

IMPOVERISHED AND POORLY

aka

BROKE 'N' ILL

Priceless rare monotreme fossils are vanishing.

Meanwhile Cooper is asked to give a DNA sample.

Jeremy Hurstbridge is concerned at the disappearance
of his younger sister Winlagh in Broken Hill, NSW, Australia.

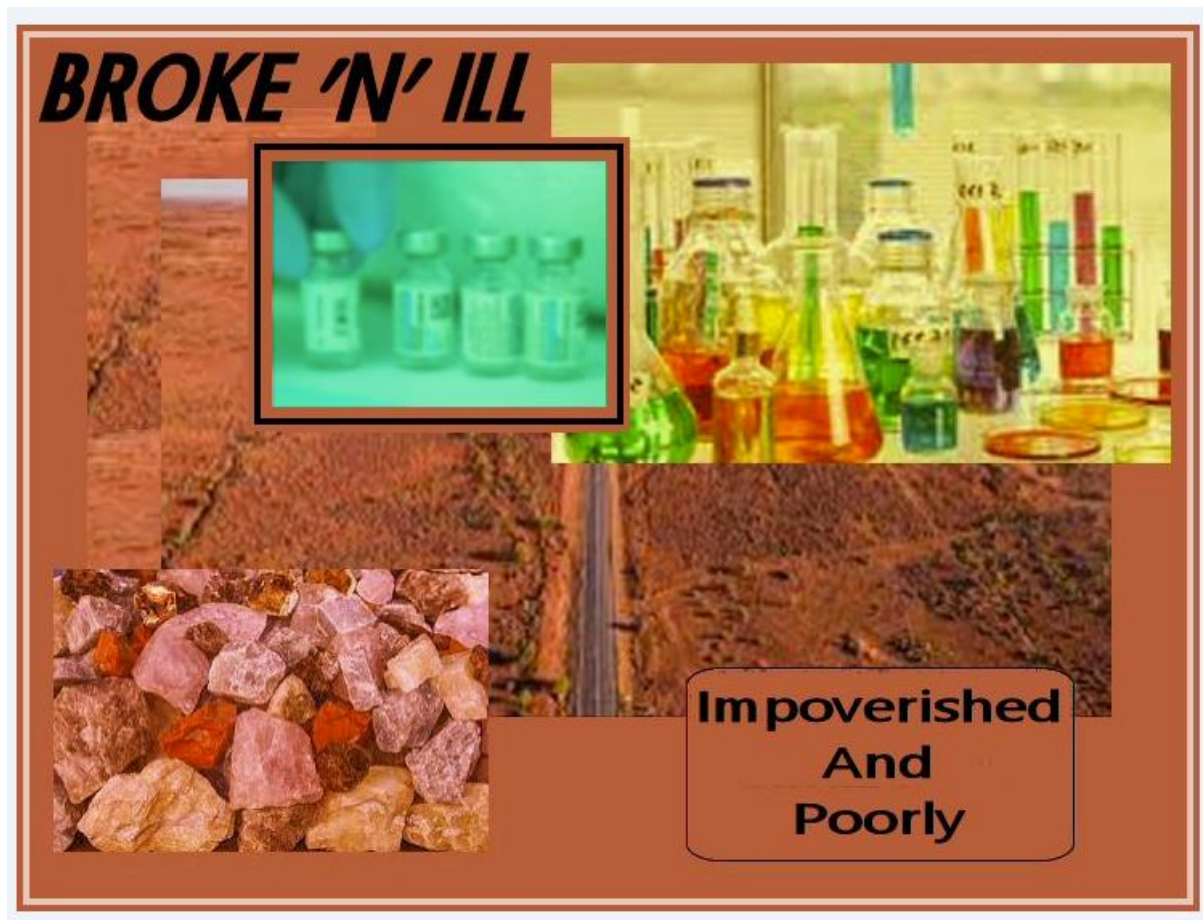
Ed Swan picks up a 12 year old cold case to investigate:
that of a pharmacist (murdered execution-style).

"Swannie" also gains an assistant: Constable Blaike Penfold.

Along with a couple of gifted indigenous locals.

All this while a new disease called F-PROTA has taken over where COVID left off.

The race is on for Ed, Blaike, Cooper and Jeremy to solve the mystery.



PROLOGUE

PROLOGUE, Scene i: Messages In The Fire (Blondstone) **DAY 1**

An old indigenous man (Grandpa Henry Burrah) is burning off in a disorganized backyard. There is a large, rusty metal drum from which smoke billows. Henry looks disappointed. He shakes his head glumly. Henry's grandson Liam Burrah-Shaw (aged about 15) strolls up. Henry looks at Liam and then points to the fire.

Henry Best man to ever pull on a footy boot coming in a plane. Soon.
 Soon.

Liam *surprised* Who's that? There's been a few.

Henry "Who's that?" you say. Reckon Ed Swannie the best. Best ever.

He help you to find your brother.

Liam Where is he?

Henry *very sad* Not good. Not good. You go find Swannie when his plane drops down from the clouds. This fire tells me that we gotta be smart. I keep it going so we can be smart. Swannie is smart: you go find him. And he'll give you back your brother.

END OF PROLOGUE SCENE

PROLOGUE, Scene ii: As Tough As Goat's Knees (Sydney) DAY 1

Superintendent Ed Swan (NSW Police force) is 189 centimetres tall.

That translates to just a smidge over 6 feet 2 inches in the old.

He is of indigenous heritage mixed with white man (about 25/75, truth be told).

An ex-AFL champion, he has not gone to seed like some of them do. But his tough, rigid, fit body has got older. He is now in his mid-40s. But footy people still talk reverently of Swannie.

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*Ed has his back to the camera as he stares out of the sixth storey window.*

*From this window we see a portion of busy Sydney Harbour. But not the Bridge.*

*Ed stands there (staring out with hands deep in pockets) as he ignores his steaming cup of coffee.*

Ed *voice-over*                      Tippolo Camira was murdered in 2010.

His body was found dumped behind some shops in a Carlingford strip. He had been brutally bashed, then shot dead. His body had been moved from the actual site of the murder (wherever that was).

*Ed gives a long sigh. He turns back to his cluttered desk from which he rescues a half-finished pack of trail-mix. Facing the camera (but not looking at it) Ed negligently nibbles some of the mix. His face wears a very thoughtful expression.*

Ed *voice-over*

There were totally no clues. Nothing.

Tippy ran a testing laboratory. Pathology. Testing blood and so on.

Nobody who knew Tippy could come up with any known threats, enemies, angry ex-girlfriends ...

Nothing. Twelve years later and we are no closer to solving the mystery.

Who killed Tippy Camira?

*Ed shakes his head, then turns back to the window – to his view of Sydney Harbour.*

Ed *voice-over*

I might be as tough as goat's knees, but I will soon be screaming for help.

*[Bitter]*

That pile of cold cases is steadily growing ...



*Some old movie clips of Ed Swan in his AFL playing days (West Coast Eagles) are shown. We hear a part of the excited and exciting commentary: "And Swannie takes a screamer! That'll bring the house down!"*

*We hear the sound of the crowd applauding and screaming as Swannie takes a hanger then kicks a goal. From that sound comes the following "titles" music.*

*Music: a very beautiful theme arises: full symphony orchestra with strong didgeridoo solo.*

END OF PROLOGUE SCENE

END OF PROLOGUE

## **TITLES ROLL THROUGH**

The view of Sydney Harbour from Ed's office window is investigated.

The odd palm tree will juxtapose well with the following opening scene.



## ACT I

### I, Scene i: All Duck No Dinner (London) **DAY 5**

*Enticing and exotic music with a tropical feel.*

*Our opening scene is quasi-tropical.*

*Our first view is looking up at a sumptuous blue sky where the sunlight filters through palm leaves.*

*It is all false. We are in London at a 5-star hotel.*

*Cooper and Jeparit lie on their backs in banana lounges which are strewn about beside an internal swimming pool. Both men wear their OBE medals along with their casual gear and sunglasses. They lean back with their eyes shut.*

Jeparit                      No, Coops. A sexy-looking redhead (past the first flush of her girlhood) sitting with a couple of corpulent gents in the swankiest restaurant in London does **not** accidentally fall into the pudding club. This is a stitch-up.

*There is a slight pause.*

Cooper                      All I know is that I've been slapped with a summons. They want to check out my DNA. Will that mean a sperm sample? Shit I hope not.

Jeparit *appalled*                      No! It's just a swab of the gunge under your tongue. Anyway, this is a complete stitch-up. They are trying to throw you under a bus.

*The two men sit up at the approach of the drinks waiter who provides fresh stubbies of beer. They both thank the waiter prior to getting stuck into the business of drinking.*

Cooper                      You reckon I'm being chucked under a bus?

Why? I don't get it.

*Jeparit sighs, shaking his head.*

Jeparit                      Neither do I. A big red double-decker London bus.

Cooper                      But they --

Jeparit *explodes*              Christ Almighty Coops! You saw that woman and **then** (without a moment's hesitation) we all got into a melee and **then** (not even pausing for breath) you were shipped off to hospital with a serious fracture to your fibula.

How was it possible for you to manage to slip your sausage into her when you were completely tied up being Max Cooper?

*Jeparit suddenly realizes that he is in a public place. He whips his head about. But no-one else is lounging in the "tropical" milieu right now and he relaxes.*

Cooper                      Well I --

Jeparit                      Do you even remember having sex with that woman?

Cooper                      No ... I --

Jeparit                      Exactly.

Now Donny and Gibbo are filming the movie right now. But they'll get a break in the near future. We're all going to front up for this DNA test (with you) because we're all gonna claim that we had sexual relations with that redheaded bird. All four of us. One in, all in. What does old Gib say? "All duck no dinner".

Cooper *confused*              But they only asked for me.

Jeparit                      Pity that the "strong-arms" went back to Sydney. Tsk.

Anyhow, four of us should do the trick. These pie-crusts will

realize that we mean business. They'll close up shop. And good riddance!

Cooper But Jeparit. They want **my** DNA. Not yours or --

Jeparit What do you have friends for? What do friends do? We stick together, mate. "All duck no dinner".

Cooper Okay. That's good. We'll all say that we fathered the baby.

*Jeparit sighs noisily then flops back into his earlier position in the banana lounge.*

Jeparit *frustrated* No, Darl. There's no baby. That's a furphy. They want your DNA for some **other** purpose.

Cooper What?

Jeparit *shrugs* Dunno. We're gonna have to sort that out.

END OF SCENE

## I, Scene ii: Impoverished And Poorly (London) **DAY 5**

All things considered, one could fly from London to Melbourne (rather than to Sydney) and then on to Broken Hill. Melbourne is actually closer to Broken Hill than Sydney. BUT the trade-off in flying from London to Melbourne is that that trip is further than from London to Sydney. (So you pays your money and you takes your choice).

*Just a bit of calculation there ...*

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And here is something else to ponder. (It doesn't bear any relationship to anything but I just think that it's cute).

Okay. So Central Time in Australia relates to the time zone covering South Australia and the Northern Territory. You set your clock BACK by 30 minutes.

AND when the Eastern states (not including Queensland) go onto Daylight Savings, so does Central Time – half-an-hour behind AEDT (Australian Eastern Daylight Time).

Sweet! So Broken Hill is in the state of NSW **BUT** it is so close to the western border that Broken Hill is in fact on Central Time. You have to imagine that you are driving through NSW with your watch set to 10 am and then you hit Broken Hill and you see this sign:



And so you wind back to 9:30 am. Too easy! (And your smart phone will do it of its own accord).

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I hope that you're all paying attention.

In the year 2000, the Olympic Games were in Sydney and they flicked over to Daylight Savings early. Central time did NOT follow suit. And so when you drove along in NSW and it was (for instance) 10 am (AEDT), when you reached Broken Hill you had to wind back your watch by 1.5 hours to 8:30 am. Even though you had not left NSW. Amazing fact!

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And if you think that **that** was useless information try this:

What did King George V have in common with King Harold Godwinson? Answer: they both had tats. When a teenager in the Navy (in Japan) King George V (then Duke of York) had a dragon and a tiger inked onto his arms. The other bloke was killed in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings (arrow through the eye). His bod was identified by his tattoos. Brutal!

Jeparit is situated in the magnificent sitting room of his suite in the 5-star London Hotel. He is busy scribbling down some notes onto paper supplied by the hotel when there is a knock at the door.

Jeparit jumps up to open the door. Gibbo and Donny enter. They are very tired. They flop down onto armchairs, sighing gustily.

Jeparit Thirsty?

Donny Sure.

Jeparit organizes cold stubbies for his two visitors. These are very welcome.

Jeparit I'll get you both a beer. And dinner won't be long. Another 5 minutes or less.

Donny Can't be too soon. I could eat the donglers off a low-flying duck. Cheers, boys!

Gibbo Geez! This film work is hard yakka. I'm sweating blood here.

Jeparit Nearly finished?

Donny *nods* Think so. What about you?

Jeparit sits facing the other two men.

Jeparit Yeah, yeah ...

Listen! Before old Coops rocks up, we need to cover off his situation.

Gibbo *sighs* Give me strength! Cooper has a situation ... *Quelle surprise*, as the Frogs would say.

Jeparit That big barney we had in the Lord Henry Scroop restaurant. Just before the face-off (before the Pommie crap-artists fronted up) -- Cooper was playing "googly-eyes" with a stunning redhead.

Story short: she is after his DNA to prove paternity.

Gibbo almost chokes on his beer. Donny groans loudly.

Jeparit It doesn't work. It can't be right.

If we were punching-on from that moment forward, and then he was whooshed off to hospital with a broken leg ...

I can't see how the hell he could have managed to slip his old-fella into **anything** let alone a sexy redhead in that expensive

restaurant. It's just rubbish.

Gibbo Jesus Christ! The usual Cooper cock-up!

Jeparit If we three give him 100% support and offer our DNA samples as well, that'll throw the cat amongst the pigeons and all will be well.

The dinner tray arrives. Jeparit spreads the feast out on the table, along with more stubbies. The talk continues as they sit down to eat. Jeparit plays host.

Donny What? Are we saying that we screwed her too?

Jeparit Correct. Make her look like a complete slut.

Gibbo *shrugs* This is what happens to A-level film stars like us. Paternity suits, estranged wives, needy charities, phantom relatives ... They'll all be queued up on the doorstep wanting huge payouts.

Jeparit Okay. I promised Coops that I'd help him to man-up at the clinic where they run these DNA tests. However, I am going to have to renege on that promise.

Donny *strop* Why?

Jeparit Flying back to Aus. To Sydney and from there straight out to "Impoverished and Poorly".

Donny *confused* What?

Gibbo *confused* Where?

Jeparit *chuckles* Impoverished is broke.

Poorly is ill.

So ... Broke and Ill ... Broke 'n' Ill.

Broken Hill!

Gibbo looks at Jeparit as if he has just landed from Mars. Donny groans again.

Gibbo Why not just say that instead of the riddle? That's so bloody typical of you.

Donny Is this something to do with your fucking gun collection?

Jeparit Yeah. I have to see a bloke (Lyle Oxley his name is). If you need suits of armour, shields, battle axes, helmets – He’s your man. He owns probably the most celebrated collection of flintlock pistols, muskets, carbines and eprouvettes in Australia. I’ve tracked him down to a suburb called “Blondstone”. Anyway, I’ll get my DNA test done before I head off and you can add that to the --

Gibbo *grunts* When Fleming Hardcastle showed you his roomful of antique firearms he cannot have known that you would end up gaga (just like him).

Jeparit Having said that, it was actually Flem who put me onto this Lyle Oxley in the first place.

Donny So you fly to Sydney and then ... ?

Jeparit One and a half hour flight to BHQ. Thereabouts.

Gibbo *warning* You’ve gotta remember that they’re on Adelaide time, not Sydney time.

Broken Hill. Tsk! It’s out in the middle of nowhere.

They’re a law unto themselves, Jep. You’ll hate it.

Cooper arrives. He does not bother to knock but simply walks straight in.

Jeparit Your dinner’s on the table along with a coldie.

Cooper Brutal!

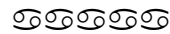
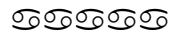
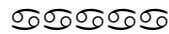
Jeparit gives Cooper a friendly slap on the shoulder.

Jeparit And the boys are standing four-square behind you. With regard to that slut-faced redhead who claims that you fathered her unborn child.

END OF SCENE

I, Scene iii: "We Did What To Whom?" (London) DAY 6

Donny, Gibbo and Cooper stand about on the footpath in a busy London street. They appear to be totally confused. There is a pub somewhat nearby. Gibbo points to the pub and the others nod. They wander along, then cross the road (dodging traffic).



Now they are sitting in a snug in the pub. They each have foaming glasses of beer.

Cooper That was brutal (in the worst sense). I hope that all that stuff is confidential?

Donny It usually is.

Gibbo *caught up in his* Oh! What a world! What a world!

thoughts

Imagine this slice of salacious scuttlebutt plastered all over the front page of the Herald-Sun. They'll find a photo of me (there's a couple doing the rounds) so drunk that I can hardly stand: like an AFL footballer on Mad Monday when the season is over ... Crissed as a picket ... Hair all askew ... Mouth at a crazy angle ... Being dragged out of a nightclub looking every inch a chainsaw-murderer ... Grim-faced police clutching my shoulders as they hurl me into the street ...

Donny *disgusted* Give it a break, will ya Gib? It's not always about **you**.

Cooper I'm still trying to get over it. That gorgeous chick was really a man in drag! My face went every shade of purple when they told me that. I caught sight of myself in the glass of a picture. Purple! They told me that "she" was a "he" and --

Gibbo My stomach is completely tied up in knots.

Here's the thing, Don. No let me finish! Here's the thing ...

I'm trying to get over the fact that four red-blooded men (us) strode like hardened warriors up to that notary public baldly stating that we had all had sex with that gorgeous piece of ... a

her-boy ...

My embarrassment level is at an all-time high.

Cooper *scared*

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

Donny

Correct.

Cooper

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

Gibbo *depressed*

Yeah. Pretty much.

Cooper

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

Donny

They wanted to --

Cooper

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

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

There is a long, thoughtful pause.

Cooper *appalled*

It's a total shocker.

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

Donny *amused*

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

Cooper

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

Donny *giggling*

Which bit?

Cooper

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

Another long, thoughtful pause during which Cooper appears utterly defeated.

Gibbo *glum* Message Jeparit. Tell him what's happened.

END OF SCENE

I, Scene iv: It Takes 24 Hours To Get There (International Flight) **DAY 7**

Qantas international flight. Jeremy Hurstbridge sits next to the window. He is trying to work through a specialist medical magazine. Next to him sits Jeparit (wearing earphones.) He holds a small tablet. The tablet is playing "The Horizon Has Eyes." We can see that the movie has reached the Bobi scenes. Jeparit chuckles delightedly. Jeremy glances at Jeparit, and is mildly amused (not annoyed).

END OF SCENE

I, Scene v: She Was Screaming Like A Banshee PART I

(Blondstone, near Broken Hill) **DAY 8**

Jeparit is driving along when he witnesses something strange up ahead on the dirt road. He stops and has a look. Nothing. Jeparit is evidently worried. He drives on, parks and watches in his rear-vision mirror. Then he sees her. There is a young woman (Winlagh) staggering drunkenly along. She tumbles onto the road, then attempts to crawl along.



FLASHBACK

As we know, Jeremy and Jeparit had been passengers on the same London to Sydney flight. Now they are also together on the same flight from Sydney to Broken Hill. However now they have fallen into conversation together like old friends.

Jeremy Yes. Everyone's unbelievably worried about her. Mum and Dad are almost frantic. No word – she's just disappeared off the face of the Earth. I dread to think what the news will be when I land.

Jeparit Oh yeah! It must be agony. Look! I hope it all turns out alright, mate.



END of FLASHBACK

Jeparit rushes to Winlagh's aid. She begins to scream and pull away. He must say something to comfort her.

Jeparit Winlagh. It's okay. I'm not going to hurt you. I flew out here with your brother. Please let me drive you to the local police station.

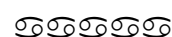
The girl struggles and continues to blub and scream.

Jeparit Hey. My name is Jasprit Namipors. I'm a lawyer: a solicitor. You can absolutely trust me 100%. I am not going to hurt you. I met your brother. He's waiting to reunite with you. He'll be overjoyed that you are safe.

The girl is past reason. Jeparit murmurs gently as he strokes the young woman. Winlagh is tied-up with sobbing, trying to wriggle free and occasionally calling out something unintelligible.

But with much careful dialog Jeparit manages to guide her into the passenger seat of his hire car.

Jeparit I'm a stranger in this area, Winlagh. But if I type in "police station" into the GPS that should work ... Here we go.



The Blondstone police station is tiny. There are two female senior constables in attendance: Grace and Leonie. Both are married women with children. Both are in their late 30s. They quickly calm the young woman down enough so that she can sip a cup of coffee. Jeparit has also received a coffee. He half sits, half leans on a corner table (out of the way).

Winlagh *tearful*

I'm English. Winlagh Hurstbridge. W-I-N-L-A-G-H. I've been part of the dig team at Connor Bend. I went to Dunbar Ridge on my own to search for fossils. That's when he grabbed me.

I woke up in a dark room. He tried to frighten me with all sorts of horrible threats. You know: he had a pack of dingoes that would rip me apart and kill me if I tried to escape. He had tame snakes that would strangle me if I struggled. All that guff.

I pretended to go along with him. Smiled and conversed with him. But he is a complete mess. A mad survivalist or doomsday prepper. Something like that. He totally went into assault mode at the slightest blip.

But then he dropped his guard and I got away.

I ran through the bush. I was so scared. I jumped at every sound. Found the dirt road and just ran and ran and ran. Of course I hid in the scrub every time a car drove along that road. In case it was him, you know.

Grace frowns, picking up a paper from the desk.

Grace *reads*

We have a report of a missing person here. The University of NSW dig team have reported the disappearance of one Winlagh Hurstbridge from Sugden, Kent. Is that you?

Winlagh *nods*

Yes. Sugden in Kent. That's me.

Grace

Good! That's you. Excellent!

[Reads]

You left the Connor Bend team seven days ago, stating that you were headed for Dunbar Ridge to search for fossils.

Winlagh *surprised*

Seven days? I haven't been able to keep track ... It was so dark.

Leonie

I'll call them at Connor Bend. They have been extremely worried. Your brother has flown out to help find you.

Winlagh *shocked*

Jeremy? He's here?

[Although Jeparit had already told Winlagh about Jeremy being in Broken Hill, Winlagh did not take that in.] Thus Jeparit simply nods.

Leonie makes the call on a mobile phone.

Leonie *on phone*

This is Constable Leonie van der Oest. I work out of the Blondstone station.

The missing lady has been delivered to us. Yes she's turned up. But she needs medical attention.

We'll drive her over to the Emergency rooms at the Medici Hospital. Yes, Mr Hurstbridge can meet us there.

Leonie completes her mobile call then smiles.

Leonie

They sound very relieved. They'll meet you at the Emergency rooms.

Winlagh stops, swinging around.

Winlagh *urgent*

Oh! I just thought of something. A couple of nights ago ... No, I don't know when it was. I definitely heard a woman moaning. Not close to me ... A long way off.

I mean ... What I'm trying to say is ... Maybe I wasn't the guy's only captive ...

END OF SCENE

I, Scene vi: She Was Screaming Like A Banshee PART II

(Blondstone, near Broken Hill) **DAY 8**

Grace drives the police car with Jeparit as her front-seat passenger.

