



In 1968, the English families (Pendlebury and Allendale) join forces
with Aussie adventurer Jack Bradley.

As Gandore's caravan wends its way along the Old Silk Road, we are tossed about
in a thrilling saga of Alchemy and Romance.

It all winds up in the midst of a London society wedding.

This is the second in the "M'Coure" series.

Introduction.

In the last few scenes of the previous film, the year was 1964. We have moved forward more than 5 years to late 1969.

George Pendlebury is now 17, while his brother William is 15. The beautiful Buxton girls (Fiona and Tess) are now 25 and 23 respectively. Toby Allendale is 29. His brother Laurence is 23. Their sister Raine is 26.

We meet Jack Bradley, who will dominate the screen when he is featured. Until we first encounter this wonderful Australian in the jet plane, there is almost a feeling of claustrophobia. From that point on, we will strive for large, sweeping vistas.

Throughout the film, an encapsulated version of "The Pardoner's Tale" from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales will appear (in parts) as a narrative which acts as a glue to bind together the subsequent action. This literary focus will contrast favourably with Jack Bradley's raw bravura.



PROLOGUE – NARRATIVE & TITLES

Music: haunting and mysterious.

*The **titles** will appear as we sweep through the narrative.*

Alchemy: The Interior of Gandore's Black Tent.
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The interior of Gandore's black tent (end of 13th century, Old Silk Road) is filled beyond belief with the various elements required by an alchemist. We will later list many of these via Beaversnade in ACT IV, scene viii.

We open with a misty, mystical "camera-walk-through" of Gandore's tent, with voice-over. The voice-over is male: a superb British theatrical voice is required, bringing a secretive, enigmatic soupçon to the delivery of the lines.

Throughout the film, an encapsulated version of "The Pardoner's Tale" from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales will appear (in parts) as a narrative which acts as a glue to bind together the subsequent action. In fact, the words spoken by the Narrative voice will have been extracted from Francis Cruikshank's magnum opus: "Cupiditas". We will discover this towards the end of the last act.

Narrative by Gus
Cassius *voice-over*

A treasure of gold was to be divided equally amongst three. Can you not imagine how they might plot, the one against the other? Would they wish their fellows good health? Long life? Eternal happiness? No, no. For if you think this were possible, then you do

not comprehend the nature of Greed.

"Radix malorum est Cupiditas", it is said. Greed. Greed is at the heart of all the evil in this world.

Avarice would cut down one of the trio, thereby leaving only two. And then one. And then ... ?

"Cupiditas ..." The Arch-enemy from the Underworld approaches

...

END OF PROLOGUE



ACT I

Author's note: compactness is key in these early scenes. I want a sense of being closed-in.

The conservatory, Sir Lentock's office, the theatrette, the cottage-garden, the cottage, the Pendlebury kitchen, the sheltered area of garden, George's bedroom, the passageway where the family argues, and then the snug of the London hotel; all these early scenes are "small" and "cosy".

After we meet Jack Bradley, we shall crash out of the claustrophobia and stretch the lens on a wider frame.

I, Scene i: 1969, The Royal Parthenon Suite, London: Outside The Office Of Sir Lentock Broughborough

Sir Lentock Broughborough and Desmond Grantley.

The two British gentlemen in this scene are reminiscent of two of the principals of the TV series "Yes, Minister". Sir Lentock Broughborough (mentioned repeatedly throughout the film represents Sir Humphrey Appleby, whereas his aide (Desmond Grantley) reminds us of the Bernard Woolley character. Why? I miss them ...

Desmond sits at a solid desk stationed just outside the closed door of his senior: Sir Lentock Broughborough. Desmond is clearly seen to be studying a glossy pamphlet advertising a forthcoming production of "Silver Nights" at the Queen Alexandra Theatre.

Then, a dark shadow falls over him. A large man in a leather suit stands before Desmond's desk. We do not see who this man is (it is Jack Bradley, of whom more is to follow). We only see part of his solid torso. Desmond looks up, open-mouthed.

Desmond *involuntarily* Blimey Teddy!

As if in a daze, Desmond rises from his seat. The visitor has forestalled him, however, and moves to the door to Sir Lentock's office, knocking, and then entering quietly.

Sir Lentock *emollient*, Ah, yes ... Do come in, won't you? Sherry?
*from the privacy of his
office*

And then the door closes. Desmond stares at the closed door, gobsmacked.

Desmond *involuntarily*, Laura Lummey!
whispers



Desmond is once again just as we first saw him: idly studying the glossy pamphlet.

The door to Sir Lentock's office opens. Desmond stands smartly.

Sir Lentock *suave* Thank you so much. I'll look forward to receiving your ... ah ...
 intelligence reports.

With that, the visitor departs. We still only see part of his torso as he slips past the camera. Desmond stands, awkwardly and Sir Lentock moves forward from his doorway.

Sir Lentock smugly watches his visitor's departure. Without looking at Desmond, Sir Lentock speaks in a voice that is at once soft, yet malevolent.

Sir Lentock Desmond?

Desmond *wondering* Sir Lentock?

Sir Lentock That ... er ... gentleman whom I've had the pleasure of

entertaining is best forgotten.

In fact, he never visited me at all, and you've not seen him.

Desmond *taking the
hint as the penny
drops*

Yes. What gentleman was that Sir? I didn't see anyone at all.

Sir Lentock *smugly
pleased*

Well done, Desmond.

[Thoughtful pause]

And I do hope you're not an aficionado of that much-revered pop band known as Wayne Fontana and the ... er ... Mindbenders?

Desmond *trying to
follow Sir Lentock's
lead*

Certainly not, Sir Lentock! I shouldn't dream of such a thing.

Now really grinning broadly, Sir Lentock turns to look at his subordinate for the first time. He leans down, playfully slapping a small pile of papers on Desmond Grantley's desk.

Sir Lentock *really
pleased*

Excellent!

END OF SCENE

I, Scene ii: 1969, The Queen Alexandra Theatrette

The Queen Alexandra Theatrette in London's East End is the tiniest of theatres, specializing in plays and farces which are out of the mainstream.

On its very small stage a group of actors in casual street clothes rehearse "Silver Nights", with scripts in hand. A few random props (a card-table, some folding chairs) are scattered about. Only a handful of people are watching this rehearsal. They wander about trying to work out where everyone must stand and where they should face. One slim girl is dressed in a shocking psychedelic frock. She wriggles about as if dancing to something by Jimi Hendrix.

In the audience, Toby Allendale sits forward in his seat, leaning his arms on the seat-back in front of him, with his chin resting on his arms. In one hand he holds the script for "Silver Nights". He holds the script open with his thumb. Next to Toby sits Maria: serious, professional, competent. Her "Silver Nights" script sits neatly open on her lap.

The esteemed director is Angus Hartnell.

The direction, and the rehearsal swan along in the background. The focus is now on Toby and Maria, whispering to each other in the stalls. Toby appears to be thoroughly cheesed-off.

Toby *under voice* Are we seriously putting this on?

Maria *whisper* Shh! Yes, it's marvellous. Cruikshank's latest work.

Toby *under voice* For what it's worth, I believe Francis Cruikshank to be one of the most overrated playwrights in the corpus. His stage works fairly reek of melodrama, rodomontade, hysterical heroines --

Maria *whispers angrily* Whoever told you that you have any discrimination? Your dentist?

Toby *under voice,*
appalled Apart from that Chaucer thing that he thought up, it's absolute crap.

Seriously! You can't possibly have conned Gus Cassius into financing this drivel.

You have, haven't you? I can **not** believe that a man of Cassius's genius would part with his hard-earned to shore-up this filthy offering, which has all the emotional appeal of a wound dressing.

Maria *angry whisper* Shh! Sit it out, why can't you?

Hartnell now makes himself heard. He calls out to Maria and Toby.

Hartnell Would you two either step outside and slug it out, or shut up, please? The drama is supposed to be up here on the stage, not in the pits.

Maria *to Hartnell* Sorry, Angus. Just ironing-out a couple of literary differences. We'll stop now.

Hartnell *sarcastic* Thank you!

Maria smiles widely and waves as Hartnell turns away. Instantly, her demeanour changes to outright anger.

Maria *savage under* You ought to have stayed in the USA since you've become so
voice to Toby bloody Americanised!

Toby delivers a long sigh. Maria sits in a stiff, angry attitude (with arms tightly crossed), thoroughly put out by Toby's insensitivity. The young man decides that he has had enough.

Toby *hoarse whisper* No, I'm out of here ...

With that, Toby slams his script down on his chair as he strides loudly out of the theatrette, leaving Maria seething in his wake. The actors and Hartnell glance in Maria's direction then soldier-on regardless.

END OF SCENE

I, Scene iii: 1969, Toby's Lovely Picture-Postcard Cottage

The sweetest, jolliest music plays as the camera takes in the beauties of Toby's cottage garden. It is very Miss Marple, and divine.

The front door of the cottage is open, as Maria is piling into the doorway a couple of cardboard boxes, string bags and suitcases. They all bulge with clothes, newspapers and bric-a-brac. Inside the cottage, we can see that it is a thing of dainty delight (courtesy of Maria's efforts along with those of the housekeeper).

Toby is in the shower. We can vaguely hear him singing.

Maria, dressed in a very stylish suit, pulls gloves onto her hands as she raps loudly on the bathroom door. Steam can be seen to filter out of the gaps around the door. Toby continues to sing throughout Maria's diatribe.

Maria *shouting at the* I'm leaving you for Donnie Summerton. He proposed to me eight
bathroom door times, and finally ground me down. Well, you never had the
slightest intention of a wedding, did you? And it's been quite

obvious to me (for some time now) that you are the **last** man I should consider marrying **if** you ever came around to it **which** you won't. Obviously!

Can you hear me? Are you listening to me?

Maria raps loudly on the door again.

Maria I've left you a letter on the kitchen table. If you find anything that belongs to me, please send it on to my mother.

And I'm keeping the ring.

Aggrieved, for she realizes that Toby has heard not one word she has said, Maria kicks the door, then storms off. Toby's singing continues, along with the escaping steam.

END OF SCENE

I, Scene iv: 1969, Thornbury, The Home Of Gordon And Holly Pendlebury And Family

Laurence Allendale has called on the Pendlebury's and is with Holly in the kitchen. She is very busy there. Laurence (gloomy) stands to one side, with hands dug deep in his pockets. On the sideboard, stands a lovely wedding photo of Holly in her Chantilly lace wedding dress, with a proud Gordon by her side. Laurence glances at this photograph.

Laurence *blurts out* Can't stand it at home ...

Holly *kindly* You'll stay to lunch, then?

Laurence is unbearably shy, even with his beloved Aunt Holly. However, as he warms up, he will become much less shy.

Laurence *shyly* If that's alright ... As long as I'm not a bother ...

Holly *brightly* No bother at all. The lads are downstairs, working on HMSV
Incorrigible. Perhaps you'd like to lend a hand ...

BREAK

Gordon, with sons William and George, work on the hull of the upturned boat which they are jointly building in a cramped shed. Without preamble, Laurence picks up a mini one-hand planer, then silently joins his uncle and cousins in their work. Gordon whistles absently. The four males seem very satisfied and contented.

BREAK

Later, the four males and Holly are found enjoying an al fresco lunch in the sunshine, in a discrete part of the garden which is protected by large, well-kept hedges.

Gordon *thickly* Don't think me rude, Laurie, but what are you doing here? You're welcome to come at any time, of course, but ... Is there a specific reason for your visit?

Laurence finishes his mouthful.

Laurence It's pretty grizzly at home --

William *grins* Is this going to be a three-act play?

Holly *admonishing* Shush!

William [To Laurence]

Go on, dear. What's going on *chez* Roger Allendale?

Laurence Well ... There's this wedding, of course, to the stinking-rich financier. Raine has become totally unhinged, and Mum's no better. It's all shouting and mayhem. Dad's locked himself away in his office, pretending to be busy. I had no idea that girls could cry so much, and over the most insanely trivial matters!

George and William smirk as they eat. Holly reaches across to pat Laurence's arm.

Holly But your sister's marrying that plutocrat Lord Anstey, so of course everything has to be perfect.

George and William groan and pull faces.

Laurence *moody* Every single chair in the house is draped in various lengths of tulle and other exotic fabrics, so that one is instantly shepherded outside when one wishes to have a quiet smoke. ... It's Hell, really ...

Gordon *bracing* Go on, what else?

Laurence Well ... you may have heard that Maria and Toby have split. She's walked out on him to take up with some other peanut. Couldn't tell him to his face. Left a letter on the kitchen table ...

And although Toby never once thought of marriage, he's still in a stink to have been blighted in love. He'd far rather be the dumper than the dump~~ee~~, of course.

Holly *shakes head* I was never in favour of Toby living in Sin in that way, even if the cottage was too adorable for words.

Laurence He's moved out of his cottage, in the meantime, and wafted back home for tea and sympathy. Fat chance! He *will* injudiciously add his *soupçon* to the on-going warfare between Mum and Raine (whenever the opportunity permits), but that only serves to make things infinitely worse!

Gordon laughs.

Gordon I can well imagine. "Acid-tongue" Allendale rides again!

Laurence But I can't help thinking that it's probably best that it's ended like that. You know ... clash of artistic temperaments.

Holly What else, Laurie?

Laurence *draws a breath* I was smoking out in the garden last evening (so as not to ignite the ubiquitous swathes of silk and organdie) when Dad stalked up. He began to wax lyrical about the current credit squeeze and his major role in its inception. The fact that thousands of his fellow Englishmen will go down the drain seems to please him no end.

Nobody can think of anything to respond to that. Suddenly, Laurence remembers what might prove to be the most important thing. He dives into his trouser pocket to reef out a piece of paper.

Laurence And besides all the rest of it, some coot has sent me an anonymous letter stating that your sister, Holly (my Aunt Margaret) has washed up in South America, of all places. And that a party of eager young insects is gathering as we speak to undertake an intrepid journey to rescue her ... blah blah blah ...

That news has quickly attracted everyone else's attention.

Holly *aghast* What?

Laurence Well ... It ***might*** be South America. The writing's not clear. "S-dot-A-m" ... bit funny ...

Without speaking, Gordon indicates that Laurence ought to hand over the letter for further inspection. Laurence duly hands the paper over to his uncle, who reads quickly. Then Gordon, frowning, looks up, as he passes the missive to his wife.

Gordon *frowning* When did this arrive?

Laurence It was waiting for me this morning, *mon Oncle*. I wandered towards my little cubby hole at Trinity College (my rat's nest cum escape hatch) when the Porter sang out "Hey!" as he forced the envelope into my pale fingers. Asked him who left it, and he simply shrugged. Apparently it was dropped-off by a radio-controlled courier on a bicycle. Latest thing!

Holly stares at Gordon as she fiddles with the paper. Gordon, open-mouthed stares back.

Holly *quickly* Laurie! Go into the house and telephone to your parents that you've decided to stay the night with us. You can have William's bed. We'll move a mattress onto the floor in George's room and William may sleep there. Only for one night. We need to discuss this further.



It is night. In George Pendlebury's room, there is barely any light. William wears only a pyjama bottom, slung very low on his hips. He is attempting to hit some unidentified object outside the house with a blowpipe, via the open window. George is trying to sleep.

William *excited* I'll have to sleep in here more often. You have a much better view of the oak tree than I do, from my window.

George *sleepy* Like Hell you will!

William continues to wield his blowpipe. A pillow is lobbed at William, almost knocking him over.

George *angry* Go to sleep, you imbecile, or I'll chuck you out!

William bounds across the room, leaping onto George's bed, landing at full length on top of his brother.

William *eager* Listen to me! I can't see why our meek, lily-white cousin will do any good on this safari to South America. He'll fall apart at the first whiff of trouble. He's an absolute cream-puff.

[Imitates Laurence unkindly]

"Oh, the letter wafted my way whilst I was swanning about my august college, *mon oncle* ..."

[Returns to normal voice]

He's a definite nancy-boy.

The brothers wrestle in the dark, knocking over various items of furniture. Finally, the door is opened by George. It can be seen that George is winning in the struggle over his younger brother. George pushes William out of the room. However, William grips the architraves, and with a tremendous effort, lurches back into the bedroom, knocking George down in the process. William is unable to contain his excitement, even as he tussles with George.

William *breathless* Don't tell Mum or Dad but I've applied for a job. I've answered an ad in the paper.

George *breathless* Working in a fish shop, is it? They won't mind. Matter of fact they'll be pleased.

William *breathless* No. I rang up about it and it's all very mysterious. I'm going to accompany some dude from Australia on his jaunts. Like a general factotum.

There is more grunting and groaning as the fight continues.

George *breathless* You idiot! You don't even shave yet!

William *teeth clenched* Minor technicality. He has to prefer me in preference to some dweeb like my uppity cousin who can only prance around at University, looking thoroughly fey. I'll be useful and resourceful. Good training for my future life in the French Foreign Legion.

There comes the sound of a punch, an "Oof!" and then silence. George is panting.

George At least our cousin is a decent human being, unlike my barbarous, fire-eating brother.

 Mattress! Now!

William rolls onto his side, hauls himself onto the mattress and lies still. George dives into his bed.

The camera moves around, such that William's face can be seen. He is still awake, with his eyes burning passionately, in just the same way that his mother did at times in "M'Coure".

END OF SCENE

I, Scene v: 1969, Thornbury, A Passageway

In this scene, everyone is still in pyjamas and dressing gowns. The men are unshaven and tousle haired.

Gordon storms along a well-lit passageway on the next morning. He is followed closely by George.

Holly stands at the other end of the passage, looking worried. Gordon is in an unbridled rage; his son is trying to absolve himself of all blame.

Gordon *seething* Where the Hell has he gone, then?

George Who knows?

Gordon stops, turning venomously on George.

Gordon *violently angry* What did you say to your brother? Did you dare him to go? Did you?

Gordon strikes at George, but years of practice have assisted the younger man (who is marginally taller than his father). George catches his father's forearm, gripping it mercilessly. Father and son glare angrily at each other, with ill-suppressed fury.

George *deeply* Don't hang this on me, Dad. The last thing he did, after wrestling about in my room with me, was to crawl into bed on my instruction. But prior to that, he **did** waffle-on about proving himself. You know the sort of adventure rubbish he's always spouting. Some total guff about hooking-up with an Australian adventurer.

Holly *mediating* We are all agreed (then) that William's not been kidnapped.

Gordon squirms angrily in his son's grip. George releases his father's arm.

George No. His knapsack and some stuff are missing from his room. He's cleared-out under his own steam. Like I said: the mission with the Australian chap.

Gordon thinks quickly.

Gordon Right! We'll get ourselves dressed, take a photograph of William to the Police Station, and then make for Southampton. That's where he'll be, trying to stowaway or some such outrageous thing.

The two Pendlebury males stride up to where Holly is standing, when Laurence steps into view.

Laurence I'm sorry to add to all this, but that was Toby on the telephone. Mother has walked out. She's heard about the group leaving for Buenos Aires, and she's decided to join them. Toby was just about to set out in hot pursuit (too late! the ship will have sailed by this time), so I've asked him to meet up with us here instead. Combine our forces, if you see my thinking ...

Gordon Yes! Good! Excellent! We'll go to Southampton in his car. Even if all parties have sailed, we can confirm their vessels and destinations, then phone ahead.

Come on everyone: comb, quick shave, get some clobber on. Pack

an overnight bag. We'll eat breakfast in the car. Holly, conjure up some sandwiches, dear. No, you're not coming, Old Girl. I need you to stay here and man the phone.

George *mulish* ***I'm*** coming with you. You won't stop me!

Gordon *absently* Yes ... yes ...

Laurence *to the
general audience* Toby's bringing some of my gear with him.

Holly I'll telephone to Fiona Buxton. She can rush over to stay with Raine, to comfort her. She's probably in high alt as we speak (Raine, that is). And Roger will be thoroughly useless there.

The inmates of Thornbury dash off.

END OF SCENE

I, Scene vi: 1969, At Southampton, Dock L, Boarding the SS Cassanove

At the same time as the inmates of Thornbury rush about, the SS Cassanove is sailing, just as Laurence had anticipated. The morning air is bracing, but the sun shines on the undertaking.

The old-fashioned gangway to the SS Cassanove sees the last of the passengers dawdling on board. A vast army of folk (all wearing identifying blue tabards) congregate on the deck as they come aboard. There are men with megaphones alongside harassed-looking crew members. Several banners are held aloft ("Bring Back Marg Allendale" and "Save M. A. "). The men with megaphones attempt to organize these passengers. Many of the people can be seen to pray. We catch sight of Judith Allendale (hands clenched and eyes closed) whispering the Lord's Prayer.

Portside workers disassemble the gangway, and the ship is readied for casting off.

The SS Cassanove can be seen to disappear from view, as if the camera is positioned at Dock L.



The camera is now in Toby's car, which is parked in such a way that the disappearing speck which is SS Cassanove can be seen. Toby is missing from the driver's seat, the front passenger being Gordon. Laurence sits alone in the back seat.

Gordon So, what have we got.

Your mother was verified as a passenger on that ship to Buenos Aires. She's with a large party of good-living folk, so we can assume that she'll be okay. Whether Margaret Allendale is actually in South America, or in some other locale, we are not to know.

So, Laurence you and Toby will fly out for B.A. as soon as you can book seats on a plane. Then collect her when she disembarks. Yes?

Laurence *firmly* Correct.

Gordon And that burly chap with the impressive whiskers thought he might have stopped William trying to sneak aboard that same vessel.

Laurence So ... failing that, William may have tried to stowaway on another vessel, or ...

Toby and George can be seen in the side mirror to be running up to the car. Toby leaps into the driver's seat and roars the engine. George scrambles in beside his cousin.

Toby *breathless* Found him! It seems that he buddied-up with a group of rock 'n' roll musicians on their way to the USA, to somewhere called Woodstock.

The car lurches forward and speeds off.

George *breathless* If he's with them, then he's in the air, New York bound.

Gordon *authoritative* London, travel agent. Let's get things moving!

END OF SCENE

I, Scene vii: 1969, A London Street At Twilight

It is twilight, and light rain is falling. From a distance, we see the traffic trundling along, slowed down by the rain. Windscreen wipers are in full swing, and somebody toots his horn.

On the far side of the road from the camera, we see Gordon (in hat and trench coat) organizing Toby, Laurence and George, all of whom are coated against the foul weather. We do not hear Gordon, but we see him gesticulating, and talking non-stop as the younger men listen.

END OF SCENE

Introducing Jack Bradley (who was the mystery visitor in scene ii)

In this scene, Jack Bradley is dressed as a dedicated follower of fashion (from previous years), with horrible bushy side-whiskers. He is thoroughly Carnaby Road, with a Ringo Starr cap and paisley shirt, Cuban heeled boots and slim black leather tie. But worst of all (apart from his Beatles haircut) is the black leather suit, which is in fact styled like a lounge suit but is made from soft Moroccan leather.

He speaks with a very broad Australian accent, but the timbre of his voice is very pleasant. (I don't want to hear one of those grating "false" TV handyman accents!)

When Jack is in scene, he is totally and unfailingly dominating, such that everyone else clams up.

I, Scene viii: 1969 The Public Bar of The Lion's Pride: A Very Cosy, "Olde Englishe Inne"

This is a very poorly lit gentlemen's bar. It has been lovingly and faithfully restored, peopled with middle-class Londoners (quiet and decorous). A good fire is burning, and several men stand about near it, chatting amicably. Gordon and George walk up to the bar together, whereas the other two (Laurence and Toby) stand at the bar, pouring over what appears to be a well-read sheet of writing paper.

Laurence and Toby scowl over the anonymous letter. They jointly hold the letter at arm's length.

Toby *shrugs in defeat* No, you're right, Laur ... That can't possibly be South Africa. I just can't get an "f" out of this scrawl.

Jack Bradley, to one side, worms his way into the conversation.

Jack Bradley If ya don't mind me stickin' me nose in, that could very well be South Australia. The handwriting's dodgy, but.

Look ... capital "S", dot, capital "A" then "u" then "s". That's where I hale from, me.

Jack forces a handshake on Gordon, then Laurence, then Toby, and finally George, all of whom are completely bemused.

Jack Jack Bradley. G'day!

Addressing the barman, Jack makes a wide gesture with his arms.

Jack Yeah, mate, a cold pot of beer for each of these gents.

Gordon *negating* No, I'm afraid that --

Jack What? The kid's too young? Yeah, ya might be right.

[To the barman]

A shandy for the young man, and a coldie for the rest of us. Pots!
And I mean **cold pots**. Hate the way youse Poms waste good beer by letting it get warm.

Spoken together:

George	Gordon
That's ... That's very kind of you Mr Bradley.	No, there's no need for you to buy our refreshments, Sir.

Jack whips out a bankroll, and peels off some bills which he negligently chucks on the counter, as George and Gordon stare each other down. Gordon gives it up with a casual shrug. Meanwhile, Jack passes each glass to each very reluctant man. Then Jack takes a substantial draught from his own

pot. He leans against the bar as if he was specifically formed to do so. George opens his eyes wide as a bright thought dawns on him.

Jack Don't stand on ceremony; I'm not royalty or nuthin'.

