*

Vincent No, no ... not "carefree" ... not by any account. *Non!*  
We were surrounded by the most cold-hearted killers!  
At the tomb in Memphis, we were in truth in absolute mortal danger. How we escaped, I know not. *Grace de Dieu*, I must conclude. It was a rough, dangerous life, and we were no more than hirelings, who tried to make the best of a bad lot.

*Everyone is stung by Vincent's words.*

Harry And our uppermost thoughts were how to evade the curses of the various Pharaoh's graves.

Vincent That's right, Harry. We thought of nothing else. And as far as I understand, none of us was touched by the curses. *Personne.*

*Dr Marell bows, wordlessly to the assembly, and heads for the door. As he reaches it, he turns.*

Dr Marell Oh, and there was something else which both Colonel Bartholemew and I scribbled down at the professor's bedside.  
*Bavarder?* What is that English word ... ah ... "To rattle on"! That's it!  
*Eh bien!* Just at the last, Phanton "rattled on" about a lion and a bull fighting. Then an eagle swoops down on them from overhead.

Miles What do you think, Doctor, was the significance of that?

Dr Marell *Je ne sais pas* ... No idea, me.

Roland Pity ... pity ...

Dr Marell But you may wish to speak to ... I mentioned this matter to one other at the time of the so dear English Colonel's death. I realize that that was slightly irregular, of course, but ... Yes! But the strangeness of ...

You see, the esteemed Dr Lilliban, who formerly advised the English visitors to Cairo on the subjects of health and well-being, has moved along.

Theressa To Constantinople, I believe.

Dr Marell Quite! Well, his replacement is a fine man who calls himself Nettlethwaite. This English doctor's vast knowledge of ancient matters, and his inquisitive nature is truly formidable.

Dorothea Yes! That's his name ... Nettlethwaite ... the kind doctor who attended my mother at the Hospice.

Dr Marell Miss Lanier will be keen to know, then, that (as luck ordains) the Madame Mahala also "sang" before the end. And it was this Dr Nettlethwaite who heard those utterances.

My advice to you is to call on him. He may have the answers you seek, my friends. Who may say?

Ah, adieu. [*Bows*] Ladies ...

*The Doctor leaves the room, closing the door behind him.*

*There is a heavy silence in the room, except for drinks being poured, and the clinking of ice. A couple of the men sigh loudly.*

Dorothea Dear Roland, you went back to the time of the Pharaohs, too, then?

Roland Yes, my love. Twice. I think that I was the only one of us to return twice.

*There is general agreement among the men. [Martin will go back to the robber gang towards the start of movie #3 "Hittite Bullshite".]*

Roland I can't think why I was in such a rage to be a Phoenician again. It was (as has been recalled) very hard work. So also was the evading those horrors of the tombs. And being dead drunk as often as not.

Theressa Hard work it was indeed. And do you know, Roland? I've often thought that we (we Phoenicians) did not ever appreciate the beautiful objects that we held in our hands.

Roland No! You're right. It was just passing one heavy object on to the next man. Or hauling stuff from the tombs in heavy nets. We were young, strong and eager. No inspiration from culture nor art, you see.

Harry I must intrude here, ladies and gentlemen, to state that ... Well, at least Lord Bruan was an aesthete.

Dorothea *kindly* I'm sure he was.

Harry He was a Nubian, of course. And an efficient swordsman. A leader and a patriot.

*[Contrite]*

He was everything that I'm not ...

Vincent But Miles ... I have never asked you. What did you ... ?

Miles *laughing in spite of himself* For me, the chase was the thing. I had several desperate men pursuing me through the back streets of Byblos. All of them wanted to see me dead, if not to actually commit the deed themselves.

It was all fighting and running *ventre à terre* for me!

Dorothea *to Roland,* Dearest Roland. You and I will visit the English doctor under the guise of my fainting fit the other day. I'll ask for a tonic. He's

*making a decision*

bound to make some innocuous remark about the weather or some cricket match ... Or, as I met him when Mama drew her last breath, that's common ground, you know. So, I'll get him chatting about that, then I'll nip in with my questions.

Dani *laughs heartily*

Try this, Dottie:

*[Imitates Dorothea with outrageous gestures]*

"I'm collecting the last murmurings of expatriates who once resided in Cairo. Do you know any good ones, *cher Docteur?*"

*Dorothea, grinning, shakes her head at the laughing Dani.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene viii:** Dr Nettlethwaite on Mahala's Last Words Cairo 1933.

*Doctor Bryan Nettlethwaite has a small room (equipped with a ceiling fan) in Cairo. He is seated at his desk, with one elbow supported on the desk. He twiddles a pencil in his fingers and looks questioningly from Dorothea to Roland. Opposite the doctor sits Dorothea. Roland stands near the window.*

Roland                      Doctor Nettlethwaite, I believe that you will remember well the so lovely Miss Lanier.

Nettlethwaite              Oh yes. How do you do? Such a sad occasion when we last met, wasn't it?

Dorothea                     It was Doctor. Thank you for all that you did for my mother at that time.

Nettlethwaite              Not at all. We made your mother as comfortable as possible.

Roland                        And I am called Captain Roland Ferrier.

*A warm handshake between Roland and Dr Nettlethwaite follows.*

Nettlethwaite            How do you do, Captain? Please ... take a pew.

Roland                    If you don't mind, Sir, I'll stay on my feet.

The reason for our visit (I trust we will not keep you too long, Doctor) is that we are curious to know of Madame Mahala's final thoughts or instructions. Her last words, you would say.

Nettlethwaite            Indeed?

Dorothea                 My mother called for me to come to her bedside. That we know, obviously. And after that, I understand, she was quite speechless.

Nettlethwaite            That's true. Yes, that's true.

Dorothea                 So ... before she lost her power of speech, did she say anything, Doctor? Anything at all, before I arrived, or when I was out of earshot? I must admit to you that we've been speaking with the French doctor ... Marell, isn't it?

Nettlethwaite *nods*        Yes, I know him well.

Roland                    We discussed the so tragic demise of the great Professor Phanton.

Nettlethwaite            Ah!

Dorothea                 If you are able to shed any light at all ... Anything ...

Nettlethwaite            I'm not sure that it's "anything". More like poetry ... blank verse, you'd probably call it. Quite extraordinary!

Roland *stunned*         Poetry?

Nettlethwaite            Well, not quite "poetry" but ... For what it's worth, your mother spoke of the bull ... no the lion ... Wait a bit ...

*Music: "something is about to happen".*

*Dr Nettlethwaite riffles about in his top drawer, muttering all the while. Then he digs out some paper. At the mention of these animals (bull and lion) Roland and Dorothea share a quick meaningful*

*glance at each other. Doctor Nettlethwaite (after much fussing) finds the sheet of paper.*

Nettlethwaite

It's here somewhere ... Ah ... Yes ...

I've got it: "The lion is mighty and can overcome the bull with strong claws and savage fangs." Something like that ... er ... "And the bull can bring down the lion by impaling its flanks with his strong horns. The eagle, a worry to all beasts great and small, flies on wings of gold."

I think that's how it went ... Jotted it down as an afterthought, don't you know.

Roland *distant voice*

The lion, the bull and the eagle ...

But these are the same kind of *bêtises* which the Professor coughed up.

Dorothea

I'd say it's the strangeness of it which hits one. Both people blathered on about livestock et cetera as the final curtain was ringing down upon them.

Nettlethwaite

I agree whole-heartedly. I wondered at the time if there might be some ... As last words go, very odd, I thought. Not at all what one would expect ...

Well, was there some mystical significance to those words, I wondered? So I visited the impressive library at what was the Oak Nut Hotel.

Roland *nods*

Ah yes! I know it.