Grace slowly pulls up on the side of the road. Clouds of red dust rise from the wheels of the police car.

The bush is peaceful.

Grace Okay. You found her here?

Jeparit nods and points to the bush.

Grace Do you mind me asking what you were doing in the area?

Jeparit Have you heard of a rich bloke – Lyle Oxley?

Grace Yeah. Lyle Oxley. He's a big wig around here. Were you visiting Lyle?

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

Grace What did you buy?

Jeparit Do you really want to know?

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

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

Jeparit pulls his docket out of his trouser pocket.

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

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

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

And some sundry flasks and gorgets.

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

Jeparit *grins* Jealous?

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

Jeparit shrugs and utters a disparaging noise.

Grace and Jeparit get out of the car and wander along the road.

Jeparit "Blondstone". I'm expecting large sandstone cliffs. But there's nothing like that here.

Grace Yes it is a funny name. It's supposed to be "Bloodstone" but someone was drunk when they wrote it out. So it came out as "Blondstone" and that stuck.

Jeparit Well stone the colour of blood makes much more sense. Broken Hill is one great big sea of burnished bronze. As seen from the air.

Grace Yo.

Okay. You stated that she was moving in that direction along the verge of the road.

Jeparit Trying to move along the road but staggering in a drunken way. Like she said at the station: when she heard the car approaching she ducked back into the bush. But she was so exhausted that she just staggered. And screamed like a banshee. With a few words in between screams. I'd say she was completely terrified.

Grace nods. Grace thinks for a long time as she strolls about.

Grace We can't find this mysterious guy (the one who grabbed Ms Hurstbridge and carted her off).

You see, there have been a few females who have simply disappeared off the face of the Earth. From around here. They must have been taken ***somewhere***. But we can't find any house,

caravan, shed, humpy or anything at all where missing females could be hidden.

I'm now wondering if there might be an underground bunker. When Ms Hurstbridge is feeling up to it, we'll check out if that makes sense to her.

Jeparit Winlagh spoke of darkness. A bunker would by definition be dark.

Grace *nods* It may be possible for her to pin-point where she escaped (provided that she is willing to revisit this place).

Jeparit And then you'll send in a SWAT team, I guess.

Grace Not at first. We'll fly a heat-seeking drone over the area initially. If all goes according to plan, we'll grab some back-up from Broken Hill.

Grace and Jeparit stroll back to the car.

END OF SCENE

I, Scene vii: Ed Swan's Cold Case Rises From The Ashes (Sydney) **DAY 7**



Carlingford 2022

Screen must indicate our geographic situation:

Daytime. A sunny Sydney morning.

A robust, substantial house in Carlingford is now a crime scene.

Police and pathology mingle as they sift through evidence, bagging anything of note. Two of the three local policemen are Senior Constable Laurie Aimes and Constable Jerry Gerard. We confine our attention to them. They want to indulge in private conversation and be overheard by no-one.

Laurie *frustrated* That bloody beanpole has put the wind up me.

Jerry Uh?

Laurie *nasty* The piece of string that passes for a human being. The lofty constable.

Jerry *under-voice* Who? Penfold?

Laurie *harsh whisper* Yeah, him!

Jerry *softly* He's not as lame as ya think. I've gone a couple of rounds in the ring with him ... At the gym ... He's alright actually. Those skinny arms are deceptive, ya know. Got a marvellous reach (as you'd expect).

Laurie snorts.

Laurie *under-voice* He could be Mohammed Ali for all I know – I don't feel comfortable anymore. I tell ya ... He's poison.

He's is suggesting things that are spooking me out. And what makes it even more disturbing: he's actually right on the money.

Jerry What about?

We focus on the third member: Constable Blaike Penfold (wearing latex gloves). Blaike is very skinny, tall (190.5 centimetres, otherwise known as 6 feet 2 ½ inches) and unprepossessing. "Only his mother would love him." Laurie and Jerry move into Blaike's area. Laurie keeps looking about as if he is being hunted.

Laurie *conspiratorial* Don't just bag the bizz: take photos of it all as well. And keep shtum about it. Front and back of everything ya think is important.

Jerry You're getting paranoid.

Laurie *grumpy* I've been hauled over the coals: sloppy work. But I'm not sloppy at all. That's bullshit! And it's starting to look "iffy".

Laurie nods with finality. His glance towards Blaike is very sharp.

Blaike discovers three business cards lying about on a kitchen bench near a fruit bowl. One captures his attention. He frowns. Blaike whips out his mobile phone to snap the cards (obverse and reverse). With a quick movement Blaike bags the business cards as evidence.

Jerry *voice-off* Here we go! The Sarge has rocked-up. Now we'll see some fun.

Both Laurie and Blaike are seen to gulp as if very nervous.

Sergeant Wendell (voice deep, gruff and irritated) bawls out to the police personnel to "get a move on!" This causes Blaike to appear to bustle.

Sergeant Wendell Has anyone thought to ring Homicide yet?
voice-off

Laurie *voice-off* No we were waiting for you.

Sergeant Wendell comes into view. He is a very tough-looking specimen, full of self-importance.

Sergeant Wendell *grim* I'm here. Make the call.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*At the Carlingford police station Blaike does not have his own desk. He is simply shunted into whatever spot no-one else wants. He does possess a few carry bags filled with his work belongings. He lugs these from bolthole to bolthole without complaint.*

*Looking extremely furtive, Blaike makes a phone call. Suddenly Sergeant Wendell stomps up.*

Sergeant Wendell *gruff*    You can go home now, Constable Penfold. Ya won't get any brownie points staying late.

Blaike *shaking*                      Just one phone call and then I'm out, Sarge.

Sergeant Wendell                      Calling who?

Blaike *trembling*                      Mum. See if she wants me to --

Sergeant Wendell                      Okay.  
*dismissive*

*Laurie stands in the background watching Blaike. Blaike is scared. But the Sergeant moves off, coughing and grunting. Blaike dives into one of his carry bags and drags out a small notebook.*

*Blaike glances at Laurie who frowns at him deeply. Then Laurie mouths: "How did you know?"*

*Blaike goggles at Laurie, appalled. Laurie turns and walks off. Blaike trembles and sweats profusely.*

*When Blaike speaks, he keeps his voice as quiet as possible.*

Blaike *on phone*                      Cold Cases? Great. This is Constable Penfold of Carlingford. I need to speak to Superintendent Ed Swan, please. If he's available.

*There is a tiny pause. Whatever Blaike hears on the phone causes him to stand abruptly, his eyes goggling. We can see that his brain is whirring.*

Blaike *on phone*                      Good evening, Superintendent Swan. I have some information in relation to a cold case that I believe you're --

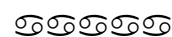
*Tiny pause. Blaike is holding his notebook as if it will be an essential part of the call.*

Blaike *on phone*                      Sir. Tippolo Camira. I can come straight over and --

*Blaike listens. He is absurdly pleased.*

Blaike *on phone*                      Sure! I'll be right over. You're in Cremorne Place? Good! See you soon!

*Blaike hangs up the phone. He is on a supreme adrenaline rush. Blaike pumps the air as if he has just scored a match-winning goal.*



*The sun is setting. Cremorne Place is all about offices and old-fashioned units. Not up-market by any stretch of the imagination. A taxi pulls up. Blaike (still in uniform) jumps out, pays the driver, then races towards one of the large buildings nearby.*



*Superintendent Ed Swan can hardly see his desk. It is covered in cardboard storage files. The pile of “In” is overwhelming. There is no “Out” pile.*

*We first saw Ed’s office in the Prologue.*

*There is a knock at the door.*

Ed                                      Yeah. Come in.

*Blaike enters and snaps a salute. Ed nods, indicating a seat. Blaike utters a polite “Thank you”. Then he sits. It is evident that Blaike is in the presence of his idol.*

Ed                                      Did you park legally? The parking peeps are pretty savage around here.

Blaike                                  Caught a cab.

*Ed nods. He is tired and bored.*

Ed                                      Speak to me. What have you got?

Blaike                                  Early this morning the body of an unidentified male was discovered by a cleaner at an address in Carlingford. He had been done-over pretty bad: battered then shot.

It wasn’t the owner of the property: just some John Doe who had ... I dunno.

However, the point that will interest **you** (Sir) is that I turned-up some business cards. Under a fruit bowl. They are --

Hang on!

*Blaike rushes to open his mobile phone, locate the photo gallery and then shove the mobile phone over the desk to Ed.*

Blaike *excited*                      I bagged these business cards as evidence (leaving them for the Homicide guys), but prior to doing that I photographed them because at Carlingford evidence is always going astray.

Ed *sceptical*                        “Evidence is always going astray”? That’s not good ...

Blaike *excited*

No, Sir. I'm pretty worried about it actually.

Okay.

Exhibit A.

Obverse and reverse of a chemist's business card. "Labrador Chemist Proprietor John Tenny B Pharm". The business is defunct. However the phone number there is a Broken Hill number.

Now Sir – note the name and phone number scribbled in biro on the reverse. It's "T. Camira". And that was his mobile number: Tippy's number.

If these suckers survive then the boffins may be able to get prints. I can let you know more later when the fingerprints have been lifted but thought you'd want to get straight onto it in the meantime.

Ed *frowns*

Why would you imagine that?

Blaike

Sir! I know that cold cases hang around going nowhere. Then suddenly out of the blue something bobs up. Here's a bloke bashed senseless (a real mess he was) and then shot. And nearby is a card with Tippy's name on it. That says "connection" to me.

Ed

And the next card?

Blaike *very keen*

The second card is even more interesting. Obverse and reverse ... A Broken Hill company. I'm not getting anywhere with it but it's a lead. I'm certain of it. "Oxmond Property Group". Also defunct.

So two Broken Hill cards found in Carlingford (which is 1140 kilometres away from Broken Hill).

And the third card (the ANZ card) is local (Carlingford) but I'll have it checked out anyway. See that phone number and name written in biro on it? Mt Isa (would you believe?) The ANZ branch in Mt Isa (manager Alf Boynton). My deep internet search tells me that

Mt Isa is over 1700 kilometres from Broken Hill.

*Ed frowns heavily.*

Ed Mt Isa! Jesus H. Christ!

Blaike This might be all you need! Three business cards found in a home where some schmuck turns up murdered. That's gotta be totally relevant. And this latest murder so like that of Tippy.

*Ed sighs. He hands the mobile phone back to Blaike. Ed stands. Ed saunters over to the window where he stares out at the Harbour. Blaike looks very concerned just as if he is waiting to hear whether he is getting detention at school. When Ed speaks, his back is to Blaike.*

Ed Why did you catch a cab? Was there no divisional vehicle available?

Blaike No, Sir.

Ed Your own car?

Blaike There wasn't time. The Sarge told me to nick off (just when I was calling you) so I just sprinted to the cab rank.

*Ed smiles and nods.*

Ed Keen as mustard. I wish that I still had your enthusiasm, your energy.

Your Sarge doesn't even know you're here, does he?

Blaike *small voice* No, Sir. No. I never mentioned it. He thinks I've gone home.

Ed He gives you shitloads of grief, this Sergeant Wendell. Am I right?

Blaike *nods sadly* I've tried to work hard and that but he prefers blokes who'll go and get tanked with him. Peeps who will laugh at his jokes that I don't even understand. He thinks I'm a teacher's pet or that ...

Ed And how did you connect the cold case of Tippy Camira's murder with anything? It was 12 years ago.

How old are you?

Blaike *weakly*

I'm 22 Sir. I'll be 23 in June.

Ed

You were a child when Tippy Camira met his untimely end.

*Blaike feels that he is totally on the carpet. He gulps. Then he goes for broke.*

Blaike *rushes*

Superintendent Swan: you're my hero. I'm either watching old replays of you playing footy for the Eagles or else I'm looking you up on the cops' database. I've followed all your cases. Whenever your name pops up on the web news, I get goose-bumps.

*Ed turns around. He looks Blaike over. In a blind panic, Blaike surges on.*

Blaike

Those business card were like ... I thought that whoever answered my call would transfer me to one of your underlings. And then **you** answered and I ...

Well, I ...

Ed

What is your name?

Blaike *deflated*

Penfold. Constable Blaike Penfold. Sir.

Ed

Do you think that you would be interested in working with me? Hopefully you can get over the "Sir" bizzo and call me "Ed". And perhaps some of your youthful bravado will rub off on me. We can only hope so.

What d'ya say?

*Blaike shoots up. He is overcome with emotion, as if he has won Lotto. His mouth works but no words come out for a couple of seconds.*

Blaike *thrilled*

Oh! Wait 'til I tell Mum! She'll be over the moon. Thank you. I mean – Thank you.

Ed

Okay. I'll call your supervisor and swing the transfer. Write down your phone number on a bit of that notebook you're gripping. I'll call you. You'd better front up at work tomorrow as usual ... Wait to hear from me.

And be cool! My weight is a lot heavier than your Sarge's weight.  
He's gonna have to like it and lump it in losing you to me.

Blaike

He won't care. I haven't even got me own desk.

*[Grins]*

Ed.

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT I



## ACT II

### II, Scene i: Broken Bones In Broken Hill (Broken Hill) **DAY 9**



AEST Sydney Melbourne	ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin	BST Britain
09:20 am	08:50 am	23:50 (11:50 pm) previous day

*Our scene is the Broken Hill airport. Picture above is from the Wiki page for “Broken Hill Airport”. [I wanted to give size, scope and colour to the story.]*

*The plane to Melbourne is due to take off in under 10 minutes (at 9:00 am ACST).*

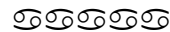
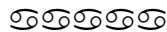
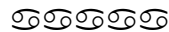
*Jeremy is on his mobile to someone.*

*The plane from Sydney lands. Jeremy watches it then hangs up his phone. He checks his watch. He glances up at the Arrivals screen. Then he looks over at the Departures screen. An older man murmurs to his wife (who replies with “Mmms” as he speaks).*

Man                                      That'll be the plane from Sydney. They'll give it a quick spruce-up and then we'll board. I reckon that's how it'll go.

*[Sighs]*

Give you the shits wouldn't it? Flying back and forward to Sydney all day. More than one and a half hour flight ...



*The passengers arriving from Sydney alight from their plane down temporary stairs which have been manually moved into position. Our camera is stationed beside Jeremy. Through the large airport window we can see Ed and Blaike alight. They are both so tall that they stand out. Ed is in a casual polo shirt and jeans. Blaike is in his police uniform. Blaike struggles with a handful of manilla folders. They nearly fall out of his grasp just as he passes Jeremy. We clearly see "Bay Morton Pharma" on one of the papers.*

*Our camera closes-in on Jeremy. He frowns, then he makes a brief check of his watch. With a quick intake of breath, he rushes after Ed and Blaike. Jeremy calls out "'Scuse me officers!" Ed and Blaike stop, looking back as Jeremy rushes up, holding his business card in his hand. This he forces onto Ed.*

Jeremy                                      Sorry for being a nosey parker but I noticed one of the brochures you have there is from Bay Morton. The pharmaceutical company. I've been worried about that crowd for some time. Funny business.

If you want to talk to me ... I'm the pathologist at Cadbury. In England. Not far out of London.

*Ed (open-mouthed) takes Jeremy's card. Ed stares at it.*

Overhead voice                              Passengers to Melbourne on Qantas flight QH552 may now make their way to gate 3. We are close to boarding.

Jeremy *flustered*                              I'm afraid that I can't stop. I have to catch the next bird to Melbourne. Then I am on a long, long flight back to the UK. But

when I hit the ground back home we can chat on video link ...

Hope that I'm not being officious.

Blaike                      Hang on, Sir.

*Without hesitation, Blaike puts the manilla folders between his knees, and grabs his notebook from his pocket. Blaike scribbles his name and mobile phone number onto a scrap of paper which he shoves towards Jeremy.*

Blaike                      Thank you. Video link sounds great.

Here's my number. Call at any time. This is Superintendent Ed Swan and I'm Constable Blaike Penfold. Cold Cases. We'll be eager to hear from you.

*Jeremy is as surprised as Ed is. Jeremy nods to Blaike then to Ed. The two Australian policemen watch Jeremy disappear out onto the tarmac.*



*Ed revisits Jeremy's card.*

Ed *reads*                      Jeremy Hurstbridge MD B Sc FRCPATH (London)

Forensic Pathology and Scientific Examination

Claude Willington Centre, Cadbury

(Practising from St Elm Hospital, Cadbury)

And so on ...

There's an email address. That will come in handy.

Blaike *frowns*                      "Hurstbridge" rings a bell.

Ed *nods, thoughtful*                      Yes. The bell is ringing for the young lady who was found staggering along a road following her incarceration out in the bush

...

Blaike                      That's right. So that bloke will turn out to be a relly, whadya reckon?

Ed *nods*                      Her brother made a quick visit from the UK when she went missing.

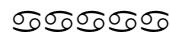
Blaike *nods*                      That'll be it! Aw, I'm always glad to get all the jigsaw pieces in place.

*Ed nods again, grinning.*

*The two police officers wander over to the hire car counter. As expected there are formalities as the clerk behind the counter sorts out their vehicle and so on.*

Ed                      You've got your notebook there. Write this down before we forget.  
                                "I've been worried about Bay Morton for a while. Funny business."  
                                That's what that pathologist said.

*Blaike busily scribbles down the words into his notebook.*



### GETTING JEREMY HOME SUCH THAT HE CAN PHONE BLAIKE

On **DAY 9**, Jeremy flies to Melbourne, landing at around 11:00 am AEST. He is then directed to the International terminal where he hangs about prior to boarding the flight to London just before 15:50 (3:50 pm) AEST.

On **DAY 10** that flight lands at Heathrow with passengers disembarking at 6:40 am BST.

Jeremy gets himself home, sleeps, freshens up and then fronts-up at work late in the afternoon of **DAY 10**. By the time Jeremy is able to phone Blaike, it is DAY 11 in Broken Hill and the time is 1:45 am.

*The scene now changes to a delightful beer garden at the back of an impressive motel in Connor Bend. Winlagh and Jeparit sit at a table in the shade. They have drinks: Winlagh has a mixed drink while Jeparit sticks to beer.*

Jeparit                      The doctor who treated you mentioned your broken finger. How'd that happen?

Did he do that? The guy who grabbed you?

Winlagh                    No! Don't laugh but I play ladies' cricket. I dived badly for a ball and paid the price.

Jeparit                      Wow! I'm a total cricket tragic. Play whenever I get a chance. Bit of an all-rounder I guess you'd say. Off-spin bowler and middle-order batsman.

*Grace approaches bearing two cappuccinos. She places one cup near Winlagh, who thanks her. Then Grace sits.*

Grace                        I've just heard from Leonie. A couple of policemen from Sydney have flown in and want to talk to you. One is a superintendent (which is rather impressive). Is that okay? For them to speak with you?

Winlagh                    Of course. I'm rather chuffed (rating a superintendent).

Grace                        Leonie understands that these two officers from Sydney arrived at BHQ just as your brother was heading off. They exchanged deets. It now seems like all this is linked-up to something smoky going on in both Australia and the UK.

Jeparit *to Grace*            Have you done the heat-seeking drone search? Over the area?

Grace                        It's on now. We'll hear the results shortly, I guess.



*Along with Winlagh, Jeparit and Grace, Ed and Blaike are now seated at the table. Ed and Blaike have beers.*

*Winlagh holds Jeremy's business card in her hand. She reads and nods. Then returns the card to Ed, who soundlessly hands it over to Blaike.*

Winlagh Yes. Jeremy is a very gifted Patho. So he deals with dead **human** bodies while I deal with long-dead **animals**. Fossils. Monotremes.

He told me that the whole family became very worried and so good old big brother leapt onto a plane (at hideous expense) to fly to my rescue.

But he had to whizz back. He's more-or-less irreplaceable. Plus his wife Beth is expecting their third child. So once he knew I was safe he tore back home to England.

*Winlagh looks around at Jeparit.*

Winlagh Mr Namipors found me and rescued me. Have you been introduced to Mr Namipors?

*Jeparit goes through the business of handshakes and introductions. Blaike stares at Jeparit.*

Blaike Sorry ... But you ... Are you the actor they call Jeparit? But your real name is Jasprit?

*Jeparit (embarrassed) nods briefly.*

Ed *confused* Actor?

Blaike *thrilled* "Slash And Burn". You were brilliant when you played every single part in the Mocket story. Oh man that was totally amazing!

Jeparit *squirming* Thank you. That's ... Um ...

Blaike *on a roll* And the Spanish guy in "The Horizon Has Eyes". Jeez I loved that film. The explosions were mega.

*Ed senses Jeparit's discomfort.*

Ed *to Blaike, crisp* Photos.

*Blaike hauls several photos from his pile of manilla folders. Blaike drags his sleeve across the table (as a cleaning exercise) then lays out the photos in an orderly fashion in front of Winlagh.*

Ed *to Winlagh* Take your time. We're wondering if any of these men was the bloke who captured you.

*Winlagh stares at the photos. She is uncertain.*

Blaike                      Here's a thought. It might be easier to chuck out the mugshots of anyone who is **not** the kidnapper.

*Winlagh nods. She pushes two of the photos out of the way. After a moment, she ejects another two photos. Now she has three photos left.*

Winlagh *apologetic*      It was dark. I'm not sure. He could be any one of these men.  
Sorry I know that's not very helpful.

Blaike                      Thank you ma'am. That was very helpful. It's an initial leg-up.

*Blaike scoops up the three remaining photos. He goes to another table to write up the results of Winlagh's cursory identification.*

Winlagh *to Jeparit*      You told me that you were a lawyer. You never mentioned film star.

Jeparit *reluctant*        I was dragged into it by some mates.

*Jeparit recalls something. He turns to Ed.*

Jeparit                      Oh! Before I forget ...  
  
My mate Cooper is on his way here. I was gonna call him my partner in crime but that's probably a bad choice of words.

Ed                            Why is he coming to Broken Hill?

Jeparit                      Basically he's been spooked by a bit of skulduggery. He was summonsed to give a DNA sample with regard to a paternity test. That was in London. If you knew Coops, that would come as no surprise. Every day of the week for old Coops. But the "woman" turned out to be a guy in drag. **And** (plus plus plus) he didn't get a chance to ... er ... "do the deed" in any way, shape or form. It's a complete nonsense, but it's put the wind up Cooper.

Ed                            That still doesn't explain what his object is in coming here.

Jeparit *shrugs*            Every great conspiracy theorist wants a conspiracy to investigate.

I'm at the nub of something here ... Cooper doesn't want to miss out. He thinks it's all tied-in.

Blaike And can you tell us what ***you*** are doing here?

Jeparit I purchased some items to add to my armaments collection. Antiques.

Grace He's bona fide. I've been shown the docket.

Jeparit There I was sitting in sumptuous luxury in a top-flight London hotel when Hollywood heavyweight Fleming Hardcastle emailed me. The result was that I flew out of London post-haste, landed in Sydney and without even changing my socks leapt onto the next aeroplane headed for BHQ.

So that's my excuse.

Might one return the favour and ask you gentlemen the same question. Why has the senior man from Cold Cases dragged himself all this way from home along with his side?

*Ed stares at Jeparit. Blaike (ever ready to butt into the conversation) stays shtum at this juncture. Ed turns to Winlagh.*

Ed You are currently working with the Connor Bend dig team.

Winlagh That's right.

Ed There's another similar dig site (a long way away). Do you happen to know if any of the Connor Bend people ever worked at Riversleigh?

Winlagh Oh yes! Most of them did.