George You're not an adventurer (are you?) who would need a ... er ...
"gentleman of affairs" to accompany you on your travels?

Gordon *hopeful* My son, William – he hasn't applied to you for a job, has he?

Jack No ways unknown! What would a drongo like me want with a
"gent of affairs", Jeez!

[Chuckles]

No, me Dad and I own and run a tomato sauce factory in Eupottiponpon. But I could also tap-dance in an emergency, and I'm the local demon fast-bowler. If you have any roos to barbeque, I can fillet them for yuz. That's me speciality. And every year, I help me uncle to run the camel rides at the local agricultural show. So, if anyone wants any camel-wrangling undertaken, then I'm yer man.

Jack skulls the pot of lager, then slakes the back of his hand expressively over his mouth. His mesmerized audience is frozen in a trance.

Jack Yeah, so I come to PommieLand to meet up with Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders. I'm their number one fan in Eupottiponpon, if not all of S.A. But I must 'ave got me dates mixed up because it turns out that they're working a cruise ship on the Mediterranean just now. Entertaining the punters. You'd remember the Mindbenders?

[Begins to sing]

"Pamela, Pamela Remember the days --"

Everyone is appalled at Jack's efforts as his voice is very loud. George rescues them.

George *quickly* Yes! Great tune!

Jack *nods* Blood oath!

George Where was that place you said? "You - pot - in - ..." ?

Jack Eupottiponpon. Nice place. We make Raleigh tomato sauce, Dad and me. Tomato sauce ...

Toby *catching on* Yes, catsup.

Jack *pointing at Toby* Bless you!

At any rate, me travel agent reckons that I've got three clear days to get meself to Venice, to join up with the pleasure cruise. Should shit it in if I fly there!

Whose shout is it?

END OF SCENE

I, Scene ix: 1969, A BOAC Jet (London to Rome)

Now we break out of the suffocating claustrophobia. The sky is huge and dotted with a few fluffy clouds. We see a BOAC jet flying over Europe, en route from London to Rome. The music is an instrumental version of "Pamela, Pamela"; very endearing and delightful.

A long, loud, resonating burp is heard. The music halts abruptly.

Jack Bradley *voice-off* Aw, 'scuse me, everyone. Better out than in ...

Stewardess *voice-off* May I serve you another drink, sir?

Jack Bradley *voice-off* Yeah, don't bother with the glass, but, just give us the bottle. A
very jovial real bloke doesn't need to fart-around with crystal ware. Ta, sweetheart!

The stewardess has obviously been pinched on the bottom. She gives a loud "Ow!" and then a stern reprimand.

Stewardess *voice-off* Sir! That's not permitted!

Jack Bradley *voice-off chuckles* No worries! Just write your name and yer eau-de-cologne number on me paper serviette and I'll catch up with ya in Rome. May as well, Darl ... nothin' else to do in the Eternal City, is there? Eh?

END OF SCENE

I, Scene x: 1969, On Board the SS Pescara, The Adriatic Sea, North-bound

The lovely music which began the last scene swings back into focus again.

With sumptuous views (as seen from the main deck of the SS Pescara), several passengers stand at and lean against the railings facing East towards Yugoslavia. In their midst, still dressed as the outré pop fan, Jack Bradley holds several passengers enthralled. He is gripping a photograph of the Pontiff Paul VI, waving to the crowds at St Peter's Basilica, whereby Jack Bradley stands beside His Holiness, also waving. Jack and his entourage roar with laughter.

Jack Bradley *laughing helplessly* So, the Prime Minister gets hold of this very photo -- See? -- and he squeezes it with his monocle-thingy and he says to The Queen: "Your Madge ... ***Who's this standin' beside Jack Bradley?***"

Everyone rocks with riotous laughter, Jack going to the lengths of doubling-over.

The bright group begin to calm down. Jack wipes tears from his face, gasping for breath as he continues to laugh.

Jack Bradley *almost under control* What a wonderful bunch of tourists you all are! "Hale fellow, well met!"

I gotta go to me cabin and have a Dad-and-Dave before we rock up in Venice. Gotta look me best for the Wayne Fontana cruise ship. See yuz all later!

There are cheerful handshakes and friendly waves as Jack takes his leave. Whistling "On The Road To Gundagai", Jack Bradley rolls along the sunny deck of the SS Pescara. He finds, then confronts a handsome, uniformed steward, who smiles warily at Jack, as if previously accosted by same (to his detriment).

Jack Bradley Ah! Bonjour, mon ami. Questa qui est la drinka? Ah ... Una beera to drink-a. In me salon de voyage. Ya got that?

The apologetic steward trembles, then gestures towards the bar, to which several of the English passengers are headed.

Jack looks about, as if in confusion. He slaps the Italian's arm in a friendly manner.

Jack Bradley No worries, Cobber. Here!

[Sotto voce]

Jeez! I'm hungry 'n' that, as well. Could gobble down an Afghan camel-driver's lap-lap.

Jack drags out his large bankroll, peels off a few notes, then stuffs them into the surprised steward's top pocket. Jack gives a swift head movement, then heads off towards the bow, with the Italian in tow.

Jack Bradley We need a translator, don't we? Do any of these boys speak English? Eh? Inglesie?

Jack presents a mime of someone talking, and thereby indicates that the third person he requires needs to be articulate in the English language. Finally, the penny drops, and the Italian steward stalks quickly up to a group of over 10 men and boys working with nets, ropes and small boats, in preparation for the landing in Venice. He talks with authority and with great rapidity to these men and boys, while Jack studies them closely. Finally, Jack works out which one might be William Pendlebury. Jack points to William.

Jack Bradley Is this the best ya got? S'pose so ... That one! I'll have that one!
He looks a nice clean boy.

The Italian brings forward a somewhat bewildered-looking William Pendlebury. With firmness, the steward shepherds William up to Jack, who pretends to be doubtful.

Jack Bradley Do you speak English?

The steward beams, gesticulating repeatedly towards William, and repeating "Inglesie!" many times. Jack dismisses the steward with more money stuffed into his top pocket, then strides off with William, keeping one hand on his shoulder. They trot up a metal gangway, then along a corridor, then up to Jack's room. Jack's voice changes to something more acceptable.

Jack Bradley *sotto voce* It's okay, William. Don't be frightened. I'm not gunna do nuthin' ...

William *defiant* I'm not afraid! How did you --

Jack Bradley Good lad!

Jack opens the cabin door, then locks it once the pair are safely inside. He lifts a finger to his lips, then looks around. He moves from this to that, fiddling with bits and pieces, checking little traps he has set. William watches incredulously.

Jack Bradley *whispers* The CIA have their own methods: stealth, silence, sophistication. I reckon the other way: it pays to be loud, gauche and obnoxious.

Jack scratches his head, then shrugs broadly.

Jack Bradley *his "stage" voice* Yeah ... So I thought "Why not get someone to translate for me?" And I thought that there might be an Englishman at a loose end who'd fit the bill ...

Jack grabs a piece of paper and rips it off the pad, writing with the paper on his knee so as to leave no imprints. He hands the paper to William. In large letters, we read: "You have to ring your Mum. They are looking for you." Jack signals to William that he should speak aloud.

William *taking up the challenge* Er, yes! I'll be able to translate for you, but only a select few words. I'm not fluent, you understand. But I could at least score you an interview with the Pope, I expect.

Jack cocks his head to one side.

Jack Bradley *mocking* Oh, ha, ha!

FIGHT

Suddenly, there is a deafening bang, and two men (dressed in black, with black balaclavas) crash through a hole which they have blown in the cabin wall, then attempt to murder Jack with knives. Jack is found to be a master at hand-to-hand combat. William decides to make things fair by belting one man on the back of the head with a chair.

There is a very exciting fight in the cabin involving all sorts of combat moves, attacks, feints and rolls. William manages to stay out of the way. Finally, the second man is dead, his neck broken courtesy of Jack's brutality. Jack studies the other man, who is wearing his knife in the middle of his back and is also dead. Panting, Jack looks at William, who has thoughtfully blocked the hole in the wall with the bed on its side. Jack points at the first dead man, looking a question.

William *pretending innocence, whispers* He fell on his sword.

Jack shakes his head, then wipes over the haft of the knife with a corner of the bed sheet.

Jack Go and grab your knapsack. We have to scarper with one of the dinghies when the chance presents itself.

And ta muchly by the way. You saved this poor sod's life I reckon.

Jack touches his wig.

Jack *to himself* Christ! Hope I haven't broken any of me bits ...

END OF SCENE

I, Scene xi: 1969, Approaching Venice

In the end, it is easy for Jack Bradley and William to take command of one of the dinghies tied-up to the SS Pescara. There is such confusion aboard as to be unbelievable. Italian men shout and scream at each other, as ropes and nets are tied, untied, thrown aside, picked up and kicked about. No-one seems to have even the slightest idea of what to do. We see Jack and William calmly disembark over the side of the vessel, and Jack row off in their stolen dinghy.

Venice is seen in the near distance. Jack rows throughout this scene, which is bustling with all manner of sea-traffic. As Venice comes closer into view, the camera picks up the beauty and grandeur of that city.

William What about that gaping hole in the side of your cabin and the two dead men?

Jack I reckon that they'll notice that lot no sooner than mid-afternoon tomorrow.

William Why did those men jump you? Who were they?

Jack *off-hand* Dunno ... not exactly. I've been knockin' about with a stuck-up bloke called Sir Lentock Browbrow, or something ...

William *keen* That's it! He's the man who lined up this job for me. His assistant did I mean.

Jack *off-hand* Right. There's some sort of ratbaggery goin' on ... or those dummies that jumped me might 'ave 'ad nothin' to do with him. Who knows? Who cares?

Maybe they were just bored with the Mediterranean ... wanted some fun ...

[Changing the subject]

Any road, that school ya go to is Whitefriar's Boys College, yeah?

William *nods* George and I both. Yes.

Jack *frowns* That's a bit posh, isn't it? Bit ecksy?

William Correct. From the money angle, yes it is "ecksy". But, you know, Dad was awarded the King George Medal for Journalism some years ago, in cahoots with Sir Ralph Cox. You've probably heard of him. They both became quite rich on the back of it.

But otherwise, Grandfather was an old-boy, which meant that we were eligible to attend.

Jack Ah! I know of him ... Not Sir Ralph Cox, I mean. No, your Grandpa.

I recall something about your Granddad ... He came to a sticky end ... Quite famously ...

William That's right. You have no idea how fabulous it is to have had a murdered Grandfather. I've been trading on that for years. It's

fab!

Jack And how did you make it onto that tin tub? Start from when you left home.

William *slyly* But you were on my BOAC flight to Rome. It was **you** who was behaving so disgustingly. We (in First) were mortified.

Jack *wryly* I'll bet. Come on ... give us the gen ...

William *airily* I've romanticized for years about stowing away on a ship bound for exotic ports. But when it comes down to it: not a realistic option. However, your Mr Whatsisname who works with Sir Lentock told me that I was just what you were looking for and that I had to get myself to Venice somehow. Now I was in clover if only I could get that far.

I scrambled onto trains and buses, headed for Heathrow. I hung about in the car park, near the chauffeurs, eavesdropping. Then I barged into the First Class lounge, spouting some drivel about being Lady Monroe's son, lately returned from trekking in Tibet, and wanting to be reunited with my Mama. Not only did they drink this up (the airline people) but they rushed about replacing my supposed lost ticket. Really, no organization at that place at all.

Eh voila! Once in Rome, I dumped Lady Monroe (who's so drugged out that she honestly thought I was a young nephew of hers) and jumped on board that leaky boat, bound for Venice.

Jack I'm not really chasing after the Wayne Fontana cruise ship. No ... This is the Big Dance. This is the Big One. A once-in-a-lifetime ...

William Where then?

Jack I'll tell ya in a minnie.

There you are! Venice. We're here by the way.

William *impressed* It's like something out of a History book.

Jack And what sort of History do you study at Whitefriar's?

William Oh, I don't bother about anything other than military History.
Affrays, battles, wars, skirmishes, strategies ...

Jack So your knowledge of the Old Silk Road is minimal, we can take it?

William *shrugs and pouts* Pretty much ...

Jack Before I tell you all about the Old Silk Road, we need you to
phone your Mum. And I gotta send a different type of message of
me own.

Any road ... Your Dad and brother are in Liverpool or Crete or
Quebec by now, trying to locate your whereabouts. And your two
Allendale cousins are booking plane tickets for South America.

William My cousins? Toby and Laurie? Well, Toby's not too bad, I suppose.
Bit artistic and precious. But Laurie? He's just a pansy.

Jack No. Actually, he's not. I met him. He just lacks confidence, that's
all ...

END OF SCENE

I, Scene xii: 1969 Holly Deals With Many Phone Calls

Holly is at her home in Thornbury. Holly's telephone rings. We see Holly swish up to the phone and answer it.

Holly Hello?

~~~~~ **Switch** ~~~~~

*Raine Allendale stands in the middle of an unholy mess, wearing only a white lace bustier and a pink pair of gorgeous gussies, howling and bawling into the phone. We cannot make out a word she says.*

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Holly *soothing voice-off* Oh, darling! That's terrible ... yes ... of course it is. I'll come over, and what about if I bring Helene with me?



*Holly's telephone rings again. She is in the middle of packing a small suitcase. Again, she swishes over to answer it.*

Holly                                      Hello?

~~~~~ **Split Screen** ~~~~~

Jack Bradley has brought William Pendlebury to the Poste Restante in Venice, which is currently crowded to overflowing with noisy tourists and businesspeople. William has managed to engage the telephonist to obtain him a connection. William (standing in a partly open booth) can hardly hear, but nevertheless, his face brightens perceptibly.

William Mum? It's William. I'm alright. Just wanted to let you know that I'm in one piece.

Holly *thrilled* William! Oh, my darling! Where are you? Are you on your way home?