Nettlethwaite *refers to his notes*

The Lion: Egypt of course. The emblem of Power, Majesty, Courage and Wisdom in the pharaoh.

The Bull, representing Life, Potency, Fertility; so many legends of heroism and nature centre on the Bull, in most of the Mediterranean countries.

And the Eagle, too. One thinks of Victory and military success. And

as a messenger of the gods, or carrier of humans from place to place. Most notably in Hittite mythology where --

Dorothea                      Hittites!

*Roland moves forward such that he stands beside Dorothea. The engaged couple stare open-mouthed at the Doctor, who puts aside his notes and leans back in his chair. Dr Nettlethwaite is surprised at the reaction of Dorothea and Roland to the word "Hittites".*

Nettlethwaite                They were called "Hittites", but the name should have been "Hethites". They were the children of Heth; headquarters: Anatolia in Asia Minor.

I might try Turkey, if I were you. Make it a stop-off on your way back to Angleterre or France. I know it's a detour, but ... Might be worth a try.

*Roland and Dorothea look at each other. This idea appeals to them. [Not that they were intending to leave Cairo; but now the doctor has put up this option, they will change their minds.]*

Roland                        *Merci.* Thank you. That is most excellent advice, I think.

Nettlethwaite                My pleasure, Captain.

Dorothea                      Just one more thing ... What of the eagle and the Hittites, Doctor?

Nettlethwaite                Why, it's the legend of Telepinu.

*Music: haunting, build-up.*

*The doctor retrieves his notes and reads carefully.*

Nettlethwaite *reading*      Very important to the Hittites. This deity looked after farming and weather ... crucial to basic day-to-day existence, one would think. Telepinu goes into hiding. From that time on, everything goes to pot: no food, no life. Quite catastrophic. He flies home on the back of an eagle, and prosperity returns.

Dorothea                      So the Hittites ...

Nettlethwaite                ... believed in the Eagle as the deliverer of Telepinu, and thereby,

the deliverer of the people.

*The faces of the engaged couple are riveted on that of the doctor, as the music builds hugely in intensity.*

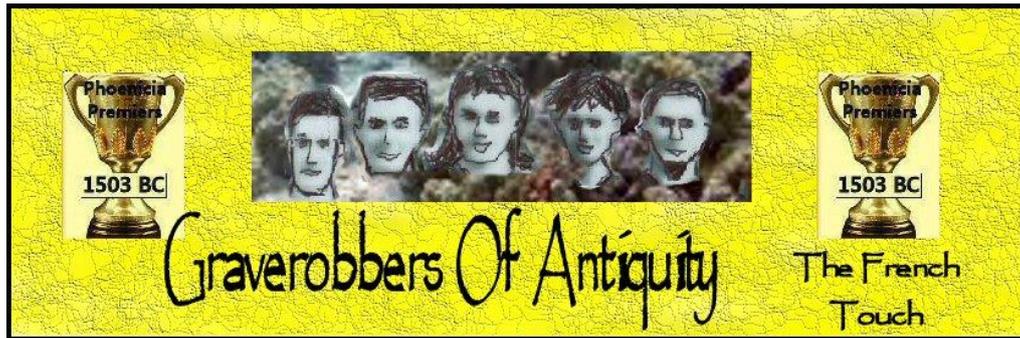
END OF SCENE

END OF ACT IV

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## ACT V

*We last saw the Ancients in ACT III, whereby at the end of Dorothea's visitation, the heroes were on a boat headed for Egypt. The chemistry between Basrani and Patto is now positively smouldering.*

### **Background:**

Professor Summerhill and Demelza have returned to England.

Following their interview with Dr Nettlethwaite, Roland and Dorothea will attempt to convince everyone to up-stumps and relocate to Turkey.

With their "French Touch" deadline looming, Dani and Harry will have to fly back to Marseilles.

At the end of ACT IV, the music was growing in intensity. So the music will now have to fade out amidst the bustle of the departure of Harry and Dani.

### **V, Scene i: Getting Harry And Dani Out Of Egypt. 1933.**

*Outside the Great Britain Hotel, a taxi waits as Harry and Dani make their hasty goodbyes to the members of the party. There is a cacophony of farewells in French and English. This is a very busy part of Cairo, and the departure is a matter of interest and entertainment to a huge number of Egyptians. The camera is in the back seat with the two men.*

*This scene (of the streets of Cairo as seen from the back seat of a car) morphs into the view from a small plane flying over the Mediterranean.*

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*Then the plane morphs back into a taxi; this time it is in Marseilles, travelling through rough-looking back streets.*

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene ii:** The Final Scenes From The Movie "The French Touch" And Getting Dani Into His Dream-Experience 1933.

*Here we present another collation of quick scenes. There is minimal dialogue, and when there is, it is in French.*

- *At the waterside, an old building blows up, and bodies fly through the fiery air. To one side, face glowing in the light from the fire, Dani/Max and the three henchmen (PV, Leo and Chapeau-Haut) stand chewing gum.*
- *A gunfight in a carpark. Dani/Max takes aim and fires, just as Lisa's character races in front of Raoul. Max kills her. Without even a hint of remorse, he takes aim at Raoul, who is shaking his head in disbelief at his lover's death (she starts to slip to the floor of the carpark) and Dani/Max kills Raoul as Raoul looks towards him in blank disbelief. Camera backs off to show Harry, LeBarron and his co-workers applauding the rendition of that scene.*
- *A slick, well-groomed gentleman lovingly caresses a priceless Egyptian treasure. He smokes using an ivory cigarette holder. Behind him, the door opens, and Dani/Max steps into the room. Dani/Max stands four-square, watching the man, who turns and grins broadly at Dani/Max. The man laughs, and chucks the statuette to Dani/Max, who catches it easily. Dani/Max runs his eyes over the work of art, then puts it casually onto a nearby table. He steps forward. The two men shake hands, then embrace, laughing.*
- *As the two actors leave the scene, we can see LeBarron congratulating everyone, and vigorously shaking hands with Harry. All the film crew appear hugely excited and happy with the progress of the film.*

- *Dani and other actors are squished into a tiny dressing room. Dani (in singlet and trousers) removes his greasepaint and combs his hair. Then he gathers up some stuff from the bench. Camera close-up of a small package: "A Souvenir of Cairo".*
- *In his small, grotty Parisian room which we visited in ACT I, Dani wanders about (whistling happily) amidst a mass of open suitcases, piles of clothes, general junk and trash. The souvenir from Cairo is still wrapped in its decorative wrapping It sits in clear camera view on the table.*

*Without seeing more than Dani's torso as he reaches out for the souvenir, we are aware (even though the camera is focused on the table, at table level) that Dani is opening this object. He chucks the wrappings onto the table. We hear the opening of the tin, and then the tin is placed indifferently back onto the table. During this brief interlude, Dani speaks, voice off.*

*Dani to himself*                      What's this? Someone gives to the Golden Boy a present ... is that how it is? What the hell ... "Goanna Oil Paste" ... a gift from Cairo? Dani-boy, you must use this muck to soften these calloused mitts of yours. The movie star must have the soft hands, no?