Ed Riversleigh is in the Mt Isa area. Riversleigh: where similar fossils of monotremes and marsupials abound.

Winlagh *nods* And now the focus is here at Connor Bend (or rather Dunbar Ridge). Some of the stuff we find in this area is quite special.

Ed                      Sorry Ms Hurstbridge but I'm leading you off the track.

We may be able to identify your captor if he left any bodily fluids  
on your person. Sorry to be indelicate ...

Did he kiss you or mishandle you in any way? Did he try to have  
sex with you (even if he didn't penetrate)?

Winlagh             No! I managed to put him off.

Blaikie                How did you manage that? Do you mind my asking?

*Winlagh is embarrassed. She grabs Grace's hand and leads her off. While the men look on in awe,  
Grace and Winlagh whisper together. Then they return to the table.*

Grace *smug*           It's okay. Secret woman's business. I'll write it up later.

*The men appear very uncomfortable whereas Grace and Winlagh are utterly serene.*

END OF SCENE

## II, Scene ii: Droning On (various Broken Hill locations) **DAY 9**

This is all going to be a bit of “snatch-and-grab”. We need to piece together some quick scenes to indicate the police process of identifying where the bunker might be. Then the SWAT team will flex up. Winlagh will assist them. So we’ll have to switch back and forth.

- The heat-seeking drone flies over the bush at Blondstone.
- In the tiny Blondstone police station Grace and Leonie watch a young woman who is remotely manipulating the heat-seeking drone. She has a large screen and complicated joystick to work with.
- It appears that the location has been successfully identified. Co-ordinates are noted. Phone calls are made.

- A people-mover bearing the identifier “BROKEN HILL POLICE” is parked on the dirt road near Blondstone (as seen earlier when Jeparit found Winlagh). Four policemen and two policewomen (all in flak jackets and combat gear) move away from the people-mover.
- We hear skat vocals as Winlagh points to where she escaped from the bunker.
- We see the SWAT team members disappearing down into the bunker.
- Winlagh is seen to begin weeping. A policewoman comforts her.
- Two women are led out of the bush. They are screaming and tottering about in the same manner witnessed earlier with Winlagh when Jeparit rescued her.
- Inside the sprawling, untidy bunker the SWAT police gather and bag evidence.

END OF SCENE

## II, Scene iii: The Ed-Blake Brains Trust (Dunbar Ridge) **DAY 10**

AEST Sydney Melbourne	ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin	BST Britain
09:00 am	08:30 am	23:30 (11:30 pm) previous day

*Ed and Blaike have managed to find accommodation in a functional hut in the Dunbar Ridge area. They are in the middle of nowhere.*

*Ed stands about in the sparse bush (hands deep in pockets), ignoring his steaming cup of coffee. His face bears a thoughtful expression. He looks about.*

Ed *voice-over*

Tippolo Camira was murdered in 2010.

His body was found dumped behind some shops in a Carlingford strip. He had been brutally bashed, then shot dead. His body had been moved from the actual site of the murder (wherever that was).

*Ed watches Blaike wandering about. Blaike sees Ed. Blaike gives a quick wave but does not approach Ed. Instead, Blaike hikes off in the opposite direction.*

Ed *voice-over*

There were totally no clues. Nothing.

Tippy ran a testing laboratory. Pathology. Testing blood and so on.

Nobody who knew Tippy could come up with any known threats, enemies, angry ex-girlfriends ...

Nothing. Twelve years later and we are no closer to solving the mystery.

Who killed Tippy Camira?

*Ed saunters very slowly back to the hut. Blaike appears on the veranda. He is eating cereal from a plastic bowl.*

Blaike

Thought I'd let you have some peace. To think. I could see that you were getting your thoughts together.

*Ed nods.*

Ed

What about yourself?

Blaike

Leonie from Blondstone has called. The SWAT team went into action once they worked out where the secret bunker was. Two females (abducted along with Ms Hurstbridge) have been recovered. They've been taken to the hospital for observation. Apparently they are traumatized more than anything but they do have some slight injuries. We can interview them later today.

No sign of the kidnapper as yet ... Um ...

Ah ... Oh yeah! They've taken away evidence. Hopefully lift his prints off that evidence. Hope so ...

At least get an ID (if he has form and he's on our database).

Ed *shakes head*

That bit about interviewing these captives later ...

Nuh. Let's not tread on anyone's feet. Because the thing is ...

We're working blind here. This is new criminal activity which may or may not tie in with our Tippy Camira cold case.

My gut feeling is that we leave local Detective Inspector Dorothy Morebank to follow through with the initial investigations. She will work with Leonie and Grace and Winlagh and these two captive women ... Correlate the evidence ...

Yes. That makes good sense to me.

Then you'd better ring D.I. Morebank (Grace or Leonie will have her number) ... Tee-up a meeting, will you? When she gets her head around it all.

Blaike

Sure thing.

Ed *determined*

We came to Broken Hill specifically to follow up on those two business cards you nabbed in Carlingford. One was the Tippy Camira card. The other was very intriguing: the Oxmond Property Group.

I don't want us to get side-tracked from that stuff.

Blaike

Yo.

Ed, is it okay if I make that promised video link call to that Pommy pathologist? The guy we met at BHQ?

Ed

Yeah. Ring him if you want to. Have you got some ideas?

Blaike

Not sure. Yes and no. Something occurred to me.

So it's okay for me to call him?

Ed

Sure. But you'll have to check what time it is in England.

*Blaike nods.*

Blaike

Rightio. I'll send him a text message first.

Ed

Oh. And talking of "send", please send me all the photos of the business cards that you reeled as evidence in Carlingford.

Blaike

Sure.

*[Looks a question]*

Right away.

Ed

Guess you were right on the money, Blaike. The Homicide team ***do not*** have them as evidence. Those cards (like you said would happen) have done a runner.

And the third one as well: the ANZ job. Send me the photos of all three cards.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| AEST Sydney Melbourne | ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin | BST Britain |
| 10:30 am | 10:00 am | 01:30 am (same day) |

A video link is in play (the cops at Dunbar Ridge and Jeremy in his Cadbury home).

Jeremy

Sorry fellas. It's half-past-one in the am.

Ed

Christ! Sorry! We can call you later if that's --

Jeremy

No. It's cool. It's cool.

It sort of occurred to me how weird it was meeting you blokes in Broken Hill. Haven't been thinking of much else.

Blaike

Something stands out. The man who rescued your sister: did you speak to him?

Jeremy *carefully*

Only briefly.

Blaike

He flew out from England. But while there (in the UK I mean), he and his friend Max Cooper were involved in a brawl in a public place. This Max got his leg broken.

Subsequently he was asked to give a DNA sample.

Jeremy

Yes. I heard that story.

Blaike

Your sister mentioned that her kidnapper may have taken a DNA

swab. She's not sure ... but anyway she has a broken finger from a mishap playing cricket.

Ed shifts in his chair. Suddenly he is interested. So is Jeremy.

Jeremy *really keen* Yes?

Blaire When they were rescued this afternoon, two women who'd been abducted by your sister's abductor – they also had minor breaks. They were accidental in that they occurred during a scuffle with the kidnapper. And one of the women definitely remembers having a DNA swab taken. Against her will.

There is a ghastly silence. Jeremy is thinking, very rapidly. Suddenly, his face lights up.

Jeremy Look! The reason I chased after you blokes at the Broken Hill airport was something I saw you carrying.

Ed jumps up, rescuing the Bay Morton Pharma brochure. He moves up close to Blaire, holding up the brochure.

Jeremy That's it! The words "Bay Morton" jumped out at me.

Blaire Do all these things string together? Broken bones, DNA, Bay Morton ... ? Is there a link?

Suddenly, a small girl (Jeremy's daughter Simone-Louise) crawls onto Jeremy's knee. She is in brightly-coloured pyjamas. She cries weakly. Jeremy is very comforting.

Jeremy Sorry guys. Parenting duties. This is Simone-Louise. She just turned three. I'd better go. Can hear the sounds of war erupting in the bedroom.

Listen! I'll buzz you guys when I get to work tomorrow. Today I mean. We'll rap properly then. Okay?

The screen blips out. Ed and Blaire stare at the blank screen.

Ed *frowns* That's disappointing.

Blaire Maybe not. He'll have the night to get his thoughts together.

Meanwhile I'll get banging on the keyboard: write all this up.

Ed *squinting*

You know what? I reckon we're onto something.

Blaike sets up his laptop and fiddles about getting himself organized. Meanwhile Ed stares at the wall, thinking.

Ed

You were part of an evidence sweep at a house in Carlingford when you discovered three business cards.

Blaike

Yeah. You've seen them on my phone. The Tippy Camira one and the one for the property group in Broken Hill: Oxmond Property. I followed up with that but it's now defunct. And the ANZ bank manager's card. We can probably scrap that. Mt Isa is a bit of a stretch, I reckon.

Oh! And the house where the body was found is owned by Les Leforest. He's flying home from New Zealand as we speak.

Ed

Les Leforest, you say? Any priors?

Blaike

Nup. Clean. A respectable business man.

Ed *drily*

In whose respectable house a guy has been roughed-up then shot dead.

Blaike

I know we're miles out of Broken Hill but there's a possible slash probable lady I want to speak to. She's the one-time Girl Friday at this Oxmond company. Now working as a housemaid at the Shamrock Hotel. Her name is --

Suddenly Blaike is super excited.

Blaike *shouts*

Whoa doggies! You are not gonna **believe** this! You are not gonna believe this!

Ed

What won't I believe?

Blaike

Vere Desmond has now been identified as the stiff who was brutally murdered at Carlingford in Les Leforest's house. His fingerprints came from a couple of drunk driving charges in

Broken Hill. And these were evidenced on the door handle, the bench and a dirty coffee cup we found in the sink.

Oh! this is good! This is good!

Ed You never told me the name of this possible slash probable lady.

Blaike She's legally changed her name back to her maiden name: Dawn Carr. But she was married (for a time) to Vere Desmond.

[Very excited]

We are **so** on a winner!

Ed *thinking aloud* Carlingford ... Tenuous link with Tippy ... I admit that we really are clutching at straws ...

Blaike This hotel housemaid lady could really crack this thing wide open.

Ed Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Step back. Let's get these duckies lined up (as they say).

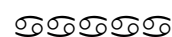
You were turning-over Les Leforest's house because an unidentified male was discovered therein – brutally bashed then shot dead. The male stiff turns out to be Vere Desmond, co-founder of the now inoperative Oxmond Property Group. The co-founder of that group is ... who?

Blaike Er ... Trevor Oxley.

Ed Younger brother of --

Blaike *nods* Lyle Oxley who is the guy that Jeparit visited to buy the antique whatsits.

Ed Well, we can discount Jeparit. He only just flew in from London. But I'm more than interested in Trevor. Let's catch up with him.



| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| AEST Sydney Melbourne | ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin | BST Britain |
| 12:00 pm noon | 11:30 am | 03:00 am (same day) |

Our camera is stationed in the Shamrock Hotel on one of the major streets in Broken Hill. We are on the fifth floor. One of the hotel rooms is untenanted: its door is open. The housemaid Dawn Carr works diligently at her duties (getting the room prepared for the next guest). She continues her work during the interview with Ed and Blaike, who stand just inside the doorway. The conversation is rapid-fire.

Dawn You never say about someone "Oh! I'm so happy that he's dead".
 But in the case of my ex – yes! I'm happy that he's dead.
 And no surprise to me that he was knocked off. Just deserts.
 I suppose that makes me number one suspect straight away. But I
 haven't graced Sydney-city-of-our-dreams with my presence for
 donkey's years. And probably never will again (truth be told).

Ed No, you are not a suspect Ms Carr. We believe it to be highly
 unlikely that a woman would have perpetrated the brutal murder
 of your husband.

Dawn *cross* ~~Ex~~-husband. Get it right.

Ed Sorry.

Dawn *bitter* I'm a fully trained book-keeper and stenographer. But it's like I've
 got priors (the way I get treated in the job market). So you now
 find me doing-out rooms in the Shamrock Hotel.

[Nasty set to her face]

Thanks Vere! Thanks Trev! (You bastards!)

Ed Sorry. I wonder if --

All the pent-up anger and frustration that Dawn has bottled-up for years comes pouring out.

Dawn *on a roll* There was nothing to choose between Trev and Vere. Two peas in
 a pod. Managing a company when neither of them had the

managerial capabilities of a gnat. Shifting the goalposts every five minutes. I'd be told to do something by Vere and then Trev would march in and completely countermand that last instruction. "Ring Mr A". "No don't ring Mr A -- ring Mr B instead." "Have you called Mr A yet? No? Why not?"

On and on and on it went like that. Vere was a complete arse-wipe as a husband anyway ... Working for him made it all 80 times as bad. And Trev is nothing more than a vicious thug.

No. All up, I'm glad Vere is dead. And if his death was violent and he died in extreme pain – then good!

Blaike What did --

Dawn Maybe we should hope for the quinella: someone knocks off my ex and *then* wipes out Trevor Oxley in the same *coup d'état*. How glorious would that result be?

Blaike *persists* What did the Oxmond Property Group do? What work was it? Like – was it Real Estate or --

Dawn You might have said debt collectors. But these two blokes were much worse than that.

It was bully-boy standover knee-capper work.

You know ... People would issue savage threats like: "If you don't co-operate mate we'll call in the Oxmond boys and they can sort you out." Thuggery. Bloodthirsty thuggery. That's what it was.

Blaike They sound very like the Terzo outfit.

Dawn *sarcastic* Nah! The Terzos would be cute baby angels by comparison with the ruthless Oxmonds.

Ed Your ex-husband's body was found at an address in Carlingford. At the home of Les Leforest. Ever heard of him?

Dawn Yeah. He was in with that whole Oxley crowd.

Blaike Do you know where Trevor Oxley might be found?

Dawn *roundly* No I don't! As I said, I hope he's history. With any luck he's been fed to the sharks in Botany Bay.

Ed is about to speak when Dawn puts her hands on her hips and lays down the law.

Dawn *with finality* You know what I would do if I was you two? I'd step away from the crimes **and** the killings **and** the whole shebang and just simply let them slug it out. Let the whole thing implode without lifting a finger. Then they'd all be deady-bones. And bloody good riddance!

That's what I'd do, guys. Make your lives much, much easier.

END OF SCENE

II, Scene iv: Kick-to-Kick With The Local Boys (Dunbar Ridge) **DAY 10**

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| AEST Sydney Melbourne | ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin | BST Britain |
| 12:45 pm | 12:15 pm | 03:45 am (same day) |

Blaike is sitting on the veranda. He has set himself up with a table such that he can keep an eye on the various bits of paperwork whilst he bangs on the laptop keyboard. Ed sits nearby, thinking.

Blaike If you were hired to knock off a bloke, you'd be paid for the hit ...
What? a 6-figure-sum?

Ed *nods* Yeah. About that.

Blaike Once the hit was achieved, then the pay-off had to be very secret such that us cops couldn't trace it.

Ed Correct.

Blaike With the Camira hit, there's totally no-one to investigate. But that

was twelve years ago. The cool way that internet banking works now wasn't the way it worked then. So it's possible that the bank manager 12 years ago might recall a hefty sum of money being moved **out** of an account – one of his customers. Say a Broken Hill branch of the ANZ bank.

Ed Nuh. That's not even likely.

Blaike The third card (the one I wanted to shaft) is for a branch in Carlingford. It was found in Carlingford. It has now gone to God along with the other two interesting cards. We only have my photos to go by.

Ed -- is it okay with you if I find out who the bank manager was at the Broken Hill ANZ branch in 2010 and interview him? Walk through it with him (with regard to Carlingford **and** Mt Isa?)

Because: if I can find the person who **withdrew** a vast amount then I can trace where that money went.

Ed No you're --

Blaike *pleading* The two murders are so alike that it's scary: Camira and Desmond. A guy in Carlingford does not have a business card for a bank in Mt Isa just because he feels lucky. Fossils! Long dead platypuses! There's a link. There has to be.

Please Ed!

Ed *shrugs* Okay sure. And if it comes to diddly-squat, we're no worse off.

[Pause]

Not Vere Desmond or Trev Oxley? Too obvious for words.

Blaike Bingo! I was thinking the same thing. Someone who does this kind of dirty work and would never, ever be suspected. With an address in or near Carlingford I was thinking ...

Ed And not lovely Les.

Blaike

Shit no! Not Les Leforest. He's the very ***last*** man to focus on.

~~~~~ ~~~~~ ~~~~~

*Our camera is out in the red dirt nothingness under a warm sun. From a distance we see plumes of red dust rising.*

The 5 teenage indigenous boys are: Liam Burrah-Shaw, Benny, Spud, Sam, and Noel.

~~~~~ ~~~~~ ~~~~~

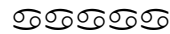
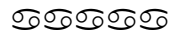
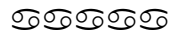
Close-up of the dust plumes reveals that five indigenous male teenagers are riding their bikes (as fast as possible). The boys wear a variety of AFL guernseys and shorts. Only Spud has shoes: the others are bare-foot. They laugh and joke as they tear along. Our camera watches them disappear in the distance, with the plumes of red dust being the only testament to their presence.

~~~~~ ~~~~~ ~~~~~

*Ed and Blaike are surprised when the teenage boys rock up. The boys are excited. They call out "Swannie!" several times. They exhibit hero worship for Ed that rivals that shown by Blaike.*

~~~~~ ~~~~~ ~~~~~

From way out in the distance Ed kicks an AFL football. He is still a very good kick. The ball sails towards our camera which is stationed amidst the boys. Blaike stands beside Ed. The boys fight and jostle each other to get the ball. One of them (Sam) succeeds. Barefoot, he kicks the ball back to Ed and Blaike. Ed stands aside for Blaike to take the mark. We repeat this action once again.



Now inside the hut, Ed, Blaike and the five boys eat chocolate biscuits (Wagon Wheels) as they drink cans of Coke. The boys are sunny, bright-eyed and happy by nature. They laugh and joke at anything.

Liam *to Ed* Are you here in Broken Hill to find out what happen to my brother Gill?

Ed *surprised* What's your last name?

Liam Burrah-Shaw. So my brother Gill Burrah-Shaw.

Blaike passes his notebook to Liam. The boy writes down his details for Blaike.

Benny *grinning* Gill work with the dig-up people. They over at Connor Bend. We go there in the school holidays. To Connor Bend. They got a shop full of arcade games. Like at the Show: side-show alley stuff. Good fun, but.

Ed Okay. Great!

Go back one step: Gill was one of the guys searching for fossils? Is that right?

Liam Yep.

Ed With the official team? Like -- he got paid for doing that work?

Liam Yep.

Ed And are you telling me that now he is missing?

Liam Yep.

Before he go walkabout, he gave us 100 bucks to muck around at the games shop. Didn't last very long, but.

Ed Were you surprised at the \$100?

Liam Sure! He only makes chicken-shit money at his job.

Spud *laughs* Money made out of chook doos. I'd like to see that!

The boys are now restless and silly.

Sam We gotta go, Swannie.

Noel *smiling* Thanks for the kick-to-kick.

Ed nods. He points to Sam who is taller and stronger-built than the others.

Ed *to Sam* Come back when you can. I think you might have a future in footy, mate.

Without any fanfare the five boys jump back on their bikes and ride off at speed. Once again, plumes of the bright red dust swirl into the air. One of the boys (Benny) has tucked the ball under his guernsey, making it bulge alarmingly.

Ed and Blaike stand around lazily, watching the dust clouds fade into the distance.

Blaike *grins* One of those kids swiped our footy.

Ed Yeah. I know. Benny (I think).

But ... Maybe it was worth it ...

Blaike But we'll have to soldier on without a footy.

Ed Nuh. We can pick up a couple in Connor Bend. 'Cause that's where we're headed now.

END OF SCENE

II, Scene v: Getting A Handle On Monotremes (Connor Bend) DAY 10

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| AEST Sydney Melbourne | ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin | BST Britain |
| 15:30 (3:30 pm) | 15:00 (3:00 pm) | 06:30 am (same day) |



Show stock film of platypus swimming.

Winlagh *voice-over*

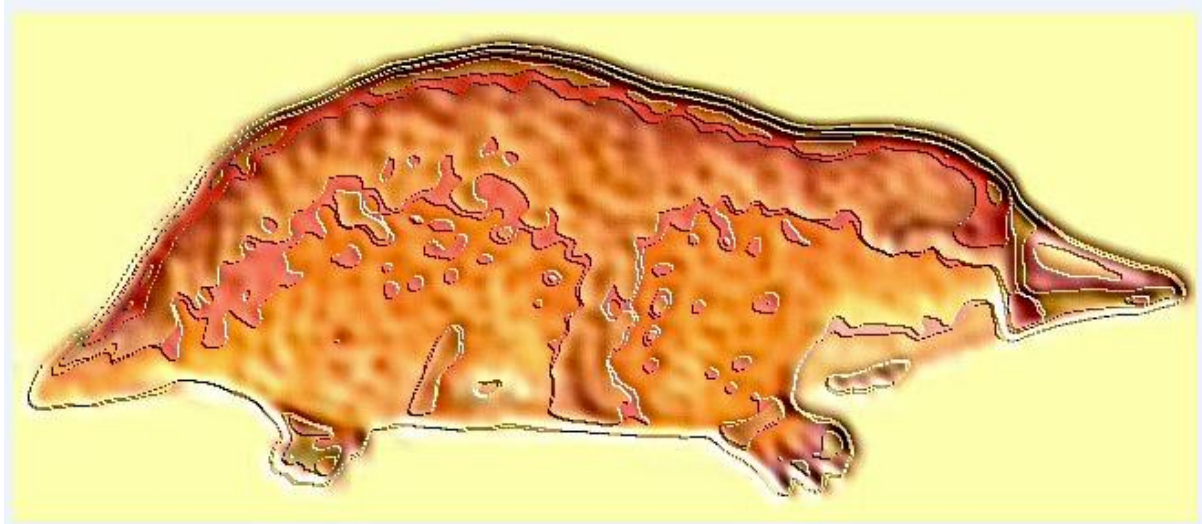
Monotreme. One opening as in birds and reptiles: the cloaca. In males the penis is only used for the transfer of sperm and never for urination (as in higher order mammals).

Reptilian features are numerous: note the reptilian rib pattern and shoulder girdle, the interclavicle (T-shaped), laying soft-shelled eggs and the wide-spread limbs.

Show stock film of echidna walking about in the bush.

Winlagh *voice-over*

But nevertheless they are classed as mammals. Milk is produced in droplets on the fur of the abdomen. They are endothermic (that is warm-blooded). They possess a single bone in the lower jaw, and three bones in the middle ear.



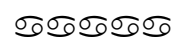
Winlagh *voice-over*

Most of the fossils belong to the species *Steropodon galmani*.

They are so well known around these parts that you can pick up artwork dedicated to these early Cretaceous creatures at the Sunday open market.

We find mostly teeth, skulls, jawbones ... to find a complete fossil is brilliant. Some pelvic fragments maybe ...

Nearly all the samples uncovered at Dunbar Ridge have some opalization. This requires silica-rich water and low temperatures during the fossilization process.



Ed and Blaike join Winlagh at the compound (at Connor Bend) where the dig team have set up camp.

Winlagh

There was something ... It makes me look really bad but ...

[Takes a big breath]

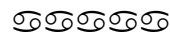
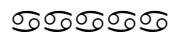
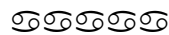
Okay!