William Um ... I'm in Venice ... It could be a few days before I can come home ... More than a few days. If Dad wants me Jack said he can find us in Venice and to remember "Anima Svani". I'll spell it out for you ...

~~~~~ **Split Screen** ~~~~~

*The last thing which Holly packs is a framed professional photograph of her two little boys, aged four and two. She lovingly fingers the glass, smiling overfondly, then pops the photo into her case.*

*Dressed very elegantly, she picks up the small suitcase and makes for the door. The telephone rings*

*shrilly. She dashes to it. The screen will split, such that we can see both Gordon and Holly conversing over the telephone.*

Holly Hello?

Gordon It's me. We've gone through Liverpool with a fine-toothed --

Holly *quickly* He's rung me. William's rung me. Quite alright.

Gordon *utter relief* Thank God! Where is he?

Holly He's in Venice. And it's all perfectly marvellous, because he's in the care of a very responsible man. You know him, it seems. They're coming back to England when they can. Oh, and you must write this down: "Anima Svani". Got that?

Gordon *frowning* Er ... who or what is that?

Holly Some sort of catchphrase, I believe. But it's important. At any rate, your best bet now is to fly off to Venice (you and George).

Gordon *frowning* Venice! That's bizarre. And who's the stiff with him?

Holly An Australian chap called Jack Bradley, I believe. You met him in London, so William claims.

Gordon *explodes* ***Jack Bradley!?!***

But he's a complete nincompoop. A tomato sauce kangaroo and camel wrestler hailing from some unpronounceable hick town in outback Australia. And you're ***happy*** that this dope is taking care of our son?

Holly *surprised* But, Darling. William seems to think that --

Gordon I'll send George home and make for Venice immediately.

Holly *quickly* William believes that George must be in Venice, too. Something about linguistics.

Gordon *roundly* For a man of decision, I'm making precious few at this time.

Holly *warning* By the way, from now on, I'll be domiciled at Segler's Landing.

Raine is on the verge of a nervous collapse.

Gordon *savage*

Yes! That's precisely what we all need at this juncture. An hysterical bride!

END OF SCENE

### **I, Scene xiii:** 1969, Venice, The "Anima Svani" Shop

*Jack and William have ditched the dinghy and stand under the awning of a tiny sunlit shop, beside a canal in Venice. The inside of the shop appears to be dark, gloomy and secretive. Lots of people of all types, nationalities and creeds bustle by. Both Jack and William have knapsacks on their backs and look about them in some trepidation. There is sign: "Anima Svani". Our camera remains outside the shop such that Jack's following speech has some background "noise" to look at.*

Jack

Anyway, it goes like this. Europeans in medieval times were bored shitless with dried meat and boiled brisket. The French came up with sauces, but that required spices from the Orient. And of course, the rich dudes wanted gorgeous duds. Silk. And jade ... you know, da da da ...

The deal was that traders on horse, elephant, camel, ox or yak made the 4000-mile journey from Venice to Peking, along the Old Silk Road. Also known as the Old Silk Route, or the Spice Road or ... whatever ya wanna call it.

They couldn't go by ship because the vessels in those times weren't that crash-hot. So they went in these long caravans that stretched as far as the eye could see. It was hard yakka, but.

Anyways, later on, eventually, the traders ditched the land route for the sea, because the naval technology caught up, and there was less chance of banditry and so on ...



William                      Why are you telling me this?

*Jack jerks his thumb towards the shop.*

Jack *sucking in a breath noisily*              Because ... we're gonna go there. There were some blokes who picked up an unimaginable treasure. Diamonds. Uncut diamonds. King David's mines and all that guff.

Those priceless diamonds made their way to the Old Silk Road. Swapped for lumps of gold that some old geezer actually made. Alchemy. You know – wizardry.

Come on. There's a sort of ritual we have to go through. Bit tricky.

*William follows Jack into the darkness of the mysterious shop.*

END OF SCENE

#### **I, Scene xiv:** 1969, The Kitchen, Segler's Landing

*Holly and Helene sit at Judith's dining table, and opposite them sits Raine. The bride (thoughtfully covered by a peignoir) takes refuge beside a box of tissues.*

Helene                      Of course, I loathe bluntness. Much better to be kind than frank ... but really, Raine, your mother is simply not the type of woman to be put in charge of a society nuptial. This might turn out to be a stroke of sheer, disinterested luck, her bailing out in this way.

*Raine sobs, speaking unintelligibly. Holly seems to regret Helene's rational (if cruel) summation of the situation.*

Holly *kindly*                      Your mother still blames herself for Margaret going off as she did. It was the work of moments; one second, there is Margaret, staring at the water, just as I had once been known to do ... and the next, vanished! But it was none of your mother's fault. I wish we could make her appreciate that. Not her fault at all.

*Raine continues to blubber into a handful of tissues.*

Helene *a little*                      Holly, this is getting us nowhere.

*frustrated*

Holly *bracing*

A list! We must all make a list. I'll begin.

Helene

A list of what?

Holly

Well ... On the left hand side of the page, I'll list all the things which are beyond redemption, and don't need any further involvement. For instance, the Chapel at St Paul's Cathedral is booked and paid for. Correct? So, then that goes down as a "past-consideration". The flowers, cake, and so on ...

And then on the right-hand side, we'll make sure to note anything about which certain activity is required before (or indeed "on") the big day.

Helene *determined to be determined*

I intend to be ready for anything. Shoulder to the wheel, nose to the grindstone, ear to the ground, eyes to the front, sleeves rolled up, fists clenched and --

Raine *sniffing loudly*

Look, it's awfully decent of you to offer to help in this way, but I'm fully committed to calling off the whole thing.

Holly *aghast*

No, no, no! There's no need! Helene and I will bring it off, and you'll be bride of the year.

Raine *sobbing anew*

But how am I to explain my mother's disappearance? The Dowager Lady Anstey is such a stickler for the "done thing". I can't possibly admit that she's run off to South America!

Helene

We'll simply put it about that poor Judith has succumbed to a migraine or some such malady. And that we've swung into action on her behalf.

Holly

Excellent! And we'll make a good start by tidying up the house.

Helene *standing*

After we've all had a refreshing cup of tea.

END OF SCENE

**I, Scene xv:** 1969, Venice, The "Anima Svani" Shop

*In a dark and dingy corner of the shop, Jack and William crouch on the floor. There is no-one else within sight.*

*With the flat of his hand, Jack carefully sweeps away a layer of dust from the floor. From his shirt pocket, Jack extracts a small envelope. He rips open the envelope, and pours some of the contents onto the floor, forming a small heap with his fingertips. The envelope is refolded and handed to William.*

Jack                                      You keep that safe, can ya?

And before you ask, that's wood shavings and cut-up bandages from the floor of an Egyptian necropolis. With just a smidgeon of turps ...

*Jack drags his Beatle wig from his head (his real hair is cut in a crew-cut), turning the wig inside out as he does so. Then he extracts various items from within the wig's lining. Jack clips open the legs of a tiny collapsed trivet, made of gold. He places his over the pile of necropolis rubbish. Then comes a miniature china teapot and a superb china thimble. Jack's large fingers do not permit him to handle the objects with the care they deserve.*

William                                      Are we having a tea party for mice?

Jack                                          Something like that.

William *scornful*                              This is a bit "little girly" for you, isn't it?

Jack                                          I wish that your mother was here, with her lady fingers ...

William *nods*                                      So do I ...

END OF SCENE

**I, Scene xvi:** 1969, The Kitchen, Segler's Landing

*Helene and Holly have made afternoon tea, complete with a jam roll cut into portions. Helene pours a cup for Raine, who seems to have slightly calmed down.*

Holly *smiling encouragingly*                      There you are! Hail to the bride!  
You drink that down and everything will seem much better.

Helene                                      Absolutely! Chin-chin!

*Helene and Holly watch with great pleasure as the lovely girl sips her tea, and nibbles a piece of cake. They sit down, when Helene suddenly recalls something.*

Helene                                      Mmmm! I meant to say ... we've been burgled quite recently. Was it last week? I think so ...

Raine *astounded*                      Gracious! How ghastly! I'm totally **terrified** of burglars, especially with all these wedding presents on the premises.

Helene                                      But that's what's so very odd, Raine. All that we can find to be missing (and please note that there was a considerable wad of cash in Malcolm's top drawer) ... as I say, all that is missing is a dear little teapot (tiny! fairy-sized really), a marvellous miniature gold trivet (which folds up -- too cute!) and one, only one of my thimbles. You know that I have hundreds of thimbles in my collection. But only one taken. Too absurd!

Holly                                        But why on Earth -- ?

Helene                                      No idea. Absolutely no idea! They were immensely valuable ... but then, so were dozens of other items that **weren't** taken.

No ... I just can't fathom it at all ...

END OF SCENE

**I, Scene xvii:** 1969, Venice, The "Anima Svani" Shop

*Extreme close-up of the tiny teapot, with its lid off, atop the gold trivet, straddled over the collected debris from the necropolis. William's fingers are seen to be dropping individual tealeaves into the tiny pot.*

Jack *voice -off*                   ... four ... five. That's it!

Now for the boiling water. Look out!

*A tiny stream of boiling water trickles into the teapot, then large male fingers fumble about putting the lid back on the tiny pot.*

William *voice-off*               We definitely need a girl for this job.

Jack *voice-off*                   No. We're right now. Okay, so here's the drill, mate. The tea goes into the thimble and we sip half each. Just to wet the lips is all that's needed. But we have to wait until the flame dies first.

*A match is heard being lit, and then the lit match appears, igniting the small pile of necropolis debris. A red flame sputters into life. The camera is as close as possible to the teapot just as the match is withdrawn. A miniscule stream of steam heads skywards. We watch enthralled as the fire beneath the trivet lives quickly and then dies slowly. When the last red cinder fades to black, the large male fingers touch the delicate handle of the china teapot, pouring the hot liquid into the thimble.*

Jack *voice-off*                   That's it. Good work, young man. Okay, bottoms up.

*The camera stays totally focused on the teapot/trivet/cinders. We hear man and boy groan, then we hear the sounds of heavy bodies falling onto wooden boards.*

END OF SCENE,

END OF ACT I



## ACT II

### **II, Scene i:** End 13th Century, In Turkey, A Long Caravan On The Old Silk Road

*Music: Sweeping, grand, magnificent with the same "hair on the back of the neck" which we remember from Laurence of Arabia (when the sun rose over the desert). Except that we are NOT in the desert: we are in the rough terrain of Turkey.*

Stunning Music and Stunning Aerial Shots.

*The caravan is made up of horses, camels, oxen and a couple of Indian elephants. All bear trading goods. The caravan is headed Eastwards. The trade on the Old Silk Road was not one-way; there were many Western commodities (for instance skins, furs, metalwork items) required in the Orient.*

*A helicopter with David Attenborough camera will film the extent and grandeur of the caravan, from the rear guard to the vanguard. The music will enhance the visuals, such that this is a superb, breath-taking display.*

*Then the camera zeroes-in on Jack and William, who are dressed in some kind of Arabian gear. They walk at a brisk pace alongside slow-moving camels, packed high with cargo. Jack appears to be looking out for a particular party in the midst of this cortege.*

William                      Why couldn't you have conjured us up a Panzer tank?

Jack *laughing*              Yer not tired already, are ya? We'll be right when we find our quarry. We'll bot a ride off him.

William                      Who's that?

Jack *correcting*              "Who's that, **mate**?" I'll teach ya to be an Aussie yet.

William No you won't. I'm an Englishman and very proud of it.

Jack *grinning* Nah, mate. You'll hate being English when we next play yuz for The Ashes.

William *mocking* Jack ... ***mate!*** ... Cricket is not uppermost on my mind right now. Who is our quarry? Tell me!

Jack Actually, his name is Gandore. He's a wicked magician. A wizard. What do ya call it? An alchemist. I reckon that that might be his rig up there towards the front. The coloured job with the flags.

William *thumb gesture over shoulder* You should have asked that old Romani woman while you had the opportunity. That gypsy you were speaking to ...

Jack Yeah ... I suppose I ...

*Jack and William have been scurrying forward. Then Jack stops abruptly, turning around, frowning.*

Jack *on the qui vive* Wait a sec ... That hag back there --

*[Points to the rear of the caravan]*

-- she does crystal ball. Okay, good! We'll give it a day or two and scunge a reading off her. When Georgie rocks up in Venice the Menace we'll nab him and bring him back here.

William *doubtful* Could we get back, though, if we leave?

Jack *laughs* Yeah, mate. We'd use the teeny tea ceremony which offended your masculine sensibilities so much.

William And Dad? Is he okay?

Jack How do I know? I 'spose so ... but I'm more interested in George. He's done languages at your Whitefriar's school, hasn't he?

William He might well have done, but I can't promise that he's any good.

Jack We gotta chance it ... We'll find Gandore and get some more of the time-travel stuff off 'im. And you've still got the envelope of necropolis rubbish.

If push comes to shove, I really oughta stay here. Are you up for

it, young Billie? Spring back to Venice and collect your two rellies, on yer own?

William *pouts and shrugs*

Guess so.

Jack *nods*

Make the magic tea. Then back here. Too easy!

William

I told Mum to pass on the message about the stinky shop.

Jack

Goodoh. Shake partner.

*William and Jack shake hands. Then Jack becomes alarmed that the caravan is moving on apace.*

Jack

We'd better get going. Come on, or the caravan will have passed us by.

*As the camera backs away, taking in the magnificence of the scene, we can discern William and Jack running hard towards the first beasts in the long caravan.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene ii:** 1969 Dream Sequence Where Gordon And George Are In Trouble

*In a dark dungeon, Gordon and George are chained by the wrists, as they stand back to back around an iron pole. They grit their teeth as they writhe about in a vain effort to get free. Their bodies and especially their faces show signs of cruel mistreatment. They are dirty and unkempt. Clumps of candles bear guttering flames. They are positioned in tiny alcoves around the dark, clammy stone walls.*

Gordon *in agony, shouts*

Don't harm the boy! Let him go! I beg of you, let him go! Kill me ... but let my son live!

*From behind him, George screams in terror and pain, whilst Gordon closes his eyes with despair and fatigue.*

Gordon *sobs*

George! Let George go free ... please ... I beg of you. Let my son



go free!

*There are sounds of a struggle, then the sound of a large sword being extracted from its scabbard.*

*A woman (Trahilai) with a foreign accent, and venom in her tone, speaks in a low voice.*

Trahilai                      Princess Ilex. You will tell Her Royal Highness that she must take the elements of the alchemist's art to my father Lord Gandore as instructed. This must be done.

Gordon *head hanging low*      I know nothing of any Princess. When will you hear me?

George                      Dad! "Ilex" is Latin for "Holly". Could she be talking about Mum?

Gordon *defiant*              I'll never give up my wife to your cruelty, bitch!

George *shouts with his dying breath*      *Bruxa!*

*A large sword is raised by an unseen hand. The light of the candles is reflected on the sword's blade.*

*The sword swiftly whishes through the air, decapitating Gordon. George screams in agony.*

SEQUE STRAIGHT INTO NEXT SCENE

## **II, Scene iii: 1969, A Hotel Room In Venice**

*Gordon and George have slept end-to-end in a doublebed in a crummy hotel room in Venice. They wear pyjamas and seem very tousled. However, they both wake violently at the exact same moment, yelling out at the same time. They stop yelling to stare at each other. George begins to cough uncontrollably.*

Gordon *relaxing*              Are you alright?

George *gasping*              My God! I had the most dreadful nightmare. It was vile beyond words.

Gordon                      Do you want a drink?

*George scrambles to the single slim drawer of a very antiquated table, pulling it open.*

George                      Thanks, but I'd rather polish-off these pastilles. The water here is dodgy unless it's been boiled for five hours. Want one?

*George stuffs three of the lollies into his mouth, then twists the spare paper at the top of the packet. Without waiting for an answer, George chucks the packet of pastilles to his father. Gordon takes one absently.*

Gordon                     I'll tell you mine if you'll tell me yours.

*George lies down on the bed, hands linked behind his head. Gordon chucks the lolly packet back towards George.*

George                     Go on, then!

Gordon                     We were captured by cut-throats in some far-flung corner of the universe, then blind-folded and dragged off. I'm certain that we were knocked about in a horse-drawn wagon. It was vastly uncomfortable and stank unbelievably.

George                     Right so far.

Gordon *raised eyebrow*   Same dream for you?

*George has gobbled down the remaining pastilles.*

George *thickly*             Yep! Continue!

Gordon                     Well, at the end of an interminable journey, we were trundled out of the wagon, then thrust downstairs into a dungeon when --

*A loud knock on the door is heard. George leaps off the bed, striding over to open the door, even though he wears only pyjamas. A small, timid man (the hotel manager) stands in the corridor, looking furtively into the room and wringing his hands. He makes a feeble effort to smile at George.*

Manager                    You okey? You scrimmed. I ...

George *grinning*           No, no, it's okay. Nightmare. Sorry to disturb.

*The Manager smiles and nods.*

Manager                    Be careful what you eat!

*The Manager waves farewell. George is ready to close the door when he remembers.*

George                      Hang on, please! The "Anima Svani". Have you heard of him or it?  
What can it mean?

Manager *disparaging*      Oh, it's a pile of rubbish. You don't wanna shop there. Better go to  
the market where you can enjoy all the colours and flavours. Si!  
"Anima Svani" second-rate ... third-rate.

Gordon                      You know where it is? Are you able to give us directions? It really  
is quite important as it happens.

Manager *smiling*              Sure! When you walk out, stop at my office and I'll have a map  
marked for you. Too easy!

*The man wanders off as Gordon closes the door.*

Gordon                      Well, that's that taken care of.  
  
So, we had the same dream, apparently. Ending in our deaths.

*George leaps back onto the bed.*

George                      How right you are, my dear Papa.  
  
What puzzles me, though, is that it was sort of real. I really felt  
injured when I woke up just now.

*Gordon stands, staring out of the window. He is musing. He drums his fingers.*

George                      Pater?

Gordon *musings and*              I was wondering about my time in Westania ...  
*worried*  
  
George what on Earth is going on? That Ozzie yokel with William,  
that violent young woman wanting your mother and calling her  
HRH Princess Ilex. And Venice! Why?

*George and Gordon stare at each other, dumbfounded.*

END OF SCENE

## II, Scene iv: 1969, The Ladies Wander About In St Paul's Cathedral

*Raine Allendale will marry Lord Christopher Anstey in the Chapel of St Michael and St George in St Pauls Cathedral. This visit by the ladies is by way of preparation for what will be London's social highlight of the year.*

*Helene Buxton, her lovely daughter Tess (a rank-and-file viola with the London Symphony Orchestra), Helene's cousin Holly Pendlebury and Holly's niece Raine Allendale wander about in a very leisurely fashion through the different parts of St Paul's Cathedral. They are all dressed-up in stylish suits, with large shawl collars (as was the fashion at that time). In the far distance, an organist practises some piece of sacred music.*

*Helene stands over a grave, solemnly reading the words on a plaque.*

Helene *surprised* And here is Christopher Wren's grave! I'd no idea of all the famous people buried in St Paul's. It's quite amazing!

*Holly likewise reads a plaque.*

Holly                      And this is the tomb of Sir Hubert Parry, composer of "Jerusalem".

[Turning to Tess]

You'll be interested in this, Tess, with your musical background.

*Tess slowly saunters up, nodding and murmuring something indistinguishable. Raine looks about, hoping for a sighting of The Archbishop of Canterbury, David Lighthorse (or at least his secretary).*

Raine *lightly*                      Where were you married to dear Uncle Gordon? Was it St Bede's  
in Lornagate-On-Thames?

Holly                      That's right. You should know that. You were my flower girl, after all.

Raine                      Was I? I don't remember. I've seen the photographs, of course.

Oh! There's the Archbishop. Excuse me, won't you?

*Raine scurries off, followed by her bridesmaid-to-be, Tess. An aged man in a dark suit approaches, warmly extending his hands to Raine. The trio slip off to an office hidden in the rabbit-warren of corridors. Helene and Holly watch them disappear.*

Helene *musling* I remember when you lost "it".

Holly *giggling* Oh, don't! It's too embarrassing. I fairly threw myself at poor Gordon. But we've been blissfully happy, I must say.

Helene My dear girl, that piece of mischief probably saved your life. I like to think so, anyhow.

But your niece will be happy, despite that fact that love won't come into the equation. Of course, she'll have a title, and a superb home. Money! I foretell that she'll soon be one of London society's darlings.

Holly I can say this to you, but to no-one else. She'll be better off out of that household. Roger has become impossible, just like Father did.

Helene And Judith's done a runner ...

Holly Can we blame her?

*Holly wanders about, with Helene close by. Helene extracts a compact from her handbag to powder her nose. Holly reads some notes which are protected by a small glass sheet. Holly bursts out laughing.*

Helene Is one permitted to laugh outright in St Pauls?

Holly *delighted* If they don't want me to have fits then they shouldn't display funny stuff like this!

Julian Beaversnade. He was an Elizabethan alchemist who blew up his charming cottage at Morton-in-Marsh during experimentation. And then apparently he meandered from inn to inn, blowing up each one as he journeyed (trying to outrun the enraged innkeepers, I expect). He travelled with a huge cherry wood chest, requiring four burly men to move it from chaise to place.

Helene Now, Alchemy. That was where the ancient scientists used mysticism and cow poop to make gold. Yes? But no-one ever managed it, I recall.

Holly It says here that this Beaversnade must have been successful. Left

all his fortune to the London poor. Many schools, a couple of alms houses, several plaques and of course buried in St Pauls.

Helene                      Nice that he was altruistic. Not selfish. A fine, good man. Should perhaps have been knighted ... or sainted.

*Holly and Helene saunter off.*

END OF SCENE.

## **II, Scene v:** 1969, Venice, The "Anima Svani" Shop

*As promised by William, crowds of tourists surge about, creating a very busy scene.*

*Gordon and George are also got up to look like tourists, complete with large map and camera. They have drifted towards the shop from which Jack and William managed to time travel. A quick referral to the map, a nod towards the name of the shop and then they wander inside.*

Gordon                      Right! What's our next action, do you think?

*George grabs at his father's arm, arrested by something.*

George                      Hang on, Dad.

*Gordon watches his son, frowning.*

Gordon *surprised*              What is it?

George *scornful*              You're supposed to be a newsman. Where's your sixth sense? Feel it?

Gordon *lost*                      What?

*George is alert as he eagerly looking about. Then George finds the bits and pieces which are reminiscent of Helene's collection. They squat down.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene vi:** 1969, The Royal Parthenon Suite, London: Outside The Office Of Sir Lentock Broughborough

*Sir Lentock sits quietly at his desk, appearing very pleased with himself. Desmond brings to his boss a bread and butter plate covered with four intricate and very expensive-looking canapés. Sir Lentock exhibits pleasure. He indicates imperatively that Desmond should place the plate on the desk beside him. Desmond does so, then awaits further instructions.*

*Sir Lentock glances at Desmond (who stands at his ease, with hands together), and then at his wristwatch.*

Sir Lentock *droll tone*      Doubtless you've heard the term "*par avior*"?

Desmond *nods*              Of course, Sir.

Sir Lentock *suave*              Well, this is a spot of "*par avian*".

Bring the "*tendre foule of the aire*" to me, won't you, Desmond?

*Desmond hesitates, seeming to be unsure what to do. Sir Lentock raises his eyebrows. Then Sir Lentock turns and points to a very solid, robust window. Outside, on the ledge, a pigeon struts and coos.*

*Desmond strides over to the window and heaves it open with effort. Sir Lentock delicately fingers the canapés in appreciation.*

*With encouraging movements and clucking sounds, Desmond quickly persuades the bird to move off the window ledge and onto his sleeve. Then Desmond carries the bird over toward Sir Lentock's desk.*

Sir Lentock                      What a charmer you are, then!  
*affectionately*

*Sir Lentock gently strokes the bird's head with the back of his fingers. Then he calmly removes a tiny message from a miniscule capsule strapped to the bird's leg. Taking a magnifying glass in hand, Sir Lentock studiously reads the minute print on the note. He then makes a satisfied gesture with eyes and mouth.*

*Without having any second thoughts, Sir Lentock divides the note up such that he can (and does) place a morsel of the ripped note on each of the canapés. With the grace of a connoisseur, he eats each canapé in turn, note morsels and all. Desmond (almost managing to suppress a grin) watches with the well-behaved bird still on his arm.*

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

Desmond                      The livestock is gone, Sir.

Sir Lentock                Good.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I am both subtle and compassionate.

*Here, Sir Lentock pats his stomach.*

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

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

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



END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene vii:** 1969, The Blue Riband Cocktail Bar At Heathrow Airport

*Toby sits on a bar stool, amidst a seething crowd of travellers in the "Gold Class" lounge. He sips a cocktail, as he leans negligently against the bar. Laurence slips onto the seat beside him, drink in hand.*

Laurence *excited*                      Have you seen him?

Toby *too tired to care*            Mmmmm?

*Laurence swivels on his bar stool, and nods towards a very rowdy group of mainly older ladies, centred around Francis Cruikshank.*

Laurence                              Over there! That chap who's surrounded by all the adoring women. It's Frank Cruikshank. You're putting on his "Silver Nights" at your Queen Alexandra Theatre, aren't you?

Toby *drawls*                         No, I'm not. When presented with Cruikshank's dulcet lines of script, I voted with my feet.

Laurence *laughs*                    Tobias Allendale: Dark, moody and sinister.

Toby                                    Wrong again. Tobias Allendale: A bloody fine judge of what in theatrical circles is termed "a stinker".

*Laurence watches Cruikshank and his devotees.*

Laurence                              He's supposed to be very good.

Toby *sarcastic*                      Now who told you that? I'll just bet it was a gypsy on a street corner, flogging an age-old remedy to alleviate the agony of bunions. No, brother --

Laurence *sudden start*            Look out! He's coming over!

Toby *leaning close to his brother,*            Shall I be polite, or my usual acerbic self?

*conspiratorial*

Laurence *grinning and whispering*      Be wise ... politic ...

He has a ranch just outside of Buenos Aires. Might be useful ...

*That opens Toby's eyes, as he raises one brow. He mouths the words: "What a piece of luck!"*

*Laurence laughs but tries to hide his laughter. The brothers swivel around, and stand, just as Mr Cruikshank (elegant in lounge suit, cravat and brogues) wafts up. Toby acts the part of delighted aficionado, whereas his brother remains true to his own nature. Toby beams as he extends his hand toward the equally delighted playwright. The latter has an interesting drink in his hand, and this he deposits on the bar.*

Toby *gushing*      Dear Francis! Lovely to see you again!

*The two men embrace, kissing cheeks in the Gallic style.*

Francis *coy*      Tobias!

*[Looks about him, pleased and keen to please]*

My lady-friends (my acolytes) spotted you. Your fame and popularity follow you about, you know, Dear Boy.

*Both men smile and utter prolonged sounds: "Ahhhhh!", then shake hands a second time. Toby vaguely gestures towards his brother, murmuring "brother Laurence".*

Toby      Augustus Cassius and his little group of Thespians are champing at the bit: "Silver Nights" ... Enchanting drama! Quite perfect! I'm thrilled and excited.

*Francis is lapping up the adulation.*

Francis      And so you two young blades venture forth to B. A., do you?  