*Dani walks away, then stops, with his torso just in camera view (but hazy). Giving a soft groan, he slumps to the floor.*

*The table (on which the camera has been focused) morphs into the side of a small boat.*

END OF SCENE

Start of DANI'S EXPERIENCE (split into 2 parts due to dramatic necessity)

### **V, Scene iii:** The Shore, Gloomy Pre-Dawn Ancient Egypt 1500 BCE.

*The boat slips gently up to the shoreline before dawn. There is a loose fog floating over the water, and wavelets lap what sand there is. This is a dangerous coastline: there are wet sand traps, reed beds, saltwater crocodiles, and human enemies lurking. The camera remains at ground level, facing up towards the region of the boat.*

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*What we (the audience) can see is only a gloomy outline of the boat rocking slightly in a dark grey skyline. And all we hear is the gentle lapping of the wavelets, along with the creaking of the timber from which the boat was constructed.*

*We begin to hear the men organizing how the group would disembark. Then (with some muttered skat vocals) we can just make out the shapes of the Phoenicians and Nubians landing. They crouch, wary, as they creep forward over the camera. Mullet scoops Doxia into his arms to carry her safely to shore. Patto leaves Basrani to be assisted by Feral (who flings her over his shoulder), as Patto wishes to scout ahead.*

Feral *low-voiced* Careful of salties.

Doxia *whispers* Salties? Do you mean sailors?

Dingo *low-voiced* No. He means salt-water crocs. Bite yer leg off.

*Through the mist, Patto can be seen standing still and alert, with the others hovering nervously behind him. When speaking here, Patto does not look back.*

Patto How ya travellin', Ding?

Dingo All good here.

Patto You right there, Feral?

Feral Yeah, mate. She's light as a feather.

Patto Y'okay Mull?

Mullet No worries, mate. I'm v-e-e-e-e-r-y happy with my little burden.

Patto Okay. Keep yer heads down but look sharp. And keep quiet.

*Gingerly, alert and on the "qui vive", Patto stalks out of camera shot, with his entourage following in his wake.*

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene iv:** The Sacrificial Altars Ancient Egypt 1500 BCE.

*On the side of a hill, many varied altars have been erected, by simply piling different shaped rocks about. Men with flowing beards and priestly vestments wander about near these altars, burning incense, examining the entrails of geese, chanting, howling and flicking oils about. Their acolytes bow, kneel and make weird signs. Coloured smoke and fumes billow about.*

*Into this mess stroll our group (Doxia and Basrani no longer carried). The two ladies cover their mouths with their shawls. The men simply look disgusted.*

Dingo *sceptical*                      What's this? Rent-a-Priest?

Doxia                                      The foul stench of burning and putrid flesh must rank as one of the worst known to man.

Feral *gestures with thumb*                                  We should go over there. Those blokes are cooking an ox. We might be able to snag a steak sanger.

Patto *reproving*                        I don't think they'll let you eat the sacrifice, Fer. It's all about beating the Egyptians, not putting on the feedbag.

Basrani *looks about*                    I can't see Bruan and his boys. We're supposed to meet them somewhere ...

Doxia *uncertain*                        They'll know to come here, won't they?

Patto                                        Yeah, yeah. We meet the guys, get away from this pong, get in touch with the Nubian commanders and then we fight.

Dingo *digs heels in*                      Nah, mate. I'm not setting foot on the battlefield until I've had a yarn with the augur after he's taken the auspices. It's just not safe to go into battle until we know what the gods have decided.

Mullet                                        Yeah, I'm with Dingo. We need to know which way the wind is blowing, how the birds are flying, and what the chicken bones look like.

Feral                                         And we hafta borrow some armour and a fistful of weapons.

*All the men nod solemnly. Patto laughs.*

Patto                                    You're serving the queen, so you'll have the best of everything.  
Trust me!

Basrani *points*                    There they are!

*Camera stands back. The members of the party led by Captain Patto walk quickly up a hill. Over the top of the hill appear Bruan, Stewie, and Phooey. Patto strides towards the Nubians, followed by the two girls, whereas Dingo, Mullet and Feral stop to have a look at (and pick over) a pile of armaments.*

|                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| MOOD: Comic, blokes being blokes and scoring off another bloke |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|

*A burly man in his mid-30s sees the three lads helping themselves to the armaments (and trying them on), and this man marches up to the lads with a rolling gait. He gives all the impression of being a sergeant-major.*

"Sergeant-Major"                Hey! Hey! What do youse blokes think you're doing there?  
*yelling*

*The three lads are used to this kind of interference. They continue to sift through the weaponry and armour.*

"Sergeant-Major"                Hey! I'm speaking to you, ya drongo! What are ya doin'?  
*yelling*

*The "Sergeant-Major" grabs Mullet's upper arm. Mullet turns and gives the man an ugly look as he shakes himself free of the man's grasp.*

Mullet *into the man's*            We are acquiring armour and weapons for the up-coming stoush.  
*face*                                    Got any probs with that, mate?

*The "Sergeant-Major" looks through frowning brows at the three lads.*

"Sergeant-Major"                What unit are yuz with?

Mullet *calm*                        TAGRATL.

"Sergeant-Major" *at*             Eh?

*sea*

Mullet T-A-G-R-A-T-L. TAGRATL.

"The Association of Grave Robbers and Tomb Looters".

*Feral nods wisely, as is his manner. Dingo wipes his nose with the back of his hand and stands his ground aggressively. The "Sergeant-Major" turns from one man to the other, looking perplexed and worried. Then he merely looks annoyed.*

"Sergeant-Major" No! Not your "union", ya dumb shit. ... I meant your **unit**.  
*annoyed*

Dingo *with some emphasis* We're with Captain Patto. Her Majesty's elite guard.

*The "Sergeant-Major" is impressed but does not want to lose face.*

"Sergeant-Major" *ironic* So ... talked yourselves up, did ya? Cushy job!

Mullet *rude and aggressive in manner* Yeah, mate. We had to root some pretty influential folks to get out of the sludge and into the cream.

See ya later, Sarge.

*The "Sergeant-Major" humphs and walks off with as much dignity as he can muster.*

*A number of scummy-looking men gather nearby, watching the boys. Feral and Dingo have set up a highly polished sheet of bronze. It is at this "mirror" that the camera is now aimed.*

*The boys pull on scary warrior masks, and they can see their reflections in the "mirror".*

*They are stirring themselves up for a fight. [In the upcoming battles, the boys will be seen in these helmets.]*

Mullet *laughing* Bring it on! Bring it on!

Dingo Ya know what? This is what ya wear when ya've got yer foot pushing down hard on the other bloke's throat.

Mullet *delighted* Yeah ... when you're about to stick the dagger in.

Feral *unimpressed* This one's rubbish. It wouldn't scare the punters one bit. Might be

alright for a funeral, but. Or for putting the nails into the coffin.

Dingo Whaddaya want with your scary helmet? A set of steak knives?

Mullet What are steak knives?

Dingo Doesn't matter ...

*They sigh long and hard, then chuck the masks onto a separate pile. In a lazy, bored manner, they get back to the work of selecting suitable weapons.*

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene v:** Marching Boldly Into Battle Across Rocky Terrain Nubia 1500 BCE.

MOOD: Comic, blokes being brave because they are in a large group and they are well-armed. This is fun, with music-and-dancing.

"Singin' Pitchers": In 1967 when he was 19 years old, the Queensland Truckie walked in on an old black-and-white movie starring Sonja Henie. His comment was: "Turn that off! I don't like singin' pitchers".

*The Nubians and Phoenicians have combined forces and march relentlessly towards the camera, with faces of steely determination. The men wear simple armour and carry spears, with broad swords in their belts. The only sound is the rhythmic tramp of the marching.*

*Then, a strong male chorus kicks in with a lusty rendition of a grand war song, reminiscent of a 1930's Nelson Eddy classic. An invisible orchestra accompanies the singing. Our group of men in the vanguard (Patto, Phooey, Feral, Dingo, Stewie and Mullet) remain grim-faced, not joining-in with the singing. [The entire song is presented in the Special Notes pages.]*

Verse #1:

We are men, marching South together!

(Onward we stride reeking of pride,

Brothers in arms we came!)

Real men, tough as burnished leather.

Brave as the lion, thews made of iron,

Strong hearts are all aflame!