Gill found something. It was a fossil – an opalized fossil. Now he stuck to his guns and claimed that he only dug up a few crappy

rocks. But later in the week he was scrolling through the photos on his phone and I just happened to glance in that direction and that's when I saw it. Maybe a jawbone or skull ... But the most superb aquamarine and turquoise and peacock blue. The opal I mean ...

Man! It was brilliant.

Then I randomly nicked his phone the next day. The photo was gone. But I'm positive that that's what I saw.



Ed and Blaike are kicking-back on a couple of outdoor chairs on the porch of their rental. They are both dressed in knock-about clothes, relaxing. They drink cans of Coke.

Notwithstanding the leisure time, Blaike has several A4 pages printed out and stapled together.

Blaike

Oh! I tracked down young Liam. Got his brother's mobile number. I've been in touch with Telstra. He's still making calls on that unit.

I mean – how double-dumb is that! If you're trying to stay hidden, don't make calls on a phone that's registered to your name.

Ed

And where was Liam? How did you find him?

Blaire *shrugs* The arcade game place in Connor Bend.

Ed *laughs* My little Buddy-boy ***lives*** to play arcade games. Drives me crazy.
I guess you are a fan, are you?

Blaire *pouts* Not for too long. Maybe 30 minutes. No longer.

Ed Did you play some of the games with Liam?

Blaire Sure. It's the usual stuff. You pay for tickets and then you win more tickets or prizes ... They got some good stuff. Yeah. And quite a few lads in there. And some chicks as well.

Blaire shrugs.

Ed You won his confidence, I assume?

Blaire *nods* They were all there. Even your star recruit, Sam. All there. Happy and laughing (as is their way).

Ed Do you trust them? Do you trust Liam?

Blaire becomes thoughtful.

Blaire On the whole, they are honest guys. But prone to exaggeration.
What 14 year old boy isn't?

Ed is pondering. Blaire leaves him alone, working in his writing pad rather than the usual laptop.

A lonely didgeridoo plays a mournful but totally wonderful tune.

Ed stands, walking very slowly down the few steps into the yard. We watch Ed wandering about, kicking stones. Then Ed saunters back to the porch, standing near Blaire (who looks up questioningly). The didgeridoo music fades to barely perceptible.

Ed We need to look at every lead, suggestion, conclusion and supposition.
We need to make a list.

Blaire Ready! Go!

Ed Now: first on our list should be Liam's brother Gill. We need to

locate him.

Second is follow-up from what Dawn regurgitated.

Third: when Les Leforest gets back to Oz he'll need to be questioned.

Fourth: Who is the guy who kidnapped Ms Hurstbridge and the other 2 females? Where is he? Why did he kidnap the women?

Fifth: Tattoos. I want to be 180% clear on which blokes have tattoos. It might all come down to that. I reckon that somebody is impersonating somebody else. But no two guys ever have the same (the **exact** same) tattoos.

Blaike

And number six: catch-up with D.I. Dorothy Morebank.

Ed *nods*

And catch-up with D.I. Dorothy Morebank.

A car horn is heard tooting. The cab that Ed has booked has come to the front of the hut. Ed and Blaike are around the back.

Ed

My cab. Keep in touch.

END OF SCENE

ED: plane from BHQ at 3:30 CT (4.00 EST) to get to Sydney 1.5 hrs later (5:30 EST) which gets him home in time for tea. So Tizz will ring Blaike at 6.45 pm AEST.

II, Scene vi: The Unpaid Mathematics Tutorial (Dunbar Ridge) DAY 10

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| AEST Sydney Melbourne | ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin | BST Britain |
| 18:45 (06:45 pm) | 18:15 (06:15 pm) | 09:45 am (same day) |

Ed catches his plane at BHQ around 15:30 ACST (3:30 pm) to arrive in Sydney 1.5 hours later. Central time now changes to Eastern time. Ed's plane lands at 17:30 AEST (5:30 pm). Ed catches a cab back home.

Blaike is busy working on his laptop when a loud buzz sounds. A message appears on his screen. If Ed wishes to speak (via video conference link) with TISANE SWAN → Blaike should click the YES button.

Blaike frowns. Who? After a moment's hesitation, Blaike taps the ENTER key (which activates the video conference.) The screen is filled with the face of a 15-year-old girl (who has long fair hair and is extremely pretty) staring at him. She does not smile. In fact, there is a serious "I-am-a-princess" air about her.

Tisane Hi! Where's my father?

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

Tisane Right.

And you are?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Looks haughtily at the screen, at Blaike]

Duh!

Blaike *smiles*

Yes. I know that stuff. We could --

Tisane

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

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

Blaike

... So if you keep your mind on the distances between the points and put them into your equation, it will all work out.

*Tisane whips around.*

Tisane

Dad's home! See ya!

*Blaike (stunned) sees the girl shoot out of the room. In the background Blaike hears Ed deep tones intermingled with the higher pitches of Tisane and her younger brother.*

Ed *voice-off*

Is he still on the call? I'll hang up for you if you like.

*Ed appears. He waves to Blaike as he sits.*

Ed

You been helping Tizz with her homework?

Blaike

Yeah. Well, I hope so.

Ed

What was it? Calculus? Quadrilaterals?

Blaike

Levers.

*Ed groans before he grins.*

Ed *chuckles*

Glad it was you not me.

Blaike

Levers not your fave subject, Boss?

*Ed looks around to make sure he is alone, then puts his face close to the screen.*

Ed *softly*

Between you and me -- not a fucking clue.

Female *voice-off*

Come and get it, Swannie!

Ed

I gotta go. Mala has just slapped tea on the table. Promise me that you'll SMS me if you have any trouble. Tomorrow I'll be going to the Museum in Sydney to get the low-down on these monotreme fossils.

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT II



## ACT III

### III, Scene i: Sorry – Did I Ring Too Early? (Dunbar Ridge) **DAY 11**

AEST Sydney Melbourne	ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin	BST Britain
02:15 am	01:45 am	17:15 (5:15 pm) previous day

*Blaike is asleep in a pair of black footy shorts. He breathes very deeply. The atmosphere is wonderful starlight with many Australian nocturnal bush animals and birds making mournful sounds outside.*

*Our camera has been scanning around the gloomy room, moving in on the open laptop.*

*It springs into life. Somehow Blaike has set-up the system such that Jeremy's face appears on the screen as soon as he (Jeremy) calls. He has finished work, but is still at the morgue.*

Jeremy                      Hello. Anyone there?

*Blaike wakes with a violent start. He dives out of bed, scrambling to the laptop.*

Blaike *bleary*              Yeah man. I'm awake. Hi!

*Jeremy laughs.*

Jeremy                      Were you asleep? What time is it down there?

*Blaike scrabbles around for his wristwatch. Then he gives a prodigious yawn.*

Blaike                      It's a quarter to 2 in the morning. But never mind that -- I wanted to hear from you.

Jeremy                      No, you can go back to sleep. You look like you've been on a buck's turn. If only, eh?

But first tell me: Winlagh – is she okay after her ordeal? I felt a real arsehole for pissing off and leaving her so quickly but I had to bolt back here immediately. But she's okay?

Blaike

Sure! Yeah! Jeparit is keeping an eye on her.

Jeremy

Great! Listen, I promised to ring you but there's probably nothing I can add to what Max Cooper can tell you. He seems to be all over the subject matter. Has he landed yet?

Blaike *nods*

Cooper? Um ...

Yeah Jeparit told us that. Cooper is coming and ...

Jeremy

Never mind. I'll let you get on with your kip. You can email me or send an SMS – whatever is easier. But please keep me in the loop.

Night-night.

*The laptop screen blanks out. Blaike stares at the screen, speaking to Jeremy as if he is still in contact.*

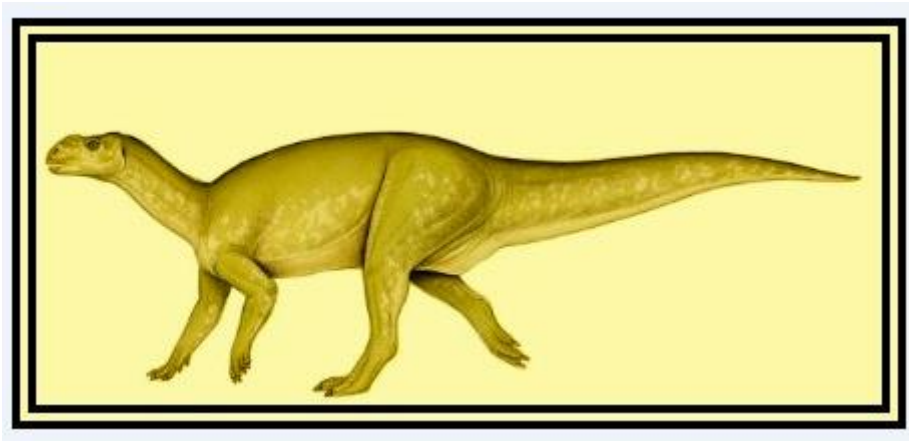
Blaike

Am I gonna be mucking around with Jeparit **and** Coops? Brutal!

END OF SCENE

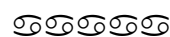
**III, Scene ii: The Museum of New South Wales (Sydney) DAY 11**

AEST Sydney Melbourne	ACST Adelaide Broken Hill Darwin	BST Britain
10:30 am	10:00 am	01:30 am (same day)



*We watch Ed enter the Museum of New South Wales. He walks smartly up the steps to the imposing entrance doors.*

*Once inside, Ed looks around. The central display is of an Australian dinosaur: the Muttaborrasaurus. People (most of whom seem to be under 14 years of age) mill about. The displays are very inviting. However, Ed heads to a uniformed Corps of Commissionaires. A short discussion ensues. The man points up the stairs. Ed nods, then takes the long winding staircase two steps at a time.*



*Ed wanders along a long corridor from which many offices open. Looking lost, Ed is approached by a smart-looking woman.*

Dr Joy

Superintendent Ed Swan?

Ed *pleased*

Yes! Dr Joy Mathieson? Thanks so much for seeing me.

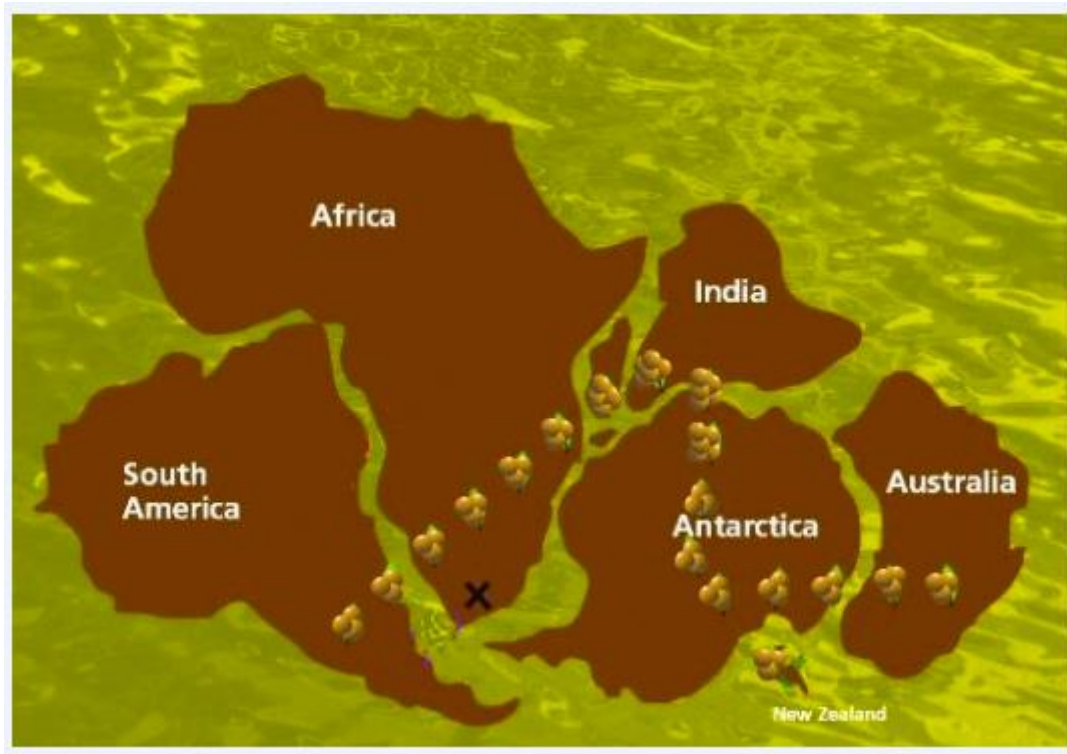
*Ed and Dr Joy shake hands. They enter her office which is labelled "Dr J. Mathieson Curator Monotremes and Marsupials".*

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*On the wall is the following map. Dr Joy points to it.*



Dr Joy

Gondwana.

The super continent Pangaea broke up into 2 parts. One of them was Gondwana. Here's the map of Gondwana.

The Pangaea break-up was some 550 million years ago.

Gondwana lasted until the Jurassic (180 million years ago). Then each of these entities drifted off towards their current positions.

Major point to remember: Australia broke off from the other Gondwana entities **before** the placental mammals evolved but **after** the monotremes and marsupials have evolved.

*This is Dr Joy's love. That is obvious.*

Dr Joy                      Totally marvellous how all the continents and sub-continents fit as if they were jigsaw pieces.

*[Pause]*

Ed, I happen to know that you have Aboriginal blood. If I venture into areas that you must not discuss, please stop me. I'll totally understand.

Ed                          That's not going to be a problem. But thank you for the concern.

Dr Joy                      I need you to study this map of Gondwana. Note the cross: that's the South Pole. You'd imagine it being in Antarctica (as now) but it's right there in current-day South Africa. And also be aware that we must not envisage an ice cap. Nor a huge inland desert: this is all warm, lush, fertile land right through Gondwana.

*The camera moves about the room as Dr Joy speaks. There are stuffed platypuses and echidnas along with a couple of stuffed wallabies.*

Dr Joy                      You can also see that Australia and Antarctica fitted snugly together. The Great Australian Bight (shown here as a curve) exactly smoodges up to the current east coast of Antarctica. Monotremes evolved around about the South Pole (meaning this one on the map), migrating across Antarctica from where the Weddell Sea now is across to the French sector: Terre Adélie. From there you might take a straight line across to South Australia and beyond: the Dunbar Ridge acreage near to Broken Hill in western NSW (for instance). And keep going for a long while up north to Mt Isa in Queensland to investigate the Riversleigh collection.

*Ed is intrigued.*

Dr Joy                      Your various monotremes which colonized South America, Africa and so on were put out of existence by the sharper placental mammals which followed. Australia (as you know) provided a

Noah's Ark for the safe-keeping of monotremes and marsupials. They came under no threat until the human migration (thought to be 65,000 years ago). Your people.

Ed *softly* My people.

*Ed and Dr Joy pause for a couple of seconds.*

Dr Joy I hope that helps with your inquiry, Ed.

Ed Fossils. There is a dig team working away at Dunbar Ridge (which you mentioned). They are stationed at Connor Bend. Funded by the University of NSW. Bizarre occurrences related to these people are causing me concern.

Dr Joy *frowns* Concern?

Ed I remember reading that many of the fossils of feathered dinosaurs found in China were smuggled out. Huge amounts of money to be made from this illegal trade.

Dr Joy *nods* Sickening. Both the pay-offs and the trade itself. Sickening.

Ed Is it possible that there is a similar scam going on with the monotreme fossils?

Dr Joy Oh sure. I've heard half-a-dozen rumours ... **Rumours**, mind! I cannot vouch for any of this ... A bloke (a German multi billionaire) is an avid collector. Erm ... Wait a bit.

*Dr Joy checks in her drawer, locating a piece of paper. She hands it to Ed.*

Dr Joy Count Dresselmähr. Avid collector of rarities. I understand that some of those Chinese feathered dinosaurs landed on his front porch along with many of the Connor Bend fossils.

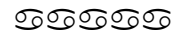
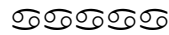
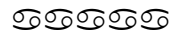
*Dr Joy sighs and shrugs. Ed stands. The two shake hands again.*

Ed Okay. I'm getting a real picture here. It seems as if some rascals are signing-up for the Connor Bend operation. Then they dig up a valuable specimen. The operation doesn't get to see that find – it

makes its way to Germany within the blink of an eye.

Dr Joy                      If such a situation exists and you are able to put a stop to it, Ed ...

Ed                         I'll certainly try.



*Ed stands beside the huge display of the Muttaborrasaurus, looking up. But his mind is somewhere else.*

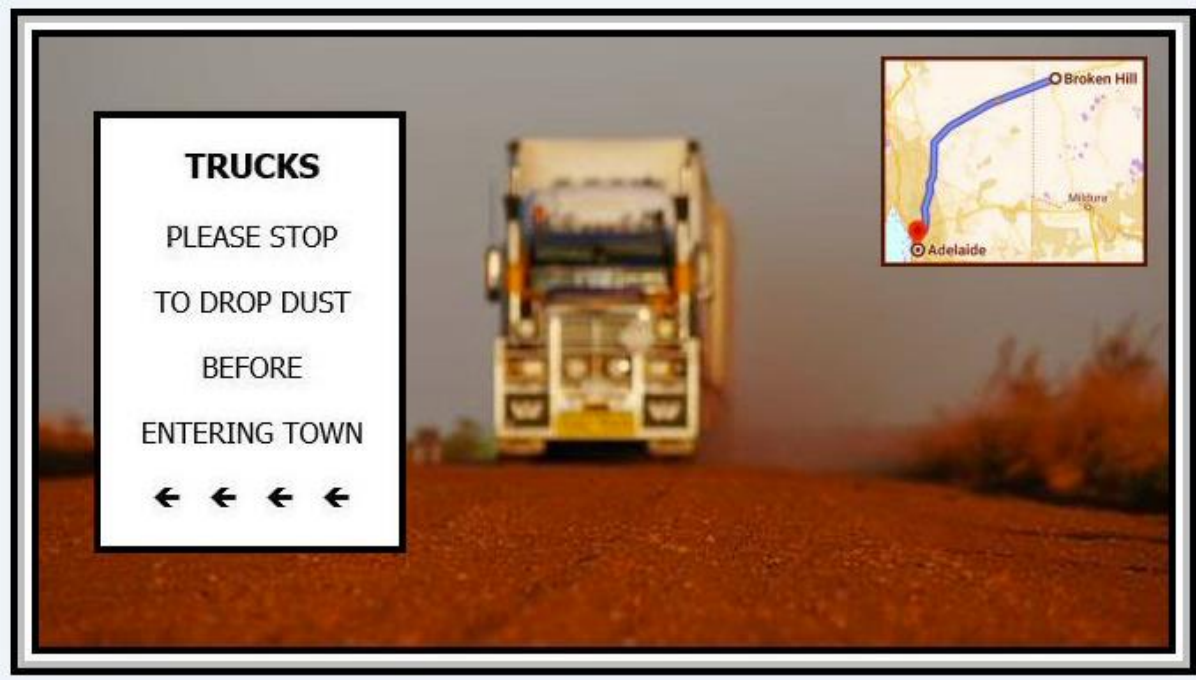
*He is imagining Antarctica (when it belonged to Gondwana) covered in sumptuous greenery. Small monotremes trundle along, doing what they do. Ed tries to see these animals crossing a sandy region where (at low tide) the coast of Australia could be reached.*

*Ed once again stares up at the Muttaborrasaurus. It morphs into a huge B-double semi-trailer that is covered in red dust as it drives along the Barrier Highway.*

*Suddenly Ed's face is in camera focus. Ed is alert. He is having a light-bulb moment.*

Ed *voice-over*                      If you are trading expensive goods out to the wider world, the obvious point of departure would be one of the major ports. Geelong, Port of Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane ... Broken Hill is absurd. What must Oxley's delivery charges be? "Exorbitant" is not the word.

*Just as Ed tears to the door, Cooper appears in the main entry hall. Carrying a small holdall, Cooper chases after Ed.*



Ed *voice-over, excited* Adelaide! The Barrier Highway from Broken Hill to Adelaide is only about 500 K. **Adelaide!** Not Sydney!

Cooper *yelling* Hey Ed Swan! Swannie! Hang on a minute, will ya?

END OF SCENE

### III, Scene iii: Blake Ticks The Boxes PART I (Dunbar Ridge) **DAY 11**

*Blake has a pair of binoculars to his eyes as he stands on the back porch of the Dunbar Ridge rental. We now see what he sees: the nothingness of this great red land.*

*With his long-distance observations over, Blake strides back inside. He is happy, eager and busy. That's the life he loves.*

*Blake whistles happily as he finishes laying out papers on the kitchen bench (which he has cleared off). The fridge door has been stripped of all its many magnetic calendars and so on. Instead, Blake has laid out a pattern of yellow post-it notes on the fridge door.*

*Blaike will now enumerate the various points raised so far in the narrative. He will be talking to himself, as if there is a second party showing interest in his mental gymnastics. And he will call himself "BP".*

Blaike Forensic analysis of tattoos and ink colours: their use in criminal investigation. Didn't one of the early English kings die in battle and they identified his corpse via his tats? I heard that somewhere ...

*Blaike bustles about: shifts papers, rejigs the yellow post-it labels and continues to fiddle with papers.*

Blaike Dawn, Dawn blowing a horn ...

We can safely say that Lyle Oxley's little brother Trevor is a toughie. Unafraid and not likely to be leaned on.

And in my humble – not very obvious as a kidnapper. Not one who (what did she say?) "He is a complete mess. A mad survivalist or doomsday prepper. Something like that. He totally went into assault mode at the slightest blip."

Well Dawn's description of Trev does not go down that path.

No Trev Oxley is not the kidnapper, that's for sure.

And somebody needs to tee-up Les Leforest. Interview him. Keep an eye on him. Something.

*Blaike bustles about: shifts papers, rejigs the yellow post-it labels and continues to fiddle with papers.*

Blaike We have three photos identified by Winlagh (and supported by the other two ladies). Any of these dudes ***might*** be the madman. Nobody could see clearly in the darkness of the bunker.

But the waters have now been even more muddied by the existence of skin under the fingernail of one of the lady captives. That scrap of humanity has been processed. However, no match to any known crim. And nothing from the prints ...

That's what you call disheartening.

Oh yeah ... Dorothy Morebank. I have to give her a ring.

Note that BP.

*Blaike bustles about: shifts papers, rejigs the yellow post-it labels and continues to fiddle with papers.*

Blaike                      Liam's brother Gill. Is he a player? The fossils – Ed is getting into the groove on that one. Back-burner.

*Blaike bustles about: shifts papers, rejigs the yellow post-it labels and continues to fiddle with papers.*

Blaike                      Bay Morton? No that medical stuff can stay on hold until Crash Cooper flexes up. ***Cannot wait!***

*Blaike gives a few triumphant fist pumps as he bustles about: shifts papers, rejigs the yellow post-it labels and continues to fiddle with papers.*

Blaike                      The guy found dead in Leforest's crib in Carlingford. No longer my brief, but keep an eye on it.

*Blaike bustles about: shifts papers, rejigs the yellow post-it labels and continues to fiddle with papers.*

Blaike                      Count Dresselmähr. Avid collector of rarities. What are we doing about that ratbag?

*Suddenly Blaike stops.*

*He goes back to the back porch, standing with hands on hips.*

### Blaike Lets His Imagination Run Loose

*Blaike imagines himself dressed in a tuxedo. He is attending a ball. The young lady in his arms is Tisane Swan. She is dressed such that she appears sweet and utterly feminine. They dance. Blaike is heroic and in charge. She is divinely lamblike (using her eyes to enthrall him).*

*Blaike swirls Tisane about then takes her in his arms to kiss her passionately as the other dancers continue.*

*Then Blaike snaps out of it.*

Blaike *appalled*                      No! Not with the boss's daughter. That is a ginormous no-no.