Wonderful! It's the future. Don't let anyone tell you differently.  
And you'll domicile with me, at my rancho? Of course you will!  
Oh, but I insist!

Toby *in the grand manner*      Simply promise that the scenery, food and beverages will be superb and the thing is done, *mon cher*.



*Toby and Laurence are seated in the plane (First Class), which is air-borne. We can see Francis Cruikshank sleeping against a window on the far side (background).*

Laurence                      How do you manage first class on your measly stipend?

Toby                          I've been trading on my fame (or should that be infamy?) for years. In this case, a tobacco company lusted after my bonny face and advertising pull. *Eh, voila!*

Laurence *surprised*        A TV commercial?

Toby *suave*                  Something along those lines ... yes ...

It was filmed a couple of weeks ago.

My role is that of a very dapper playboy living in a chromium and leather apartment overlooking Hyde Park. Several nubile wenches sheathed in silk pour over me, as I drag on my filter-tip, whilst bearing on my face a mien exuding wealth, privilege, style and sex appeal. Decided glint in one eye.

Laurence                      And that sells cigarettes?

Toby *careless*                Apparently.

Laurence                      But then, what they are trying to say is that if you had smoked another brand, you'd lose the girls. They would drift off to comb the city, looking for some other playboy who smokes the correct brand? Well, that's utterly ludicrous!

Toby *sighs*                    Oh no! In the world of advertising, it's clearly Darwin's "Natural Selection" at work. The dominant male lords it over his harem.

Laurence *snorts*              Silly clunches!

Are we taking up the offer? I mean, Mr C.'s offer?

Toby *drawls*                  Naturally!

Laurence                      Even though you can now afford La Palace d'Accord?

*Toby stares out of the window of the plane. He hums a little.*

Toby                                I feel something in my toes, Little Brother. Something is about to happen. I may in fact need Frank Cruikshank ...

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene viii:** 1969, Near Buenos Aires, The Ranch Of Francis Cruikshank

*The ranch is a large, sprawling bungalow built in a very modern style. It has a relaxed, masculine aura about it. Large animal pelts and skins are draped over the solid pieces of furniture. Several eclectic objets d'art are scattered about. There is a plethora of books piled everywhere.*

*Toby, Francis and Laurence drift into a superb room with breathtaking views (large windows abound). Servants carry baggage into the room, and then carry it on to other rooms.*

*Francis (always tending to smugness) gestures vaguely.*

Francis                                My major-domo Pasquale will attend to your various needs. Make yourselves at home, for God's sake. You'll see me flit off from time to time as duty demands.

*With that, Francis makes himself look very busy, picking up and shuffling various papers, documents and scripts. He walks with the quick step of a man trying to impress others that he is a man of worth.*

Laurence *calls out*                This is all very kind of you, Mr Cruikshank. Very kind!

*Francis buzzes back into the room, for long enough to respond to Laurence. Then he is gone again.*

Francis *airily*                        Not at all. Oh! And you'll need to locate your mother. The "B. A. Shipping Times" is on the coffee table.

Toby                                        Ahhhhh!

*Toby sifts through the magazines on the coffee table, at length finding the Shipping Times. This he hands to his brother, without comment.*

Laurence                                We want the SS Cassanove from Southampton. Oh, Lord! It's in Portuguese! Not one of mine, I fear.

*Francis once again looms into view. He holds out an imperative hand for the timetable.*

Francis Portuguese, Old Fruit? Argentineans speak Spanish! (Faugh! Although I'd be pilloried for that display of national distaste).

Here ... Have you found it? Let me see ... Oh! Here it is. And not docking until the end of next week.

*With his finger on the relevant topic, Francis hands the timetable back to Laurence, who pretends to study it closely.*

Francis                    You'll stay here, and relax, and inspire me. What more can one do with one's life? I'm always on the look-out for eccentrics, you know.

*[Laughs heartily]*

Not that I hold you in that regard, of course. But when in London or New York, I'm constantly listening for the odd accent, the weird brogue ...

Laurence                    We met the most outrageous gent in Londres, Mr Cruikshank.  
                                     Horrid man! Really horrid! You'd have written a fine play about  
                                     him, I'm sure.

*Francis looks a query.*

Toby                      He was a pumped-up Antipodean catsup purveyor possessing all the tact of a garden trowel. Even **I** was rendered well-nigh speechless in his presence.

Francis *delighted* Not Jack Bradley, was it?

Laurence Yes ... I believe that that was his name.

Francis *claps hands in glee*      Was it really? Jack Bradley! Ghastly specimen!

He's absolutely a by-word in the City for heart-stopping gaucherie.

Did you know that on being introduced to Her Majesty, that very same colonial swine went off into a very risqué anecdote, hardly pausing for breath. A deathly hush fell over the many bystanders, who earnestly expected our beloved Elizabeth to keel over with

the shock.

Toby                      Good grief!

Laurence                That sounds very like him.

Francis                    Fortunately, our Dear Queen understood hardly a word of it,  
smiled kindly at the miscreant and then moved graciously on.

*Francis again flounces off, humming to himself. The brothers, provided with drinks by a thoughtful servant, stand at the windows, looking out. Francis once again accosts them.*

Francis *to Toby*            By the way, I really would like to stage the moral and ethical  
dilemma of your younger years, Wonderboy.

*[Grand theatrical gestures]*

The untried male-child facing Nature at its cruellest; the fury of a  
civilization as it plummets into the abyss ...

*[Changes tack immediately]*

Pasquale will take you both to the stable. We have two very nice  
hacks that badly require exercise. I'm sorry to desert you thus, but  
my latest tragicomedy awaits: "Love In The Afternoon".

*Toby raises his glass to salute the disappearing form of his host.*

Toby *under voice, very*    That'll make for a turgid offering. Thanks for the perspicacious  
*sarcastic*                      insight, Frank!

*The brothers turn to Pasquale, who bows solemnly and then the brothers and major domo move off in order to ride.*

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene ix: 1969, Venice, The "Anima Svani" Shop**

*George stops at the back of the shop, where there is a hob with an old copper kettle simmering and steaming. George looks about him, frowning deeply. Then he scans the floor. His eyes light up dramatically as he spots something in a dark corner. He dives over to the corner, squatting.*

George *triumphant*      Aha! Recognize these?

*Gordon bends over, peering at the tiny objects in George's hand.*

Gordon                      They remind me of the sort of bric-a-brac which your mother's cousin collects. I'm talking of Helene Buxton, naturally.

George *excited*              Right on!  
This is it! This is it! They came here!

Gordon *confused*              Do you mean your brother and that maniac from Down Under?

*Suddenly, there is a whoosh, a heavy sound and the unexpected depositing of William on the wooden floor. William does a dramatic tumble as he lands on the floor near his kinsmen.*

*George and Gordon, both very shocked, jump in alarm.*

*William leaps to his feet, face wreathed in smiles. He still wears the Arabian costume of the Old Silk Road.*

William *thrilled to bits*      **Dad! George!**

*William indiscriminately slaps George's shoulder with some force, then leaps onto his father (legs wrapped around Gordon's back) to hug him joyfully in the manner of a jubilant soccer player having just scored a miracle goal. Both Gordon and George groan. But they are absurdly happy to have William returned to them, nevertheless.*

Gordon *elated*                Wonderful! Come, let's head for home and put your mother's mind at rest.

*William steps back. The delivery of lines in this part of the scene (up until the males are ready to drink the tea) is very swift in order to convey a sense of urgency.*

William *urgent*                No! We can't leave Jack in the lurch like that. He needs Junkhead's linguistic skills.

George *affronted* I'm a polyglot, I'll have you know.

*William takes from George the trivet, which he sets down on the floor.*

*William now squats in order to set up the teapot, the contents of which (as in, when last used by Jack) he thoughtlessly tips onto the dirty floor.*

William Alright. Keep your shirt on. Jack needs you to translate for him. He's buddied-up with a party of V.I.P. traders from Venice. The Polos, they're called.

*George is super-surprised and grabs at his brother's shoulder.*

George *breathless* Not the "Marco Polo" Polos? Surely not!

William Yes, something wild and woolly like that. I think the young man is called Marco. He's about your age; much shorter than you, but you might well become friends. He's a real riot! Talk about funny!

We'd better move it! These are the tea things; there's a rather feminine little ritual we have to go through, I'm afraid.

*[Raises an admonitory finger]*

When I make this brew, you just let it moisten your lips and take the tiniest sip. No more! And then pass it onto the next man.

We must remember to stow Auntie Helene's bits before we buzz off.

*As Gordon, William and George speak the following lines, William organizes the ceremony, complete with the necessary necropolis rubbish. William has thoughtfully provided his own tin of matches and flint. He will have to jump up and quickly grab the simmering kettle. His last action will be to pour the tea into the thimble. This time (however), William will gather the small articles together even though they are burning hot **prior** to the departure.*

George *baiting his brother* "To the next man" ... Or "boy", as appropriate.

*William quickly looks up. His eyes really blaze with excitement.*

William Boy no longer, Junkhead. Jack lent me his razor. He said I



***definitely*** needed to start shaving.

Oh, and I've killed a man: an assassin, he was. It was self-defence. Naturally.

*[Gordon and George start in shock]*

Well, sort of. Two of them set on Jack, and if he'd been taken out, it would have been curtains for me, too. I was very brilliant, I can tell you. I made it look like he'd fallen accidentally back onto his own weapon. And no fingerprints. Jack wiped them off the hasp of the villain's knife.

*Just as father and brother begin to expostulate, William holds up his hand.*

William *urgent*                      Quick! Squat down! Saves you hurting yourselves ...

Only the merest sip now and onto the next man. I'll be last. You first, Dad. I'll be the cup-bearer!

*The music (thrilling strings dithering portentously) kicks in.*

*William carefully pours the tea into the thimble. With the hem of his long robes in his hand, he gathers-up the trivet and teapot. Then William passes the thimble carefully to his father's lips.*

William *warning*                      No! Let me hold it. That minimizes the chance of accident.

Gordon *gasps*                      God! That's hot and foul.

*William ignores the complaint, touching his brother's lips with the hot liquid held in the thimble.*

George *warning*                      If I get a cold sore out of that lot ...

*William makes a face at George, then finishes off the tea himself. The three Pendlebury males stay squatted on the dirty floor, in the back of the dingy shop, looking at each other.*

George                      What's supposed to happen?

William *very disappointed*                      Well ... We're supposed to be hurtling back in time to the Old Silk Road. Damn! I hope I haven't ruined our return to Jack. I wish I was allowed to swear.

George *expansive*                      Whadda we do now, Smartarse? What's our exit strategy at this

*gesture, heavy sarcasm* juncture?

*William wisely chooses to ignore his brother.*

William Don't let me lose these bits of junk, will you? Jack stows them in his wig. He's a corker!

George *distracted* That's a **rug** on his head? You mean he wears that God-awful haircut from **choice**?

William *nodding* He pretends to be a drip, but he's some sort of international spy or something like that. He knows all the tricks.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Just as Gordon is about to retort, George intervenes.*

George *hoarse* And how proud of you will Jack the Kangaroo-Wrestler be that you're now **not** going back to him? Huh?

*George shrugs, shaking his head.*

George *pissed-off*            Come on gang. Back to the airport and home to Mum.

*Gordon gives William one more withering look as the Pendlebury males stride outside the shop, expecting to find themselves canal-side in Venice. Instead, they are in the region of Gilgit, Pakistan outside an ancient citadel. This citadel is on higher ground than the Gilgit Valley, however. The Pendlebury's have a commanding, spectacular view of the surrounding mountains.*

William *astounded*            Dad! Oh man ... Where are we?

George *amazed*                You'd pay a fortune for a house up here. What about those views!

Gordon *gobsmacked*           William, I have no idea where we are. You brought us here with your magic tea, so you should know. However that may be, the aspect certainly is stunning.

George *wisely*                 I'm plumping for Central Asia.

*William strains to see what is approaching from the West. The music rises: something is about to happen.*

William *shouts*                The caravan! That's the caravan, away off in the distance.  
*excitedly*                        Jack!

                                        This place must be another outpost on the Old Silk Road ...

                                        Junkhead! You were right! We **did** it!

*As the camera backs away, to take in the majesty and grandeur of the locale and the caravan, we can see Gordon and George stand beside William, all watching the approach of the huge caravan.*

*The music grows to immense grandeur. It will fade off to a wispy tune befitting the next scene.*

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene ix: 1969, Toby's Lovely Picture-Postcard Cottage**

*Maria has moved back into Toby's cottage. Obviously she is alone as Toby is with Laurence overseas. Maria has found the book which Toby eventually wrote about his time in Westania ("Little Bow and Arrow") which she reads whilst dabbing at her eyes with a hanky. His diamond ring still glistens on her finger.*

*This scene is included to give the audience the information that Maria is still in love with Toby. She has not forsaken him for the other peanut she mentioned earlier. Besides, she will turn up in Karachi and join the adventures: there needs to be a thread otherwise we have forgotten all about her.*

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene x: 1969, A Very Quaint Tea Shop In The Environs Of St Paul's Cathedral**

*This is a thoroughly delightful and evocative tea shop, which is situated in the close vicinity of St Paul's Cathedral. Holly sits alone at a table in a very quiet corner of an outdoor garden connected to the tea shop. Roses, hollyhocks and other beautiful flowering plants surround her. Holly stirs her tea. Another cup awaits her companion.*

*Helene swans up, sitting and pouring tea quickly. She takes a long breath.*

Helene                      Nothing. No calls.

Holly                        It was very kind of you to loan Fiona to me in this way.

Helene                      She can be anywhere while she's writing her Masters thesis, of course. To be frank, I'm almost sick of it. But she's determined to see it through.

Holly *smiling*              You have two lovely daughters, Cousin.

Helene                      Raine asked Fiona to be a bridesmaid, of course, but Fiona simply couldn't see how she could spare the time. And (to be utterly brutal), all that tizzy fuss is simply not in Fiona's line at all.

I think Raine understood. I hope that she did.

Anyway, Tess is more than making up for the loss of her sister in that regard. I've never seen her so excited about frocks, flowers, presents ... oh! Everything!

Holly *thoughtful*

And no phone calls ... Hmmm ...

Helene

You're bearing up well ... sons and husband gone off ... and no contact from any of them.

Holly

Oh, they're alright. They've all climbed Snowdon twice. And you know that they sailed to Holland in a yacht ...

No, it's Laurence that I'm concerned about. His mother's decamped, his father's turned into just such a bad-tempered bear as our father became ...

Helene

Poor Uncle William ...

Holly

Toby can handle himself. He has a way of humiliating and belittling his enemies which would be envied by most politicians.

Helene

Agreed.

Holly

But Laurence is like a lamb. Fancy him flying overseas as he has, to rescue his mother. To South America!

Raine cares for nobody but herself. Her wedding takes major precedence. Poor little lost brother is very low on her list of priorities.

Helene, am I really the only person who cares about this young man?

Helene *bracing*

He's with Toby. Toby will take care of him. What can happen?

Holly *sighs*

If only I was there to hold his dear little hand ...

END OF SCENE

**II, Scene xi: 1969, On Horseback, Riding The Cruikshank Ranch**

*With easy grace, the Allendale brothers canter across the farmlands which comprise the outlying reaches of the Cruikshank property. They come across a rocky area, which has a more interesting topography than the flat land through which they have travelled. The brothers dismount, tethering the horses to bushes, and stretching their legs.*

Toby Did the man-servant murmur to us that there was a "caverna" for us to explore?

Laurence Pasquale? Yes, he did. And this looks like the most promising site for it.

Toby *urbane* After you, *mon frère*.

*In a leisurely manner, the brothers saunter lazily between clumps of rocks, stepping over rocks and boulders where this is required. The music creeps in: something interesting is about to happen.*

*They walk out into a grassed clearing, where sheep have grazed in order to keep the lush grassy lawn attractively short. A couple of sheep graze in the distance even now. Toby and Laurence look at each other: they had not expected what they now see.*

*To the right stands a pre-Columbian stonework temple, now overgrown with grass and bushes. It is large, impressive and malevolent. The music rises to encapsulate this sense of foreboding.*

Toby *puzzled* Frank didn't mention anything like this ...

Laurence *shrugs* I understood (via my scratchy Spanish) that when Pasquale talked of a "cave", he was indicating a very small affair, into which two men might just squeeze, along with a small fire.

This is much grander than that ... What can it mean?

Toby *stepping forward* I think ...

It's an old temple, built hundreds of years before the Conquistadors even arrived in the Americas ... Built by the Calpaquez people. Yes, the Calpaquez ...

Inside, there will be an altar dedicated to human sacrifice. Note the wide steps, squared-off pillars, and the frieze of a golden Sun.

Laurence *impressed*      You're right up on your South American history, Bro. Very impressive!

Toby *indifferent to this praise, looking about with huge interest*      During an idle moment at a film studio, I snaffled a glossy German magazine which was serendipitously running a feature on these fascinating folk ... and other cannibals ...

*[Here, Laurence gulps, looking apprehensive]*

Hmmm ... And our dear friend Cruikshank has not even hinted that we should find such an edifice ...

*Toby mounts the broad steps, striding boldly into the temple. Laurence follows. He stops inside, arms akimbo. When the men speak, their voices echo.*

Toby      A torch ... We ought to have provided ourselves with a lantern, or torch ...

*Laurence flicks on his cigarette lighter. The music becomes ever more haunting and threatening.*

Toby *smiles*      Ah! My ever-reliable brother has lighting to hand, I see.

Laurence *looking about*      Quite large inside. I expected a smaller interior.

*Laurence's lighter dimly indicates a temple reminiscent of a somewhat simplified Mayan temple. The stone walls and pillars have been decorated with flat sculptures of ancient South American men, scantily clad, involved in warfare, human sacrifice and the making of gold ingots.*

Laurence      Do you know what this will turn out to be?

Toby      Tell me.

Laurence      This will be a super-theatre dreamed up by Mr Cruikshank. He's obviously fleecing *i touristi* with dramatic shows to thrill and awe.

*[Puts on a deeper voice]*

"Primitive man as you dared not think him!"

You know the kind of thing: the balding bloke whose job it is to bang solemnly on the drum also sells peanuts to the patrons at the end of the show.

*The light brings some signs into focus. They are modern and in Spanish: PELIGRO! Se debe tener cuidado!*

Laurence *triumphant* Ah, yes! I'm sure that I'm right.

*Toby moves further into the temple.*

Laurence *quizzical* I wonder what one charges for these shows? It must be --

*Toby raises his hand, calling for silence. The music is now very evident, and foreboding.*

Toby Hush! Do you hear voices?

Laurence *frowning* Yes, as a matter of fact, I do.

*The brothers move further into the temple. As they move forward, Laurence extinguishes his lighter.*

*There is now no need for it: deeper within the ancient building, there is a torture-chamber, from which some light spills.*

*The immoderate laughter of deep-voiced men rumbles out of the chamber.*



The Conquistadors: Barbato, Kurwingue and Sondez

These are Spanish men of the 15th century. They are dressed in the style of Spanish gentlemen from that era; however, their clothes are now dirty, patched and threadbare. They are battle-scarred, with many teeth missing. Their hair and beards are unkempt; their skin heavily tanned. These men, with their bright eyes and deep Spanish voices, have gone native. They wear some shoulder armour. Their dogs are large, shaggy specimens, of indeterminate breed.

*The camera is in the chamber, where three men (Barbato, Kurwingue and Sondez) stand around a large, flat-topped boulder, spilling a large quantity of uncut diamonds through their fingers. Delicious laughter accompanies this ecstatic activity.*

*Three dogs loll about on the stone floor. These dogs rise (on the qui vive) as they sense the approach of the Allendale brothers. The dogs bound forward. However, although one would have expected these hounds to have barked threateningly at the intruders, these dogs greet Toby and Laurence as long-lost friends. They bound about, yapping excitedly, ears flat and tails wagging frantically.*



*Although this behaviour puzzles the Allendale brothers, they nonetheless acknowledge the dogs with pats and ear-scratching.*

*Barbato swings around, delighted at the new arrivals.*

Barbato *welcoming*      By our dear St Gandro! Here they are: the heroes of the hour.  
Come forward, Pascal, Lucale! See what your efforts have  
secured.

*The three men surge forward, kicking aside the over-eager dogs. There is much hand-shaking, hugging and cheek-kissing. Toby and Laurence (unsure if this is a theatrical display for their benefit or not) go along with the other men.*

Sondez *gesticulating*      But what is this? Bare cheeks? You have shaved off your beards?  
No doubt for the ladies, eh?

Toby *playing along*      Of course. Can you doubt it?

Kurwingue      No, no! Look at their strange clothes! They've been hiding out on  
a galley. I'm sure of it!

Laurence *also playing along*      Aye, aye! But only for a couple of days. We had to ensure that we  
weren't followed, you see.

Barbato *suspicious*      You weren't trailed now, no? We have clear passage to the coast?

Toby *right into the story*      Just so. Divide the diamonds amongst us and let us be on our  
way.

*Barbato lets out a hoot of laughter, then slaps Toby ungently on the shoulder. Back at the flat-topped boulder, each man is given a leather pouch containing an equal fifth of the stash. Toby and Laurence stow their pouches in their jeans pockets. They back away a little, as the three Conquistadors share the pungent contents of a large jug. Then the men start singing. Under cover of this noise, Laurence notes his thoughts sotto voce to Toby.*

Laurence *low-voiced*      These "diamonds" will no doubt turn out to be well-disguised  
plastic gems.

But I'll certainly congratulate Frank on the show. Quite life-like

and entertaining.

Toby *low-voiced*

Yes, very enjoyable. I think we're doing it right by going along with the action. This is called "adventure theatre", I believe. All the rage in London.

Laurence *nods*

D'you know, I recently met a chap who'd parted with a small fortune in order to board a double-decker bus. This vehicle ferried him about the West End; they did the rounds of all the major shows. A variety of actors boarded and alighted the bus, acting out parts as they went. A bit amateurish, one would surmise, but loads of fun, he claimed.

However, at the end of the evening, the conductress flung at him a paper bag filled with indifferent food. No drinkies at all to be had! So he felt a bit gulled, really.

Toby *shakes head*

Foolish! Foolish beyond belief.

|       |
|-------|
| FIGHT |
|-------|

*At this juncture, four villains (similarly kitted-out in dirty 15th century attire) erupt into the chamber, with shouts and calls. These latter assail all the men, even though the dogs attack and savage them cruelly. It is suddenly apparent to Toby and Laurence that this danger is quite real. Only by judiciously ducking does Laurence dodge a potentially fatal wound. The music is wildly exciting and brilliant.*

Laurence *affronted and aggrieved* Hi, there! You're attacking an unarmed man!

*A huge sabre whizzes through the air towards Laurence.*

Sondez *shouts* Here, Lucale! Make me proud!

Toby *alarmed, urgent* Laurie, this is for real! Fight, man!

*The young Englishman side-steps in alarm as the sabre lands near him, then he retrieves the weapon, sweeping it from side to side with all his strength.*

Laurence *brave*                      So! You want a bit of it, do you? Come on, then!

*Laurence, despite his apparent timidity, hurls himself into the fray. He has trained long and hard at fencing and at last has a chance to display his skills. Toby (a natural athlete) has somehow snaffled a brace of wicked daggers, and he is fully engaged with another of the miscreants.*

*Barbato has been killed at the beginning of the onslaught. His body is in the way as the four remaining men fight the four invaders, whilst the frantic dogs make matters worse.*

*At length, Laurence (by dint of some superb and well-timed thrusts) fells his opponent. Chest heaving, he watches Toby finish-off his opponent with admirable simplicity and neatness. Toby uses the twin knives with expert precision. Then, realizing that they are now outnumbered, the invaders depart as quickly as they had arrived.*

*Without further discussion, Toby and the other three men flee the bowels of the temple.*

END OF SCENE

## **II, Scene xii: 1969, In The Open Air Of The Cruikshank Ranch**

*From the distance, four horsemen ride at speed up to a lightly treed glade. Under cover of the bushes, our equestrians dismount. Kurwingue and Sondez immediately begin to squabble in Spanish about the leather pouch of diamonds which Sondez is suspected of having filched from Barbato's dying body.*

*Toby and Laurence try to tend their horses. But the argument between the other two men becomes more intense and physical.*

Laurence *low-voiced*                      That scrawny one thinks that Sondez may have been instrumental in the dead chap's demise, in order to extract his share of the loot. Bit grim, don't you think?

|       |
|-------|
| FIGHT |
|-------|

*Toby shrugs. He is no longer interested in the Spanish companions. The latter draw swords and begin to fight, with gritted teeth.*

*Laurence calmly withdraws a gold cigarette case from his jeans pocket and offers a Benson and Hedges filter-tip to his brother. The business of lighting-up and dragging back takes place against the backdrop of the bitter fight-to-the-death continuing between the erstwhile companions.*

Toby *musings*                      Chaucer. One should never travel to any geographic location on this big Earth of ours without toting "The Canterbury Tales" with one.

Laurence                              What are you thinking?

Toby                                      "The Pardoner's Tale". I must remember to twit Frankie about that one.

Laurence                              Now how was it? Wasn't there a bushel ...

That's right! Death left them with a bushel of gold. The three men said that they'd divide it equally. Now A-for-Albie went off for food, secretly leaving the wine bottle poisoned. Then B-for-Brian and C-for-Chester plotted to kill A-for-Albie on his return (which they did). Then C-for-Chester killed B-for-Brian. Thus he had all the gold. To celebrate, he drank the wine and he too died. Yes?

Toby *thoughtful*                      Mmmm ... Something like that ...

*There is a loud shriek of pain, and a harsh grunt, and then Sondez drops to the ground, mortally wounded. Breathless, chest heaving, Kurwingue staggers back. He, too, has been badly wounded. He holds up his sword as a warning to the brothers not to approach him. They, in their turn, gesticulate that they have no intention of so doing.*

Songez *dying*                      San Gandro! San ... ahhhhh ...

*Kurwingue coughs up globs of blood, then stoops over, trying to retrieve from Sondez his share of the diamonds. As Kurwingue does so, he falls to his knees. Blood now streams from his nose, eyes and mouth. With one last effort, the dying man tries to ward off the Allendale brothers with his sword. The hand holding the sword shakes violently. With a gasp and groan, Kurwingue also expires.*

*Laurence (eyes wide) watches this activity. Toby scrunches out his cigarette, then strides over to the now-dead bodies. Toby removes the two pouches, chucking them to his brother.*

Toby *reasonable*                      They probably are real uncut diamonds, you know. We'll give them to Cruikshank, as this is his land.

Laurence *very loudly*              I say Death (if you're in the vicinity) we are not keeping the diamonds for ourselves! Just so as you know.

Toby *jumpy*                              You scared the shit out of me then, yelling like that.

*Toby then frisks the body of Sondez and pulls another pouch from that man's trousers.*

Toby *elated*                              And the accuser was right! This man **had** filched Barbato's cut.  
Well, well ...

*Laurence finishes his cigarette by lighting the next one from it. With dawning realization of what has passed, he is now trembling and distressed.*