Chorus:

A distant light shining on the valley of blood,

Friend against foe, Forward we go,

Good -- *[Singing stops abruptly]*

*The marching, singing, orchestra, everything stops abruptly. Patto is signalling with his arms that the singing is not welcome. He turns on one heel. Patto (arms akimbo) eyes the army malevolently.*

Patto *firm, shouts* I am definitely not foot slogging over the deserts of Nubia with that crap ringing in my ears.

For starters, I don't like singin' pitchers.

And secondly, yuz can't yodel about "iron" because we are still in the Bronze Age and it hasn't been thought up yet.

*With a baleful glare, Patto turns back to face the front, and signals to the men to move forward.*

Mullet March! -- 2 -- 3 -- 4 -- March! -- 2 -- 3 -- 4 ...

*The marching sound dominates as before.*

Dingo Are the blokes allowed to whistle, then?

Patto *begrudging* If they have to.

*Whistling follows from the marching men, joined by Dingo, Mullet and Phooey.*

Feral You know what? I reckon that this fighting (like, when yer in a war, like we are!) is just a ploy to keep us young men busy so that we don't ravish the women.

Stewie *surprised* That's a bit erudite coming from you, boyo.

*Feral goes into a rock-hip-hop number whereby he plays an air guitar. The other boys, except for Patto (who marches on relentlessly), also break-out, making the moves. Feral sings, with the whistling continuing (it is a nice mix of rock in the foreground with tonal back melody). I envisage here a really fabulous dance mix, with groovy moves and some electrifying male ballet.*

*I lay, I lay, I lay the ladies*

*When I'm not making war.*

*Forget your mind games*

*I only live to score.*

*You've got a sword, a sword of might*

*You've got a shield, so use it right.*

*Gird up your loins and join the fray.*

*No time for rolling in the hay.*

*That's why we're fighting*

*To keep our minds of arse.*

*That's what we've trained for ...*

*We are the warrior class.*

*You've got a sword, a sword of might*

*You've got a shield, so use it right.*

*Gird up your loins and join the fray.*

*No time for rolling in the hay.*

*The men march off, with the sound of electric guitars and marching feet fading out.*

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene vi:** Late Evening, the Nubian/Phoenician Encampment 1500 BCE.

MOOD: A Snatch of Conversation from a Council of War

*Several men are crowded into a tent. Various slaves stand out of the way, bearing golden eagles on staves. Wine is being passed about in stout bladders, and incense is burning in small hanging metal baskets. There is a hubbub of noise, caused by everyone talking at once: orders being given, questions being asked. Many of the men, including Patto and Mullet, are crowded about a bench on*

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*which lies an ancient map of Nubia etched into leather. We come upon them as they continue to argue over the nature of this war.*

*Patto and the other officers straighten, looking daggers at each other.*

Old Officer                      We will march into battle as we have always marched!

Patto *scathing*                      To die gloriously in a free ticket to Heaven?

Another old man                      Our auspices have been taken --

Patto *decisively*                      Don't give me that shit, gentlemen. A dead warrior is no good to me, even if he is a hero. Heroes can't win battles if they're dead.

Grumpy old officer  
*spiteful*                      You're not fit to take command of this army.

Patto *derisively*                      Dream on! Under cover of darkness, I'm taking my Phoenicians up that pass to the North in order to tackle Egypt's re-enforcements before they can reach the battlefield in the morning.

Grumpy officer *spitting venom*                      You're a dastardly poltroon, Captain. When Her Majesty regains her throne, I'll have you flogged to within an inch of your life.