*Blaike paces about, trying to compose himself.*

Blaike *gritted teeth*

I'm in the bush. And what happens in the bush, BP?

What is the one thing that the bush offers to a young man with prospects?

*[Determined]*

A bachelor and spinster ball.

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene iv: Cooper Is Now On Board (Sydney) DAY 11**

*Outside the museum, Ed (now full of purpose) trots down the steps. Cooper explodes out of the Museum, calling out "Swannie!"*

*Ed almost makes the bottom step when Cooper reaches him. Whereas Cooper beams with delight, Ed is wary. Cooper forces a handshake. Ed is still wary.*

Cooper

Don't give me the brush-off, Swannie. I've come lookin' for ya. Your off-sider told me you'd be here. I'm Max Cooper. You met Jeparit Name-Your-Poison. He's me mate.

I've flown over the pond to catch up with you guys. (Had enough of Ye Olde England and all those Pommy no-hopers).

Ed *drawls*

Max Cooper ...

Cooper

You going to the airport? We can share a cab. I'll go ya halvies.



*Ed and the driver sit in the taxi while Cooper stows his holdall in the boot of the taxi.*

Ed                                      Airport thanks driver. Qantas domestic departures.

Driver                                 Righto.

*Cooper closes the boot. Then with a heavy grunt he flops into the back seat next to Ed. Once the seatbelt is organized (more grunting) the taxi moves off. Cooper now emits a satisfied sigh. The cab driver glances at his passengers via his rear-vision mirror.*

Driver                                 You're Max Cooper, aren't ya? The film actor?

Cooper *delighted*                 Yeah, mate. That'll be me.

*Fortunately the cab is idling at a red light, so Cooper and the driver are able to shake hands. Ed (who himself is used to being hero-worshipped) watches on with a wry smile.*

Driver                                 I reckon that pirate show you were in was one of the **best** movies I ever saw.

Cooper                                 Thanks! It was a bit of alright.

Driver                                 My young tacker and me loved the explosions. We watch that DVD movie again and again – just for the explosions.

Cooper                                 Brutal!

Driver                                 My missus – she likes the bit when you had not much on.

Cooper *grins*                         Sweet!

*Ed glances at Cooper then rolls his eyes.*

Cooper                                 And this bloke with me is even more famous: he played for the West Coast Eagles back in the day.

Driver                                 Aerial ping-pong? Nah! I'm loyal to rugby league. Don't like that soft game from down south.

Cooper *laughs*                         Spoken like a true New South Welshman.

*Ed shakes his head, sighs gustily through his lips then turns to look out of the window.*

END OF SCENE

**III, Scene v: Cooper's Role In The Cold Case (Sydney to Broken Hill)****DAY 11**

*Cooper and Ed sit side-by-side as passengers in the plane to BHQ (from Sydney).*

Cooper                      You are obviously panting to hear about my various movements in good old England.

Ed *sarcastic*                Frothing at the mouth with thrill, Coops.

Cooper *smug*               Solving your crime for you, mate. That's what I've been doing.

Ed                            My pile of "to-do" crime investigations (stretching back decades rather than years) stands at about the height of a 6-year-old child. To which of these numerous cold cases do you refer, mate?

Cooper *surprised, shrugs*                I dunno. The one that involves me being the patsy (or whatever you call him).

Ed                            If you could --

Cooper *forceful*            Nobody sticks it up Max Cooper, ya know! Because Old Coops fights back – big time!

Don't get me wrong – I love conspiracy stuff. Really thrive on it. Except where Yours Truly is the centre conspiracyist.

*Ed realizes that he will not be able to guide the conversation. He will simply have to be a responsive auditor. So he settles back.*

Ed                            Go on then. Fire away!

*This pleases Cooper. He has the floor.*

Cooper                      Brutal.

Questions were asked.

Money changed hands. (It's only a real conspiracy when money changes hands). Lucky I'm rich from my illustrious movie career. I mean – I was passing out quids Sterling like they were Fantail

wrappers.

Anyhow ... Where was this going? ... Oh yeah!

I found the sexy redhead in a nice apartment in a London suburb called "Full Ham".

Ed *sighs*

Fulham.

Cooper

Yeah, right.

Anyhoot, the darling girl-slash-boy was not in any way, shape or form pleased to see me on her "Full Ham" doorstep. But I put the hard word on them nevertheless.



**FLASHBACK**

Be advised that the unacceptable views expressed by Cooper and other characters in this opus are theirs alone.

Well, that's not exactly true ... During his illustrious lifetime the Queensland Truckie was dedicated to any and all homophobic pursuits. Woe betide any gent appearing at the Burleigh Heads Tavern in a bow tie. Or drinking a pink gin. Or even a shandy.

The author ("the Mate") adores everyone, irrespective of colour, race, etc etc etc. So please don't send letters of complaint (replete with vitriol) because they'll just get shafted into the recycle bin along with the old "Your Garden" mags and the ripped-up cardboard box that I got with my new blender.

*In Fulham Cooper has tracked-down the redhead. The apartment door is opened and then immediately closed (almost). Cooper has pushed his knee forward.*

*It is evident that Cooper (a dyed-in-the-wool homophobic poofter-basher) despises the man who is trying to close his door on Cooper. Cooper cannot keep the bitterness from his voice.*

Cooper                      Sorry, Nerine Langeller. Leg before wicket. I'm coming in there.

*Nerine makes a genuine attempt to close the door. She is unsuccessful. Cooper enters the room regardless.*

Nerine *terrified*                      You brute! I'll call the police!

Cooper *snarls*                      Go ahead, Darl. Go right ahead. Tell them "D for Deadhead", "N for Nancy-boy" and "A for Arsewipe".

Er ... that spells DNA by the way.

Nerine *trembling*                      You can't frighten me. I'm ... I'm not afraid of you.

Cooper                      Yeah! Fear is a funny one, isn't it? Some guys piss themselves on the ghost train at the Royal Easter Show.

Oh! But the likelihood is that you (being a Pom) never went to the Easter Show. Wouldn't know the ghost train at the Show from the tunnel of love at Luna Park.

*Nerine has no idea what Cooper is talking about. Cooper grins without humour.*

Cooper                      My fave at the Show was always the Jock Shand Boxing tent.  
Loved a punch-up. Loved to chance my fists in the ring.

*Suddenly Cooper grabs one of Nerine's wrists, squeezing it tightly. The faces of Cooper and Nerine are now very close. Cooper is threatening – a bully. Nerine whimpers in both pain and fear.*

Cooper *low voice*                      Why! Look at your lovely wrists, Nerine. Donny's Mum told me once that the quickest way to sort out "hees" from "shees" is to look at the wrists. No matter how effeminate a man might be, his wrists are always masculine. Not slim, gracile and feminine as you'd expect with a "she".

With medical help you can have lovely boobs spring out of your chest as well as shrivel your dick and your agates out of existence – but the wrists remain the giveaway. Just a spot of trivia there.

*Cooper releases Nerine. She begins to weep.*

Cooper

I first spotted you in the Lord Henry Scroop restaurant. What a stunner! You've pretty much perfected the "come-on" look.

I missed out on rooting you (thank God!) ... In consolation for which you can tell me **right now** what the DNA test bizzo was all about.



**END of FLASHBACK**

Ed *frowns*

I'm really uncomfortable with your homophobia, Max.

Cooper *dismissive*

Yeah, yeah ... I'm up for counselling, if that would help.

Ed

You do realize that you might have to front-up before a beak if you are heard to denigrate a homosexual for his or her sexual orientation. You can cop a hefty fine and even gaol time is a possibility. And that also applies to race, colour, religion ...

Cooper *does not care*

Gotcha!

Now, here's the gen on the DNA swab.

Darling Nerine was ... er ... "encouraged" (by yours truly) to be forthcoming. Bit of gently applied muscle power.

*As Cooper flexes his right bicep, he searches in Ed's face for some sign. There is none. So he ploughs on.*

Cooper

Okay.

So I got a name mate – a name. She was put up to it by a bloke

called Gareth Lidyard.

You recognize that mono?

Ed *shakes head*

Not yet.

Cooper

Well get out your official police notebook and jot those two names down: Nerine Langeller and Gareth Lidyard.

Ed

Righto. I've made a mental note.

Cooper

Mind like a steal trap.

Ed

Yo.

Cooper

Langella/Lidyard.

They had history those two (blah! blah! blah! whatever that was – who gives a flying fuck anyway?). So Lidyard leaned (full weight) on the lovely lad/lass until she agreed with his plan. That meant that my turning up was a bit scary for Ms Langeller.

Ed

I'd be keen to find out what this Lidyard wanted with your DNA. Did you go looking for Gareth Lidyard?

Cooper

Sure. All dead ends. He's a slippery fish that bloke. Several people are after him, it appears. But my brilliant and dedicated detective work did not go unrewarded. A lady surrendered up to me (my charming smile department worked a treat) the name of a bloke that you already know.

Ed *surprised*

Who's that?

Cooper

He met you at Broken Hill airport as he was rushing off to Melbourne. Dr Jeremy Hurstbridge (Pathologist). In charge of his own "House-of-Death" in Cadbury. Charming village. Quaint.

I trotted up to Cadbury (actually caught a train!) so that I could drop in on our friendly death-man. He and I rapped while he dived into some lady stiff's body cavity – man! That was a major high.

Brutal!

Are you interested in what the big boy said?

Ed *very cool*

Yeah go on.



## FLASHBACK

Location: Claude Willington Centre, Cadbury.

*Jeremy has two young helpers who work with him in the morgue. These three are all kitted-out in scrubs, caps, Perspex masks and so on: they are involved in the post-mortem examination of a large young female who may have suicided.*

*With them (also correctly kitted-out) is Cooper. The voices of Jeremy and Cooper will be slightly distorted due to the conversation occurring behind the masks (and broadcast via small speakers).*

*Jeremy continues with his work, talking to Cooper as he goes.*

Cooper                      Aw bewdy! Brush.

*Jeremy is not impressed.*

Jeremy *cold*                      You'll have to respect the dignity of the deceased patient, Mr Cooper. I learned that the hard way. If you can't keep your prurient observations at bay and if you are unable to control your juvenile observations – then I can promptly show you the door.

Cooper *oblivious to threats*                      I can do that (what you said) but it'll be hard yakka.

Jeremy                      You told me that you were sent here by Anne Cottee. Why? Let's start from there.

Cooper                      No. We have to start with the knock-out redhead who flashed her bedroom eyes at me. And she then asked for a DNA sample (because we had miraculously achieved a virgin pregnancy she reckoned) and she then turned out to be a bloke anyway.

She/he/they was called Nerine Langeller.

I found her/him and questioned her/him in my own inimitable way (minimum force required).

Names (mate) names. The person who put her/him/them up to it was a guy called Gareth Lidyard.

*Jeremy is awestruck. He freezes then turns slowly towards Cooper, eyes wide open.*

Jeremy *whispers*

Gareth Lidyard ...

Cooper

Yeah thought you might be interested to hear that ...

But my quest to find Mr Lidyard petered out. He's gone to ground it seems. Bugger him!

I wound up with a very nice old bird (Anne Cottee) – she was certain that **you** were the best person to discuss this with. Oh! And at the time Lidyard tried to stitch me up (via Nerine) I had a broken leg. I'm still a bit dodgy. Won't be running in any marathons for a while.

Jeremy *awestruck*

A fracture.

A fracture ...

Did the DNA sample --

Cooper

We set up a rort. All four of us (Gibbo, Donny, me and Jeparit) all got DNA tests done and then fronted up at the legal guy's orifice to "flood him with data". But as I said the joke was on us because my dreamboat had a digital scanner pen and not a swipe card reader.

Jeremy

That joke is over 30 years old, Cooper. You'll need to update your material. And I did ask you not to --

Cooper *forceful*

My question is: why did Lidyard need my DNA?

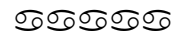
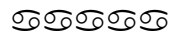
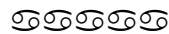
Jeremy

Were you injected in any way **after** you gave the DNA sample?

Cooper No. Should I have been?

*Jeremy has finished. He walks over to a laptop and starts typing.*

Jeremy Coops, go outside and strip off the uniform. Give your hands a good soap-up. I have to finish off this report. I'll meet you in about 10 minutes. I'll take my tea break a bit early ...



*There is a very attractive rock garden in the grounds of St Elm Hospital. A couple of outdoor chairs are vacant. Jeremy and Cooper (now dressed in street clothes) have grabbed these chairs and dragged them away from public scrutiny. The two men drink coffee.*

Jeremy In 2004 I was an awkward teenager just starting to shave. Maybe 16 or so ...

*Jeremy shrugs.*

Jeremy My predecessor here in the "House of Death" at St Elm's was a lovely old buffer: Dr Hortier. So anyway – prior to his retirement Dr Hortier reminisced (with me) over this 2004 case which he investigated.

A deceased patient lay on his slab. Murdered. The bloke was a complete mess: bashed with a chair such that every bone in his body appeared to be broken. And then shot.

Cooper Brutal!

Jeremy Quite.

Now that has got to be an execution. That is to say: a murder bearing a clear message. "Mess with us and we shall deal with you." Dr Hortier and I were in complete agreement on that.

Cooper It's like it came straight out of a movie.

*Jeremy nods.*

Jeremy                      It all comes down to this: in 2004 Gareth Lidyad founded the BAY MERIDIAN MORTON pharmaceutical company (Great Britain).

He is a genius but no friend to the human race. His idea was to manufacture wonder drugs that fixed up health conditions which did not exist yet. Then invent those conditions. And with all that in hand, you (the pharma company) rushed the wonder drugs onto the market becoming everyone's heroes.

*Cooper shakes his head in disbelief.*

Jeremy                      There was an honest façade to give themselves street cred. They made a great deal of money out of BENEDICE and BAYMOR drugs. These potions were aimed at skin problems (rashes and so on). Totally believable and acceptable. Cortisone and ...

Cooper                      Yeah. I've heard of Baymor for sure.

Jeremy                      The executed body was that of Theo Addison. He had been a pharmacist. But his murderer was never discovered.

Okay. Now in 2010 Lidyad took several noted chemists with him when he split off from the company he had founded. He formed a rival company called BAY MORTON. This he sited in New South Wales rather than the UK. One of the noted chemists (I can only remember him having an Italian name) was brutally bashed and then shot. **His** murderer never identified. Lidyad had a solid alibi.

Cooper                      There's a bit of a pattern emerging ...

Jeremy                      You got it.

Are you going back to Oz any time soon?

Cooper                      Yeah. Matter of fact I am. Well Gibbo and Donny don't need me and Jeparit has bailed out.

*[Shrugs]*

So I may as well go home to Oz.

Jeremy                      My young sister is working as a palaeontologist near to this Broken Hill.

Cooper                      Whoa! That's amazing. My mate Jeparit – that's where he skedaddled to. Broken Hill.

Jeremy                      I'll grab a pen for you – and some paper. I'll talk and you can write. When you return Down Under you'll be in a great position to disseminate these facts. Solve the whole thing before the cops have stopped scratching their heads.



*We are now in the plane flying from Sydney to Broken Hill. Cooper and Ed sit side-by-side.*

Cooper                      So this company comes up with the cure to a disease which doesn't yet exist. They're going to make a motzer. And all this years before anyone dreamed-up COVID-19.

The deal is that they all sit around and work out something major that's going to cause chaos – a whole new health crisis to bring every major country to their knees. All the sickies will be running 'round with one leg in the air ... Then whoosho – flog their wonder drug, corner the market and become mega-billionaires in the blink of an eye. Magic!

Ed *scornful*                      That sounds like something straight out of science fiction!

Cooper                      That's exactly what I thought!

Okay. I can tell that you are sceptical, Swannie. I was too. Let me put you in the picture here.

First, take the DNA samples. They are reworked by some flash

scientist from Norway. He doesn't use ... Aw! I can't remember what they call it ... Hang on! Wrote it down ...

*Cooper twists and turns his body as much as he is able in the cramped confines of the aeroplane seat. He manages to drag some bits of folded paper from his back pocket. These papers are sifted through with accompanying murmurs and grunts. Then Cooper is triumphant.*

Cooper                      Here we go!

*[Reads]*

Chinese galenicals medicine equals infusions and decoctions rather than chemical and synthetic treatment. Professor David Ing from Stockholm in Norway is the mad scientist in this scenario.

Ed                              Sweden.

*Cooper is confused. He refers back to his papers.*

Cooper                      Yeah I'm positive that the Prof is Chinese. His photo bobbed up on some stuff that Jeremy accessed online. Definitely Chinese. Or something like that.

Ed                              But Stockholm is the capital of **Sweden**. Not Norway. Norway is Oslo.

Cooper *shrugs*              Somewhere up there ... They eat fish and have Ikea furniture. Land of the midnight sun.

Ed *sighs*                      Alright. Go on. We got to the part where the Chinese scientist from Sweden rejigs the DNA samples using galenicals rather than chemical synthesis.

Cooper *impressed*              Cripes! You've got a handle on all this shit already, mate.

*Ed gives a dismissive grunt.*

Cooper                      Let's plough on.

Point two.

Jeremy explained it all to me (sort of) but I'm a bit shaky with

bodily functions.

Okay! This is the simplified bizzo: there is a “jump” when the bone marrow realizes that a bone is fractured. The body (via the bone marrow) releases chemicals. This process chunders along for a long time because bones take weeks to mend.

Except that the adulterated DNA is injected **back** into the subject. And there it is: they now go funny.

Ed

Funny? What?

Cooper

My mate Jeparit described the way Jeremy’s sister carried on. Doddering around instead of walking straight. Getting super emotional – bawling, screaming, screeching, shaking – You know like your team has just won the Grand Final. Like that!

(By the way I think that love might be in the air in that direction. Watch this space.)

Anyhow, these peeps with the broken bones become like chicken hatcheries. They breed the malady. And from there it’s a breeze to whip-out the cure. You’re now everyone’s hero and you made a pile of money along the way.

Ed

How do the “chicken hatcheries” pass on the disease to the general populace? Is it air-borne like COVID?

Cooper *shrugs*

Dunno. We haven’t got that far.

Ed *frowns*

I’ll need to catch up with Jeremy when we land and check all this out. This is beginning to sound super-major.

Cooper

Sure thing. The disease already has a name: F-PROTA.

Now remember that Jeremy’s a big lad. He gets really upset when he speaks about this bizz and he sweats up a storm. Clothes wringing wet.

Ed *drily*

We’ll be conferencing online. I won’t care if he sweats a bucketful.

END OF SCENE

**III, Scene vi: "How Keen Are You To Strut Your Stuff?" (Dunbar Ridge) DAY 13**

*Ed and Blaike are cracking-on with the follow-up to the various leads.*

Ed                      Constable Penfold! Are you seriously bent on attending the B & S Dance this coming Saturday night?

Blaike                Yes. But not if you don't want me to.

Ed                      You think there might be trouble? Is that why you're dead keen to be there?

Blaike                Not sure. No ... Maybe ...

Ed                      Then why are you so eager to go?

Blaike                Do you really want to know?

Ed *firm*                Yes! I really want to know! I wouldn't have asked --

Blaike                You are not going to like this ...

*[Takes a huge breath.]*

I have strong feelings about your daughter Tisane.

*Long pause. Ed stares unblinking at Blaike.*

Blaike                She calls on a regular basis for me to help her with her schoolwork. Mostly more than once a day. Three ... Maybe four times a day. Yeah.

Maths, English Lit, Geography ...

Conference calls.

I mean -- my heart pumps as loud as a stream train. Nothing I can

do about it.

*[Takes a huge breath]*

Man-to-man, I'm having ... er ... I'm having impure thoughts about her. Unacceptable ... Your daughter and that ...

She's very pretty. And she has a lovely figure. And I'm a heterosexual boy and ...

Well ... And there it is.

This is so hard to talk to you about because she's your little girl ... and ...

*Long pause. Ed tries to speak but is unable to.*

Blaire *rushing ahead*      It's the biggest mistake on this planet to fall in love with the boss's daughter. Also she is barely 16 so I can't ... So I mustn't ...

*Blaire shrugs. He is blushing profusely. Long pause.*

Blaire                      So I wondered if it might be better for me to get out and meet other girls and ...

Ed *nods*                      Be heterosexual. I understand. I get it. Tizzie is flirting with you and you are standing firm. Good work!

*[Pats Blaire's shoulder.]*

Now, under normal circumstances the B & S would be a great idea to help get your mind off Tizzie, only you can't do any of that because of this F-PROTA scare.

We need one of those prohibition signs. Instead of "No Smoking" – "No Rooting".

*Ed laughs to himself. Blaire appears worried by something.*

Blaire                      Can I ask you a question?

Ed                          Sure.

Blaike Back in Cremorne Place (which seems like a thousand years ago) why did you select **me** to be your wingman?

Ed That's simple.

Because you're tall. I'm sick to death of having to lean down to talk to people. Nice to discuss the weather with someone who's on my same level.

*[Thinks quickly]*

We'll **both** go to the dance. I'll go with you. We'll be policemen and not bachelors.

Blaike Well you can't be a bachelor anyway because you're married.

Ed Fair enough. Got it in one. See that's why I chose you: you're not only tall – you're smart.

*Ed shoots up, wandering off as is his way. Blaike watches Ed. Then Ed turns. He has a light bulb moment.*

Ed You know what would be a mega idea? We could drag our friendly film star along: Max Cooper. I bet he'd slide down a boggy drainpipe for a B & S Dance (Broken Hill style).

Blaike "Take a chance at the dance to find romance" you reckon? Old Coops is up for anything! Let's give him a call and get him on board.



Ed Oh ... By the way ... I get Maths and Geography but English Lit? It wasn't "Portnoy's Complaint" or "Ulysses" or anything unsavoury like that, was it?

Blaike *shakes head* "Julius Caesar". Shakespeare.

Ed *pouts*

Oh ...

END OF SCENE

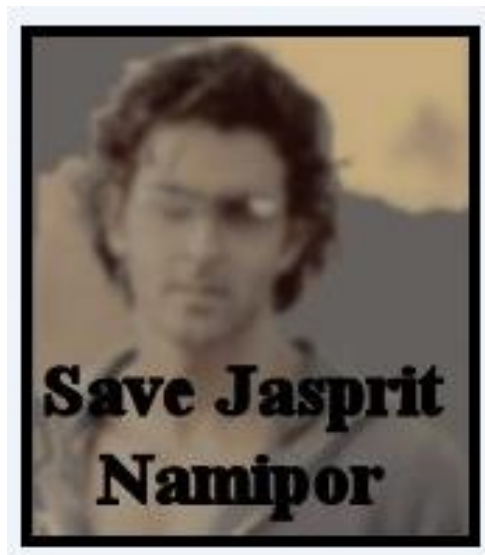
END OF ACT III



## ACT IV

### **IV, Scene i:** The Prime Minister Speaks Out (Canberra) **DAY 14**

*We focus on a crowd of protestors, waving banners. Some of these banners proclaim a desperate plea to save the life of Jeparit. Others are more general: demanding that something be done about F-PROTA. The camera moves back to reveal that the locale is Canberra.*



*Outside Parliament House in Canberra, a lectern has been set up, replete with over a dozen microphones. A huge phalanx of Press people mills about. Cameras proliferate.*

*There is a buzz: people shout out. We hear the words “disgrace” and “COVID” and “Jasprit” bandied about. There is anger, fear and despair festering in the small crowd of non-Press attendees.*

*An important-looking man (harassed to the point of madness) approaches the lectern. This causes an outpouring of vitriol.*

- Why weren't we told?
- What about kissing? We understand that kissing is the root cause.
- The public should have been informed.
- Can Jasprit be saved?
- What are you trying to hide?
- Is this worse than COVID?
- Why did you let this happen?