Toby                                          We'll canter back to the ranch and surprise our unflappable host. A hearty meal, and a bath. Then bed.

Laurence *dismal*                      I'm not really hungry ...

*Laurence is now suffering qualms on behalf of the villain he killed in self-defence in the depths of the Calpaquez temple.*

Laurence *trying to put the man's death into perspective*              When I was a little tyke, and overheard people whispering about your pre-pubescent feat of bravery, I was stunned at the thought of you having **actually** killed a human being. Quite God-like, really.

And now, to have committed the unthinkable myself ... Death hath me in his hoary grasp.

Toby *reasonable*                      When it's you or him in armed combat (*mano-a-mano*), then all thoughts of civilization, polite society and "the done thing" are all chucked out the window, Laur. It's law of the jungle stuff --

Laurence *depressed*                      Meaning that there is no law at all.

Toby *frustrated*                      You're too sensitive. What seems grotesque now will fade. How

must soldiers get on? One hardens oneself.

Laurence *reflectively* It's not like at the pictures where the people get shot-up and then we simply move on. Damage bill: five rubbish bin lids, two coupés, a vicar and three itinerant women.

I've killed a living human being. Can't take it in ...

Toby *encouraging* I truly believe that he was from another century. He's dead anyhow.

Big breath and let's deliver the diamonds and Frank's hacks to him.

Laurence *appalled* I feel ... That man probably has a mother and a wife and sisters and daughters ...

Toby *annoyed* Way too sensitive! That's a dick in your trousers, Boyo. If in doubt, clutch it firmly in your left hand and say: "This is a dick. I am a man. I can face death (either mine or some other stiff's)."

You should model yourself on your little cousin William.

Laurence He of the fire in the belly? Do you know that that kid raves on about becoming a legionnaire?

Toby Our sweet sister's favourite literary heroine was "Darry the Dauntless". Now, D. T. D. would have polished-off that chap, smoothed her marcelled curls, straightened her worsted skirt, then taken off on her next cracking adventure.

Laurence I suppose so ... You think me weak and effeminate ...

*Toby ensures that all five pouches of diamonds are safely stowed in his saddlebag. He speaks as he does this.*

Toby Pretty much. Except that you did account for yourself in battle rather swash-bucklingly. If that's a word ... Come on ... horses ...

*They mount. As they canter off, Laurence looks back, forlorn.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT II

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## ENTR'ACTE -- NARRATIVE

*This scene reprises the Prologue. It progresses the Pardoner's Tale by presenting a potted version of that salutary tale.*

*We open with a misty, mystical "camera-walk-through" of Gandore's tent, with voice-over, as was the case in the Prologue. The interior of Gandore's black tent then morphs into a mysterious medieval forest.*

*It is not clear whether the three actors are men or women. They are heavily robed and appear in silhouette, acting in mime to reflect the narrator's words. Whenever the gold is in camera-shot, it will glow as if hot.*

*The music is suitably mysterious, portentous and superb.*

Narrative Gus Cassius  
voice-over

In the far-off times of medieval England, when the Black Plague ravaged the treasured land, three drunken revellers pledged themselves to bring the vile villain Death to account.

An aged man pointed to the path on which one found Death. And these young people ran along that path, finding a treasure of glittering gold at the foot of a tree. This golden horde of florins was divided equally amongst the three, whose focus on bringing Death to heel suddenly gave way to all-consuming Greed.

They plotted to stay with the fortune until cover of night. They drew lots. One of the three would homewards run, to bring back sustenance for the other two. And in that reveller's absence, the remaining two planned to kill the third.

With their heads rocking back and forth, the duo of would-be



murderers laughed to think that all that shining gold would belong to them alone.

END OF ENTR'ACTE, MORPHING INTO OPENING SCENE OF ACT III



## ACT III

### III, Scene i: Late 13th Century, Gandore's Black Tent, Old Silk Road

*From the Entr'acte, morph back into the interior of Gandore's tent.*

*A fire has been built in a makeshift hearth, comprised of large stones formed into a ring. Over the fire, a copper trivet stands, and from this hangs a small steaming cauldron suspended by chains. The glow of the fire will reprise the glowing of the gold florins from the Entr'acte.*

*Further, a few oil lanterns are positioned about the tent. We can discern many scrolls, charts and ancient books. George (who is present as the translator if required) is fascinated by the various items as he fingers them.*

*Gandore stands near his fire. His ears are covered by his hands. He shakes his head about, and rocks his body, in effect refusing to listen to Jack Bradley. The latter sits on a small stool, near the fire. Jack is utterly relaxed and patient with the emotional Gandore.*

Jack                               -- if ya just --

Gandore *passionate,*       No more! No more! I implore you to stop; do not importune me. I  
*angry*                               am as hard as adamant. No!

*Gandore strides about, wringing his hands, unable to control his temper.*

Jack                               Mate, I didn't fly half-way around the world to play marbles with  
ya.

*Gandore spins about, pointing accusingly at Jack. He emits a loud crack of derogatory laughter.*

Gandore *mocking*           **Fly**, did you? What! Are you a bird, or perhaps an insect?

*Gandore springs about, mimicking the hopping and flapping of a bird, squawking and chirping. Jack grins and shakes his head. George laughs outright.*

Jack                                You'll have to take me at me word, Gandore. In my time, we've built huge metal objects just like birds. People walk into the "stomach" of the –

They've managed to send men to the Moon where they walked about. George will back me up on that.

Gandore *impatient*            Yes, yes ... they cling to the legs of giant moon doves being tied on with silken scarves.

Do you think that the Arabs and Turks have not bored me off my pate with these tales of adventure? Sinbad and his ilk; twaddle, all of it!

*[Wags an admonitory finger at Jack]*

And Gandore has not yet admitted to the supposed spherical shape of planet Earth. Despite what boatloads of sailors attest to ... Gandore must still be convinced of it.

Jack                                They're right on the money, as it happens.

Okay! King David's mines were --

*Once again, Gandore flies into a passion. He turns away, screaming. Jack remains calm, sipping his beaker of tea. George stares in alarm.*

Gandore *in a rage*                No, no, no, no, no! Enough! I won't listen to you! Get out! Both of you. Go away! Out, out, out, out with you!

*As Gandore rounds on Jack, the latter lifts his beaker to Gandore, as both salute and thanks.*

Jack                                Superb tea.

*Gandore sinks onto a stool, holding his face in his hands, with elbows on knees.*

Gandore muffled                Drink it down and then out. You and the boy.

*Gandore uncovers his face. He is almost weeping with angry frustration. Gandore jerks his thumb over this shoulder several times.*

Gandore *saddened*                I'm tired of you and your complaints. They waste my time.

*Jack finishes the tea in one swig, then changes tack.*

Jack                               Where's yer daughter?

Gandore                       Making some infernal mischief. I am not your friend, Jacob, but still I warn you. Have nothing to do with her. She is not of beauty – rather of fire and passion. And all her passions swim resistless towards **one** thing: wealth.

*Jack starts to speak but Gandore gets in first.*

Gandore *weary*               She is not from Eleesha. Some other woman – a snake-eyed gypsy woman – swore that I had got Tahilai on her. I don't see any part of me there. Except that she ever demands that I care for her.

Ha! Women! Keep her at arm's length, Jacob. That is my advice.

*[Turns swiftly towards George]*

And you Georgio! Learn a good lesson from me.

Jack                               Well thanks for the warning. I came to the Old Silk Road to fetch some diamonds from King David's mine. They rightfully appertain to Her Majesty's Government and I mean to get them.

Gandore *interested*           Has this been hard work, Jacob?

Jack                               Too right! Hard yakka!

Gandore *snarling*             Your efforts are in vain. Tahilai will be involved no doubt. You mean to wrest the ice from my daughter. You will fail there. I who know warn you: you will fail there.

*As Jack speaks, music kicks in: mysterious, moody, full of foreboding. The camera pans around, bringing to the foreground the many pots and pans filled with the basic ingredients of the alchemist's repertoire.*

Jack *utterly patient*           The alchemist has tried for years to make gold. And one night, he succeeds, because he realizes that it's not just the recipe that has to be spot-on, it's the Earth's alignment with the Sun, the Moon, with Venus, Mars and the stars in the Pleiades cluster.

Science and Astrology meet.

And on that sullen night, with its shafts of lightning, this bloke stirs the cauldron, and sees gold gleaming from its bubbling depths. The only time it will ever happen. Mark that Gandore. The only time ...

*The camera has now moved back to Gandore's face. He is captivated by Jack's story.*

Gandore *breathless*      What? What do you say?

*Jack nods. The music is really spooky now. George stares, licking his lips in wonder.*

Jack      But, in exchange for the gold of his own making some twerp will offer a large bag (or several large bags) of uncut diamonds, excavated in ancient times from King David's mines, and smuggled out of Africa in a peasant's chunders.

Gandore      George? "Chunders"?

George *frowning*      Er ... underpants I think Jack means.

Gandore *half-hearted chuckle*      Ha! Lucky pants!

Jack      The trade will be duly effected. The alchemist: he had made gold! The first of his calling to do so. ***The only one to ever do so ...***

Gandore *scathing*      And he swaps that precious metal (the Holy Grail for alchemists since time began) for mere diamonds?

Jack      But Gandore, this alchemist (you!) can make ***more*** gold (he thinks).

And these diamonds were beyond price. King David's mines! Wealth beyond measure ...

*There is a lull, which allows the music to dominate. Gandore takes a turn about the confines of the tent, touching this, touching that. He is watched by Jack and George.*

Jack      The alchemist will give the diamonds to me or be murdered in the name of Greed by some other body (probably that fire-and-passion woman). I solemnly swear to return the loot to Her

Majesty in England. George is my witness here.

Gandore *thoughtful* This sounds almost Biblical.

Jack Well here's the thing, mate.

Your dead body will not be buried in the cold earth, and nor will it be committed to the flames. Your beloved wife will insist that the guts be laid on a rocky ledge in order to feed the birds. And so it will be.

Years later, she retrieves your bones, which she places in an ivory box. A couple of miracles later, and my mate Gandore is now a saint, venerated by the Spanish as San Gandro. The little box filled with the alchemist's bones makes its way to the New World, where real gold and silver were found in abundance.

He is the big hero, San Gandro is. The Spaniards blessed him for supposedly giving them all the wealth of the New World. Because it was he who made gold.

*Gandore hangs his head.*

Gandore I don't know what these words mean ... Perhaps later on Georgio might explain it all ...

Jack *concerned* I know that Eleesha nurses you when you are sick. But is there someone to guard you? A strong-arm to protect you?

Gandore *sad* I had a servant. A large buck, who cared for me and protected me.

But poor Gwilt was killed whilst collecting rut fluid, ichor or you might say "temporin": that so prized tar-like matter which one gets from the temple of an angry bull elephant in musth.

Tragic! Tragic! Besides, on that other point, I do not merit sainthood. Far from it. More the opposite.

*Just then, the handmaiden Maglia peeks into the tent. She carries with her an armful of superb red roses.*

*This sweet, modest girl slips into the body of the tent, placing the roses with a deep curtsy into Gandore's lap.*

Gandore *charming, smiling*                      Oh! Maglia! These are lovely! Just what I needed. Thank you muchly, my dear.

*With a winsome smile which she shares between the two men, Maglia effaces herself. Jack whistles then turns to George. Jack makes a head movement to indicate to George that he should clear out of Gandore's tent. With a murmur of excuse, the blushing George zips off.*

Jack *keen*                              That's not yer daughter, then?

Gandore                                Maglia? No, no! Just a willing handmaiden who helps Eleesha and myself to procure the various bibs and bobs which I need for my work. Lovely creature. Very amenable.

Jack                                      Handmaiden? Is that like a slave girl, sort of thing?

*Gandore merely nods. Jack brightens up, rubbing his hands together.*

Jack *delighted*                      Bewdie! Ya know what? Back home in the bush, we gotta yearly get-together called the "Bachelor and Spinster Ball". It's a ripper! The fillies all get dolled-up in their best frocks and the blokes scrub themselves up as well.

Ya dance the progressive barn dance all night, get as drunk as a skunk, kiss as many girls as ya can, and hopefully wind up getting yer leg over in the back of yer ute. Bonza night!

Gandore *entirely at sea*            I have no idea what you are talking about. Why on Earth did you send Georgio from my tent?

Jack *excited*                         D'ya think that handmaiden girlie would be up for it? She's not married, is she?

Gandore *confused*                    Are you by any chance suggesting some kind of seduction? Of Maglia?

*[Bitter laugh]*

I wouldn't advise it.

Jack *disappointed*            What? Some stiff has priority rights on young Maglia, does he?

*As he speaks, Gandore fossicks around, placing the roses on a bench. He begins to cut the heads from the roses.*

Gandore *mildly amused*    Not a "man", my dear Sir. There is a sister. Oh, you would appreciate the sister, I think. She is a very wise lady, of great beauty. Her days of servitude are gone, and she now acts as a kind of organizer (ensuring that the caravan runs smoothly). Quite an achievement for a woman, one would say.

*Gandore looks at Jack. The latter has stood up, clumsily, and has knocked over his beaker of tea.*

*Gandore leaps forward, clucking about Jack's clumsiness. The young woman (Sophie) who has insinuated herself into the tent, also rushes forward, to mop-up Jack's spilled tea.*

*Jack is hit for six. The girl, Sophie (who is Maglia's sister), smiles up at Jack, who is totally incapable of speech. The actress playing Sophie also plays Fiona Buxton.*

END OF SCENE

### III, Scene ii: Segler's Landing, 1969

*Raine, happy now, is talking animatedly and giggling loudly on the phone. She wears an ultra-feminine peignoir, as she dries nail polish.*

Raine *on the phone*            We're having "For All The Saints". Do you remember how gung-ho we were when we sang that hymn at Assembly? Yes! Should be bloody **marvellous** in the chapel.

*The babble of noise associated with the phone call continues in the background of this scene.*

*Helene Buxton stares at her face in a large mirror. She seems to be inspecting her hair. Holly marches into the scene, puffing, and lugging an overflowing leather satchel.*

Helene *unhappy*                Grey hair! The most dreaded sign of the passing of the years.



At last, Old Father Time has caught up with me, it seems, and means to make me one of his most dedicated disciples.

Holly *bracing*

Oil of Ulan and Richard Hudnut, Pet.

Or no! Have the full beauty treatment in honour of the Wedding of the Year (at which you'll play a prominent role). Spoil yourself, Helene.

Helene *rueful*

I'll need the industrial strength job!

*Helene turns away from the mirror, to watch Holly slap together sandwich points.*

Helene

Have you just returned from Thornbury? How is my lovely Fiona getting on?

Holly

Running everything with the precision of a comptroller.

Helene

Such a wonderful daughter. But I have few hopes of marrying her off. Too high standards. Nobody as good as Papa. But Tess will make some lucky man a lovely wife.

Holly *sly*

Now don't get antsy but I wonder if Raine's young brother isn't just a bit interested in your Tess. Just the way he looks at her when they are together.

Helene

Nice to have one's suspicions confirmed. Yes! I've wondered about that. Laurence is such a lovely young man. I'll adore him as a son-in-law if it gets that far.

But poor dear, dear Fiona. Who will ever be brave enough to ask Malcolm for the honour of her hand?

END OF SCENE

**III, Scene iii: The Old Silk Road: Getting Acquainted**

*This scene is the precursor to the "Father/son" scene later on. Night. Open air.*

*Jack and Gordon are dressed in Arabian outfits. Jack no longer wears his rug.*

Jack                      Yairs. George is a solid, sensible boy. You must be immensely proud. And the little nipper: William. He saved my life. There's a big ticker there, like Pharlap.

Gordon                  He'll probably follow my footsteps and join the Navy. William, I mean.

Jack                      The Air Force might be more fulfilling, but. He's a genuine self-starter which doesn't always work in the confines of a ship. I can see him piloting a jet m'self.

*[Pause]*

So ... you're right now. I'll get one of the maidens to bring you all some tucker

Gordon                  Listen Jack! I know that you lay on that Ocker business pretty thick and a more annoying, festering man I've yet to meet.

*Jack roars with laughter.*

Gordon                  But you looked after him superbly. I'm only thankful that he repaid you by decommissioning your adversary as he did. And I'll be square with you – no! let me say this. You're a much better man than that drip who wrassles roos and ties-up camels.

Jack *humbled*              You'd be genuinely surprised then Gordo to know how very, very effective that pounce disguise really is. It puts the baddies right off. Makes people drop their guard.

Any rate! You and the boys will see what a great working community the caravan is – how everyone mucks in together. It's just as if it was a township or village on legs. Oh yeah there are sometimes fights – different nationalities and religions and that. But usually we all get along in good form. Hope youse enjoy your

time here!

Gordon                      We intend to. Thank you.

*The two men firmly shake hands.*

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene iv:** 1969, A Small Figure Garden Attached To The Royal Parthenon Suite, London

*Sir Lentock Broughborough and Desmond Grantley take a break from their hectic work schedule, wearing correct public service attire, even down to the bowler hats.*

*Sir Lentock is practising golf. He is putting into a tin plate (designed for the purpose) in a tiny patch of a pretty garden attached to the Royal Parthenon Suite.*

*Desmond sits at ease in a canvas chair under a bright beach umbrella. He is reading Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. The volume is very old and tatty, covered in brown paper and Sellotaped up the spine. Desmond takes a sip of a very strange-looking cocktail. On doing so, he smacks his lips, a sound which disturbs his boss. Desmond quickly covers his slip by clearing his throat, murmuring an inaudible apology, and then speaking.*

Desmond                      No pigeons today, Sir?

*Sir Lentock is seen from an aerial shot, looking searchingly into the sky. He purses his lips and then shakes his head.*

Desmond                      Is a bird-mail expected, then?

*Sir Lentock does not answer. He merely nods indicatively towards the tatty old book, and then resumes his golf practice.*

Desmond                      Perhaps if I were to put out some corn ... or maize ... or --

Sir Lentock *decisively*      Read on, please!

*Desmond's eyes also scan the skies. He has distracted himself, thus failing to obey Sir Lentock.*

Desmond                      If a bucket holds two gallons, and a bushel stands for eight gallons, then ... we are actually speaking of four bucketsful, Sir.

*Sir Lentock continues to putt, but he is displeased with this disobedience.*

Sir Lentock *loudly and commanding*      Read on, Desmond!

*Desmond, besmirched, clears his throat again and whispers a brief apology. He now reads from the book. He tries for a very close approximation to what is believed to be "Chaucer-speak".*

Desmond *reading*              "And everich of thise riotoures ran  
Till he cam to that tree, and ther they founde  
Of floryns fyne of gold ycoyned rounde  
Well ny an eighte busshels, as hem thought  
No lenger thanne after Deeth they soughte ..."

*Desmond watches Sir Lentock successfully putt into the tin plate. Sir Lentock reaches for the ball, then stands. He looks measuringly at Desmond, who again sips his cocktail.*

Sir Lentock                      Your accent is a little wobbly, my friend. But ...  
Four buckets filled with gold florins. Indeed, ever so attractive ...

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene v: 1969, From Segler's Landing: The Shopping Expedition**

*Helene and Holly are seen climbing into Helene's car, in order to purchase items from a list provided by Raine. It is gloomy, windy, drizzly: a very unattractive English day.*

*As Helene settles into the driver's seat, and begins her manoeuvres, Holly (sighing heavily) refers to Raine's list.*

Holly                              If we start off with the Chemist's, and then on to that new

Haberdashery in Rowling Street --

Helene                      Shall I park next to that little railed-off green?

Holly                      May as well. I don't mind walking, even if it is raining.

*[Sighs, looking out of the car window]*

Do you know? Judith would have drowned under all this pressure.

It's really rather fortuitous her having buzzed off as she has.

*Helene's voice seems to come from very far away.*

Helene *mysterious*              What else is on the list?  
*voice*

*Holly looks out of the car window.*

MORPH INTO NEXT SCENE

### **III, Scene vi:** The Inge Ferry Inn, Darsley (Near Maldon), 1594

*The window out of which Holly stares changes into the diamond-paned window of a very late 16th century post horse inn.*

*Holly finds herself in the Inge Ferry Inn, dressed in Elizabethan costume and carrying a large velvet bag. From this bag Holly extracts a paper. The list in Holly's hand is that of a beautifully formed script, on vellum. Holly, trying to take all this on board, reads aloud.*

Holly *reading*                      Galenicals physick, as were known to the Pharaohs of Egypt,  
ground sea-shells, spider webs, snake and scorpion venom, wolf  
semen --

***Wolf semen!***

Where on earth do we go for ***that?***

*Julian Beaversnade pops his head around a corner (he has been discreetly hiding). He makes a loud "Hsst!" noise.*

*Creeping up beside Holly, Beaversnade sits beside her in this antiquated coaching house. There is no sign of Helene. Beaversnade is dressed in the costume of an Elizabethan gentleman. He places a wicker basket on the table.*

Beaversnade *low voice* If you would be so kind Princess Ilex as to pass to me the velvet purse which you hold in your exquisite and dainty hand ... Then Beaversnade may revictual the ever-needy Gandore. And you may be on your way transported to his caravan which traverses the Old Silk Road. You will sip Gandore's tea. That is what we have worked for all these many days and nights. I only wish that I could be there to witness Gandore's triumph.

*Holly sits open-mouthed as Beaversnade transfers many strange and interesting items (in thick glass jars or wrapped in twists of paper) from the basket to her velvet bag. Holly looks about her quickly, then decides to play along with her new situation. Beaversnade pulls a small phial from a nifty pocket in his jacket. He passes this to Holly.*

Beaversnade Your business with Gandore completed, from the Old Silk Road you may return to the present day by simply imbibing the contents of this phial. Hold the hands of those who must return with you, my beautiful Princess. Thus, you will move the corporeal form to a higher plane.

Holly To the present day?

Beaversnade Be assured lovely Ilex that every Christian soul's chief desire will be to assist you. As well the Turks, the Arabs, the Ottomans, the Seljuks and Saracens: they will all fall over themselves to serve you.

*[With finality]*

You will bear Beaversnade's bona fides. That were enough. The words "Anima Svani" will bring you all manner of joy, my gracious Princess.

Holly To the present day? What year are we in? I mean ... My wits seem to have --

Beaversnade                      Why! It is now MDXCIV.

Holly 1594 ... And where do I find myself in 1594?

Beaversnade *surprised at the question* This is the Inge Ferry Inn, lady. Darsley. That is why I must keep my voice low. Julian Beaversnade is not ever welcome at hostelries since my necessary experiments with the arcane tools of my trade sometimes tend to ruinously explode.

[Weak giggle]

I escaped from my last foetid hostelry just in time. Purfleet!  
Faugh! Remind me never to set foot in that locality again without redress to the constable. Still, I trow that I retreated thence with as much dignity as I could muster. And with all my requirements stowed in the Beaversnade cherry wood chest, just as they should be.

Holly                      So 1594, is it? Alright ... The virtuous Queen Elizabeth will pass from this life in ... er ... MDCIII. There! And she is succeeded by the Stewart King James (son of Mary, Queen of Scots).

Beaversnade *shocked*, A Scot? On the English throne? One shudders to --

*[Again, change of tack]*

What else can you tell me, Ilex? One might win a velvet purse full of gold florins by dint of a few judicious wagers based on your omniscient powers. And all without recourse to crystal ball or The Tarot Deck. Amazing woman! No wonder that Gandore adores you!

*[Becoming interested and keen]*

We could find a fat pigeon to pluck. We would lure him into risking his gold on some chance-made topic of our choosing ... string him along with a few politic comments ... and then ***you***, Princess Ilex, would whisper into my eager ear the most relevant heads of the narrative. Then would we pounce!

Holly *with nasty edge*      And is that how you have amassed your fortune? You scored a plot in the Cathedral for ***that?***

Beaversnade *swelling with pride*      This World of ours is filled with woolly-headed fools, ripe for the fleecing. Beaversnade is clever, and wholly unrepentant of his avarice.

*A long-haired small boy in a striped apron pops his head around a corner just as Beaversnade had earlier done. He emits a shrill "Hsst!". Beaversnade gestures to the boy that he should approach. The boy bears a miniscule teacup and saucer in his fingers. With a magnificent sweep of his hand, Beaversnade indicates to the boy that the teacup must be placed before Holly. As soon as this is performed Holly skulls the tiny amount of hot tea and is gone. She has taken with her the velvet bag (filled with the various items) but has left the phial on the table.*

Beaversnade      Ah ... And narry a "Goodbye" for Beaversnade ...

                         This should have been stowed in her sash, perdee.

*[Shrugs]*

                         Well, all is not lost. St Gandore may brew another of these possets. But Lord knows what time or place that will be for her return ...

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene vii: The Old Silk Road: A Touching Father/Son Discussion**

*Several well-fed camels (their heavy burdens removed for the night) rest on the ground, their legs tucked under their bulging bodies. They chew their cud with the familiar figure-8 pattern.*

*Behind the camels, a large campfire burns. Several men play primitive musical instruments, and women dance about, watched by the men. There is a constant wailing, in the manner of Spanish peasants as they sing. Smoke and red-hot cinders rise up from the fire. In the dim light of the fire and then lanterns, the scene of the dancing girls is somehow attractive.*



*The Pendlebury's are clad in what appear to be Arabian outfits. Gordon sits on the ground, leaning against a recumbent camel. William sits next to him, very close.*

*The two Pendlebury males eat heartily from tin plates, using wooden spoons.*

William *thickly*                      This is delicious! You'll have to get the recipe for Mum to make it. Whatever it is.

*Gordon, busy eating, can only nod. George saunters up, sitting beside his father. He has managed to score a long kebab, on which he gnaws hungrily.*

George *to William*                Does that caterwauling continue throughout the night?

William *knowledgeable*        Until they get too tired or too drunk to continue. It's very erotic, that dancing.

*Gordon snorts on his sudden burst of laughter.*

Gordon *still chuckling*        Exchange the "r" for an "x" and you'll be closer to the mark.

William                                They let me watch the ladies dancing.

Do you know what they had the hide to do? They were jabbering about whether I was old enough to be a spectator. Sometimes the ladies dance with not much on, and you can almost see their bosoms. They hate it when the young boys ogle and drool, so the men shoo them away.

But the older boys, like me, are encouraged to join in. They check if your voice has dropped. And one of the blighters looked me up and down, then suddenly grabbed my nuts.

George *affronted*                I hope that you told him what was what!

William                                Absolutely! I slapped his hand as hard as I could. That made them fall about laughing, though.

Anyhow, they let me watch. But I didn't find it very exciting.

Gordon *smiling,*  
*murmurs*                            Good for you!

William *slyly*                        George might find it arousing though, mightn't you, Junkhead?

You would like to disrobe one of those girls, wouldn't you? I saw the way you looked, with your mouth half-open just before.

George *embarrassed* Shut up, prick!

Gordon *calling the boys to order* Now, now. I don't want either of you to giggle about sex or have a distorted view of women.

It's best to be quiet and dignified. Giggling and nudging gives the game away. Certain women, you know, will try to take advantage of a love-hungry boy. Just remember to be sophisticated and in control of yourself.

Here's a good rule of thumb: Any beautiful woman who throws herself at you is usually targeting the contents of your wallet.