*Mullet arcs up at these words.*

Patto *unperturbed*                      This council of war is over.

~~~~~

*Patto and Mullet stride out of the tent, and down a rocky slope towards where the Phoenicians have gathered around a wagon laden with food. Patto grabs a tin plate and a fork, then lines up for a serving of something filling and steamy. Mullet soon joins him.*

*Dingo (already eating heartily) steps forward and nods to Patto and Mullet, who quickly grab and eat some food.*

Dingo                                      How'd yer go?

Mullet                                      They're a bunch of hoons, that's how we went.

Patto                                      Aw, those old Nubian farts think we should trust to the gods and line-up for the slaughter. They see my chimpanzee tactics as just

coward's tricks to dodge a fair fight.

Feral *food stuffed in mouth* Sr gliv nmotto car been?

Mullet *arcs up* Patto knows what he's doin, ya prick! Don't mouth off like that, Feral, unless ya know what yer talkin' about!

Feral *still eating, offended* Clm dabba nv arry gin flot gon!

Patto *calming Feral* It's alright, Feral. In this case I know **exactly** what I'm doing!

*Patto finishes his meal by swiping thick millet bread around his tin plate, then eating the bread in one gulp. He chucks the plate to a waiting slave, then wipes his hands down his clothing. Now he addresses all the Phoenicians in the vicinity.*

Patto Y'okay men!

Listen up!

We're marching up the defile. We need to be quiet and stealthy. So no singing, whistling, clinking or ... just don't make no noise, boys, until we're in position!

*Armed and ready, the Phoenicians troop off, to the plaudits and well-wishes of the surrounding Nubians.*

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene vii:** In The Defile, Dawn. 1500 BCE.

MOOD: The men are organizing their Wills

*An old man (a notary) sits cross-legged beside Feral, who is squatting. Other men mill around. A large, flat stone is at hand.*

*With a great deal of sighing, the old man takes a clean tablet of clay. As we shall see, this old man habitually licks the point of his stylus, even though it is daubed with clay.*

The Notary *to Feral*      Name?

Feral *offended*      You know that! I'm Feral!

The Notary      Feral Who?

Feral      Feral, son of Boner, the Ossifier.

*The old notary is just about to write (having licked his stylus) when he stops, looking at Feral from under his brows.*

The Notary      How d'ya spell it?

*Feral makes a couple of large marks in the dirt.*

*The old notary writes his words in cuneiform, whilst speaking his words aloud.*

The Notary *writing*      I, Feral, son of Boner, who currently resides in ... ?

Feral      Byblos.

The Notary *writing*      ... Byblos ... the Holy town of Byblos-on-Sea, do hereby bequeath and bequest (in the event of my demise), all of my worldly goods (no strings attached) to ... *[Stops writing]*

Who's going to be the chief beneficiary?

Feral *shrugs*      My sister, Debbie. So make all the loot over to her husband, Stiffy.

The Notary *writing*      .... to Stiffy of ... ?

Feral                                   Byblos. But they're not near the sea. They're up in the hills.  
Vineyards.

The Notary *writing,*               ... to Stiffy of Byblos Magna and all his heirs and etc etc etc.  
*nods*

*With copious sighing and stylus-licking, the old notary puts aside Feral's clay table to dry and grabs another clean tablet.*

The Notary *looking*               Right! Who's next?  
*about*

*Dingo drops down onto his haunches alongside Feral, and signals with a raised finger.*

Old Notary                           Okay, Dingo. Name?

Dingo *taken aback*               I'm Dingo! Who else would I be?

Old Notary *grumpy*               Spell your name for me.

*Dingo reaches out and scratches in the sand next to where Feral scratched. The marks he makes are identical to those made by Feral.*

*Before the old man can speak, Dingo forestalls him.*

Dingo                                   Yeah, yeah ... We've sort of got the same name. But it's okay  
'cause we're like blood-brothers.

Feral *agreeing*                   Blood oath.

Dingo                                   And it's all irrelevant anyway. My loot goes to Stiffy same as  
Feral's.

*The old notary stares open-mouthed at Feral and Dingo, shakes his head sadly, then begins to write (after licking the stylus).*

Dingo                                   Say, mate ... What's with everyone making their will? Are we likely  
to (you know) ... do the big dirt dive in this show?

Old Notary *matter-of-*       Pretty much. I'd grade you as a high to extreme risk.  
*fact*

*Feral nods knowledgably, as if he has been in on that information right from the start.*

Dingo *surprised*                   Shit! As bad as that?

The Notary *writing*               'Fraid so.

*The old notary continues to write, while Dingo appears to mull this over.*

The Notary                         The Nubian generals are hopeless. Utterly hopeless. No more sense than newborns. Your army will be spifflicated.

Feral                                 But Patto's goin' to ignore them blokes and go for the chimpanzee tactics, whatever they are.

The Notary                         Then you're in luck. On that understanding, I'd regrade your death expectancy as moderate to high.

END OF SCENE

### **V, Scene viii:** A Tent In The Defile 1500 BCE.

*Patto and Mullet are preparing their weapons in a tent. They share a large beaker of wine.*

Mullet                               So ... you mentioned "Chimpanzee Tactics" in the war council. What's that when it's at home, then?

Patto                                 Haven't you never seen a platoon of chimps hunting monkeys?

Mullet                               Nuh ... where do you go for that?

Patto                                 Deepest, darkest equatorial Africa.

Mullet *lost in awe*                 Go on ...

Patto                                 You see, hunting chimps break up into small groups that head off in different directions. They contact each other with secret calls. Then they can ambush their quarry without anything realizing they're around. It's a concerted effort. And all done by stealth.

Mullet *really lost*                 So ... are we hunting for monkeys ... in deepest Africa ... or ... ?

Patto Not monkeys, Mull ... Egyptians! They have vastly superior forces, as Bruan said. We'll beat them with surprise.

Good work, eh?

END OF SCENE

### **A QUICK MEDLEY OF SCENES follows.**

MOOD: Fighting, Heroism

*Patto's tactics pay off. But although the Phoenicians won their battle, the war was lost.*

#### Quick medley of scenes:

- *Music: exciting, military, exhilarating. Ends with doom-laden feel.*
- *Teeth gritted, hand to hand combat. Feral and Mullet stand back-to-back, fighting bravely.*
- *Bruan is unreal, taking on 3 or 4 at once, and showing us some amazing swordplay.*
- *Phooey jumps up from behind a rock, bringing an Egyptian guard heavily to the ground with a flying rugby tackle.*
- *Long shot of hundreds of soldiers fighting.*

END OF MEDLEY OF SCENES

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**V, Scene ix:** In The Shelter Of A Cliff, Hiding At The Opening Of A Cave 1500 BCE.

MOOD: Leave-taking, promises for the future, compassion
---

*The wind howls. Most of the men (Patto, Dingo, Mullet, Bruan, Stewie and Phooey) all look extremely uncomfortable. Phooey openly weeps. However, Feral watches the girls with high interest, rubbing his hands together.*

*Dorothea and Basrani cling to each other. Both girls cry and sob unrestrainedly.*

*Feral trying to cheer the girls up*                      When we all meet up again, we'll go fishin'! We'll catch some morwong, and we'll steam 'em in bamboo baskets with ginger and spring onions. Fantastic! You'll see. Yuz won't cry or nothin' then!

*Feral's efforts are ignored by everyone.*

*Patto looks meaningfully at Mullet, who steps forward. Mullet (making cooing noises) prises Doxia away from Basrani, taking her (Doxia) firmly in his arms. But Doxia struggles and squirms in a vain attempt to break free.*

*Doxia distraught*                      But I must go with my mistress, my queen!

*Basrani likewise distraught*                      I shall have my Doxia with me! You must not separate us!

*Meanwhile, Patto steps between the two girls, holding Basrani behind him with one hand. Patto stands determinedly in front of Basrani, who (like Doxia) struggles against the restraint. Basrani scratches at Patto's grasping hand, but he remains unmoved, with his back to her.*

*Mullet gently to Doxia*                      Come on, now. The Queen is in mortal danger and has to escape. You know that. And Patto'll be like a big brother to her; he won't let nuthin' happen to her.

*Bruan fighting back tears*                      That's right, Majesty. You are doomed if we are caught. Your only hope is to go into hiding with Captain Patto, who knows this terrain as he knows the back of his hand. We'll be the decoy and

draw the Egyptians away.

Stewie *urgently*

It's time to be off! The enemy can only be minutes away. Go now!  
Quickly, go now!

Phooey *crying*