*The man at the lectern begs for quiet as the accusations and pointed questions fly about. Security men and Commonwealth police (in uniform) make their presence felt.*

Man at lectern                      The Prime Minister of Australia will speak to you, but only if you can bring some self-control into play. These outbursts are undignified and --

*As expected, these words are "red rag to a bull". The crowd is now really aggressive. The police and security men work hard to bring order.*

Man at lectern *pleading*    I cannot let our leader address you until I can be sure that calm and order will be maintained.

*The man swings around, then storms back into Parliament House. The crowd chant, boo and howl out abuse.*



*Inside Parliament House, we watch the man march past more security guards. He storms into a large room where the Prime Minister and other politicians stand about.*

Man *urgent*                      I can't let you face that mob, PM. They are potentially a powder keg ready to go off.

Male dogsbody                  Sir, they want to lynch you. Facing up to them is impossible. Let's set up an internal media moment instead: speak direct to the people over the wire.

*The Prime Minister shakes his head.*

Prime Minister                      Cowards we ain't.

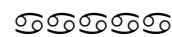
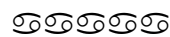
*[Turns to a soignee female]*

Gaynor. You're the Deputy. Go out there and sort it out. Please.

*Gaynor nods swiftly then leaves the room.*

Man *upset*                      You're sending that woman to the slaughter, Prime Minister!

Prime Minister                      I'll follow her in a minute. Have a stiff drink for God's sake. Settle down! You're worse than a chook with an egg stuck up its bum.



*Some sort of peace has descended outside. Gaynor is at the lectern. Not far away is a young man who will translate the speeches into sign language. Gaynor introduces the PM.*

Gaynor                      Ladies and Gentlemen. I present the Right Honourable George Bentleigh (Prime Minister of Australia) who will now address the nation.

*There is a sprinkling of applause. But they are drowned out by boos and cat-calls.*

Prime Minister                      Thank you Gaynor. Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am unable at this time to deliver all the absolute and full details of our latest health crisis except to state the following.

Firstly, F-PROTA appears to be unrelated to the Coronavirus strain.

The two diseases are not linked.

Secondly, those individuals affected by F-PROTA must be --

Lady journalist *shouts*                      Prime Minister! Is F-PROTA spread due to kissing? Is kissing the main way people contract F-PROTA?

Prime Minister                      Thirdly (and this is the matter which is believed to be at the heart

of the F-PROTA outbreak) all people of any age who have fractured any bones (no matter how trivial) must attend those clinics formerly dedicated to COVID testing.

- Male journalist      Does the transmission of F-PROTA arise from kissing, Prime Minister? Is kissing to blame for the outbreak of this vicious and deadly disease?
- Crowd person #1      One of our favourite actors (Jasprit Namipors) is lying on his hospital bed dying of this thing. Be it on your head if he dies!
- Crowd person #2      With COVID it was world-wide. But this new one is only in Australia. What are you doing about it?
- Prime Minister      All local GPs are being instructed to provide lists of names of those people (even including children and babies) who have presented at their clinics with any kind of bone fracture in the past 18 months. All hospital staff have also been directed to comply with their lists.
- Lady journalist      Are there any known concerns about breast-feeding of babies? Where do you stand on that, Prime Minister?

*A huge kerfuffle of noise and protest arises.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene ii: The Rock Band "Melting Glacier" (various locations) DAY 14**

*Preparations are well on their way for the upcoming Bachelor and Spinster dance. Mad bustle is the keynote here.*

*In a well-lit office at the Broken Hill Town Hall, several young women tear around. The room is filled with bright posters, mobile pin-up boards and dozens of cardboard boxes which get in everyone's way.*



Dargie "Criminal thingo"? Are we launching ourselves into Crime Central?

Mark Nah. Local troubles. Although such a high-flyer as Ed Swan being involved gives one pause ...

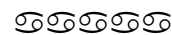
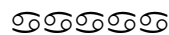
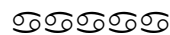
*Dargie is worried. He turns to Con Bisco.*

Dargie Me no like. We'd better find out straight away what this is all about.

You know what I always chant: All duck no dinner.

Biscuit, can you track down this senior copper and find out what the hell is going on there? I've got a **really** bad feeling about this.

*Snowie stops drumming to look up. Our camera moves in on his face. He is troubled by what he is hearing.*



*Con Bisco picks up his mobile phone as he saunters over to the balcony railing. He has Ed's number as a preset, and thus rings his old footy friend.*

Ed *phone voice* Ed Swan here. That can't be the Biscuit Man, can it?

Con Bisco *smiling* Swannie! How are they hangin' mate? Yes it's Con Bisco. Jeez it's good to hear your voice again.

Ed *delighted phone voice* And you Biscuit! Are you calling from the West?

Con Bisco No mate. We're in Steak and Kidney getting ourselves pumped and primed to come over to you in Broken Hill.

Ed *surprised phone voice* What?

Con Bisco We're the headline act for your B & S ball on Sat'day night.  
They usually have Country & Western but they decided to change this time to good old Rock. Smart move.

You got your tickets yet mate?

Ed *laughing phone voice*

I'm an old married man. If I'm there at all it will be in my official capacity.

Con Bisco

Noice.

*Snowie rocks up, pestering Con Bisco (who appears annoyed).*

Con Bisco

Hang on, mate. Snowie Rostley wants a word.

*Snowie reefs the mobile phone out of Con Bisco's hand. Snowie speaks loudly because years of playing drums have given to him mild deafness.*

Snowie

Ed Swan? Hi mate. Simon Rostley (aka Snowie). I'm the legendary drummer of "Melting Glacier" and I need to have a yack with you.

Are you okay with that?

Ed *surprised phone voice*

Sure.

Snowie

Rightio.

Word came to me (from somebody further up the food-chain than me) that a bloke (John Tenny he calls himself) is prowling around where you are. This bloke is a nightmare. I tell ya!

Ed *phone voice*

Name. Give the "higher-up" bloke a name. Can you do that?

Snowie *out of step*

Er ... I only know him as Muggo. But you'll be able to find him: he's one of the senior organizers of this B & S ball that we're playing at. Mac-something (I think). I always call him Muggo.

Ed *phone voice*

Kay. Go on with the nightmare guy. This John Tenny.

Snowie

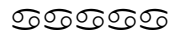
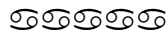
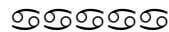
Yeah, yeah ... John Tenny. I found him backstage once and (man!) he is one big sicko. So when I saw the stuff on the internet news about some ladies being kidnapped and hidden away in an underground bunker, I just went snap!

*[Snaps fingers]*

John Tenny. That'll be John Tenny. He's right into that stuff for sure. Too scared to take on males but females are fair game to him. Fucking coward.

Ed *urgent phone voice* Is he anything to do with pharmacy ... A chemist maybe?

Snowie No idea. Pass.



*The screen splits. On the left side is Ed in the Dunbar Ridge cabin. On the other side is the madcap scene described in the very beginning of this scene. Ed is speaking to one of the madcap girls on the phone.*

Ed Could you bring him to the phone please? Tell him that I'm Superintendent Ed Swan investigating –

Girl Oh, there he is now. I'll drag him over.

Ed Yes, please.

*The girl puts the phone down. There is lots of noise and laughter in the background. Then McCormack picks up the phone. He looks harassed. He emits a huge sigh. As Ed speaks, McCormack nods.*

McCormack Muggo McCormack here. How may I help you?

Ed Superintendent Ed Swan. Sorry to disturb you, however I understand that you spoke to Simon (Snowie) Rostley drummer of the band "Melting Glacier". Concerning John Tenny.

McCormack That's right. I knew that Snowie was heavily spooked by that numb-nut. Thought I'd warn him.

Ed Would you be aware if Tenny has a pharmacy background ... Maybe worked as a chemist or in a chemist shop?

Muggo Yeah mate. He was a fully paid-up pharmacist. But he was struck off for failing in his duty of care.

Ed                                      Thanks mate. That's very helpful. You couldn't give me an idea where I can find him?

Muggo                                Yes I do. Your very best bet is to smoke him out at the B & S ball. There's not a snowflake's hope in Hell that he'll miss that.

*Just as Ed finishes his call (looking satisfied) his phone rings. Ed's half of the screen moves rightwards (to take over from the madcap scene) and the Sydney hotel balcony where the "Melting Glacier" members are hanging out takes over the left-side.*

*Ed recognizes the caller's ID.*

Ed                                      Biscuit! What's up?

Dargie                                This is Dargie. You hung up too soon, man.

Hey! Before you shoot off again, Swannie – are we safe to come to Broken Hill? We won't get our pricks shot off or that?

Ed                                      Christ I hope not! No this is a big problem but with a tiny scope. You'll be as safe as houses. I'll try to get to meet up with you all on the big night.

Dargie                                I'm depending on you, man. I have two ex-wives and three expensive kids to support. Don't let me down.

Here's the Snowplough.

Snowie                                Eduardo, catch you at the Big Dance! See ya then.

Con Bisco *calls out*              Yeah see ya Swannie!

*The call ends. The screen is no longer split. Ed chuckles with a playful grin.*



Ed *phone*                            I know! She's not a baby anymore. That (in a nutshell) is the problem. My constable (who is extremely busy working for me) is getting ... er ... "interested".

Mala, listen!

If you stay in the room with her when she calls my offside, then that should cover all bases. She's calling him to help with her homework. Make her keep the calls brief and succinct. The last thing I need is a love-sick young man on my hands.

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene iii: The Sergeant Assists The Cause (Carlingford) DAY 14**

*Our scene is the Carlingford police station. Sergeant Warren Wendell was last encountered in ACT I, SCENE vii.*

*D. I. Dorothy Morebank has flown to Sydney from Broken Hill in order to interview Les Leforest (recently returned from New Zealand). However, Dorothy realizes that Sergeant Wendell will get more from the interviewee than she could achieve.*

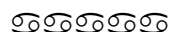
*We begin outside the interview room.*

Dorothy                      This interview needs to be crisp, dirty, menacing, in-your-face and effective.

To that end, I'm going to leave our unwilling witness in your capable hands, Sergeant Wendell. I find that I don't possess the necessary balls for a gig like that.

*Sergeant Wendell grins and nods.*

Sergeant Wendell              Gotcha.



*Dorothy sits at a small, functional bench-table opposite Les. Sergeant Wendell stalks about. Les begins confident, brash and smug. This attitude fades as the Sergeant roughs him up.*

Sergeant Wendell      Why were you in New Zealand?

Les      Business.

Sergeant Wendell      We'll need a list of all the people you contacted in the Shaky Isles.

Les      Kay.

Sergeant Wendell      We understood that you would fly back from NZ and then come and see us straight away.

Les      You understood wrong.

Sergeant Wendell      Why didn't you come straight to see us?

Les      I was busy.

Sergeant Wendell      Can you explain what Vere Desmond was doing at your Carlingford home while you were absent on a business trip to Auckland?

Les      No idea.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

Les is now somewhat dishevelled as if he has been severely manhandled. The smug grin has disappeared.

Les I want my lawyer. I'm entitled to legal representation here.

Dorothy No you're not. You abnegated that right when you reneged on your promise to visit us immediately upon your return from New Zealand.

Les *shouting* That's bullshit! You jumped-up bastards!

Dorothy Get on with it, Sarge. I'm interested to hear what Mr Leforest has

to say.

Sergeant Wendell One of our witnesses (a **reliable** witness) states that **you** were part of the Oxmond crew. So that means that Trevor Oxley and Vere Desmond and you were all buddies. Pals. Mates.

This gentleman whose ferociously murdered body was discovered by your cleaner inside your house was well-known to you.

Les I dunno what you're talking about.

Sergeant Wendell You emailed the cleaner to tell her that you were returning home. You wanted to come home to a nice, clean, tidy domicile. You told her when to visit your house. In the morning. Early.

Les Total lies. I demand that I have legal representation.

Sergeant Wendell Early in the morning. "Come and do your stuff in the morning." I can show you your email.

Les That's completely and utterly untrue. I did **not** email her.

Sergeant Wendell You were well aware that a man's body would --

Les Get your IT lads to check my computer. And my phone. I did **not** in any way, shape or form --

Sergeant Wendell That's what you told your cleaner (who usually mucks out your crib in the late afternoon).

Les I did not email her. I wasn't coming home yet so my telling her to clean up right then would be nonsense. You're snatching ideas out of thin air. This is a stitch-up Wendell.

Sergeant Wendell But you knew that Desmond's body would be the first thing to meet her startled gaze --

Why would you do that?

Les No idea. It's beyond all reasonable thought.

Sergeant Wendell You knew it because you **organized** it. You and Oxley. Trev

Oxley.

Les Prove it, arsehole.

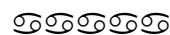
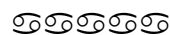
Sergeant Wendell You are a geologist specializing in mining. And you hit the big one. Billions of dollars there ... So why divvy it up with poor old Vere who couldn't even start a bushfire by rubbing two sticks together.

Les You're dreaming, Sergeant Wendell.

Sergeant Wendell Rare fossils. Better than a goldmine. More money than you could imagine. Piles of it.

So why share it with Vere? Indeed! Why share it with Trev? Is he on the chopping block too? Or will be?

Les Trev who?



Now Les has a big mouse under his right eye. His left eye is blackened. His lips are bleeding. Les is sour and sorry for himself. He has decided to be a smartie no longer.

Sergeant Wendell Tell me where Trevor Oxley is.

Les *quietly* He'll be hiding out with his brother.

Sergeant Wendell Which brother?

Les *very weary* The one with the gun collection. All the guns ... Bloodstone or Dumdum Ridge or something outside of Broken Hill ...

Sergeant Wendell steps back, looking at Dorothy who stands.

Les *angry* I'll have you scratched off the Force for this, Wendell! I'm entitled to a mouthpiece! They'll hang you up by your agates, mate.

Dorothy *calm* You can jabber on until your bum drops off. And I shall deny all your assertions. I was present at this interview 100% of the time and will swear that Sergeant Wendell acted in an exemplary

fashion.

[To the Sergeant]

Return this man to his cell.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*Dorothy and Sergeant Wendell are once again outside the interview room.*

Dorothy                      Thanks for that, Warren. I'll ring that information through to Superintendent Swan before I fly back to BHQ. Good work!

Sergeant Wendell              He was a bloody good footballer in his day, Ed Swan. You're lucky to be working with him.

Dorothy *archly*                      And his skinny off-sider Blaike Penfold?

Sergeant Wendell              That nerd! Wowser. A real goodie-two-shoes that one. I'm glad  
*snarls*                                      he's pissed off.

Dorothy *chuckles*                      Oh, and he speaks so highly of you, too.

*Dorothy makes as if to walk off then turns back. Sergeant Wendell looks a question.*

Dorothy                      I'm returning to BHQ later today. So thanks very much for your help.

The lads will be returning to Sydney in a couple of days. After the B & S ball I believe. They want to focus their enquiries here in Carlingford. Everything they have is pointing to the killer of Tippolo Camira being a local. A well-placed local, they believe.  
  
See ya!

END OF SCENE

**IV, Scene iv: Blaike Ticks The Boxes PART II (Dunbar Ridge) DAY 14**

*Winlagh weeps profoundly. She is hardly able to speak (such is her distress.)*

Winlagh *weeping*

It's so unfair. I'm being hunted down as if I'm a killer. And I didn't kiss Jasprit. I didn't!

He's been such a nice man: a gentleman. He cares about me. He wouldn't force me to kiss him if I didn't want to. And I certainly didn't force myself onto him.

GENERAL COVERAGE OF XT-95 DISTRIBUTION
----------------------------------------

*Now we see a bevy of quick takes where vans disgorge cartons of XT-95 (fabricated and supplied by Bay Morton (Aust) to pharmacy outlets.*

Female *voice-over*

The makers of Benedice and Baymor drugs have launched XT-95 which has been developed specifically (here in Australia) to treat F-PROTA. Supplies are being rushed to pharmacies throughout Australia.

GPs are being advised by authorities to issue emergency scripts for those suffering from the F-PROTA disease.

The bans on overseas travel to and from Australia may be lifted as early as next week, according to the Minister for Health Diane Davies.

FOCUS ON IDENTIFYING JOHN TENNY Dunbar Ridge
----------------------------------------------

*We are back at the Dunbar Ridge shack.*

Ed

Aw screw the fossils. They'll have to wait. The health crisis is more

important.

Blaike You sound like a triage nurse.

Ed Yeah well sort of ...

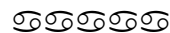
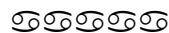
Where are we? You seem to be keeping score.

Blaike We need photos of John Tenny. We need his DNA. And since he has no police record we are pushing shit uphill.

*Ed ponders in his usual way: wandering about looking thoughtful.*

Ed He was a pharmacist ... A practising pharmacist. He will have attended a university somewhere. There'll be a record ***somewhere.***

Blaike Right! I'm onto it.



*We are now situated in a small office which forms part of the administrative block at the University of New England.*



*We are able to view delightful bush and woodland through the windows. A neat lady speaks to a young man. Both wear white lab coats.*

Neat lady *worried* That's funny ...

Young man Do you need help?

Neat lady *frowns* No ... Yes ... Not sure ...

This is the strangest thing. But ...

*The young man moves closer, looking over her shoulder.*

*Suddenly the neat lady sits down. She is obviously perplexed. The young man looks on in worried silence while the neat lady shuffles papers.*

Neat lady                      I'll tell you what it is all about and you can slap me back into reality.

The police are chasing after disgraced pharmacist John Tenny who trained here in the '90s. Late '90s. He graduated with a B Pharm. And according to our records, **this** is he.

*The young man looks thoughtful.*

Young man                      Where's the complication? And why "disgraced"?

Neat lady                      It was such a humiliating experience. One of **our** graduates got mixed up in inhuman experimentation. Real Frankenstein stuff. Cadavers, splicing body parts – it was horrendous.

Young man                      Looks like the police are after the right man then. What are you worried about?

*Neat lady shakes her head and waves the paper in her hand.*

Neat lady                      I put in a request to Alumni (as instructed by the police bulletin) in the normal way. Nothing complicated. "Give me the gen on John Tenny". And **this** came back.

*[Frustrated]*

Not as close as a bull's roar to the **real** John Tenny.

Look at him! The real John Tenny is a wimpy limp jelly. This bloke is a bloke. Yet the written stuff proclaims him to be John Tenny. Oh! This is so crazy!

*The young man looks a question.*

Neat lady                      I know this guy as Jake Oxley. Around 50 years old he would be

now. Brother of Lyle Oxley the infamous antique firearms trader.

Young man                      How do you know that?

Neat lady *bitter*                      Because my sister happened to date this man. And now he turns up as some other guy: a disgraced pharmacist.

Young man                      And was Jake a pharmacist too?

Neat lady                      Um ... No ... He was a geologist. No ... A palaeontologist. Fossils.

*Both the young man and the neat lady stare at each other.*

Young man                      You'd better get that information over to the police immediately. Probably set their case on its head.

Neat lady *nods*                      Suppose so. I'll do it right away.

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Blaike That call was bloody interesting. New England – the University there. They can confirm that John Tenny definitely gained his Bachelor of Pharmacy at their institution. But ... There's been some sort of mix-up. The alumni people ...

Blaike stares at the screen. He is perplexed and puzzled. Ed comes over to look over his shoulder.

Blaike No "interesting" is too weak a word. "Fascinating"?

Ed *concerned* What the hell are they saying? The spiel is John Tenny but the photo is of one of the Oxley boys. That's crazy!

Blaike Jake Oxley. He works with the Uni people at Connor Bend. Winlagh! I'll call Coops and get him to bring her over.

Ed *intrigued* Yes ... Yes do that ... But tell her nothing. I don't want any suggestions or ideas clouding her judgement.

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Ed                                      We believe that the man who took you captive at Dunbar Ridge was called John Tenny. We showed you three photos of different men but you were unsure ... because it was dark.

Winlagh *shrugs*                      Was one of the photos that you showed me of this John Tenny?

*Blaike has printed out the alumni details as sent to them from the University of New England.*

*Wordlessly he passes the pages to Winlagh.*

Winlagh *alert*                              No! No! This photo is of Jake Oxley. I work with him. Alongside him. I'd know him anywhere. Fabulous knowledge of reefs and seams: where to dig. Where to find the fossilized remains.

Blaike                                      My last chance is a photo taken at a Melting Glacier gig. John Tenny was hanging around the band: freaking them out. But it's not a very clear shot I'm afraid.

*Blaike pushes his "last chance" across the table. Winlagh almost jumps when she looks at the man in the background (who is being pointed to by Blaike).*

Winlagh                                      Oh yeah ... Yes. That's the blithering idiot who tried to frighten me with dingoes and murderous snakes.

Blaike                                      On his left arm it appears that there is a tattoo.

*Again, Winlagh almost jumps. She slaps her hand to her mouth.*

Winlagh                                      I'm so sorry. I should have mentioned that but forgot.

Yes! He had a bulldog tattoo on his left forearm. Right forearm?

No! I was right. Left forearm. A bulldog with rippling muscles, spiky teeth and loads of menace.

God! How did I forget that?

Ed                                      Is there anything else you can think of? Like ... What do you feel about Jake Oxley's photo being passed off as that of John Tenny?

Winlagh                                      When he was jabbering and off with the pixies my kidnapper

started to ... ah ... "gloat" I suppose you'd call it. He puffed up his own importance. The dingoes that would tear me to shreds and the trained snakes ... Then he gloated about the stitch-up he had orchestrated. "The Oxleys would get it with both barrels."

My strong feeling is that Tenny would have done that himself.

Blaike *frowning*

How can that have helped him?

Winlagh *shrugs*

Put you policemen off the scent perhaps?

Ed *reluctant*

Okay. Thanks Ms Hurstbridge.

Winlagh *smiles*

Please: "Winlagh".

Ed

Alright then. Thanks Winlagh. I'll let you go. Give Jeparit our best wishes.

Winlagh

Sure. Will do.

Ed

And if you can remember anything else, give us a call.

*They stand and shake hands.*

Ed

Oh! And are you feeling better?

Winlagh *nods*

They pumped me full of XT-95 and all good. I'm allowed to kiss Jeparit in one month's time.

Ed

I have about half-a-dozen lewd comments to add to that but being a gentleman ...

*They laugh. Just as Winlagh finds Cooper, something occurs to her. She runs back to Ed.*

Winlagh

Say! Something just occurred to me.

Ed *alert*

Yes?

Winlagh

I can vaguely remember (I was swimming in and out of reality) but Tenny was shouting at someone on his phone. I don't know ... something about bachelors and spinsters.



*Blaike and Ed are in close conference. There is an overlaying sense of extreme urgency.*

Blaike                      The Swedish oriental professor came up with the disease. Then he came up with the cure. Then he went to ground.

Ed *dismissive*              The World Health Organization can track him down and deal with him in the proper way.

Scratch him from our list.

Blaike                      Take his name off the fridge, then.

*Ed does so. He scrunches the yellow post-it note into a tight ball then flips it into the sink.*

Ed                          Next.