William *smug* Mum threw herself at you, didn't she, Dad?

Gordon *horrified* What? No of course she didn't! Why on Earth would she have? I was as poor as a church mouse in those days.

Whatever made you think that?

William *defensive* She slid across a table to grab you. That's what you once told me!

Gordon Well, in a way ... she was trying to shake my hand. That's all.

William Tell us again how it was. How you fell in love with Mum.

*Gordon sighs. Whilst he speaks, we revisit the breakfast scene from "M'Coure", where Gordon first saw Holly Allendale. (This could be shown with the exact same action, but with the camera held at different angles.)*

Gordon Alright ... it was one morning at Segler's Landing in ... 1950 it would have been. Yes ... It happened just a day or two before your cousin Toby was kidnapped. (That's another story.)

I had somehow nabbed free board and lodgings with your Uncle Roger and Aunt Judith. So! It was breakfast-time, and I was trapped at the dining table with sections of the newspaper before me, and a full cooked breakfast, and coffee and your cousins ...

Then, without being able to stand (which of course a gent ought to do when a lady enters the room), I was caged-in. She breezed in ... The most breathtaking girl I'd ever seen.

And I fell totally in love with her when she almost lay on the table as she stretched out to shake my hand. ***Ka-bawm!*** I was a goner.

*Both sons chuckle.*

William *with sledge-hammer honesty* She's not the most beautiful girl ***now***, though ...

Gordon *taking umbrage* Who says so?

George *grinning* Your younger son is pushing you to erupt. I know the signs. Just act cool, Pater.

Gordon I'll certainly stay cool. You're right, in a way ... the girl one marries gets older (naturally). She has children ... and as the years pass --

William *blissfully unaware of the effect of his words* And she has too much sex which tires her out.

*Gordon laughs and manages to thump William lightly on the shoulder. William breaks into fits of laughter, and George leans over to slap William's leg.*

Gordon Settle down! Come on!

No, your mother is just as beautiful to me now as she ever was. But it's in a different way ...

*The noise of the dancing, drinking, jeering and singing continues to waft towards the Pendlebury males. They all settle back. Gordon absently lights a cigarette as he leans back against the large ruminating camel. George looks about him, somewhat furtively.*

George Um ... now might be a good time to tell you something, Dad.

William, buzz off, will you? Go and find Gandore and Jack.

William Nix on that, Junkhead. I know what you're going to tell Dad. It's

all about Cherry MacFarlane, the vicar's daughter. He's performed a very delicate operation on her, Dad: a "slip-a-dick-to-me".

*Gordon is all at sea. George reddens to beetroot shade and launches himself over his father to wrestle with his brother. Plates and spoons clatter about. Without much effort, Gordon hauls George off William.*

Gordon *authoritative*      Yes, William. Take yourself off. Get yourself organized for bed.

And no, you don't need to shave again. Wait until the morning.

*William rolls onto his side, pretending to be violently ill.*

William                      Can you just imagine the scene? That unlovely lump of lard showing her breasts and her front bottom to Junkhead and him salivating everywhere?

*Once again, George fires up, dragging William to his feet in order to thrash him. Once again Gordon intervenes. It is clear that he has had enough. (All three males are now standing).*

Gordon *brooking no argument*      Bed! Prepare for it, now!

*William slumps off. Gordon sighs loudly, then turns to George.*

Gordon *fatigued*              I'm tired. I want to sleep. Make it a very quick précis, and I'll congratulate you on reaching an important milestone; then we'll retire.

George *relaxes*              Right!

You know, the vicar's daughter is about 19 or 20, and she's got as much appeal as the back end of a cow. Nobody but a blind fool would fancy her.

We were playing strip-jack-naked in the Vicarage and --

Gordon *appalled*              God help us! You're not going to tell me that you lost your virginity in the Vicarage, are you?

George *defensive*              She was losing the card-game on purpose! Anyway, after what my brother did, **my** conquest is a bit lame.

Gordon *wryly* Yes ... the less said about William's escapade, the better.

*George grins, shaking his head.*

George *summing up* I didn't force myself on her. I didn't have to.

I closed my eyes and pretended that she was Jane Fonda, or even Catherine Deneuve, perhaps ...

And when I felt ... you know ... well, I pulled out and deposited my seed onto an old smelly towel that Cherry had thoughtfully provided for the purpose. So as not to get her preggers. That's all there was.

*Gordon has taken this in. He nods, shakes his son's hand and slaps his shoulder. As he moves off, George calls out.*

George *shouting* And I ruddy-well enjoyed it! Very much!

*Gordon half-turns to wave.*

Gordon *calling back* Excellent!

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene viii:** 1969, Buenos Aires: Francis's Villa, The Study

*Toby and Francis are ensconced in an extremely stylish, masculine study, which does not possess any windows. Thus, the light is unnatural. Francis is in focus (vis-a-vis the camera), such that he is in extreme close-up, as if face-to-face with Toby (who is represented by the camera).*

Francis *utterly confounded* That's impossible!

Toby *voice off* I have the map which Pasquale drew for us, Old Boy. We stayed well within the boundaries and crossed no roads nor paths.

Francis *still perturbed* Show me!

*We hear a folded piece of stiff paper being unfolded. It is placed on the table. Francis looks down, still very bewildered. Toby's finger taps purposefully on the map, where Pasquale drew a few rocks.*

Toby *voice-off*                      We headed for this place here. Your major-domo described caves and such. But we only found a large temple in a clearing amidst these rocks.

*Francis, shaking his head in disbelief stares down at the map. The camera pulls back, such that both men are in shot.*

Toby *raises eyebrow*              You don't believe me.

*Francis wanders about the room, thoughtful.*

Francis *musings*                      I **want** to believe you, certainly.

I mean, there've been tales and whispers without number ... The Calpaquez Indians were hereabouts, that's true ...

*[Turns to Toby, almost pleading]*

You did definitely see just such a temple as you described? On my property?

*[Points to the map, tapping it in a deliberate manner]*

But you must understand my concern, Toby. I've ridden to those rocks time and time again. Pasquale accompanied me. There is only a small cave in that vicinity which would excite two or three boys, who might choose to hide in there (say) from a thunderstorm, or some such a peril. Nothing like a temple. It's just not possible.

*The music builds: mysterious, moody. Toby carries the pouch of diamonds to the large polished table, pouring the diamonds onto its surface. The camera catches the rich lustre of the uncut diamonds.*

*Music: stark, sharp, sudden; then fading.*

Toby                                      Laurie and I are agreed that these are yours, since they were found within the Calpaquez temple on your property. *Fusce tellus domininus.*

*Francis stares at the stones, almost unable to breathe. He reaches towards them, stops his hand, then forces himself to touch the stones. As the music builds again (now smoother), Francis breathes very hard.*

Toby *jovial*                      And yes! I know what they are and can almost guess at their worth.

Francis *almost suffering from laryngitis*                      *Fusce tellus domininus* ... er ... "the owner has full possession".  
But why? Why me?

*Toby snorts in disgust.*

Toby *scathing*                      You who wrote "Cupiditas" can ask me that?

Francis *even more stunned*                      "Cupiditas"?

*Francis stares in total disbelief, mouth open, at Toby, who has walked over to the door. Toby nods, then exits through the door. He wanders about, negligently lighting a smoke, as he heads to the picture window. The camera picks up Laurence (seen through the window), who sits in glum despair amidst the glories of Francis's superb garden. Toby watches his brother from the picture window. Francis approaches behind Toby.*

Toby *without looking around*                      Laurie is inconsolable. I should go to him and --

Francis                      Why the diamonds? Why "Cupiditas"? How did you fathom that I had written it, when I did not ever put my real name to it? You must know that I used a pseudonym.

*There is a moment's pause, while Toby drags deeply on his cigarette, blowing out a plume of smoke. He turns slowly to Francis.*

Toby *quite serious*                      I made a packet out of my interesting past, one way or another.  
  
However, I learnt when quite young that there is a divine purpose behind every worthy enterprise. You must call a halt to the bilious rubbish you've been foisting on your hapless public all these years. Stop right now!

Give them quality, Frank; "quality" oozing out of every pore.  
Promise me that the proceeds from the sale of this diamond  
windfall will finance your greatest ever production: *Cupiditas*.  
Make it huge, breath-taking, powerful and splendid!

Teach the world the dangers of "Greed". Promise me that!

Francis *frowning*                      It's not ... The public won't ...

*Toby pats Francis's shoulder, then shakes his hand.*

Toby                                      Don't do it for the public, Old Cock. Do it for me!

*[Changes tack: more decided and down-to-earth]*

I'll drag Laurence out of his reverie, and we'll beg a lift from your  
driver. If that's alright. We'll get ourselves to the waterfront in  
plenty of time to greet our mother. And then home to Blighty.

*Francis rakes his fingers distractedly through his hair.*

Francis *concerned*                      No, dear boy, I simply cannot understand. How in the name of  
God and the Angels did you know that I had written --

Toby *calming, jovial*                      Ooooooh ... Just my antennae. I'll want tickets to the Opening  
Night. Good seats, mind! You'll easily recognize me among the  
milling throng in the foyer before the show, you know: I'll be the  
gent wearing a white feather boa over my Tux.

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene ix: 1969, The Garden of Francis's Villa, Buenos Aires**

*Laurence is still in the pose of Rodin's "Thinker". We see him in silhouette (in the foreground), as the camera is focused on Toby in the background as he wanders down the impressive steps, into the luxuriant garden.*



*Toby stands beside Laurence, looking down at him in sympathy. When Toby speaks, it is without his usual venom and/or sarcasm.*

Toby                               It's time to blow, Bro. We've to collect our dear mother, and then

...

I suppose we ought to phone Dad; Rainie will be a cot-case by now, I guess. Put their fears to rest.

*Laurence is unmoved.*

Toby                               Quit lashing yourself. In 100 years, everyone will have forgotten about it.

*[Pause]*

Between us (given my rusty Spanish), Frank and I have tentatively booked three seats on a small plane for Friday afternoon, which will give us oodles of time to collect Mother's baggage, and so on.

*[Pause]*

Lorenzo! You can't --

*Laurence jumps to his feet.*

Laurence *decisive*           What was that mantra you gave me? Something about grabbing my willie to remind myself of my gender? Consider it done!

*With that, Laurence pats his brother on the shoulder, then marches purposefully up the garden steps, two at a time. Toby is seen to scratch his head.*

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene x:** 1969, Buenos Aires, The Bridge Game

*Contract Bridge is huge in Argentina. At the Consuello Republico Bridge Club, in Buenos Aires, some 40-odd tables are laid out for bridge, and the club members are hard at it. Several immaculate*

*waiters glide between the tables, silently clearing glass tumblers and emptying ashtrays. There is a pall of smoke hanging over the tables; several ladies fan themselves.*

*Francis is very spiffy in comfortable suit, brogues and cravat. He is North, partnered by an elderly Argentinean (complete with waxed moustaches). A middle-aged Spanish lady (East) with beaky-mouth (in the manner of the late Mavis Pugh) looks about her with darting eyes. Her partner (her husband) is a portly, well-dressed man who sucks on a fat Cuban cigar, coughs immoderately and seems to have difficulty following the play.*

*There is a very low hum of conversation. As the play continues, Francis leans forward, whispering to his partner in Spanish. Whatever Francis has confided, the elderly partner raises his eyebrows in surprise, shakes his head disbelievingly, and mutters some reply in Spanish.*

*A very beautiful young woman of Portuguese appearance is South at the neighbouring table and is back-to-back with Francis. She turns and reaches back to tap Francis on the shoulder. He is startled, turns back, and then chuckles in pleased surprise. Anguella stares at Frank with a hard look. The other surrounding folk appear annoyed and displeased with Francis's lack of protocol.*

*Note: Anguella is played by the same actress who plays Trahilai.*

Anguella *whispers*                      Did I hear you mention "diamonds", Papa?

*Francis feels everyone's eyes boring into him. He blushes and flusters a little.*

Francis *whispers*,                      Darling! We'll discuss this later ... Excuse ...  
*flustered*

*Francis turns back to his table, where three faces seem awaiting an explanation and apology.*

Francis *explains in a*                      So sorry.  
*whisper*                                      My lovely step-daughter recalled to me that I have ...  
                                                      Sorry! What was the last bid, again?

*The sole female at the table sniffs disagreeably, all participants return to their cards, and the bridge games continue.*



*Later, in the foyer of Consuello Republico Bridge Club, Anguella stands in sublime elegance as Frank races up to her. The lady shows no delight at her step-father's enthusiastic greeting, and cheek-kiss.*

Francis *effusive*                      Anguella! My angel! How lovely you look.

*Anguella is cold, calculating.*

Anguella                                Diamonds! I heard you mention "diamonds" to your partner.

Francis *blustering*                Of course! As in the suit of diamonds. Playing cards, you know.

*Frank rushes to divert his stepdaughter.*

Francis *bonhomous*                Shall I fetch you a drink? What would you like? Crème de menthe?

*Anguella grasps Francis's sleeve as he attempts to leave her.*

Anguella *cold as ice*                Clubs were trumps when I interrupted you. Not diamonds. You're hedging, dear Papa.

They've been found, haven't they? The famous diamonds of King David's mine. You have them, or you've seen them, and you know where they are.

*Francis tweaks his sleeve from Anguella's grasp.*

Francis *frowning*                    Now look here!

*Anguella relaxes.*

Anguella *conversational*        I recently dreamt that I was torturing two men (one much younger than the other). They were a father/son duo, perhaps. In a dungeon. No, no ... somewhere dark and mysterious ...

It all had to do with King David's loot. But I was *here*, in South America. Who can explain ...

*[Expansive gesture]*

Do you know that I was prepared to kill for those gems? But only in my dreams, of course.

*Francis stares at her, as if seeing her for the first time.*

Francis *low*                            Don't be stupid. What would King David's diamonds be doing here

in Buenos Aires?

Anguella *scornful*

You must be acquainted with the myriad stories that people have bandied about over the years. Rumours and --

Francis *trying to squash further discussion*

Tall tales, all of them!

Anguella *eager*

There were Conquistadors here. That's certain! And they sought to plunder the Calpaquez gold. But one of these Spanish noblemen was said to have also obtained a stash of uncut diamonds indirectly from traders who plied the Old Spice Route.

***That*** particular tale has strong currency, Papa.

Francis *definite*

Nothing like that happened in the environs of B. A.

Anguella

What about my dream?

Francis *dismissive*

No, no! I don't hold with "truth-in-dreams".

Anguella *urgent*

Papa!

Francis *with finality*

I wrote something. Years ago. Chaucer.

I'll give it to you to read, Anguella. You must take the particular moral lesson therein on board.

*Anguella stares at her stepfather, and mouths "Chaucer"?*

END OF SCENE

### **III, Scene xi:** The Old Silk Road, The Interior of Gandore's Tent

*Coloured smoke billows through Gandore's tent. Gandore himself, dressed in his wizard rigout, moves backwards and forwards, with his right hand held high. He mutters incantations as his cauldron spills out copious bursts of bright smoke, in varied hues. Gordon and Jack, with faces swathed in silk scarves. They watch Gandore.*

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Jack *muffled*                      This smoke bizzo is giving me the shits. Come on! Let's grab a pozzie up the back. This magic show would be a lot better without all this tizzy stuff.

*Gordon nods. As he does so, George, William and Marco (clutching scarves to their mouths due to the smoke) burst into the tent. On almost bumping into his father, William jumps with surprise. Immediately, he rips off his scarf.*

William *excited and elated*                      Dad! I've finally managed to drag Marco Polo out of his cubby-hole.

*Without apology, William reefs Marco's scarf from his face, to reveal Marco grinning adorably.*

William *to Marco*                      *Mio papa, Marco. Celi mio papa. Si!*

*As Gordon unswathes his face-scarf in order to address Marco, Marco (still grinning boyishly) prattles away in Venetian Italian. Gordon tries to follow the conversation, nodding as best he can. George shepherds everyone away from the smoke. Jack is in larrikin mode and will be the "difficult" section of the audience: catcalling and laughing immoderately. He constantly has a roll-your-own cigarette hanging out of the corner of his mouth.*

*Marco sits cross-legged on the floor, playing at cat's cradle with a twist of camel tail hair.*

George                      Come on. The show's about to start.

*Our music (a solo flute playing an evocative tune) sweeps over the scene.*

Gandore *magician's voice*                      Gentlemen! My duty is to demonstrate to you all the wonders of the Alchemist's art.

You see here that I am alone with my smoking cauldron. Here you will see --

*Gandore spins about, waving his arms like a banshee. Then he waves a sheer silken veil (light and ethereal) about.*

Jack *aside, laughing*                      Look out! He'll do himself a damage!

Gandore *with flourish*                      -- here you will see my beautiful Eleesha!

*Under the veil kneels Eleesha. She stands, as if she has been praying, and bows to the small audience. This feat of magic is met with desultory applause. William whistles shrilly.*

Jack *rudely*                      Bring on the dancing girls!

*Gandore takes Eleesha's hand in the theatrical manner, to lead her from the vicinity of the cauldron.*

*Marco (grinning effusively) rattles away in Italian. He has said something utterly insulting, which causes Gandore to glare at him, and George to shout a crack of laughter.*

*Just then, a loud whooshing noise occurs. Our music is now a mysterious undercurrent. There is now a second woman kneeling under the large silken veil. Gandore gasps and starts, staring at the newcomer, who is hidden under the veil. Eleesha looks surprised, then suspicious. She puts her hands on her hips, glaring at Gandore, who moves slowly forward, staring at the newcomer in complete disbelief.*

|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| Holly Arrives Shrouded in Mystery. |
|------------------------------------|

*The camera focuses on the Pendleburys and Jack. They look searchingly at the newcomer.*

*Suddenly, as the music builds, William's face becomes positively wreathed in a joyous smile.*

William *totally*                      Mum!  
*delighted*

*William rushes forward, as Holly (serene and stately in her rich velvet cloak) stands. The boy throws his arms around his mother, lifting her from the ground. Likewise, George tears up to his mother, including his brother in his effusive hug. The eyes of Gordon and Holly meet and the married couple smile lovingly at each other. Gordon manages to push his sons out of the way, such that he may hug and kiss his beautiful wife.*

*But, as this takes place, Gandore (staring as if seeing an angel come down to Earth) drifts forward. He is awestruck. Holly hands to Gandore the brimming velvet purse.*

Gandore *reverently*                      Princess Ilex! You are returned to me!

*Music: the music is very large, thrilling and almost overpowering.*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT III



## ACT IV

### IV, Scene i: 1969, Segler's Landing, Interior

*The music carries over from the end of ACT III, with the tempo dropping to dithering strings. Then fade out as Fiona begins to speak.*

*Apart from a brief glimpse at the end of Film #1, we have not yet met Fiona, who is staying alone at Holly's house, whilst she works on her master's thesis. Fiona has driven over to Segler's Landing to visit her mother (Helene) and to comfort Raine, who has been found in an awkward situation. Raine's father (Roger Allendale) stands at a window, looking out towards the River Thames. Fiona stands in the middle of the room, looking at Roger's back. She looks about her, uncertainly.*

*It is in Roger's nature to be curt, domineering and self-important. These traits (seen in Film #1 "M'Coure") have been magnified with the passing of time.*

Fiona                      I've received an urgent phone call from Raine. Where is she? And where's my mother?

Roger                     Your mother and my sister have slipped out to make some purchases in the high street. I thought that they'd have returned long before this.

Raine is in bed.

Fiona *uncertain*        Then --

Roger                     My daughter, whose beauty has snared Lord Anstey --

Fiona *aside* "Snared" is right!

Roger Exactly! Raine has taken the opportunity of the house being empty to indulge in a dirty liaison with a local tradesman.

*[Turns away from the window to face Fiona]*

And don't try to fob me off with some plausible explanation. I arrived home unexpectedly and caught them at it!

*Fiona is floored by the unexpected news regarding the bride's sexual adventure; however, she recovers well.*

Fiona *shrugs* Pre-marital nerves, that's all. Quite in order. I'm sure that the bridegroom is also --

Roger *crisp* Shall we leave Lord Anstey out of this discussion? Thank you.

*Fiona wants to take charge of this difficult situation but is unsure where to take the conversation.*

Fiona Where's Raine now?

Roger I ordered her to lie down for the afternoon. When she is thoroughly rested, we'll examine her situation. Tact and discrimination might be called for.

Fiona *reasonable* Oh! Well, if only you and I and the butcher's boy know about it, then what's the harm?

Roger *utterly stern* The "butcher's boy" might blab. I'll need to consider this very carefully. On top of all else that's gone on recently. This was very ill thought out.

Fiona Yes, much to consider. And you still have no word of your missing sister, Margaret? Is that right?

Roger Absolutely. Thank Heavens that my sons have located Judith, however. They'll bring her home. Margaret will have to find her own way, and in her own time.

Fiona *shrugs* Well, then ... My visit here was all for nought, if I can't be of comfort and support to Raine.



Roger So it would seem.

Fiona *cheerful* I'll head back to Thornbury, then.

Roger Why Thornbury?

Fiona House-sitting and phone-sitting.

Roger *frowns* On your own?

Fiona Yep.

Roger That must prove stultifying in the extreme.

Fiona Quite the opposite. I've a good chance to work on my thesis in relative peace and quiet, as it happens.

Roger *smiles reluctantly* A "peace and quiet" from which my daughter's distress signal dragged you.

Fiona *blithe* Can't be helped.

Roger What's it about?

Fiona *frowning* What's what about?

Roger *sighs* Your precious thesis.

Fiona *responds too quickly* The Crampling Controversy. Market Ely in East Anglia. The 7th century Abbess of Ely (Aethelthryth), d'you see.

Roger *all at sea* But ... ?

Fiona *airily* Latin, Latin and more Latin. Enough to make one weep. *Hic illi lacrymi ...*

Roger *about to explode* Goddammit! You bloody minx!

Fiona *delicious giggle* Had you going for a moment, didn't I?

Funny that you should remember Laurence's thesis. I wouldn't have thought you cared tuppence. He gained a First for his efforts, you'll recall. Although you spoke of it scathingly as a "bothersome waste of time".

Roger *weary of it all* And your opus isn't? A waste of time?

Fiona *delighted to discuss her "pet"* It focuses on a specific instance of "Potestatis" versus "Auctoritas" in Western Europe during the 15th Century. There was a secret sect in the Lowlands: *Ubi Nos Congregati Sunt*. They fell foul of The Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian, who --

Roger *vitriolic* My God! Cloudy Soup! And these pathetic souls are the subject of two years' slaving on your part, are they?

How earth shattering! What a radical difference **that** will make to the world at large, to be edified in their trivial cause.

*Fiona cannot believe how really vile is Roger Allendale.*

Fiona *stung* Been meaning to ask you, Roge: why didn't you go to Westania with the others, to rescue your son?

Roger *stiff upper lip* I had my business to run. Someone had to keep the family ticking along.

Fiona *accusing* My parents made the hazardous journey; and they weren't even involved.

Roger That sort of historical nonsense was right in your father's line, but not mine.

Besides, one all too quickly forgets what I suffered as a young man. I hark back to my wrongful imprisonment for my father's death. And my elder son's involvement in what later proceeded.

Fiona *waspish* We've dined out on that story for years.

Roger *louder, more defiant* And I take it from your tone that you are about to insinuate that I'm a loathsome, cowardly poltroon. Well, my exemplary War record must lay that idea to rest.

*Roger, believing that he has acquitted himself admirably, turns back to the window.*

Fiona *jocular* Your lack of bravery (or otherwise) was not uppermost in my thoughts. No! I was going to say that you are still (and always will be) Olympic standard in speaking like a pompous twat.

Toorah!

*As Fiona departs, Roger turns; he is offended and shocked.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene ii:** 1969, Segler's Landing, Exterior

*Shaking her head, Fiona makes her way along the path back to her car, when her mother (Helene) drives up. Once Helene parks, and steps out of the car, she is in Fiona's arms, being lovingly hugged.*

Fiona *overjoyed*                      Mum! Roger's concerned that you've taken so long with your shopping.

Helene *confused and frazzled*                      Darling! Did he haul you over here, then?

Fiona                                      No, the bride-to-be did.

*Helene is rescuing the shopping from her car. This she divides between herself and her daughter as they speak.*

Helene *surprised*                      Raine?

Fiona                                      Oh, it's a real pulse-spot here, Mum. Raine's been caught *in flagrante delicto* by her father. Apparently, he marched into her bedroom all unannounced to find her "at it" with a local journeyman.

*[Bites her lip with naughty, wicked grin]*

Raine rang me, in total hysterics -- *Eh, voila!*

Helene *shocked*                      Oh my God! Do we need any more disasters?

*Mother and daughter make their way back to the house, even though it had been Fiona's intention to leave. They walk quickly, lugging the many parcels and bags, due to Helene's stress.*

Fiona I thought that you went off with Holly? Did you leave her in the high street?

Helene *frazzled and frustrated* Well, on top of all our other miseries, I've lost Holly. She's totally evaporated!

*Fiona stops dead.*

Fiona *shocked* What on Earth do you mean? She can't have --

Helene We were driving along, and she fell asleep. I left her in the car (with a window wound slightly down for her comfort) whilst I darted about collecting all of the bride's various needs. Came back to the car and -- **poof!** No more Holly! Gone without trace.

Fiona *worried* Gone? Well ... what did you --

*The women recommence their walk to the house.*

Helene *even more frazzled* I've been at the police station for over an hour. They've fingerprinted the car, of course. Bystanders were questioned, but no-one saw Holly leave the car by any means (fair or foul). She's simply vanished.

What am I to do, my dear?

*Fiona stops again.*

Fiona Wait Mum! This is getting way too serious. **Way** too serious!

Think about it ...

Toby and Laurence are in South America collecting Judith, but so far Margaret is still unaccounted for. Gordon, William and George are who-knows-where. They've buddied-up (so you tell me) with some weirdo Australian side-show freak. But so far I've not had one single phone call from them as to their well-being.

And **now** ... you tell me that your beloved cousin Holly has dissolved into the ether.

Helene *lip trembling* It's appalling!

Fiona *urgent* No, Mum! Listen! I'm saying that there is a "weirdness" about all this.

Forget Raine; that was just last-minute jitters. But everything else is ... is ...

It's not possible that your Westania place has anything to do with this, is it?

*This has not previously occurred to Helene. She is really appalled. But in the way of a mature woman, who has to manage a family, she pushes that possibility behind her, onto the backburner.*

*She turns back to the Allendale house, walking determinedly.*

Helene *near to frustrated tears* I'm not attempting any outlandish explanations for all that has passed. Not in the mood just now.

I simply want everybody to come home so that I may return to my normal life.

*Helene strides off, bearing her many bags and parcels.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene iii:** The Old Silk Road, Blowpipe Practice

*William and Marco have climbed a tree to practise their blowpipe technique.*

William *excited* This one is much better than the pathetic excuse for a blowpipe that I have at home. I seem to remember that it came from a kiosk on a seaside pier. Blackpool? Yes, Blackpool! Not authentic at all.

*Marco points as he jabbars something unintelligible while William continues to practise.*

William Yes I agree. A king-size storm is building up over there.

*Marco begins to climb down the tree, jabbering unintelligibly as he goes.*

William                      Again, you are right. If any villains or rogues or brigands should try to attack the caravan, we'll put them out of action with some adroit blowpipe work. Wizard!