That wizard bloke made up a death potion for youse. It's a sweet-tasting elixir. Keep it safe ... and if the worst comes to the worst  
...

*Phooey (sobbing desperately) hands the tiny vial over to Patto, who solemnly stows it in his belt. Everyone else is aghast, but they all realize that this is the classic way to handle possible calamity. Except, of course, for Feral.*

Feral *merrily*

Don't have a blonde moment, but, and pour that over yer pancakes like syrup.

*Patto, with a brief nod to his erstwhile comrades, drags away Basrani, who continues to struggle and wildly squeal "No! No!" The pair head into the cave without torches. Basrani's voice echoes as she disappears.*

*The others look at each other hollowly. Bruan and Mullet nod to each other, and the small party scurry away from the shelter of the cliff, out into the wildly whirling sandstorm. Doxia is seen to look back, her face tear-stained and bereft.*

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene x:** The Escape From The Battle 1500 BCE.

MOOD: The Flight: the dangerous escape

*Here follow random scenes featuring Patto and Basrani as they flee Nubia.*

*Patto is the strong, fearless leader. Basrani is the compliant companion.*

---

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*We note that Patto has a large cow bladder for carrying fresh water hanging off his belt. This is refilled from a waterfall. We see the pair sharing a drink from it as the sun sets.*

*They walk across wide, rocky terrain, seeing wild animals.*

*They skid down a rocky slope, with Patto catching Basrani, stopping her from slipping over.*

*By a dying fire, Basrani sits watching Patto sleep.*

*As Basrani sleeps, Patto (restless) strides about, keeping guard.*

*The pair, tired and dusty, stroll listlessly up a hill, and where the ground flattens out, Patto suddenly stops. He throws out an arm to stop Basrani, who suddenly looks alert and apprehensive.*

<p>The lion, the bull and the eagle. The rescue of Patto and Basrani.</p>
---

*In the clearing, right in front of them, a large bull with a glossy coat pores the ground. Clouds of dust billow up.*

*Suddenly, from out of nowhere, a lioness launches herself onto the bull's back. She makes for the throat; however, the bull is able to throw her off and kick her savagely as she rolls on the ground.*

*Patto and Basrani (appalled) cannot move. They watch in horror as the wounded lioness comes back at the bull, savaging it. The bull stands his ground, swinging his head in such a way as to impale his attacker with his large horns.*

*Then, the huge eagle which Dingo had seen earlier swoops down, distracting the bull. The lioness mortally wounds the bull, but she herself is dying. With wings unfurled, the eagle gently lands, and finishes off the lioness with its large beak. Then it ensures that the bull is also dead. Having accomplished this, the eagle stands: magnificent, majestic and royal.*

*Patto and Basrani are afraid. Surely the eagle will tear them to shreds! Patto stands in front of Basrani, arms spread, ready for the inevitable attack.*

*The eagle however stands still, blinking at the pair with quiet composure. Finally, with the dust settling, Patto finds his voice.*

- Patto I think it's okay. It's not going to peck our eyes out. I don't think so, anyway.
- Basrani *gulps* It's big enough to take off our heads, Captain, if it wants to, let alone our eyes.
- Patto You know what? I think ... I think that he's here to help us. Divine intervention, sort of thing. Does that sound reasonable?
- Basrani *unconvinced* It's possible ... are we going to approach him ... ? I keep thinking of hands full of birdseed ...
- Patto *inspired* No! What was that stuff you were mouthing off about in the fake tomb? You remember, Kahmood's dummy tomb.
- Basrani cannot focus. She shakes her head, bewildered.*
- Basrani I don't recall ...
- Patto *urgent* Yeah! Yeah, you do! You called it "idle boasting". Something about wings and protection --
- Basrani *clicks* Of course! "On long legs, shall I tower over the Pharaoh's Lion Throne, and my wings shall shelter the people of the Black Land."
- Patto That's it! You got it! Well, could that mean us? Can we ... like ... can we hitch a lift on this bloke and bring prosperity back to the black land of Nubia?
- Basrani The "Black Land" text was nothing but an idle boast, as I said. I don't think we should do anything with this eagle. It scares me.
- Patto What else have we got? Do you really love trudging for hundreds of miles through this unfriendly terrain? I'm fairly jack of it, m'self.
- Look! He's just standing there, as if he's waiting for us.
- The eagle extends a leg forward. Patto gingerly approaches the bird, which is as tall as he is. Patto extends a hand and touches the feathers.*
- Patto *pleased* Come on, Your Majesty. It's okay. We're in!



snake! Ahhhhhhhhhh!

*Basrani fetches a stout stick and clears the area of snakes. Meanwhile, Patto is in agony, clutching his left leg.*

*Basrani applies a tourniquet to the leg (using a neck scarf), and sucks out the poison, spitting onto the rocks. Then she kneels beside Patto, bent over him.*

*Patto teeth gritted in agony*      It was one of them death adders, wasn't it?

*Basrani gently*      Yes ... I think it was. Hopefully, I've got out most of the poison.

*Patto writhing*      It only takes a drop ... Thanks anyway. I've bought my ticket, I think. My ticket to the ever after ...

Jeez! We got so close ...

*Basrani*      Yes, I can see Byblos from here. It looks lovely. We'll soon be back.

*Patto ripped sigh*      Nah ... you might, but I won't. In fact, you'd better get cracking. You can reach it by nightfall.

*Here Patto sadly reaches out to touch Basrani's hair.*

*Basrani*      What? And leave you here? There are lions and ... I'll have to stay with you.

*Patto musing*      Vultures ... When do the vultures start sniffing around?

Basrani and Patto must seek refuge in a cave.
---

*Basrani is appalled by Patto's mood of pessimism. Patto continues to toss about restlessly, groaning. Basrani straightens her back. She looks about and spots a small crevice between rocks. Standing and moving closer, she can see what could become a makeshift shelter further down, past the rocks. With all her might, she pulls a couple of rocks out of the way, and steps forward to investigate.*



*[Sobbing helplessly]*

I cannot be the queen of Nubia without my most faithful warrior.  
My love! My love!

*She rocks on her hips, hands covering her face as she sobs, whilst beside her, Patto convulses alarmingly.*

Basrani *maddened by grief* Then I, too, shall die!

*Tugging the broken phial from Patto's ineffective grip, Basrani tosses back her head to imbibe the last of the poison. Having swallowed the draught, she slakes the back of her hand over her mouth and then slumps down beside Patto.*

🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀 **Break** 🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀🌀

MOOD: Relief, Salvation arrives in the form of Stiffy and Bruan

Stiffy *voice off*

I can smell smoke.

Yeah! Look! There's a small cave down here, behind these rocks.  
Maybe they've ...

Yeah! There's a fire here. Bit of a squeeze, but ...

*We hear grunts from the mouth of the cave. Bruan calls out to Stiffy, but his words are unintelligible. Into the cave comes strong light from Stiffy's flaming torch. Then, with much more grunting, Bruan joins Stiffy, adding more light to the cave.*

*Stiffy props his torch against a rock, and squats down beside Basrani. Instead of the expected grim face, Stiffy grins. Both Patto and Basrani shake and tremble. Patto actually lets out a loud crack of laughter, to be followed by a long moan.*

Bruan *very concerned* What has happened here? Majesty! Majesty!

*Basrani opens her eyes to peer upwards. Shadows thrown by the torches dance over the walls.*

Basrani *giggling helplessly* It's too late! I thought that Patto was dying. So I swallowed the rest of the wizard's suicide syrup. And very tasty it was, too.

Bruan *horrified* Her beauteous Majesty has imbibed poison! What --

Stiffy *calm* No she hasn't. Look at her!

*Basrani rolls about, laughing uncontrollably. Stiffy watches, smirking, whilst Bruan is aghast.*

Stiffy Old Pooter must have got the DTs and mixed up the supposed death potion with a batch of "Giggling Gerty Juice". Pity! 'Cause some poor schmuck who was after a bit of cheering-up will no doubt take a swig of the *real* death potion that was meant for these two and cark it as a result.

I'll look after me brother. You do something about the queen.

*Politely excusing his intimacy with her, Bruan slings the queen over his shoulder. She laughs such that she is apoplectic: drumming on his back with her fists, kicking her feet, and squealing with unbridled mirth.*

*Stiffy struggles desperately to carry Patto's weight.*

*As they trudge off, all that can be heard is Basrani's laughter, Patto's guffaws and moans and Stiffy's grunts.*

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene xi:** Byblos Demolitions In Ancient Times 1500 BCE.

*As usual, the entrance and reception area of Byblos Demolitions is deserted, with Buddy working (busy with his clay tablets) and whistling in the background. There is an abacus and primitive scales in evidence on the bench, as well as a large ewer of water.*