Blaike                      Right. The latest murder (Vere Desmond) turns out to have a serious goof in it. Everyone is in agreement that the lady cleaner discovered the body early in the morning. She normally mucked out Leforest's crib just after lunch (if she was called in by Leforest).

Why so early?

Anyway she went off to Shoalhaven to stay with rellies after the nasty shock of finding the stiff. Dorothy Moreland drove there to question her all over again while she was in Sydney.

"Why so early?" This cleaning lady reckoned that (as per usual) an email arrived from Les: "I want to be mucked out before breakfast." But why? He wasn't returning from Auckland for days so it all looked smokey. And remember that he flatly denied ever sending that sucker when Sarge questioned him.

But it gets much worse. Leforest never sent that email at all. Our official IT guys ran it through their soup vitamiser and placed the source of that email as an outlet in a café-slash-kiosk in Carlingford.

Ed *confused* Nah ... I'm not with you ... Who? Remember it's got to be someone who knew that Desmond would be bumped off.

Blaike A couple of days ago, I spoke to Senior Constable Laurie Aimes. Really got in his ear – about the way that vital evidence flies out the door not long after it arrives.

And other things ...

If **anyone** rang the cleaner to get her there early then it is probably Aimes.

*[Takes a big breath]*

Go through it in your mind.

The phone rings. I answer it. A hysterical woman has found the body. First thing she saw. Three of us jump into a car and head straight there: an initial "look-see" before we call Homicide. There's me, Senior Constable Laurie Aimes and Constable Jerry Gerard.

Ed What about your Sarge?

Blaike *shakes head* He fronts up later. That's the moot point: he fronts up later.

Ed What are you saying?

*Ed is very restless. He paces about: his face works as he tries to figure it out.*

Blaike *emphatic* Ignore Sarge for a minnie. Somebody wanted us at the crime scene before the evidence went west. Somebody (just like me, but not me) was suspicious of ...

Ed You've worked it out haven't you?

Blaike Yeah. Senior Connie Aimes (Laurie) was so edgy you could use him to cut up a pineapple. My money's on Laurie. He was so suspicious that he was watching.

Ed *probing* The reason that not one shred of a clue was found in the Tippy

Camira killing of 2010 is that a very well-placed player tidied-up. The same player in 2022 intended to tidy-up but was beaten to the punch by the fact that the body was discovered before his expected timeline. And the reason that that happened was an instruction (pertaining to come from Les) might have been sent by your mate Laurie.

*Blaike covers his face with his hands. He is trying to make sense of it all.*

Blaike *whispers*

Laurie knew! He told us to photograph everything on our own phones and to tell no-one. He was double suspicious.

Ed

Okay. That means your Sarge is definitely looking to be the most obvious candidate. He could do the deeds and be well-paid by the contractor.

Jeez! Deep shit-hole for a drop dunny!

We have to flush him out somehow (if you'll pardon all the lavatory allusions.)

*[Pause]*

The money! Get onto that ANZ bloke again and work on the assumption that Wendell was paid a huge sum to take out Camira in 2010. And then another even bigger amount just recently for Desmond. Can he trace that (ask him).

Wait a minute! No – we sent Dorothy to Isa. She can do this leg work with the bank bloke for us.

That'll be the one and only way that we can put the finger on Wendell. Unless we smoke him out ...

END OF SCENE

**IV, Scene v: Dorothy Deals With Unfinished Business (Mt Isa) DAY 14**

*Although Dorothy told Sergeant Wendell that she was headed for Broken Hill, she has in fact flown to Mt Isa. She is now at the Mt Isa ANZ branch. Dorothy is ushered into a large back room: Alf Boynton is discovered there with a sizeable PC and decent screen on the table in front of him. The replay of an AFL game rolls on in the background on a TV screen mounted high on the wall. Dorothy gives the TV a quick glance: evidently she is surprised.*

*The two shake hands and exchange names. As they sit, Dorothy tries for a bit of humour.*

Dorothy                      All the comforts of home, I see.

Alf *grins*                      Mmmm ...

They call it "kicking-back" now. In my day it was called "having a spell". This room is for staff recreation but the current manager has set it aside just now for you and me to put our heads together.

And you are working in conjunction with Swannie, are you?

Dorothy                      Yes. I have that pleasure.

Alf *warm smile*                      He was the best. You can't argue about that. They made him and then they threw away the pattern plate.

He was the very best.

Dorothy                      And he needs you to put the final pieces of the jigsaw puzzle in place.

Alf                              Yes I gathered that from your phone call.

Swannie wants to know why an old business card with my name and number scrawled on it was found in Carlingford – is that right?

*Dorothy nods. After a slight pause, Alf sadly shakes his head.*

Alf                              No can do, I'm afraid. I can't explain it.

Dorothy                      So no Carlingford customers?

Alf                                      Narry a one. Sorry.

*Dorothy looks about for inspiration.*

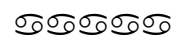
Dorothy                              Okay. Let's try another tack. Large sums of money deposited in a bank account.

Alf *super-surprised*              You've got to be joking! "Large sums of money"! Mt Isa is ***all about*** large deposits and large withdrawals. For God's sake get a grip, woman! This is the mining capital of Australia – it's only ever going to be ginormous sums of money here!

Dorothy                              Yes. But that would be business to business – corporations and multi-nationals.

I'm thinking more about a private citizen who received into their bank account huge deposits but on very infrequent occasions. Almost never (you'd say).

Alf *nods*                              Yes that narrows down the field quite a bit. Let's have a look.



Alf                                      Ah!

This one looks promising. An Italian name perhaps. Or Greek?

Over a period of 15 years only ever two deposits: one for \$600,000 and the other for \$750,000. One 12 years ago and the other very recent. And no others.

Dorothy *eager*                      Yes, Italian sounds good. What is it?

Alf *chuckles*                        Well, I don't have a hope in hell of pronouncing it.

*Alf shows the page to Dorothy who reads the name where Alf stabs his finger on the PC screen.*

Dorothy *reading*                  "Steropodon Galmani"? That's strange ...

*Dorothy is perplexed. She hesitates.*

Dorothy                      Excuse me. Do you mind if I call someone to check that name out? It's not the Italian name that I was expecting ...

Alf                              You go right ahead. Anything for Swannie.

*Dorothy calls Blaike rather than Ed. Blaike is not "in view" as Dorothy speaks to him.*

Dorothy                      Yeah hi Blaike. I've got something but I don't recognize the name. "Steropodon Galmani". Does that compute?

Blaike *phone voice*        Yeah! Yes it does! That's the scientific name for the fossils they've been digging up both here and in Isa.

Dorothy                      Over a period of time two deposits only: 600K in 2010 and the other (recent) of 750K. Surely that has to be it, doesn't it?

Blaike *phone voice*        Bingo! Find out who opened the account, can you?

Dorothy                      Okay. I'll ring you back.

*Dorothy finishes her call to Blaike then turns to Alf.*

Dorothy                      Alf is there any hope of identifying the actual person (the individual) who opened that account in Mt Isa about 15 or so years ago?

Alf                              Certainly.

*Thrilling pause as we watch Alf tapping away on the keyboard.*

Alf                              Jake Oxley. He was a palaeontologist working at Riversleigh (which is about 200 kilometres up to the north of here).

Dorothy                      Okay. Forget the recent deposit for a minute. Let's concentrate on that account in 2010. What I need to know is: were there any withdrawals on that account and at which branch.

Alf                              Yes there were several modest withdrawals from 2010 onwards. And all at one branch.

*[Thrilling pause]*

One branch only. I'm just extracting the name of the ...

*[Thrilling pause]*

Carlingford. So now we have the reason for one of these old cards with my name on it being found in a Carlingford house.

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Blaike

Ed! This is it. This is the missing link between the fossils and the medical bizz.

Jake Oxley (fossils) opens an ANZ account in Mt Isa such that the hired assassin (of the pharmacist) can be paid off.

Ed

And Vere Desmond?

Ed holds up his hands (insisting on silence). He wanders about (as is his way).

Ed

Listen! This is my take on all this.

Gareth Lidyard is the puppet master.

We provide a vague filmic version of the solution that Ed and Blaike come up with.

Ed *voice-over*

He provides the wherewithal. He tells his henchman Lyle Oxley to organize a bank account. Lyle wants distance – so he tells brother Jake (Mt Isa) to set up the account. Give it a name that won't be obvious.

The hitman (we are pretty sure this is Wendell) in Carlingford receives the deets about this account. And he takes out Tippy to the tune of \$600,000. Tippy is whacked because he is a threat somehow ... maybe he is unhappy with the idea of making people sick to then make a packet curing them. Who knows?

Blaike *voice-over*

Twelve years later (as in a few days ago) Vere Desmond goes to the home of Les Leforest (even though Les is off in New Zealand.) He takes three business cards with him. Cards that he has stolen from someone connected with our police station. These cards can

be used to blackmail the hitman. That's why he hides them under the fruit bowl (for now). Vere is a cut-throat stand-over merchant but the hitman beats him at his own game.

Ed *voice-over*

The hitman cannot clear-up as he would like to. The cleaner arrives early. She was not given her instructions by Les – someone else told her to do out the house in the morning. Early in the morning. You and your mates find the cards (now missing).

Blaike *voice-over*

And Lidyard is happy to part with a quarter of a million for Desmond to be taken out. Obviously he is threatening to disclose the operation.

The question remains: is John Tenny to go the same way? Is he still in hiding because that's what he fears?

Ed

Make the call to Gunnar Franks of Internal Affairs. Tell him to use the utmost care. Ask Gunnar to arrest Wendell whilst we clear everything else up.

Blaike

Dorothy mentioned that she put the wind up Wendell by hinting that we were pretty much onto him. I'll let Gunnar know that, shall I?

But Ed is wandering about, his brain working overtime.

END OF SCENE

IV, Scene vi: Jeparit Is In Worse Trouble Than The Early Explorers

(Medici Hospital, Connor Bend) **DAY 15**

Jeparit is asleep in a hospital bed, hooked up to a saline drip and with all sorts of meters bipping away. Gibbo and Cooper hover about looking worried. Donny could not make it so the boys have obtained a life-size cardboard figure of Donny as he looked when he played the Arab in "The Horizon Has Eyes". They have placed this effigy right near Jeparit's bed.

Whilst Gibbo and Cooper murmur to each other near the window, Jeparit wakes. He stares at the effigy of Donny.

Jeparit *weakly* G'day Don. Looking a bit flat there ...

Gibbo and Cooper are overjoyed. They rush over to the bedside. There is a great deal of handshaking. Jeparit is not up to this level of excitement but soldiers on regardless.

Gibbo Hey Buddy! You back in the land of the living, yeah?

Jeparit *weakly* Where am I?

Cooper *confused* Er ... Where are we again?

Gibbo Medici Hospital in Cooper Bend. I mean, Connor Bend.

Cooper You've been pretty crook, mate.

Gibbo Hovering on the brink between Life and Death.

Cooper Your fan club organized a vigil in Martin Place. In that plaza they have there. Hundreds of guys and girls openly weeping. Candles ... Prayers ... Latest updates on your health flash onto a huge screen ...

Jeparit *weak laugh* Tell 'em old Jasprit is hangin' in there ...

Fuck! I feel like a steamroller has run over me. Like you did to poor old Don there.

There is grateful laughter. A doctor and nurse enter the room. They give the Donny effigy very speaking looks, then focus on Jeparit. Gibbo and Cooper leave with heartfelt good-byes.

In the corridor outside, Gibbo twigs Cooper's elbow.

Gibbo Yeah. Get onto the News (Channel 7 or someone ...)

 Let them know that the curry muncher is awake and conversing with his co-stars. Mention that he is in good humour.

Cooper Are we allowed to do that? What if he has a relapse and then snuffs it further down the track?

Gibbo *shrugs* I dunno. You'll be called on to make a nice speech at his funeral, I suppose.

Cooper *equably* Righto. I can do that.

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*The nurse and doctor make some general conversation with Jeparit. Then the doctor leaves the room.*

Jeparit                                I was telling my mates that I feel like a steamroller has crushed me.

Nurse                                We'll try to make you more comfortable.

Jeparit                                Listen! Don't go! Tell me is Ms Hurstbridge okay? Can I see her?

Nurse                                The girl who kissed you? No! She is in complete isolation.

*Jeparit frowns.*

**FLASHBACK**

*Winlagh is asleep in her bed at Connor Bend. She has been moved out of the dormitory and into a tent.*

*There is enough starlight for Jeparit to see what he is doing. Stealthily, Jeparit approaches the tent. He looks around furtively then enters the tent.*

*Jeparit (subsumed by his love for Winlagh) watches her sleep. He thinks that it is utterly cute that her face is cupped in her hand.*

Jeparit *whispers*                      You beautiful, beautiful girl! Goodnight, darling.

*Jeparit leans forward, kissing Winlagh on the lips several times. Then he slips soundlessly out of the tent.*



*Jeparit has run out of steam. However, he forces himself to respond to the unfairness of the attack on Winlagh.*

Nurse                                      You are in this mess because Ms Hurstbridge kissed you. However she absolutely denies having done so. Which leaves us wondering how you came by F-PROTA.

Jeparit                                      No! You got it wrong!

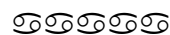
***I kissed her.*** I went into her tent (yeah, I know – complete dickhead) and watched her sleeping. She looked ...

Oh man! I could not resist. I bent over her and kissed her.

Nurse                                      On the lips?

Jeparit                                      Yes on the lips. Do you have a problem with that?

Nurse                                      I'll get the doctor back in here. He needs to hear this.



*Ed sits beside Jeparit, who still lies in his hospital bed. The cardboard effigy of Donny is still found in the room.*

Ed Tell me about Lyle Oxley.

*Jeparit makes several faces as he breathes heavily.*

Jeparit Confident. Got the "patter". Got the oily smile. Puts the customer at ease. Tarted-up like a pox doctor's clerk. What do you call that poofie thing around a bloke's neck when he's trying to bung on side?

Ed *frowns* Pardon me?

Jeparit Not a tie ... Oh, Jeez! It's a French word ...

Ed Cravat?

Jeparit Yeah that's the one! I'm getting as dumb as old Coops.

Ed Don't beat yourself up. You've nearly died mate.

Jeparit "Death by pash". It's a world first, for sure.

Anyway ...

Lyle had a gold silk cravat with a pearl pin stuck in it.

You know I'm not a poofter basher – but shit-a-brick!

Ed Are you saying that he is a homosexual?

I know that it's not legitimate for me to ask that question but in this case I would like to know about his ... er ... "leanings".

*Jeparit stares at Donny's cardboard figure as he thinks.*

Jeparit He was fairly dripping with masculine jewellery. Expensive watch and thick gold rings. Opal cuff links ... No I don't think he was gay. I guess I'd have to see him with a lady to give a proper opinion.

Ed Fair enough.

And now have a good think: is he well set up such that he'd be violent? A thug? A standover man?

Jeparit I'm fairly certain that someone else would do his dirty work.

Ed Did you see anyone else while you were there?

Jeparit Nup. Only him.

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene vii: Gibbo Sorts Everyone Out (ABC Studio, Broken Hill) DAY 15**

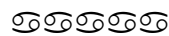
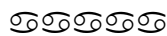
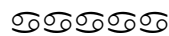
*Our scene is a dimly-lit TV studio. It is small and inconsequential.*

Gibbo *voice-off* Somebody or other needs to pull his (or her) finger out.

*After a moment, bright lights crackle into existence. Several members of the TV crew bustle about moving in furniture, setting back drops and preparing the small studio as if for an address to the nation from the Prime Minister.*

Gibbo *voice-off* Get me a spot just prior to the evening news when all the peeps will be watching. It'll need to go out to all the channels. And Youtube.

Start off with a bass-baritone spruiking how important this public service message is. Some bloke who sounds commanding. Then I come on and put the hard word on 'em. Force it down their throats (sort of).



*Gibbo is dressed in a suit and tie. He is clean-shaven and his hair is stylishly cut. Because he is appearing on TV, make-up has been applied. His lapel pin is an enamelled map of Australia.*

*Gibbo (grim-faced) sits at a robust oak desk replete with Australian flags, bowls of native foliage and an attractive framed photo of Gibbo with a blue heeler.*

Gibbo

Good evening Broken Hill, and good evening to the rest of Australia.

For those who may not be aware, my name is Josh Gibson (Gibbo). I am a close personal friend of my fellow actor Jeparit Name-Your-Poison (whom you all know as Jasprit Namipors).

Jeparit is still in a serious condition in hospital, clinging to life. He is under the care of a dedicated staff. His loved ones are gathered around him with a box of tissues to hand.

*Gibbo evidences great emotion (including the ever-popular lip-quiver). Then he recovers. He looks straight at the camera.*

Gibbo

But in my presence, Jeparit has regained consciousness long enough to confirm the theory that his life-threatening illness arose from unwittingly pashing with a lady who was a carrier of F-PROTA. She didn't know that but.

*Change of camera angle. Gibbo is on top of it.*

Gibbo *very aggressive*

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

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

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

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

*[Gains his equilibrium]*

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

This advice must be taken with the utmost seriousness.

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

*The camera closes in as Gibbo points straight at it.*

*Gibbo pointing*

F-PROTA is real. F-PROTA is lethal.

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

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

Thank you for your attention.

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT IV



## ACT V – THE BACHELOR & SPINSTER DANCE

**V, Scene i:** It All Kicks Off At The B & S (the greater Broken Hill area) **DAY 16**

### WARNINGS FROM THE FIRE Dunbar Ridge

*Both Ed and Blaike have spruced themselves up in preparation for the Bachelor & Spinster Ball. They are in happy, jovial spirits when suddenly Liam tears into their shack. He is in a very distressed state.*

Ed *surprised*                      What's a matter, mate?

Liam *urgent*                      Grandpa Henry Burrah see big problem in his fire. You take all your good stuff with you to the dance. Clear outta here! Now!

Blaike *appalled*                      What are you talking about?

*Without delay, Liam begins to pull all the yellow post-it notes off the fridge. Blaike makes to rescue his notes, but is stopped by Ed.*

Ed *calm, quiet*                      Is this to do with Gill?

Liam *wildly urgent*                      No, Swannie. You and your stick-figure sidekick – take all the good stuff that ya wanna keep (Grandpa says). Put it all in the boot of your car and drive off like stink.

*Ed indicates to Blaike that they should co-operate with Liam. They pack all their necessary belongings into the boot of the hire car.*

Ed *to Liam*

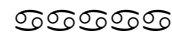
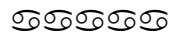
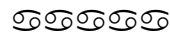
Will you be alright? Shall we drive you home?

Liam

Yeah. Take me and me bike home to Blondstone. You can meet up with Grandpa Henry and ya can yack with him.

Ed *nods*

I'd like that. I'd like that.



## THE OXLEY BOYS ATTACK ED'S SHACK Dunbar Ridge

*The shack is well-lit with electric light just as Blaike and Ed left it when they tore off only 12 minutes before.*

*A white stretch limo (chauffeur-driven) rocks up. It disgorges the three Oxley brothers (none of whom we have actually met so far). They ooze masculine confidence and strength. Lyle is wildly overdressed. The chauffeur also leaves the vehicle. He looks at the limo and frowns.*

Chauffeur

I'd give 'em an extra rocket up the arse for getting our white wheels all dusty. Red dust! Ya can never get it off.

*Lyle looks at the car. The chauffeur goes to the boot. He passes large and intricate automatic weapons to the three brothers.*

Lyle

Bastards! City slickers without a single clue.

Jake

I don't really feel comfortable gunning Swannie. That mark he took in the Grand Final when the Eagles beat Hawthorn. Best hanger I've ever seen.

Trevor *sighs*

Think "copper" and forget the other.

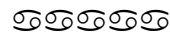
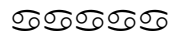
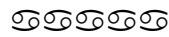
Are we ready gentlemen?

*Lyle, Jake and Trevor fire round after round of automatic ammunition into the shack which disintegrates quickly. The chauffeur hurls Molotov cocktails one after the other. The explosions are brilliant: it is night-time, they are in the middle of nowhere and no expense has been spared.*

Lyle                      You know what? I don't think anyone's at home.

Jake                     Well where the hell will they be ya reckon?

Trevor                  My gut is telling me "B & S". Come on. We can take them out there.

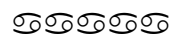


## THE RAID ON LYLE OXLEY'S OPERATION Blondstone

*The SWAT team arrive at the Oxley armaments display to find it empty of humanity. Everyone has fled. We take a few moments to follow the team around, as they search for occupants. Lights switch on and then off.*

Policeman *voice-over*      I'm at Lyle Oxley's abode in Blondstone. Everybody has shot through, Ed. Not a sausage. And that includes the showrooms and all outhouses.

Ed *voice-over*                Thanks. Stand the guys down, will you?



## GILL BURRAH-SHAW TURNS UP

*Ed stands beside Grandpa Henry Burrah in the starlit back yard (Blondstone). The two men stare at the fire. Every so often one or other chucks some wood or brush on the fire. Sparks fly up.*

Ed                        My work doesn't wait for me.

*Ed pulls his mobile phone from his trouser pocket. He is about to make another call when he senses a shadow behind him. When he turns, he sees Liam Burrah-Shaw.*

Liam G'day. What does the fire tell you?

Ed *grins* It says: "Sorry mate. No time for footy tonight."

Henry *laughs* It's bright enough to play under lights, mate. Them stars ...

Liam I guess not. You busy. Gill turned up just now. Thought you'd like to know that.

Ed Gill? Your brother Gill? What do you mean he's "turned up"?

*Liam shrugs. He looks over to the shadows made by bushes near the house.*

Ed Okay. Where is he? At your home?

*Liam shakes his head. Then he gestures to the bushes. Gill moves out of the shadows but does not advance.*

Ed He's not hurt I hope? Can I go over there and speak to him?

Liam A bit hurt. They try to do him over but he run too fast.

Go on and talk to him. He's your best fan. I mean your biggest fan.

Ed *smiles* No that honour belongs to Blaike.

*Liam motions with his thumb. Ed nods. He wonders whether he should go himself alone or drag along Blaike?*

Ed How old is Gill?

Liam *pouts* Nearly 20.

Ed Then it might be easier for him to deal with Constable Penfold.

*Liam nods. Ed turns to Blaike.*

Ed Constable Penfold. Find out if Gill needs any medical assistance. Question him here *in situ* – I don't want him dragged around the countryside.



## JOHN TENNY: DODGY JOCKS IN A KNOT

*The foyer at the Broken Hill police station is very boisterous.*

Policewoman #2            The big shindig is about to kick off and look what we found as soon as we rocked up.

*Policewoman #2 points to a large tattoo on the forearm of a man (John Tenny) who lies in a demented state on the floor of the police station. The tattoo is of a very vicious bulldog.*

*John Tenny is a complete mess. He has soiled his underpants upon being nabbed by two uniformed police (one male, the other female). Unable to stand, John Tenny squirms about on the ground, as he squeals and shouts. The police are perplexed and disgusted.*

Dorothy                      Finally! This is John Tenny. And he's shit himself.

Policewoman #1 *sighs*    Great. That's just what we need.

Policewoman #2            What do you call that when a felon gets his knickers in a twist whilst at the same time soiling them?

Dorothy *crisp*              We say that he is "rooted": had the big Richard right up the sphincter. Sling the cuffs on him.

Policewoman #2            What's the charge?

Dorothy                      Three counts of abduction, kidnap, aggravated assault, assault and battery, assault with menaces, ...

That'll do for starters. And ensure that he gets a mouthpiece. He or she can organize to clean him up.