*Down from the tree the two boys are seen to rush into action to assist some scouts (who are ensuring that the animals are safely tethered).*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene iv: 1969, Segler's Landing, Interior, Another Day**

*Tess Buxton has joined her sister and mother at Segler's Landing.*

*The ladies are all dressed in stylish outfits, even though they are "chez nous", sitting in the lounge room, eating fish and chips (as daintily as possible). They are: Raine, Helene, Fiona and Tess. The ladies face the television (a small black-and-white, antiquated job), and are focused on a BBC news program. We can hear the announcer's voice droning-on in the background.*

*Roger strolls in, looking with disdain at the collection of females.*

Roger *self-important*      Is that the best you ladies can manage?

Fiona *thickly, points to the TV*                      We're hoping to catch some inkling about Holly. You never know ...

*Roger steps forward, looking over Raine's shoulder. He calmly reaches down, to snaffle some chips from her plate.*

Roger *suave*                      You really oughtn't to be stuffing this fattening food down your gullet. Will you ever fit into that wedding gown?

*Raine, dissolving into tears, passes her plate back to her father. As Roger serenely eats his daughter's portion of the treat, Tess has to console the bride-to-be. Tess gives Roger several speaking looks, but he proves impervious to visual criticism.*

Fiona *waspyish*                      And how are the various hunts for the missing sisters, wife and

sons marching along?

*Roger speaks thickly whilst scoffing the fish and chips he has been offered. With that, he maintains his dignity.*

Roger                    I've been glued to the telephone all morning, if you must know. As we speak, I await a return call from Lord Marvelle, who is acquainted with Holly, and is most keen that she be located safe and well. He's expediting the police search squad.

Helene                  And the others?

Roger                   Margaret -- no idea.

                              However, Judith and the boys are quite accounted for.

*The telephone rings shrilly. Roger appears to be abundantly pleased.*

Roger *urbane*           Ah! And with any luck, that is His Lordship now. Excuse me, ladies, won't you?

*As Roger swans off, the ladies glance at each other. Tess, Fiona and Helene share their fish and chips with Raine, who is now mastering her tears.*

*The camera swings around to home-in on the television screen.*

BBC Announcer           And in news just in, the Foreign Office has been notified that a small aeroplane flying out of Buenos Aires has been commandeered by hijackers. It has been claimed that several members of the Bilbao-based terrorist group YTA have taken over the plane, demanding the recommencement of political discussions with the Spanish Government in exchange for the safety of the 20 international passengers. The YTA rebels have been promised safe landing in West Pakistan whilst negotiations proceed.

*The face of the BBC announcer is replaced by a professional studio photograph of Toby, as would be distributed by his theatrical agent. Then we see the Cambridge graduation photograph of Laurence, as he stands alongside his proud mother, Judith.*

*NB Despite having graduated, Laurence is still at Cambridge, as a Fellow and tutor.*

BBC Announcer *voice-off*      The Foreign Office holds grave fears for the safety of the passengers, among whom are British actor Toby Allendale, his mother Judith and brother Laurence (of Cambridge University).

*We hear the ladies scream in unison, sending plates of fish and chips flying as they stand impulsively.*

*From behind, we see them jumping to their feet, calling out to Roger and beginning to rush about in alarm and fright. The dramatic music which dominates the next scene crashes into life here.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene v:** 1969, The Hijack Drama On A Small Aeroplane, In Mid-Air

*This scene includes a comic homage to the Hope/Crosby/Lamour "Road" movies.*

*People rush about in the passenger area of the small plane, screaming and acting frenetically. There is a feeling of total chaos, which is exacerbated by the harsh, dramatic music, along with the confined space. The plane rocks about: articles of all kinds bounce about amidst the frenzy of passengers.*

*Four of the seven hijackers are in fact played by the same actors who played the four interlopers of ACT II, Scene (x).*

*They are dressed as Spanish or Mexican bandits, complete with loads of facial hair, over-the-shoulder bullet belts and macho weapons. These hombres are extremely aggressive, attacking or scaring as many of the passengers as they can. They shout random Spanish fighting words, which are almost lost in the screaming and shouting of the passengers.*

*In spite of the BBC News announcement, Judith Allendale is not on board the aircraft.*

*The camera zooms-in on Toby and Laurence, who are crouched (hiding) on the floor instead of sitting in their seats. They face each other, and the brothers appear to be absurdly calm, almost negligent of their safety. They can hardly be heard above the ruckus; they have to over-pronounce their words.*

Toby                      Remember how we doted on the "Road" movies? Bing, Bob and



Dotty L?

*Laurence is not at all surprised by the inappropriateness of the question at such a time.*

Laurence *bright*                      Sure! Er ... do you want them in alphabetical order?

*Suddenly, a man hurtles through the air, landing on Toby's back. He lets out an "Oof!"*

Laurence *laughs*                      Are you okay? Not often that a walrus lands on one.

Toby *suave*                              I could count it out on the fingers of one hand. Had the stuffing  
knocked out of me for sure. Go on about the "Road" movies.

Laurence                                  Listen! They were ... um ...

*[Counts off on his fingers as he remembers]*

"Bali", "Morocco", "Rio", "Singapore", "Utopia" and "Zanzibar".

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Toby and Laurence Are Set Upon. |
|---------------------------------|

*The man who landed on Toby is savagely dragged up by one of the hijackers. Thus, the Allendale brothers are discovered. They, too, are dragged roughly to their feet. Both young men struggle ferociously with much grunting and growling, managing to free themselves. Immediately, and just as they are about to be bashed by the hijackers, Toby clicks his fingers.*

Toby *shouts exultantly*    You forgot "Hong Kong"!

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| The Hope/Crosby "Pattacake" Routine. |
|--------------------------------------|

*This confuses the hijackers. Loudly, and in spite of the violence which has been meted out about them, the brothers go into the "Pattacake, pattacake" routine, in the homage to the "Road" movies. The nearest hijacker is confused: he looks about for some kind of re-assurance. Just as a second villain moves in on the brothers, they get to the last words of the routine: "... as fast as you **can**!" With this, the brothers throw strong, telling punches, floor their attackers, and launch themselves into an almighty brawl, with the object of disabling the remaining hijackers.*

The "Pattacake" routine of Bing Crosby and Bob Hope (often used in the "Road" movies) required the men (who were under some kind of duress) to slap their hands on their knees and then on each other's hands as in a children's game. At the final word ("can"), the men would punch the unsuspecting dude who was supposed to be guarding them. It is assumed, therefore, that being devotees of the "Road" movies, the Allendale brothers had actually practised this routine many times in their youth.

### MID-AIR FIGHT.

Several other male passengers join in the scuffle/melee, and after a very exciting stoush, the several would-be bandits are disarmed and securely bound up. They are hauled into a heap, such that all the passengers and crew are able to keep an eye on them. Until the plane lands, these miscreants moan, groan and shout obscenities (in Spanish).

During the fight (in which Toby and Laurence show themselves to be heroic stars), there will be a scary scene actually in the small cockpit, whereby the pilot is almost unable to fly the plane due to the exciting scuffle.

### Danger Now Averted: Congratulations.

Once the hijack situation has been defused and the ripping music dies down to a gentle lull, the air crew try to restore order among the passengers. However, this cannot be completed until all the gents shake hands with each other, offering each other congratulations, as if this had been a Sunday cricket match.

The late combatants      Jolly good ... Well done! ... Marvellous left upper-cut, there ... Yes, thought I was a goner for a moment ... Nasty piece of work that ... Top show ... *[and so on]*

Toby's clothes are ripped. Still, he feels it incumbent upon himself to smooth his hair back. Toby, as an aesthete, would be rather horrified at the brutality of fisticuffs. Yet as a fit, strong young man, he has once again proved himself, and is noticeably proud (in his typical smug way). Laurence is out-of-breath (as are most of the gents), but still laughing. In spite of himself, he has enjoyed the melee. Under direction from a very capable air hostess, the passengers resume their seats.

Toby *suave, urbane*      My favourite "Road" movie was "Road to Morocco". One has to be

impressed with the sight of Bob Hope astride a camel.

Laurence

No. "Utopia" for me.

And speaking of Bob Hope, my golf clubs are in the luggage hold. Pity! I could've clocked these thugs over the mazard with my 9-iron, had I been able to get to it.

Toby *oily, precious*

No, no, no! That would have given the affray a very brutal edge, whereas (in fact) it was elegant, dulcet ...

Laurence *down-to-earth*

Very twee!

At least no-one was killed, which is a minor blessing.

*The babble of conversation continues amongst the other passengers. Toby wears his usual supercilious smirk, whilst Laurence listens-in to the hostess, who is explaining the situation to another seated passenger.*

Hostess

Yes ... We're landing in Karachi in less than 30 minutes: it's our closest airport given our current position. That will enable the British police to come on board. Won't be long now. I do apologize for this dreadful situation. Do you require anything? Coffee? Tea? Aspro?

*The brothers smile dismissively at the hostess. Then Laurence shifts in his seat.*

Laurence *dreamily*

Karachi! West Pakistan ... exotic ... the last days of the British Raj ... damsels dressed in flowing silks ...

Toby *decisive*

Once we land, we'll grab our accoutrements from the baggage counter, and then we might score an American Jeep or some such vehicle. Drive off ...

Or else we may organize a flight to Islamabad.

Decisions, decisions ...

Whatever course we take, it'll be to the wilds of Central Asia.

Laurence *calm, not surprised*

With what object?

*Toby muses, humming slightly. Before he answers his brother, he sucks in a long breath.*

*Toby drawls for effect* Your golf technique needs some work. We'll find a likely range on the steppes on which you may practise. 18 holes. Yes ...

*Laurence raises his eyebrows at that. Both brothers relax back in their seats.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene v:** 1969, Jinnah Airport, Karachi, West Pakistan

*There is always a bustle of travellers at the Jinnah Airport, but when the Allendale brothers land, a phalanx of international press photographers and journalists rush forward, swamping the brothers. The brothers completely ignore the rapid-fire media questions, are seemingly oblivious to the fuss, and shout at each other so as to be heard. The aeroplane is in the background, complete with emergency squads, weeping female passengers and loads of activity. We can even see the sundry desperados being dragged off into waiting police vans. The Allendale brothers are caught in an unseemly sea of gushing media people (media frenzy) and have to fight their way through.*

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| Maria and Toby Are Reunited. |
|------------------------------|

*This is a high-pitched, loud babble of urgent voices as the Press people push and shove the erstwhile passengers. Out of this rabble, Maria emerges: frantic and utterly relieved. She and Toby go into a very passionate embrace, whilst Laurence tries to steer them along.*

*The camera backs off such that we can see the knot of humanity surrounding the brothers and Maria.*



*As the trio scramble into a very beaten-up jeep, Maria Mayhew-Spinks smacks her hand over her mouth. She is horrified.*

Maria                                      But ... Oh, your poor, dear mother.

Laurence *quickly*                      No, no! All cool. Ma's alright. Not on board.

*Toby takes the driver's seat, with Maria beside him. Laurence jumps nimbly into the back seat along with the ragged luggage and the golf clubs.*

Toby                                      Ma wouldn't leave BA. She wants to assure herself that Aunt Margaret is safe and sound before her departure.

Now, where does one drive one's jalopy in this vicinity? Map, Laur?

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene vi:** 1969, Driving in the Wilderness, West Pakistan

*The trio are in the 4-wheel-drive bouncing along. The wind blows, the car's engine is loud and the terrain very uninspiring. Maria is merrily reading aloud from a battered romantic novel.*

*Laurence is rocked about in the back of the vehicle, and he appears to be not much impressed with the literary offering.*

*Toby grins appreciatively as he drives. When the occupants of the car speak, they have to yell, especially Laurence.*

Maria *laughing*                      ... as he dipped his feet into the limpid blue water, he felt that a pair of eyes watched him. His sleek body, naked in the shards of filtered sunlight, glowed burnished bronze as --

*Toby drives on, still grinning.*

Laurence *scathing*                      Peanut!

Maria *very bright,*                      No listen! Listen! He coaxes her (that is, the voluptuous heroine)

*laughing* out of the jungle greenery and she whips off her sarong. Then they spend the next 8 pages "discovering" each other.

Laurence *appalled* Good God!

Toby Is this your latest bodice-ripper?

Maria Yes. I found it in the hotel lobby, abandoned and discarded by a more discerning traveller than my good self. And it was written by one ... um ... Antonia Verest. That will be her *nom-de-plume*, of course.

Laurence Her actual name will no doubt turn out to be Ethel Burns or Shirley Grey.

Toby And this girl who's doing a Peeping Thomasina from behind the tropical foliage ... Is she or isn't she the verger's sister, who is the long-lost fiancée of the Most Reverend Archbishop of York?

Laurence *brightening* Or the love-child of a cabinet minister's grubby liaison with an usherette from Wapping?

Maria *surprised* How on Earth should I know?

*Toby dissolves into loud laughter, tossing back his head. He thus loses control of the car.*

*The car lurches dramatically. It slews about in the rocks, sending the two passengers and driver lurching about. Camera in very close-up as the 4-wheel drive skids about, coming to a dramatic and sudden halt.*

*Plumes of dust waft skyward as the erstwhile occupants of the car pick themselves up from the scenery. They are bloodied, extremely dusty and somewhat frightened.*

Laurence *faint and weak* Have we died? I feel decidedly different.

*Toby merely groans as the two brothers survey the damage. Toby kicks stones and rocks out of the way.*

*The following speeches are delivered as gunfire rapport, such that each speech almost overlaps the next.*

Maria *voice rising to hysteria* You bilge! You gut-fart-melon-turd! You foul, sour-faced toad! My mother **warned** me not to go within 12 yards of you!

Toby *firing-up* Nobody asked you to come to the airport.

Maria *shouting in insulting tone* You ham! You jelly! What a sack of useless stink --  
You are the most limp excuse for a man!

Toby *sneering* "Limpest", darling. Have you forgotten your basic English principles?

Maria *seething and gasping for breath* Now what on Earth are we to do, oh wise and omniscient one?  
How can we get home from this far-flung outpost of the Middle East?

Toby *drawls* I for one intend to encourage *mon cher frère* to practise his golf swing, as was my intention all along.

*With that, Toby makes a show of locating the golf bag and dusting it off.*

Maria *hopelessly enraged* Meanwhile, you and me and your prat of a brother will **die** in this death-trap hell hole from want of sustenance. But that's okay! At least he'll have a well-tuned golf swing!

*Laurence is very surprised to be included in Maria's diatribe.*

Laurence Me? What?

*Maria squeals in a foot-stamping tantrum, then she starts to chuck rocks at Toby, who now has the golf-bag slung over his shoulder. Toby simply moves slightly from side-to-side to dodge these missiles (Maria squeals with each throw). Laurence is concerned at Maria's white rage: concerned that Toby will be hurt. He edges forward, only to have Maria chuck rocks at him, too.*

Laurence *dodging about, affronted* Hi there! Be careful where you shy those things, Maria! They might very likely hit me.

Toby *amused* She's not that good a shot, Laurie!

Maria *completely out of control* Shut the fuck up, you pathetic moron!

Laurence *horrified* Steady on, there! Language!

Maria *contemptuous* Donnie Summerton is looking like a very attractive hot property right now.

*Maria (sobbing as she speaks unintelligibly) is now pelting the ground with rocks, for she is so far gone in her temper tantrum that she is indiscriminately throwing the rocks at unseen targets of her own. This allows both brothers to visibly relax.*

Laurence *concerned* Why ... Why don't you stop her ... or calm her down ... or something ...

Toby *urbane* No need. She'll peter out. Like one of those skyrocket fireworks thingummies.

*[Smug and self-absorbed]*

You'll notice that I've maintained my stoicism during the entirety of Maria's shooting match. Rather proud of myself, all in all.

Come on! Let's get out the pings and have some fun.

*Laurence and Toby mess about with the golf clubs. They even manage a couple of long shots.*

*Meanwhile, Maria flounces off, still obviously upset. The dust has settled on her tear-stained face, giving her a woebegone appearance.*

|                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| The Caravan On The Old Silk Road. |
|-----------------------------------|

*As she stands at some distance from the brothers, a golf ball whizzes by her, overhead. She watches it land. Moving slowly forward, Maria pulls up: she stares into the distance, mouth agape. The Old Silk Road caravan comes into view, and she can just make it out from where she stands. She stares at the approaching panoply in extreme disbelief.*

Maria *harsh whisper* The sort of caravan which plied the Old Spice Route ... Coming towards me ...

Laurence was right, it seems. I must have died and gone to Heaven. There can't be any other explanation. Not possible ...

END OF SCENE



### CATCHING OUR BREATH and COLLECTING OUR THOUGHTS

At this juncture, we are going to use the ploy of an old Medieval book, whereby an amorphous hand turns each page for us. This ploy was often used in Hollywood films of the 1930's, whereby the cast members and other titles were depicted as being written-up on the pages.

As each page turns, there will be short grab depicting the matter described on the page. This will be visual only: no conversation, except as mime. This will be a neat method of collecting all the various threads such that we can pleasantly "overview" where everyone is right now.

### "FOR ALL THE SAINTS"

*[Refer ACT III, scene ii: Raine's first speech]*

Our grand finale will be the wedding of Raine Allendale and Lord Christopher Anstey at St Paul's Cathedral. There will be so much going on during the actual wedding, with many scenes being ultra-brief and action-packed, that the singing of "For All The Saints" would prove distracting. But here, with pictorials rounding-up the several characters, the hymn would be perfect.

So, to expedite this, I've abstracted the hymn from the actual wedding ceremony and shoved it in here, as a final rehearsal with a week to go. These scenes/"pages" can be abridged or stretched-out as required to fit the singing of the hymn. If the latter (vis stretched-out), then the obvious ploy will be to add some sumptuous organ music in between the verses.

### INTERLUDE: 1969, Choir Practice, St Paul's Cathedral

*The choir master conducts the St Paul's Choristers for the final notes of something classical.*

*The members of the choir shift about restlessly, as the choir master shuffles about with his music. The organ music grinds to a halt.*

Choirmaster *looking up* Yes ... that was rather well done, people. Let's run through the  
from his papers saints thingy one last time before Saturday.

*The choirmaster raises his arms, ensuring that every eye is focused on his baton.*

Choirmaster *loudly to* Thanks, Dean. We'll work the saints hymn. Forte. Lots of bravura.

*the organist*                      Okay.

*The superb organ bursts forth, and the choir bursts into voice.*

|                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. For all the saints, who from their labours rest,<br>Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,<br>Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blessed.<br>Alleluia, Alleluia!                        | 5. And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,<br>Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,<br>And hearts are brave, again, and arms are strong.<br>Alleluia, Alleluia!          |
| 2. Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress and their Might;<br>Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well fought fight;<br>Thou, in the darkness drear, their one true Light.<br>Alleluia, Alleluia! | 6. The golden evening brightens in the west;<br>Soon, soon to faithful warriors comes their rest;<br>Sweet is the calm of paradise the blessed.<br>Alleluia, Alleluia!                  |
| 3. O blest communion, fellowship divine!<br>We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;<br>All are one in Thee, for all are Thine.<br>Alleluia, Alleluia!                                       | 7. But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;<br>The saints triumphant rise in bright array;<br>The King of glory passes on His way.<br>Alleluia, Alleluia!                          |
| 4. O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true and bold,<br>Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,<br>And win with them the victor's crown of gold.<br>Alleluia, Alleluia!                      | 8. From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,<br>Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,<br>And singing to Father, Son and Holy Ghost:<br>Alleluia, Alleluia! |

*Be advised that once the practice of "For All The Saints" has begun, the voices will be in the background, as we work through the "Overview" book (with its matching filmic episodes).*

| Words on the page of the filmed book                        | Matching filmed episode                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The wedding of the year is just one week away</b><br>... | Helene, Tess and Fiona are gushingly happy as Raine models her wedding gown for them. The ladies are surrounded by all manner of garments, which hang from windows, architraves, light fittings and over the backs of chairs. |
| <b>Julian Beaversnade wends his way about the</b>           | Beaversnade along with a troop of weary                                                                                                                                                                                       |

|                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>English countryside.</b>                                                          | servants is seen to be harried out of another English inn. A furious innkeeper shakes his fist at the hapless alchemist as he departs in no good order. Billowing smoke can be seen in the background, along with a mob of inn servants fighting a fire.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>The several members of the Old Silk Road caravan trudge relentlessly onwards.</b> | Marco Polo is entertaining a merry group of people in a tent (Jack, Sophie, Maglia, Holly, Gordon, George, William, Gandore, Eleesha and sundry others) with a very amusing charade. Jack is red-faced as tears stream down his face. Holly and Gordon lean against each other, helpless with laughter. George and William roll off their stools onto the Persian rug, almost unable to breathe through their exuberant mirth. |
| <b>Our lovely bride acquaints herself with her soon-to-be brother-in-law.</b>        | Raine is in bed, making passionate love with a naval officer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Roger's wife, Judith, wings her way back to her loved ones ...</b>                | Judith is in an aeroplane, flying back to England, with a cocktail held between her fingers. She seems absurdly happy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>It is considered advisable for young warriors to practise their art.</b>          | Hidden and camouflaged, William, George and Marco are seen to try and shoot an apple from atop a nervous elephant's head with blunt arrows. Marco leaps about with excitement; the Pendlebury brothers are not impressed.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Francis dines comfortably with his stepdaughter.</b>                              | Anguella and Francis are dining out in B. A. They are apparently in the middle of a very heated argument. Francis then sits with head in hands, and Anguella seems to be berating him, as she slams her napkin angrily on the table.                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The wedding preparations continue.</b>                                                        | Fiona, Tess and Helene sit about a table at Segler's Landing, making lists and drinking tea.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>More correspondence arrives “par avian”</b>                                                   | Sir Lentock sticks small pieces of ripped-up paper into a large serving of bombe Alaska. He is chatting amiably with Desmond, who stands before Sir Lentock’s desk bearing a carrier pigeon on his arm. Then Sir Lentock begins to eat the paper-laden dessert.    |
| <b>Raine, a radiant bride, receives even more wedding presents</b>                               | Raine is in a passionate, steamy embrace with a slim actor, in the bowels of the National Theatre.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>The caravan meanders along, across West Pakistan</b>                                          | Long, long, high shot of Maria, Toby and Laurence staring down from their vantage point at the slow approach of the Old Silk Road caravan. It is evident that the caravan is heading towards its next stop: nearby, a small fort forming part of a high rock face. |
| <b>Margaret, the long-lost sister of Holly and Roger, enjoys wedded bliss in South Australia</b> | Margaret Allendale has been married to Albert Pitch since her mysterious disappearance at the end of Film #1. The pair, arm-in-arm, wander along beside a beautiful sunlit riverbank.                                                                              |
| <b>Jack Bradley finds enjoyment in a strong cup of tea.</b>                                      | Jack is standing in Gandore’s tent. Jack goes to take a sip of his tea but instead places the beaker on a nearby table. Then he holds Sophie’s shoulders, and goes in for a passionate kiss.                                                                       |

*The hymn finishes. The last strains of the organ music wind up. There is a delightful silence.*

*The choirmaster lowers his hands and grins at the choristers.*

Choirmaster

Lovely! Well-done!

END OF SCENE

**IV, Scene vii:** The Old Silk Road, The Caravan, In A Dark, Private Spot

*Music: soft romantic.*

*Jack and Sophie are hidden in a private corner of someone's tent, sitting on a pile of large, silken cushions. They are embracing, with long kisses. They break apart to look at each in tender affection.*

Jack *tenderly*                      We're goin' back to PommieLand in a few secs. Come with us!

Sophie *businesslike*              There's no time to think of ourselves. I ought to be getting on with my work.

*Jack holds her closer, murmuring his dissent to her reasonable reservations. Sophie pushes him back.*

Sophie                              No, no, Jacob. Gandore's dreadful daughter must be watched like a hawk. She will soon appear, so the seer predicts. All manner of mayhem visits the caravan when she arrives. Her and that bunch of thugs she keeps by her. "Durawarriors" they are called.

Jack                                 You'd be safe with me in 1969. We'll have a bewt time, you and me.

Sophie *forceful*                      This is Gandore's enterprise and my sworn task is to protect it. So let it be. You and I Jacob are nothing to this. I'm serious! Gandore's daughter will ruin us all, so malevolent is she.

I love you Jacob with every inch of my being. But we are prevented by Fate from plighting our troth.

*Jack burrows into her breast whilst she takes on a noble, self-denying aspect. It is all getting entirely maudlin, when Gandore's sharp voice breaks into the scene, from off-camera.*

Gandore *off-camera*              Jack! Come quickly. I need you!

*Of a sudden, lightning flashes with a crack of thunder to follow. The wind whips up. Jack and Sophie stand, holding onto each other. They appear to be worried by this very sudden weather change.*

*Gandore calls to Jack several times, his voice urgent, demanding.*

SEGUE TO NEXT SCENE

#### **IV, Scene viii:** The Old Silk Road, Caring for the Animals

*Sophie has left Jack as she tries to comfort the animals (elephants, camels and horses) that are being spooked by the advancing storm. William and Marco help her.*

*Then Marco notices some strange moving shapes out in the distance. Sophie follows his gaze and nods sadly.*

Sophie                                      Yes I thought it would come to this ... Gandore's vixen daughter Trahilai has returned to make our lives a nightmare. Those men with her are her mercenaries. So callous is she that no man will protect her without he receives large payment.

*Marco's eyes light up. He jabbars incoherently as he performs a complicated mime.*

William *excited*                              Marco has a great idea. We'll lie in wait and then take the mercenaries out of commission by nobbling their horses. Wizard!

*Despite Sophie calling to the boys not to be foolhardy, they have dashed off into the gloom. The elephants have been moved, and they trumpet in terror at the smell of fire and at the sound and fury of storm and battle. Several terrified women attempt to soothe the huge beasts.*

END OF SCENE