*Dingo and Patto (both dripping with sweat) wander into the reception area. Both men help themselves to the water, drinking and wetting themselves refreshingly.*

---

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Buddy Be with ya in a minute.

*Buddy glances up from his secluded corner and sees Dingo and Patto.*

Buddy *pleased* Aw, it's youse blokes! You're still above ground then, Patto? We'd heard some horrible tales about you and yer lovely lady friend.

Patto *dismissive* Yeah, I'm alright. She's me missus now, by the way.

Buddy *bright* Good work, mate.

*[Heartily shakes hands with Patto]*

That'll be why you're looking all shagged out, then?

Patto *grins* Reckon ...

Dingo *bored* Is Knackers here? Donger's dad, I mean.

Buddy Well, let me tell youse what happened. The Eagle Boys pulled a swifty on us in Byzantium. At least, that's where they've been tracked down. So, the two Knackers are off in Byzantium, trying to sort out what happened.

Dingo *laughs callously* Huh! Those Eagle Boys are way too smart to get caught.

Buddy Aw, The Knackster reckons he'll nab them this time.

*[Returns to the desk]*

Okay! What's up?

Dingo You say Knackers is in Byzantium?

Buddy Yep, that's right. That's what I said.

Dingo You don't know when he'll be back?

Buddy Couldn't say ....

*Dingo drums his fingers on the counter, whistling soundlessly. Then he looks around for inspiration, finally raising his eyebrows at Patto, who shrugs.*

Dingo *uncertain how to* Mmmmm ... Alright ... can ya let me know when he fronts,

*proceed* because --

*Patto sudden* Hey, Ding! That's a new wreath up there, isn't it? Someone else  
*interruption, pointing* do the big dirt-dive, did they, Buddy?  
*finger*

*Buddy* Yeah. It was Squizzy, of all people.

*Dingo surprised and* Squizzy? Of the Eagle Boys?  
*intent*

*Buddy* Yep.

*Patto* Fair dinkum?

*Buddy* Yep.

*Dingo* When'd that happen?

*Buddy miffed, put out* Don't you fellas never read your carrier pigeons?

*Dingo awkward* Aw, if we can ... We mighta been busy when you sent 'em.

*Buddy exasperated* I don't know why I bother, sometimes.  
Well, the old Squizz-boy snuffed it about ... ooh, 15 suns ago it'd  
be now, I reckon.

*Dingo* How?

*Buddy* He was gored by a bull in Spain. You know how those Eagle Boys  
are going to set up a dodge with fighting bulls? They intend to  
ship them to Crete. Sounds like a plan, if you ask me. They'll pay  
anything in Crete for good bulls.

*Patto nods eagerly* Oh my word, yeah. They're like gold, good bulls on Crete.

*Dingo* The Leather and Pigskin footy match, for example.

*Buddy nods* Any road, Squizzy was standing around watching them herd-up  
these bulls, and one of them just broke away and went straight  
for Squizzy's stomach. Dead instantly, so I'm told.

Dingo *horrified* Shit! That's a shit of a way to die. First Archie --

Buddy That was a lion.

Dingo -- And now Squizzy. Ah well, he won't be missed. Opinionated prick.

Buddy I agree 100%.

Hey, if you're not getting them pigeons, do you want me to try TMVs (tattooed marine vipers) instead? (Since the messenger ferrets turned out to have drowning issues.)

Patto *worried* I don't like the sound of snakes. I nearly got carried off in the desert by a death adder --

Buddy *quick to reassure* Oh, no! These vipers have been trained to lick, not bite.  
*[Looks from one man to the other, concerned]*

So what d'ya reckon?

Dingo Yeah, give that a try.  
*[Turns to leave]*

I'm off fishing with Feral. Reckons we can get a nibble in a cove he knows of nearby.

Buddy Alright.

Patto Me, Chips and Socks are looking for the treasure of some arse-wipe or other ... can't remember his name ...

Buddy *nods; to Dingo* Ding, when Knackers rocks up, I'll tell him you're after him.  
And I'll send youse the vipers next time I have any news for yuz.  
*[Taps his index finger meaningfully on the counter]*

But make sure you read 'em!

Dingo *waving dismissively* Yeah, righto, mate. See ya, Patto.

*Dingo strolls out of the office, watched lazily by Buddy and Patto.*

*Then Buddy reaches over for a clay tablet, which he passes to Patto. As we fade out of this scene, Buddy can be seen explaining the next job to Patto, as they lean over the tablet, concentrating on it.*

END OF SCENE [*this dream will be continued towards the end of the film*]

END of DANI'S EXPERIENCE (for now)

### **Medley Of Silent Scenes With Continual Voice-Over (Martin And Others) 1933.**

- *Sitting in a secluded corner of a library, Dorothea pores over several large, ancient tomes. Beside her, Theresa appears to be making notes on a neatly ruled page.*
- *Vincent and Roland haggle with a seedy-looking antique dealer in a dodgy back alley.*
- *Theresa and Dorothea meet a very old Egyptian scholar in his untidy, but appealing study. Animatedly, he appears to be explaining to the ladies the meanings of several ancient scrolls.*
- *Miles sits amongst Egyptian men, drinking Turkish coffee and fanning themselves as they are seen to vociferously discuss some matter.*
- *The English/French party sojourn in a museum, which contains the most sumptuously beautiful Egyptian tomb relics. Solid, uniformed guards stand about, watching them.*

Martin *voice-over*

Modra ran the three remaining gangs that had survived the grave curses. We were gang #6. Our name is irrelevant. It was a trifle ... ah ... rude.

However, the Hittites comprised gang #5. They called themselves the Eagle Boys. We did not feel any joy for them, be assured.

Gang #4 was led by Ships. They were such affable chaps, these Phoenicians in Gang #4. I would say that we got on well with all of them.

Now, we spent much time with our boss Modra. Be assured that

we worked very hard. There were some equestrian games (where I became better acquainted with Monsieur Ships), and a market in Byzantium. And finally, we lazed about *en vacances* on the East coast of Italy.

Monsieur Ferule was the happiest of men.

Dorothea *reprising Act IV, voice-off*

It was the scent! Yes, yes! There was a tiny bottle of scent wrapped up in a lace hanky and hidden among the bolsters on the sofa.

I dabbed my wrists, and then Basrani's. One second I was seated on a couch in my dead mother's home. And then in the blinking of an eye, I was getting ready for dinner at the home of Feral.

Vincent *voice-off*

What happened there? What did this Doxia do?

Dorothea *voice-off*

Feral and Dingo were having some kind of tiff. Oh, I remember ... Feral had chopped off the head of a very nasty Egyptian official.

Harry *voice-off*

Yes! Mandro, a vindictive torturer, came within an inch of boiling me in oil. Talk about being scared out of one's wits.

Theressa *voice-off*

Harry! How very grim for you!

Dorothea *voice-off*

And Feral thought it a fine joke to serve this Mandro's head up for Dingo's dinner.

Vincent *outraged, voice-off*

That is outrageous, Sir!

Martin *voice-off*

A thousand apologies, *mon ami, je vous implore*. What can have possessed me?

Dorothea *lovingly, voice-off*

Mullet and I ... er, that is Doxia ... fell very much in love.

Roland *unctuous, voice-off*

*Mon ange.*

Dorothea *voice-off* There was a heavenly rock pool. And we splashed each other, Mimi.

Mimette *voice-off* Me? *Moi-meme?*

Roland *voice-off* You are an Egyptian queen, dear girl.

Everyone else *voice-off* No! She's **Nubian**, not Egyptian. Get it right, old man.

Dorothea *voice-off* So then we were all headed towards Nubia, to fight for the honour of Queen Basrani, whose evil cousin had usurped her throne. Captain Patto stood strong, single-minded at the bow of our rickety boat.

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene xii:** Dani Tries To Relay His Information (Post-Dream) To The Others 1933.

*Dani stands in a dimly-lit corridor at a down-market Marseilles hotel, trying to hear what is being said on an old wall-model telephone. He looks over-wrought, tired. He is drinking, looks unkempt and is smoking nervously. His voice is over-loud and raspy from lack of sleep and too much alcohol.*

Dani *shouting on the phone* Where did you say? I cannot ... Anatolia? And where is that, *s'il vous plait?*

But then, can you not connect me to these people? Well ... Am I not able to leave a message? You know, a message? Words for them ... *Eh, bien --*

'Allo? 'Allo? Can you 'ear me, now? Ah! *Saprist!* But this becomes impossible.

*Dani tries (frustrated and angry) to continue with his call.*

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene xiii:** The Desert Of Turkey, 1933

*Amid interesting wind-blown rock sculptures, with a blustery wind blowing, Miles stands with Roland and Dorothea. They look somewhat dejected. Martin wanders about, thoughtfully smoking. Theresa is a little more optimistic. Theresa sighs loudly.*

Theresa

My father led a famous dig in Crete. And spent a couple of years digging in Syria. But the bulk of his work centred on Asia Minor ... **here** ... what we would now call Turkey.

One night, he became loquacious over a bottle of Irish Whiskey given him by my late husband. Opened up like a peony blooming in the sunlight, did Father.