And you'd better head back to the Showgrounds as soon as pooey-bottom is behind bars. We need every able body on patrol. Get to it, girls!



## THE ANCIENT FIRE WITHIN ME Dunbar Ridge

*Ed and Blaike are alone in the starlit backyard belonging to Grandpa Henry in Blondstone. The fire continues to burn, providing a bright focus such that Ed and Blaike are almost in silhouette.*

*We have evidently intruded on a disagreement between the two men.*

Blaike

Ed I just don't get this --

Ed *angry, nasty*

What don't you get? Come on mate – spill your guts. There's something bothering you (I can tell that) so unburden yourself. Then we'll rock up at the B & S where you can find some spunky maiden to ravish (which is [I believe] your current prime objective).

Blaike *determined*

Police work isn't staring into flames and getting a wrench in your guts that --

Ed *forceful*

That's me! That's my biology – my chemistry.

I'm the grandson of a full-blood Noongar woman who was "taken" to his bed by a white man: a drover. His name was Thomas Swan. Which makes my Dad a half-caste, and makes me a quarter-caste.

Blaike *shakes head*

That's irrelevant. Solving crimes does not hang on --

Ed *emotional*

I can't fight my ancient lineage Constable Penfold. You're an Anglo-Saxon whitey who hasn't got a clue about the inbuilt magic that drives me. You know fuck-all about it.

Blaike *firm*

And you know as well as I do Superintendent Swan that good, sound police work is comprised of careful investigation of evidence gathered. Of scientific method. Not smoke signals.

Ed

This is part of my make-up. Live with it!

Look! Countless of my indigenous relatives passed these genes on

to me via their sperm.

Blaike *fired-up*

You can't lug a portable barbeque into Court and get the jury to grasp that it corroborates the Crown case against the defendant. It's dumb! It's just ludicrous!

*Both men wander off in different directions. The fire spurts. Sparks dance around in the night air.*

*Ed wanders back. He is calmer now.*

Ed

Everyone remembers Swannie in his footy-playing days taking big marks. The crowd screamed with excitement as Swannie went back to kick the winning goal. Hero! That part of me was Noongar. I'm sure of it.

Blaike *stubborn*

And my Anglo-Saxon roots drive **me**. I go for logic and rational thought processes. I always will.

Ed

So you'd rather be shot-up by thugs? Grandpa Henry's fire warned us. We heeded that warning. And we're both still alive.

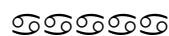
*Blaike is still sullen and stubborn. He cannot be convinced.*

Ed

Anyhow ... However we get there (even if we use voodoo mysticism) it is important that we **do** get there.

And listen ... I'm proud that you didn't crumble when I came down heavy on you just then ... You stuck to your guns. I like that.

*Ed pats Blaike fondly on the shoulder.*



*Blaike drives (with Ed and Gill as his passengers) towards the Broken Hill Showgrounds where the B & S ball is kicking-on.*

Blaike

Quick deviation to pick up Cooper.

Ed

Now Cooper at a Bachelor and Spinster ... that has **got** to be a

new high.

You know, I've been thinking things over (as you do) ... I'm genuinely pleased that my daughter has turned her sights on a good man like you, Blaike. There's loads of --

Gill                      That sounds like peace-making.

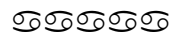
Have youse two been having a barney?

Blaike *rhapsodic*                      I'm in love with his daughter. I want to crush her in my arms and kiss her hair ... her face ... her neck ...

Ed                      That's enough. Save that for the lovely virgins of Broken Hill.

*Gill crack of laughter.*

Gill *laughing outright*                      Virgins? Now youse **are** reaching for miracles!



*The attendees at the B & S Dance are having a very good time. The rock band (Melting Glacier) plays loudly. People dance on what might (during the local Agricultural Show) pass for a large animal parade ring. Drink flows and there are various BBQs slogging away. There is an atmosphere of extreme joy. Nobody seems to care about the "no-kissing, no-rooting" rules. A quick sneak peek at the many ute trays (jammed into the carpark) indicates that males and females are already hard at it. Bare bums rise and fall to the tempo of the band. It is all happening!*

*The promised kiosks (giving away condoms) are everywhere: "Free 4 U Frangers".*



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## BLAIKE AND COOPER WITH JEPARIT'S FIREARMS



*Blaike is in raptures as he takes an SMS message on his phone. Then he pockets it quickly.*

*The noise level is very high. We can hear “Melting Glacier” playing in the background. Our camera focuses on the night sky: a helicopter flies in. We watch it land. While the helicopter blades continue to turn, armed troops are disgorged from the craft.*

*Cooper (wearing a disgusted expression) looks over at the helicopter. Blaike is assisting Cooper to prepare the antique flintlock pistol which Jeparit bought such that he will be able to fire it.*

Cooper                      Who sent those blokes?

Blaike *shrugs*              Er ... the PM I guess.

Cooper                      Stupid bastard – no wonder the country’s going down the gurgler.  
  
Aw! I’m making a pig’s breakfast of this sucker – are you any good at these bastards?

*Cooper hands over the flintlock pistol. Blaike strokes it lovingly.*

Blaike                      If I’m not mistaken this is a Ketland and Son. Yes, look at that: engraved on the side here. And see the word “London” in the teardrop?

You’d better let me load this thing. I’ve made quite a study of antique firearms, as it happens.

But I warn you that you have to be really careful, Coop.

*Blaike gives a reassuring smile to the hapless Cooper. Blaike loads the flintlock pistol then hands it back to Cooper.*

Blaike                      Okay. Now you’re ready to go. Just cock it like this.

But remember Cooper: you are only shooting to protect yourself in the event that your own life is under direct threat. Aim to wound rather than kill. Got it?

Cooper                      I shall do my best, Bro.

Blaike Stay calm. Shooting at a real live human being with real live ammunition (even if it is 18<sup>th</sup> century) is your **very last** resort. This is not a movie set. We are not cowboys.

*Cooper appears inordinately excited. He is practising firing the gun. His expression (murderous delight) gives Blaike pause.*

Cooper *teeth clenched* Ah man! This is gonna be sweet.

Blaike Keep yourself hidden here.  
Now I'm serious: don't do the big hero thing. Keep in the back of your mind what you'll be testifying in court if it all goes haywire.

*Cooper is in no way chastened by Blaike's words.*

Cooper Brutal!

Blaike *worried* This isn't your first experience with firearms is it?

Cooper No mate! In the pirates and Vikings bizzo I had to shoot out lots of extras with a fake gun. It was brutal!

Blaike *warning* Well, don't get an itchy trigger finger. Be calm, steady and treat every threatening situation with steely resolve.

You right with that?

Cooper *nods* No worries.

Blaike *echoes softly* No worries ...

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This is where some of the exciting action takes place.

The Oxley brothers rock up in the stretch limo. They are looking for Ed and Blaike (to take them out).

Ed mingles with the crowd. He is alert, watching with Melting Glacier
rocking on to everyone's delight.

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Cooper *frustrated*

Hey Corporal Penwick! This bloody thing doesn't work!

Blaike

It's Constable Penfold actually.

Look it's easy ...

Cooper *determined*

Now let's have a crack at it ...

*The antique firearm almost explodes in Cooper's hands. The firearm makes a horrendous bang as Cooper (shouting in fright) drops it like a hot potato. Smoke billows up.*

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Nearby, the Vicar of St Osthwin's Anglican Church is conducting a vigil with several elderly parishioners who sing "Praise my soul the King of Heaven". Their large placard reads: "SAVE OUR CHILDREN". Suddenly the Vicar screams out in extreme pain, clutching his backside.

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*Blaike springs into action, rushing to Cooper's side.*

Blaike *shouts*

Oh Jesus! Are you okay Cooper?

*Cooper scrambles up to his feet.*

Cooper *weak laugh*

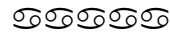
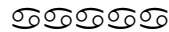
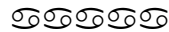
Yeah mate! What a rush! That thing fired off just --

*Blaike and Cooper hear the yells and shouts of the Vicar and his parishioners. Blaike goggles in absolute horror.*

Blaike *totally aghast*      Fuck-a-duck! You've winged the fucking Vicar!

*The camera closes right in on Cooper's face. He is more elated than anything else.*

Cooper *low-voiced*      Brutal!



This is where more of the exciting action takes place to the accompaniment of Melting Glacier.

The Oxley brothers roam about looking for Ed and Blaike (to take them out).

Ed mingles with the crowd. He is alert, watching and then jumps into action!

## BLAIKE IS TRIUMPHANT

*There is a mad scramble of punches, knives being thrown, tussles, aimed rifles and shotguns and on and on and on. Terrifying excitement.*

*Blaike nabs Trevor Oxley after a brilliant fight which involves bouncing off walls and leaping from heights. Blaike uses his brain to gain the advantage over the stronger, tougher man. He swings at Trevor by means of a chain hanging from a rafter. Then (after some more electrifying stunts and with lightning speed)*

*Blaike slaps on the handcuffs. Trevor Oxley is face-down on the ground and extremely uncomfortable.*

Blaike *panting*

Trevor Oxley! I am placing you under arrest for endangering the life of a serving police officer. There will be other charges with relation to the theft and illegal export of monotreme fossils. I am obliged to caution you that you do not have to say or do anything, but that if you do, it may be used in evidence against you.

Do you understand the nature of this arrest?

*Trevor squirms and grunts or groans. He does not respond. Blaike has disposed his full body weight on Trevor.*

Blaike *panting*

Trevor Oxley! Do you understand the nature of this arrest? A simple "Yes" will suffice.

Trevor *muffled*

Get off me, ya cunt!

Blaike *forceful*

I can't hear your response. Trevor Ox --

Trevor *in agony*

Yes! Yes! I can't breathe! ***Get off me!***

*Blaike relaxes, smiling.*

## COOPER GAINS THE UPPER HAND

*Cooper is in his element. He hides away (as instructed by Blaike) taking pot shots at anything that moves. Just as he turns to reload, Jake Oxley (panting with fear and excessive exercise) takes shelter. Cooper bonks him over the head with Jeparit's antique pistol.*

Cooper *jubilant*

Max Cooper – go you good thing!

*The noise of the old flintlock pistol combined with the pall of smoke that its use necessitates draws four members of the armed soldiers (who were delivered to the B & S by helicopter) to this area. They surround Cooper, whose face is wreathed in smiles.*

Soldier #1                      What are you up to, sir?

Cooper                         I'm under orders from Corporal Penshurst. He said I was to stay here and shoot to maim (not kill). But this one is a head-case: not shot just banged-up. On the noggin.

Soldier #2                      And what is that monstrosity that you are firing? Is that from a museum?

Cooper *proudly*                It belongs to Jeparit Name-Your-Poison. Cost him a packet. Look! The only one who got shot with this baby was a vicar who was in the wrong place at the wrong time. No worries but!

*The four soldiers glance at each other.*

Soldier #1                      Ah ... You'd better come along with us, sir.

Cooper                         And the felon. You have to arrest him. He is so wrong.

Soldier #3                      Why?

Cooper                         He's one of the blokes that Commissioner Pendle wanted me to watch out for. Ask Ed Swan if ya don't believe me.

*The soldiers seem to comprehend.*

Soldier #1                      Swannie! You're with Swannie! Okay we'll grab this bloke and get him to an ambulance.

Cooper                         Brutal! I can be the one who keeps a beady eye on him. You know because he might try to make a break for it.

*The soldiers tacitly agree that Cooper is a "rara avis" to be humoured at all cost.*

Soldier #4                      Sure! Come on then.

Soldier #2                      And we'll let Swannie know that you are okay. You'd better pass over your antique firearm, sir – we'll take good care of it for you.

ED IS ETERNALLY REMEMBERED FOR "THAT" MARK
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*Suddenly we find Ed standing over Lyle Oxley (flat on his back) with the shotgun aimed at Lyle's groin. Lyle has covered his groin with both his hands (as if that will make a difference). He whimpers and squeals (begging not to be shot).*

Ed                                      Some idiot stole my service pistol.

Lyle *whimpering*                      You look like Ed Swan from the West Coast Eagles.

Ed                                      Ed Swan minus his serviceable service pistol. What an effing nuisance! What d'ya reckon?

Lyle *panting with fear*                      That mark you took in the Eagles/Hawks Grand Final was amazing. Like God lifted you off the ground.

Ed                                      No mate it was all me. Me without a pistol.

Lyle *panting*                              Right ... But you now seem to have a rather threatening shotgun. Please don't shoot me, Swannie. I'm your most devoted fan.

Ed                                      There are 582 utes parked out in that paddock. Every second one is unlocked and every fourth one has a shotgun slung over the passenger seat. I could fairly take my pick. And I picked this one.

Lyle Oxley ... you are under arrest. You are charged with running an illegal trade in priceless fossils which technically belong to the University of NSW.

I am cautioning you that you do not have to say or do anything, but --

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene iv: The Morning After The B & S (Dunbar Ridge) DAY 17**

*We begin with an aerial shot of Connor Bend moving on to Dunbar Ridge. There are many campsites replete with caravans, mobile homes and tents bobbing up everywhere. This is because people were combining the B & S with a quick holiday or else they have thrown themselves into the search for monotreme fossils.*

*Ed and Blaike have erected a couple of tents in the grounds of their exploded shack. They have access to water and electricity but not much else. The chairs that were on the back porch are now out in the shade of an awning attached to one of the tents.*

*The two policemen look the worse for wear as they shovel breakfast cereal into their mouths and drink coffee. The sense of urgency with which they approached their investigations appears to have petered out.*

Ed *bleary*                      The B & S Ball ... Did I have a good time?

Blaike                         Yo. Did I?

Ed                              You sure did. We both did, then ...

Good. So long as nothing I did was inappropriate ...

Blaike                         Coops accidentally shot a Church of England reverend.

Ed *shrugs*                    Yeah. We should have been on the lookout for that.

Blaike *surprised*            You anticipated that Cooper would express his atheism in that way?

Ed                              Nah. He's just a careless twat who doesn't think before he acts. The peeps at the hospital reckon he's on the mend: the vicar I mean. And he won't be pressing charges once he discovered who had peppered him. Apparently he's a great fan so there you go.

*[Rubs hands together]*

But other than that blip we did good.

Blaike

We did good.

The Prime Minister (the Right Honourable George Bentleigh) phoned. You assured him that all was hunky-dory.

Ed

The PM rang? Nuh ... Missed that one.

Blaike *grins*

He told you that he was busy on the patio at The Lodge (cooking T-bones) because his poofter French chef didn't have a clue. And you agreed with him that bum-bandits should not be let loose near a Jumbuck Astro barbeque at any cost.

Ed *pulls a face*

Jeez! I really don't recall that one ...

Not like me to be bigoted like that ...

Okay ...

And did **you** manage to score (on the "I'm a heterosexual boy" front)?

Blaike

Er ... No. I'm more than ever in love with Tisane so there it is. I tried. I failed.

I have to get over it on my own time, Ed. Please don't invite me to your house ... Because if I meet her I might ...

*[Big sigh]*

Anyhoot -- you almost eclipsed your playing days: Swannie "Go you good thing!"

You arrested the usual suspects and won praise for your fine detective work. Outstanding! The Oxley boys were running the fossils exploitation. You've closed that down.

The F-PROTA scam ... You've flushed out John Tenny who has confessed that the explanation Jeremy Hurstbridge gave to Cooper (and that he then gave to us) was right on the money. So you've handcuffed all offenders and all is solved.

*There follows a thoughtful pause.*

Ed *sadly* Except for Tippy. The killer of Tippolo Camira is still out there.

Blaike And Vere Desmond. Right.

*[Sadly]*

You're right. We haven't finished – not by a long chalk. And the shack has been blasted to buggery.

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Ed stands about in the sparse bush (hands deep in pockets). His face bears a thoughtful expression. He looks out over the vista.

Ed *voice-over* Let's go over it again, Eddie old son.

Tippolo Camira was murdered in 2010 almost certainly by the trusted local sergeant of police.

His body was found dumped behind some shops in a Carlingford strip. He had been brutally bashed, then shot dead. His body had been moved from the actual site of the murder (wherever that was). My strong suggestion is the Les Leforest demesne.

Ed watches Blaike wandering about. Blaike sees Ed and walks towards him.

Ed This time we haven't missed anything: all vital points covered. And now it's wait and see.

Blaike Talk to me. Say what's on your mind.

Ed *sighs* About Tippy. I'm now fairly certain that the **place** of execution will turn out to belong to Les Leforest. His swish Carlingford house.

Blaike Sure.

Leforest has owned that shack for over 20 years. And the murders of Camira and Desmond bear striking similarities.

Ed *nods* Can we safely assume that these two blokes were done-over by the same man? By Sergeant Warren Wendell? We're fairly certain that a male caused the damage to both bodies. And he's as "male" as they come.

Blaike If you look over the fine details of the Camira case, there are some glaring gaps in the investigation. But I'm hooked into "hindsight" of course.

Ed Yeah?

Blaike *shrugs* I told you about my Sarge. He'd been the resident Sergeant of Police at Carlingford forever. And I told you that he wanted to boot me out.

Not that exactly but: I didn't fit into his idea of "crew member". He wanted hard-drinking, loud-laughing buddies who swanked along with him. Step along in his footprints. I was too much of a swot.

He was out to make me so uncomfortable that I'd beg to be transferred. I can't run away from that idea. I know it's him!

Ed Yes, we discussed this when we first met. And he gave you up to me without a whimper.

Blaike It was only a matter of time before his crimes were exposed. His methods were sloppy. His credo was: "Get your man. Look no further. Fill-in the paperwork. Full stop. End of story."

I hate using gut-feeling but I can't get over the fact that the Sarge's evidence-gathering was shonky. Both murders were not given their full attention. Which (if he were the perpetrator) would be understandable.

Ed And?

Blaike is seemingly reluctant to continue.

Ed *forceful* ***And?***

Blaike

Okay.

This is what I think after going over and over and over the Tippy Camira case **and** the Vere Desmond case.

One man did these two execution-style killings. Both concerned savage battering then gunshot. Both in Carlingford.

The person best-placed to commit both murders was my Sarge. He's a bull of a man, so the bashings would be a piece of cake for him. Lugging bodies about – right up his street.

And then he comes along collecting evidence. He missed the three business cards in the Desmond case. The ones I found. That is: they are **not** in his evidential report. Not mentioned at all. I've been over that report with a fine-tooth comb. Nuttin.

The Homicide Squad guys were misdirected in 2010 when they sniffed around because the Sarge misdirected them. Any clues or concrete evidence dissolved into thin air due to Wendell's behind-the-scene actions.

This is what I reckon, Ed: he stitched everyone up and played them on a string.

All we have to do is **prove** it. It has to be solid, irrefutable proof. That's all.

Ed

Just hang on a minute. Let me think ...

Blaike

And with Sarge under lock and key, we can turn our attention to any other cold cases that arose in that general area which might be his. We'll look at Telopea, Dundas Valley, Pennant Hills, Mobbs Hill ... Like that.

Ed

Shoosh for a sec, will ya? Old Ed needs to cotton-on to this ...

Ed wanders about kicking a stone. There is a heat shimmer in the background. Ed stares out.

Ed *voice-over*

There were totally no clues. Nothing.

Tippy ran a testing laboratory. Pathology. Testing blood and so on. Nobody who knew Tippy could come up with any known threats, enemies, angry ex-girlfriends ...

Nothing. Twelve years later and we are no closer to solving the mystery.

Who killed Tippy Camira?

Ed stops as if arrested.

Ed *urgent*

If Sergeant Wendell did this twelve years ago he was told to do it ... or asked ... or instructed or ... Like it wasn't his own brainwave.

[Snaps fingers]

We need to fly under the radar with this ... He can't know that we suspect him ...

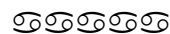
Erm ...

The ANZ account in the name of Steropodon galmani. It was accessed in (and **only** in) Carlingford. Our brief is to show that Wendell was the man who made the withdrawals.

How do we do that?

Also (while we're at it) can we find out Les Leforest's movements at the time of the Camira hit? Sergeant Wendell cannot have allowed Leforest to know that he was the hitman. So Leforest may have been sent out of the country on a fact-finding-mission or some such thing to get him out of the way.

Come on! We're almost there.



Dorothy is back in the police station. There is a split screen: Dorothy on the left and Blaike (out in the fresh air near the tent) on the right. Both Dorothy and Blaike are on the phone.

Dorothy Don't be flippant. I'm very concerned. You and Ed had better be on the lookout.

Blaike *surprised* What for? Are you saying that Sergeant Wendell is gunning for us?

Dorothy Blaike you have to take me seriously! The people at Carlingford are very concerned. It appears that he's gone troppo. Had some kind of breakdown.

He's taken a rifle and ammunition. A Divisional car has disappeared.

Blaike *appalled* It'll take him a full day to drive all that way. It's madness.

Dorothy No! The car would be to get him to the airport. He's probably on a plane as we speak. Perhaps even landed.

We're checking the passenger manifests of all planes arriving in BHQ right now.

Blaike *frowning* But he can't board a plane carrying firepower, can he? Surely not!

Dorothy Well ... He could stow the rifle in the baggage compartment if he used a special box or case or something ...

Look! Blaike! For God's sake --

Suddenly Blaike jumps with fright. Sarge moves into view aiming his rifle. Just as he prepares to fire, Blaike screams out in genuine terror. Dorothy also screams as her side of the split-screen dissolves.

Blaike *terrified* Ed! Look out! Ah Jesus!

Blaike and Ed stand frozen. Sarge makes a curious face and then fires into what is left of the shack roof. Pieces of ceiling and roof rain down on the remains of the shack. Blaike and Ed (still frozen in time) stand about, gobsmacked.

Meanwhile, Sarge flops down onto his stomach on the ground. A native spear is seen to stick out of his back.

Gill appears. He speaks to the newly-deceased man who lies on the ground.

Gill *to the body* You not taking out Swannie!

The other guys (Liam and his friends) arrive on their bikes. Blaike makes a quick call to Dorothy to allay her fears. He also mentions that back-up be provided, and an ambulance. Then he completes his call. Meanwhile, Ed hugs Gill and each of the boys.

Ed Gill! You saved our lives. How did you know? Was it the fire talk?

Liam *nods* My grandfather Henry Burrah – he walked over the road to tell me and Gill. He is still burning-off and saw it all in the flames. Just like you and he did.

Us guys jumped straight on our bikes and come here. Gill faster than us. We losers.

Blaike Must be hard to ride a bike while you're holding a spear.

Gill Nuh. Tied it on to top frame with bits of white rope.

Spud *to Gill* Good shot, mate.

Everyone agrees that Gill's spear throw was a "good shot".

Then a car rocks up, speeding. It is braked suddenly and rather violently. Winlagh, Gibbo, Jeparit and Cooper rush to the tent.

Gibbo Are you okay? Everyone's running around with one leg in the air.
What happened?

Cooper What have we missed?

Blaike This bloke thought we needed extra ventilation in the roof.

Noel Swannie, can we play kick-to-kick now?

Ed Um ... Sure. After we thank Grandpa Henry and his burning-off ...
And organize a bravery commendation for Mr Burrah-Shaw here ...

And some sort of expensive floral tribute for Dorothy ...

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT V

END OF FILM

END CREDITS ROLL THROUGH while Gibbo, Cooper, Jeparit, Ed, Blaike and the boys play kick-to-kick. Winlagh looks on.

The music is discussed in the other document: BROKENILL_CAST_SYNOPSIS.PDF.