It all came out. How his ostensible aim had been to discover the late Bronze Age treasures of the Hittites. I remember one superb find: a finely-wrought chariot, made for a king, perhaps. No-one could state with total assurance whether the chariot was Hittite or Ammonite or Phoenician ... But it was assumed to be Hittite due to its position. Anyway ...

There were statues of horses, I recall. And slabs of red clay, picked-out in cuneiform writing. I had imagined them to be records of the momentous undertakings or decisions of a mighty ruler.

*[Sad laugh]*

Do you know what they were of?

*[No one answers]*

They were property statements. Wills, in fact. Something like "This

is the last will and testament of so-and-so " ...

Roland *meditatively* "The children of Heth" ...

Theressa Father laughed and drank. Do you know, I can remember that night so clearly.

For years and years (since time immemorial) there had been stories floating through the corridors of archaeological institutions, regarding a mammoth treasure-horde. Some crafty Hittites had buried their cache deep within the rocks. Or so the story went.

My father tossed that whisper aside: [*here, Theressa imitates her father*] "Yes. We all heard about that one. But there was nothing in that", he said. "There was nothing at all."

So many eager diggers frantically searched: Turkey, Crete, Syria. Anywhere and everywhere. What had the Hittites done with the loot?

*There is a long lull, in which the camera finds Martin, staring at a rock face.*

Martin You know what would have been a stunningly grand idea? If we had given young Dani one of those famous sleeping potions. He would have ... I don't know ... perhaps heard a snip of the so valuable information? Who can tell? I mean, of course, that he would ...

*Theressa has not heard Martin. Or she has heard him and chooses to ignore him.*

Theressa Never found. And I'll just bet that that's what we've all been dreaming about ... literally!

Vincent *matter of fact* Once, I saw a gigantic raptor; perhaps an eagle.

Theressa *excited* In Cairo?

*Vincent nods, stirring the sand/dirt with his shoe.*

Theressa *excited* Why, yes! I mean, I didn't see it myself, but dear Demelza

certainly did. She took a photograph of that bird, but it just didn't turn out. And someone else had complained of the same phenomenon. Loads of Egyptian sky, but no bird.

Vincent *nods sadly*

I saw it as me (Vincent) some years ago, and then again as that mad Dingo. Or so our dear Roland says. Do you not think that strange?

And the Hittites were linked to such a bird, according to the so charming doctor whom we met at the Ball.

Theressa

Yes, Vincent. The great golden eagle at the very heart of their credo ...

And after all these visions we've had, courtesy of Dorothea's mother, none of us can say absolutely what the Hittites did or where they travelled.

We can't find Modra's stash. None of us knows where the graverobbers hid their gold. What's left of Gang #5, the Hittites, have run off, and we're none the wiser.

Dorothea *lazily*

I've only the veriest dribble left of my mother's elixir. Not enough for anybody to perform any time-travelling. Perhaps I can concoct a cigarette or two ... At a stretch, maybe ...

Roland *firm, husbandly*

No, no, my love. It is without fruit, this quest. We must not attempt to travel through time again, no matter how much we would wish to.

Theressa

I earnestly think that those Hittites (Squinty, Angus, Fergie and what's-his-name) took all Modra's gold.

Miles *amused*

The ignoble Modra fed the fishes, *Cherie*.

Theressa

Of course, Miles. You are quite right. Knacker's gold, then, I should say.

Nevertheless, those Hittite boys snaffled it. I **really, firmly**

believe that!

If only we could --

Roland *still firm*

It's over. We cannot go back. Our dear Phoenician friends are no more than memories. There is no buried Hittite treasure. The dreams were an entertainment, a diversion, only.

*Moi-même*, I'm very pleased with myself, that I wrote it all down. How gallant and brave was the Monsieur Moollet! A man among men (he was) and destined (surely) for greatness and honour.

Martin *sighing*

I'm still of the opinion that young Dani (such an amusing fellow) might have ... Such a pity ...

*Our camera backs away. The group of French and English friends loll about, in reverie. High in the sky, behind where they sit, so that they cannot see it, hovers the huge eagle.*

END OF SCENE

## Second part of DANI'S EXPERIENCE

### **V, Scene xiv:** Ancient Times In An Unnamed Tomb 1500 BCE

*The four older brothers (Stiffy, Chooker, Crackafat and Emu) will be played by the actors playing Stiffy/Miles, Mullet/Roland, Feral/Martin and Dingo/Vincent respectively.*

*These men sport strange plaited beards.*

*The scene begins in darkness with slowly appearing light. Patto (covered again in Pooter's lime green slime) is working hard on a large wooden door in the burial chamber of an unnamed pharaoh. He calls back to Chips who is in some other part of the tomb.*

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Patto *over his shoulder* Yeah, mate. Be with you in a sec ... My hands are slippery ... Can't get this stubborn, bloody door to ...

*With a gigantic push using his shoulder, Patto manages to break open the door.*

Patto meets up with the older brothers who were sacrificed to Baal.

*In the room, lit by a few torches in wall brackets, four men sit around a table, playing a complicated ancient board game involving dice and ivory tokens. They look up with casual interest at Patto as he violently bursts into the private chamber. But Patto's arrival hardly interrupts the game play.*

*Patto is flummoxed. He stares closely at "Stiffy".*

*Note to the wise: in the first movie (The Curse) when they were swimming in the Adriatic Sea, Stiffy explained that his older brother died **before** sacrifice. But technically (as he was being prepared for sacrifice) Stiffy the elder can slide into this scene. Just ... by a whisker ...*

Patto *awestruck* Stiffy?

Stiffy's brother Yeah?

Patto *scratching his head* I'm a bit gutted seeing you here, mate ... um ...

*The man sneers but returns to the board game.*

Stiffy's brother I'm yer cousin, alright. But I'm Stiffy's older brother, also called Stiffy.

And before yer say it, yeah I look like him and all.

Patto *awestruck* But ... um ... you're --

Stiffy's brother *nasty tone* I'm dead. Well-spotted, young Patto. Well-spotted.

*Chooker stands and reaches over to shake Patto's hand.*

Chooker How ya doin'? I'm Mullet's older brother. M'name's Chooker. And

of course I'm dead too.

*As Chooker sits down, Emu and Crackafat stand. Both shake hands with Patto.*

Emu                                      Emu: Dingo's older brother. G'day.

Crackafat                                I'm Feral's big brother: Crackafat. Killed in Baal's fiery stomach like the others. Anyway, how y'goin'?

*The men sit down again and resume the game as if Patto had moved on.*

Patto *frowning*                        First-born sons ... You were sacrificed as babies, weren't you? To Baal.

Stiffy *shrugs*                         I sort of was and I sort of wasn't. But the other boys are ridgy-didge.

*Patto is utterly confused.*

Patto                                      But ... Chooker, Crackafat, Emu ... you really fair dinkum were burned alive as babies? That sucks! I mean – so how did that work out?

Emu *very nasty tone*                It was a picnic. What d'ya fucking think it was?  
  
Go on ... Fuck off back to your cushy life, Patto. A first-born son who escaped the fire. Good on ya, prick!

*The four older brothers begin to snarl "Yeah, good on ya!" as they turn into very scary ghosts, of tremendous size. They attack Patto (punching and kicking him). Patto slips over onto his back. As best he can, Patto fights off the ghosts.*

Patto *yelling*                         Hey dudes! I'm wearing slime! I'm covered in slime!

END OF SCENE

END of DANI'S EXPERIENCE

**V, Scene xv:** In A Superb Limousine, Paris 1933.

*Dani (who was asleep in a chauffeur-driven limousine) wakes suddenly.*

*Dani yelling*                      You can't touch me! I'm covered in Pooter's slime.

*Dani recovers his equilibrium, as the several passengers of the limousine are startled by Dani's outburst. The other passengers are Louis-Jean LeBarron, Madame Mimette Renauld and Harry Polglaze.*

*LeBarron and Mimette seem concerned at Dani's outburst. Harry, however, cottons-on to the outburst. He pats Dani's knee.*

*Harry reassuring*                *Le Président* awaits you, Dani. You and LeBarron (and I guess myself as well) are about to receive France's most prestigious cinema award. Come on! Let's face the fans!

*The limousine has stopped amidst a large contingent of movie fans. They are held back by gendarmes and barricades. LeBarron, Harry, Dani and his new wife Mimette wave to the crowds as they attend the star-studded awards ceremony. Cameras flash and there is great excitement.*

*A large banner announces "La Touche Française". Another announces "The President's Award For Film Excellence".*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT V

END OF FILM

*The film ends with the closing credits. They roll over the crowds of movie-goers, waving and jumping excitedly.*