#### **IV, Scene viii:** The Old Silk Road, Gandore's Tent During A Fierce Storm

**This scene must be wildly evocative: a focal point of the entire film.**

Everything melds into one stupefying scene.

Except for William, all the Englishmen will witness Gandore create gold.

The climax will involve the destruction of the Gandore's tent.

His cauldron will tip over in the midst of pouring rain, revealing the lumps of bright gold which Gandore has fabricated.

Gandore's daughter Trahilai will be the driving force in the mayhem which Sophie has predicted.

*Jack quickly moves to the tent where Gandore has been studying astrological charts and consulting the auspices. Gandore's fire roars as various items are added to the brew in the cauldron. There is an array of different sized pots, boxes, and glasses: all of these contain all kinds of weird and wonderful substances (some alive!).*

*Gandore is extremely excited. Gandore turns to Jack, jumping up and grabbing him by the arms.*

Gandore *eager*                      Tonight will be the ideal time to make the gold. I know this for a fact. The heavenly signs dictate it. Mars in transit! The moon in Pleiades!

*Jack looks uncertain.*

Gandore *insistent*                Princess Ilex brought me the proof that I shall succeed.

*Jack scratches his head as Gandore rushes about, finding various interesting items, and chucking them into the cauldron.*

Jack *concerned*                    It's gettin' a bit blowy. Maybe leave it 'til tomorrer, eh?

*Another fork of lightning startles Jack. However, Gandore appears to be relishing the severity of the weather. Gandore raises his fists at the same time as a full-blown roar of thunder rumbles through the tent (causing Jack to flinch). Gandore bellows out his delight. Strange-coloured spirals of smoke rise ominously from the now bubbling concoction in the cauldron.*

Gandore *triumphant*              Princess Ilex described just such a night. Fierce and grand spectral events. She vowed that I would find myself thrashed about. She is a veritable goddess. Be assured of that, Jack.

And you will act as my protector when the gold forms in my brew. They will come for my gold with their flashing green eyes, but you

will stop them in their tracks.

*Jack is busy rescuing all manner of items which appear to be about to blow away. The very sides of the tent rise up.*

Jack *shaking head*      I'll guard you as best I can ... but ...

*Gandore stretches up his arms.*

Gandore *calling to the Heavens*      Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Rulers, Archangels and Angels. Rejoice! Rejoice!

Jack *frustrated*      Come on, mate, or I'm gonna have to do somethink drastic. Come on, Gandore, that's *it* for this evening, I'd say.

*Gandore ignores Jack as he tears about grabbing more ingredients for his brew. George appears, assisting Jack to minimize the storm damage.*

*The music, lightning, thunder and wind rise in intensity. Gandore is now living the dream: he is at one with Nature and the Spirit world. The last of the ingredients which he must add to the cauldron fill his arms. He adds a pinch of this and a slurp of that, shoving the various elements which he has finished with back in the general direction of Jack, who is totally frazzled.*

*[NB Gandore has inadvertently forgotten one ingredient due to Beaversnade's oversight.]*

Gandore *roaring over the wind*      Galenicals physick, as were known to the Pharaohs of Egypt, ground sea-shells, spider webs, snake and scorpion venom, wolf semen, clay, the piss of dogs, dung of bulls, and the gall of them.

Ha-ha, friend Jack! Princess Ilex has given me the key!

Egg-whites, verdigris, powder of talc, moonwort, chalk, quicklime, slaked ashes, the herb valerian, agrimony, orpiment, mercury sublimate, lead protoxide, ground porphyry, Armenian clay, borax, arsenic, brimstone, sal ammoniac, saltpetre, vitriol, and even splinters from St Peter's cross.

Boil! Fester! Imbue!





*In what is left of Gandore's tent Jack and George stoke the cauldron fire with stout pieces of wood. Gandore prods and stirs the cauldron's contents. Gandore's daughter Trahilai has marched in with three of her Durawarriors behind her. At their rear come two scouts who normally help Sophie protect the caravan. They address Trahilai, not Gandore.*

Scout #1                      The representatives are here. They await you without. Two men and a woman. One of the men is called Sondez. That is the one you want, no?

*Scout #2 indicates the bag of golf clubs.*

Scout #2                      They carry these strange weapons. And six stout leather pouches full of uncut diamonds, Your Highness.

*Trahilai nods. She is absorbed in watching her father.*

Trahilai                      Have them in.

*The two scouts absent themselves. Trahilai speaks to Gandore in an urgent undertone.*

Trahilai                      Hurry up with that brew, Father. The diamonds are here. The swap must be made.

Gandore                      I don't know anything about diamonds.

Trahilai *urgent*              You can make gold (one believes), but you will never be able to make diamonds. There is more wealth than you can envisage – diamonds! All that I need from you then is the gold itself.

Gandore                      And this I shall do! I shall be the first Alchemist to --

Trahilai *impatient*              For pity's sake **when?**

Gandore *shrugs*                It comes when it comes, dear.

Trahilai *savage whisper*      Make it come faster than that!

*As Toby and Laurence are shepherded into the tent, George wants to call out to them. However, Jack realizes that the situation is dangerous. He touches George's arm and shakes his head.*

Jack *whisper*                Say nothing. They are unknown to you.

*The wind rips at the sides of Gandore's tent. The thunder and lightning are strong. The following speeches must be loud to allow for the bitter weather. Trahilai turns to Toby and Laurence, her face glowing with an attempt to smile.*

Trahilai *bullshitting*      My noble Father is only moments from creating pure gold from the depths of his cauldron. Do you care to be taken to a more secluded place where you may be revived with refreshment?

*Toby affects the haughty demeanour of a Spanish nobleman. When he speaks it is with a Spanish accent.*

Toby *imitates Sondez*      No, no! Please continue with the experiment. I am more than fascinated with the Alchemist's art.



*After about 10 minutes, Trahilai's patience is in shreds. The storm rages much stronger. Most of Gandore's tent is destroyed. The fire under his cauldron hisses and sputters. Gandore weeps at his frustrated efforts as they seem to dissolve into further failure. To escape his daughter's retribution, he will blame Holly for the unco-operative brew.*

*Gordon appears. He runs to George whose hair he ruffles.*

Gordon *shouts*      George! Your mother – I can't find her!

*Before George is able to answer, Gandore calls out.*

Gandore      Late! Late! I sent the beauteous Princess Ilex back to our provider Beaversnade. Just one last ingredient missing. She will come ... Mayhap it will be all too late ...

Trahilai *angry*      You should have checked when she first swanned into our camp. A mere velvet purse! The goods were better carted in a duffel bag. No wonder the silly poultice forgot the vital ingredients.

Gandore *shakes head*      The sad Princess was not up to the task, that is all. Empty-headed and woolly-brained.

*George is fired up due to the slight on his mother from both Trahilai and Gandore.*

George *angry* Don't you dare speak of my beloved Mother like that. I don't care how high and mighty you both are.

MAYHEM AND FIGHT.

*Out of nothing a huge melee erupts involving Jack, Gordon, George, Toby and Laurence (all unarmed) against the well-armed Durawarriors who all wear heavy armour. Backup Durawarriors suddenly appear.*



*Gandore pushes on with his attempts to create gold.*

*The Englishmen fought valiantly. Without weapons, they were easily overpowered. Gordon and George are now chained by the wrists, as they stand back to back around an iron pole. To the side, Jack, Toby and Laurence have been chained together, gagged and bashed. They grit their teeth as they writhe about in a vain effort to get free. The bodies and especially the faces of Gordon and George show signs of cruel mistreatment. They are dirty and unkempt. Flambeaux dance in the storm providing the only light.*

George and Gordon Bravely Face Death.

*Trahilai is apoplectic. She strides about in a fine temper. The fierce wind, lightning and thunder only appear to fan her rage. She takes a heavy sword as provided by one of her Durawarriors and prepares to torture Gordon and George.*

George *voice breaking* Dad! This time it's for real ... we're goners for sure! Oh God! What can we do?

Gordon *in agony, shouts* Courage, George! We both know that our deaths will be quick. I love you George, with all my heart.

George *trying to* I love you, too, Dad. You're so ace! Oh God!

*master his sobs*

*The sound of the large sword being extracted from its scabbard is heard. Dramatically, Gordon and George prepare for their end. Trahilai speaks in a low voice.*

Trahilai *venomous*      Do you not understand or are you so stupid that I need to draw the situation for you in the sand?

To obtain more diamonds I need the gold.

For my Father to produce the gold, he needs Princess Ilex.

So summon your wife, your mother ... this is your last chance. Get her to me or die. I shall waste no more time on you.

Gordon *utter despair, head hanging low*      Just get it over with, will you? Just end it ... for pity's sake ...

Trahilai *furious*      Where is your wife? Where is Ilex? I want her **now!**

*As Trahilai lifts her large sword in order to kill George, rocks begin pelting into her back. Trahilai screams in pain. She is wounded.*

|                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Maria is Magnificent &amp; Holly is Superb</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------|

*The camera swings around 180 degrees, taking in the shocked and startled faces of the many Durawarriors, along with Jack, Toby, Laurence, Gordon and George. They all look towards a high rock ledge where Maria stands like some ancient Goddess of Fate: feisty and ready for action. She is dressed in a skin-tight action heroine costume. A couple of the Durawarriors rush towards her but are forced to withdraw as more rocks rain down on them.*

Maria *to Trahilai*      No you don't, Chickiebabe. Diamonds are a complete waste of time. For some months now, I've possessed a most emphatic diamond solitaire on an interesting finger, and trust me, lady! It's brought me nothing but beastly botheration. It's a tosser!

*Toby groans. All the English males are gobsmacked.*

George *in awe* That's Maria Mayhew-Spinks. But ... Toby ... I thought it was all washed-up between them ...

Gordon *also awestruck* Toby's on-again-off-again girlfriend? From the cottage?

George Yeah ... wow! She's amazing!

*George brightens perceptibly.*

*Maria maintains her vantage point, with large rocks gripped in her hands. A spear is thrown at her. This she deftly dodges.*

Maria *utterly cheesed-off* So, my aim is less than ordinary, according to the all-knowing, all-seeing Mr Toby Allendale, huh? Okay! I'll give anyone who's up for it a dose of my proficiency at rounders. Come on, then ... bring it on!

*Maria continues to throw rock after rock with seeming endless energy at the astounded group below. Every one of her rocks smashes its intended victim. On the other hand, not one of her rocks harms any of the Englishmen in any way. Gandore (remember that Trahilai is his daughter) dithers helplessly, unsure what action to take. He wants to aid his daughter – he wants to tend to the cauldron.*

*Holly zaps into view. She immediately begins to sprinkle the treblewort tea leaves onto the lacklustre soup which simmers in the cauldron. Exactly at that moment, a blast of lightning zeroes in on the wooden fire under the cauldron. It springs back to life.*

Gandore *overwhelmed* My Ilex! The brew – it finds its spark! Hope is renewed!

*Gandore quickly stokes the fire by adding more bits of wood. Then he and Holly (as she speaks) untie the binds on Jack, Toby and Laurence, then Gordon and George. All this while Maria rains rocks on any unfettered assailants. As Holly speaks, several of the freed Englishmen hug and kiss her (as appropriate).*

Holly Oh! That beastly Beaversnade is such an overrated nincompoop. A regular danger to sanity.

He forgot all about the treblewort tea. It seems that it is unknown to the wider world except for those who live at his cottage at Morton in Marsh. He has not only blown up *that* cottage but also

all of his supplies which were in the cherry wood chest. To get just this small amount of tea I had to hawk a lift with a gnarled farming man, sitting in his dray like any maid on a Sunday jaunt. Lots of fun (Morton in Marsh is unbelievably pretty) but that's why I'm so late.

*As the Englishmen are freed, they truss-up the stunned Durawarriors, removing sundry weapons as they go. Jack hauls Trahilai to her feet, binds her hands behind her with thick chains and gags her immediately. Jack looks about, shrugging – eager to explain this action.*

Jack                                      I'm not very good with female pleading ... Best not to hear her ...

*Maria stands like some triumphant Juno, arms akimbo, legs apart.*

Maria *unemotional*                      Diamonds, my dear girl, are **completely** overrated.

And not worth dying for.

If you feel like slapping her up, Jack, be my guest!

*Jack declines this invitation as George rushes up to Maria, taking her in his arms to kiss her. But Toby gently pushes his cousin out of the way.*

Toby *smiling*                              You are magnificent my Sweet. If anyone is going to kiss you, it shall be me, myself and I.

*It is now Toby who embraces Maria.*

George *worshipful*                      She saved our lives! I was a complete goner if she hadn't started -  
-

*Meanwhile the cauldron has tipped over as it boils furiously. Huge chunks of gold glimmer amid the grey soup spilling all over the ground. Using any implements available, Maria and the Englishmen gather the hot gold, wrapping it in rags made from the remains of Gandore's tent. Gandore himself is completely overcome by emotion.*

Holly *in command*                      Gandore: sit down and recover yourself. Your triumph is overpowering you. I can see that.

Now! Toby: golf clubs. Laurence, Gordon, George: gold and diamonds. Here's the velvet bag. Stick as much as you can in here. The rest can go in with the golf clubs. Maria – you look

unbelievably beautiful. You've done more than enough. Let's get ourselves back to the Cathedral before the all-important wedding takes off without us.

William? Where are you?

*William bursts upon them.*

William *exuberant* Our blowpipes worked brilliantly! Marco and I ...

We did the best we could to keep the Dura-thingies away. A couple broke through. Oh! You've got them. Good!

*From her sash Holly extracts the vial which Beaversnade had given to her. Holly holds out her other hand to Gordon (who is sharing the job of carrying the diamond haul with the other men). He takes it, kissing the back of his wife's hand. The English folk hold hands in a circle: William, George, Gordon, Laurence, Holly, Jack and finally Toby (golf clubs slung over his shoulder) and Maria. Jack looks askance at Toby.*

Jack *displeased* This "holding-hands" shit is a bit poofy, doncha think?

Toby *imitating Jack* Best we got, mate.

*Without pause, Holly drinks the contents of the vial.*

William *shouts urgently* Marco! We forgot Marco! Mum, not yet ... wait for Marco!

## **BLACKNESS, THE SCREEN IS TOTALLY BLACK**

*We hear the sound of a male sob.*

William *whispers voice-off* Mum, Jack's crying.

Holly *softly voice-off* Shoosh! He'll get over it. Just leave him alone for now ...

*There is no music. Only a soft whooshing sound can be heard.*

END OF SCENE

## Reprise of Prologue – Narrative as Entr'acte

*Again, this is a misty, mystical "camera-walk-through" of Gandore's tent, with voice-over, as was the case in the Prologue and other Entr'actes. We see Gandore's battered tent, with all his ingredients scattered about in disarray. His two ravens fly off, and the camera follows them. They alight on a rock ledge where Gandore's body lays. Eleesha lies nearby, sobbing.*

*This scene then morphs into a rocky clearing in a medieval forest.*

*As before, it is not clear whether the three actors are men or women. They are heavily robed and appear in silhouette, acting in mime to reflect the narrator's words.*

*The music is suitably mysterious, portentous and superb.*

Narrative *voice-off*      Oh! Injured soul, neither anointed nor blest, but perjured 'fore  
Gus Cassius                  God. Vile deed.

He that left the other two to guard the treasure bethought him of taking the booty all for himself alone. The bottle of wine which he carried back to his rollicking companions did he adulterate with polecat poison, supplied by the apothecary.

He would (he schemed) beg his friends to partake of the thirst-quenching wine. Then would there be no need to divide the treasure. 'Twould all be his.

*A lone flute plays mournfully.*

Narrative *voice-off*      But when this third man did return, the other two carried out their  
Gus Cassius                  plan to murder their erstwhile friend with savage stabbing knives.

"It's ours! It's ours!"

These two foul murdering rogues slapped their legs and laughed. How clever they had been.

Kicking aside the body of their late companion whom they had robbed of life, they each watched the other as they ate from the provender in the sack. They ate and smirked over their ill-gotten



meal.

But they eyed each other, withal ... Without trust ...

END OF INTERLUDE

END OF ACT IV



## ACT V

**V, Scene i:** Late 1969, St Paul's Cathedral, London. General View.

*Raine Allendale is marrying Lord Anstey in the Anglican Chapel of St Paul's Cathedral, London.*

*On a glorious day in early Winter, the cathedral bells chime merrily. Overhead shot of the environs of St Pauls are seen in sumptuous colour. There are deliverymen and attendants darting about at ground level: there is a great deal of activity required to ready-up the cathedral.*

SEGUE INTO NEXT SCENE

**V, Scene ii:** Late 1969, St Paul's Cathedral, The Vestry.

*Helene and Fiona are arranging flowers in the vestry in which the Marriage Certificate will be signed. Fiona and her mother are dressed in readiness for the ceremony (with addition of aprons). Fiona (in smart clothes, makeup and with her hair coiffed) is a total vision of loveliness.*

*The chiming bells still peal overhead without being annoying. Fiona glances towards her mother.*

Fiona *brisk*                      They'll be here. From wherever the Hell they are – they'll be here.

*Helene sighs as she looks at her wristwatch.*

Helene *sadly* Two hours to go until blast-off.  
*[Gives a frustrated "Tsk!"]*  
This a right royal disaster, Pet. Oh, what am I to do?

Fiona *stoic* Soon be over and then we can return to normal (whatever that is).

Helene *thin-lipped* What makes me cross is that this should be **your** wedding and not hers.  
  
Why, you're every bit as witty and charming as Miss Allendale.  
And much prettier, and more talented to boot.  
  
Raine's nothing next to you.  
  
Look at you! Any man would jump at the chance of being your husband. You should be fighting them back.

Fiona Putting all that aside, Mum (and much thanks for saying it), we really have to pull it together. This Allendale/Anstey union, I mean. With most of the Allendale clan *in absentia*, the preponderance of official bride-helpers will be Buxtons. Quite an honour. But ... bit scary.

*Fiona gives a sham shiver. Helene continues with her flowers; but she is unhappy.*

Fiona If it's any consolation, Mum, the bride won't realize the lack of brothers, cousins, mother, two aunts and a stray uncle. And more power to her on the strength of it! Ignorance being bliss, and all that.

*Helene is close to falling in a heap. Fiona realizes that Helene is past it. Fiona gives her Mother's shoulders a quick hug.*

Fiona I'm going to shoot off to another part of the Cathedral to fetch you a hot cup of tea. Nothing better to cheer you up when you're down. Just wait here!

END OF SCENE

### **V, Scene iii:** Late 1969, Another Part of St Paul's Cathedral, London.

*We first visited this precinct in ACT II, Scene iv. When the Buxton/Allendale ladies sauntered about St Paul's many weeks previously, they chanced upon the grave of Julian Beaversnade. It is in that same location that this scene develops.*

|                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sir Lentock and Desmond Wander About in St Pauls Cathedral. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|

*Sir Lentock Broughborough and his aide Desmond Grantley (two of the wedding guests dressed correctly in morning suits) have decided to while-away a spare half-hour in these precincts of St Paul's cathedral. They chance upon the following scene (the arrivals of the time travellers). They stand about making erudite comments as a small crowd of goggle-eyed spectators gradually gathers.*

|                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|
| The Several Travellers Return To St Pauls. |
|--------------------------------------------|

*Suddenly (as if by magic) Holly appears next to Beaversnade's grave. She is still dressed in her fabulous Elizabethan gown. However, she seems unaware of the interested crowd gathering about her.*

*Toby and Maria land right next to where Holly landed. Maria is arrayed in her action heroine costume; Toby is still wearing his ripped suit. Maria carries the velvet bag formerly carried about by Holly.*

|                        |                                                                                                          |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maria <i>amazed</i>    | Wow! We seem to have landed in St Pauls. Incredible!                                                     |
| Toby <i>lovingly</i>   | To the wedding of the season. And after it? Will it be back to Donnie Summerton – your erstwhile suitor? |
| Maria <i>smirking</i>  | Who's he? Never heard of him!                                                                            |
| Toby <i>engagingly</i> | Have me instead? I'm asking you to marry me, you know.                                                   |
|                        | <i>[Shrugs]</i>                                                                                          |
|                        | Guess it's the only way I can get back my pretty cottage.                                                |

*Maria nods shyly. The happy pair go into a passionate embrace. Again, they are completely unaware that they are the centre of a fast-gathering crowd.*

*The crowd lets out an approving "Oh!" Still the couple are unaware. Holly heads for the vestry where she believes that she will find Helene.*

*Desmond points to the Toby/Maria clinch, gasping. He is completely surprised.*

Desmond Grantley        Sir Lentock! Look who has just --

Sir Lentock *delighted*    A historical re-enactment, Desmond. How very droll! This is no doubt a valiant attempt by the Cathedral's Trust to enliven our interaction between History and Tourism.

Desmond Grantley        But Sir! Surely that's --

*Sir Lentock raises his voice such that Desmond gets the idea that he is not to take his observations any further. Sir Lentock claps appreciatively as the lovers continue to kiss.*

Sir Lentock                A theatrical triumph! Where more fitting than in the Cathedral of St Paul? Let the bells ring!

Desmond Grantley        I see, Sir. You mean "Bread and Circuses", Sir Lentock.  
*chastened*

Sir Lentock *nods*            Precisely.

*A whooshing sound is heard. Laurence lands with William and George beside him. The Pendlebury brothers are still arrayed in Central Asian attire, having provided themselves with weapons: kukhri, machete and baselard. They immediately adopt warrior poses, relaxing on the realization that they had made it to St Pauls. However, their unorthodox and sudden appearance, along with their aggressive demeanour causes the crowd to gasp in fright. They stow the weapons in their waistbands. Laurence is dressed as he was in the hijacked plane.*

*Sir Lentock applauds enthusiastically. Desmond joins the applause to be polite.*

Sir Lentock *thoughtful*    Graves don't do much. Their occupants have by now turned to dust, and as such have little theatrical worth. By mounting these delightful cameos our dry-as-ditchwater scene is transformed at once into a precious, living memory.

*Now Jack Bradley (in his Ottoman rigout) lands in a heap but jumps to his feet immediately. He is holding his ghastly wig (rather than wearing it). Out of breath, he calls out.*

Jack *shouts* Does anybody know where we are?

Sir Lentock Ah! Another face we recognise, Desmond. This is turning out to be a *tour de force* indeed!

*Fiona rushes up as she wends her way to some place where she may snaffle a cup of tea for her flagging mother. Fiona immediately finds herself face-to-face with Jack Bradley dressed in his Ottoman get up. Jack incorrectly recognizes Fiona as his beloved Sophie. But that seems to matter not a jot.*

Jack *shame-faced* Ahhhh ... I'm wondering if a lovely lady --

*Jack is transfixed by the site of Fiona, who is in turn very impressed by this hunk of manhood.*

Fiona Excuse me. I'm going for a cup of tea.

Jack If a lovely lady dressed in a kind of Elizabethan garb, sort of ... ah ... "landed" in this ... ah ...

*Jack drags a hand through his hair. Fiona is doubtful.*

Jack Fee! They told me that you couldn't ... But here you are!

*Jack is lost. He looks at his startled fellow-travellers and then back to the equally startled Fiona. He lets out a long, long sigh.*

Jack *smiling shyly* It's been ripping my heart out of my ribcage: thinking that you was not coming back. And I ... Is it okay if I kiss you?

*Jack does not await permission but simply takes Fiona in a very thorough and loving embrace. They are busy kissing. Fiona offers zero resistance. More applause is heard from the crowd.*

Sir Lentock *smiling* Ah! The theme of matrimony looms large today. Excellent!

*Holly rushes back to this area, accompanied by a harassed Helene. Holly claps several times briskly.*

Holly *managing* Alright everyone! Malcolm Buxton is rushing over to Segler's to grab our clothes, shoes and so on. Then he'll bring them here. So: males to the vestry for changing. William? George? Where's your father?

*There is another whoosh. Gordon can be heard to groan and swear.*

Holly *managing*                    Good! Boys go with Laurence and grab your father. Then to the Vestry – you'll see signs. It's easy to find. Toby?

William *laughing*                He's here. He and Maria are doing **that** –  
*[Here, William points pointedly at Toby and Maria]*

And Jack and Fiona are doing the same.

*[Here, William points pointedly at Jack and Fiona]*

So it's going on all around us. Can't escape from the blighters.

Holly *managing*                Jack! Toby! Break up the snogging sessions. Time enough for that later. Oh, Fiona – you look absolutely lovely. Just tidy up your lipstick and you'll be fine.

Maria – you and I are the only females. There's a nice little bridal room opposite the Vestry. We shall snaffle that, shall we?

*With that, the time travellers move away to the delighted applause of the gathered crowd (the members of which disperse now).*

Sir Lentock                        Congratulations to the brainpower behind this stunt. Quite a coup!

Desmond                          You mean that the sightseers might give more generously to the Cathedral Fund if the entertainment value is high?

Sir Lentock                        Of course. And to prove a point, I'll donate a fiver on our way out.

Desmond                          Yes. I'll join you. It was all so ... er ... edifying.

Sir Lentock                        Quite. And on several fronts ...

*Sir Lentock looks about, finger to lips, humming thoughtfully. Then he stops, touching Desmond Grantley on the chest with the tips of his fingers.*

Sir Lentock *carefully*            Do you know, Grantley, that there is a certain "something" which will unfold this afternoon, even in the hallowed precincts of St Paul's Cathedral.

Desmond *grim*                    It's not going to be a "dirge in marriage" scenario? I can't bear the

thought of comforting weeping females. One has one's standards to uphold, Sir.

Sir Lentock                      We might have just a *soupçon* of dirge, Mr Grantley. And one or two maudlin tears, perhaps ...

Desmond *down-to-earth*                      My gut-feeling is that the wedding ceremony will progress with military precision, Sir Lentock.

Sir Lentock *sly*                      We shall see ... Your "gut" may be right. It all hangs on a certain chap from the Antipodes named ... er ... Jack Bradley.

*Desmond raises his eyebrows. Sir Lentock stares at Desmond speakingly. Then the gentlemen are seen to stroll off.*

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene iv:** Late 1969, St Paul's Cathedral, The Cloister Where The Bridal Party Arrives.

*Note: from this point onwards, our friends (George, William, Holly, Fiona, Jack, Gordon, Helene) are correctly and appropriately dressed for the high society wedding. George and William are looking spruce in slim-line silk suits.*

|                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|
| The Arrival of the Bridesmaids and Bride's Mother. |
|----------------------------------------------------|

*Outside St Paul's Cathedral, in a cloister, a sparkling Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow has conveyed the bridesmaids and Mrs Judith Allendale to the Cathedral. As the ladies alight, with girlish commentary, a phalanx of photographers descends on them. Thus, the young ladies pose for pictures. Judith has dressed in the exact same style which was a favourite of the late Queen Mother. She seems delighted with the proceedings. Judith is in her element.*



The Arrival of the Bride and Bride's Father.

*There follows, with even more media frenzy, the bride's Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow, bearing beautifully styled white ribbons. Roger alights with much hauteur, offering his hand to the dazzlingly-lovely bride. Now the bridesmaids form a knot about the bride, all gushing, squealing and talking at the same time; and being interviewed and photographed by the media scrum.*

*Roger sidles up to Judith. He is looking about him, as if seeking someone. Laurence approaches his father and shakes his hand, wishing him luck. Roger manages a smile, as he pats Laurence's shoulder. All the ushers now head back to the Cathedral. They are followed by Mr and Mrs Albert Pitch.*

Roger                                      Haven't caught up with the Anstey's yet, have you? Ought to give them a nod.

Judith                                      We've only just arrived. Surely they'll be inside the Cathedral, waiting for our Raine.

*Looking about, Roger sees something which shocks and appals him.*

Roger *aghast*                              Good Heavens! That Pitch fellow needn't think he's attending my daughter's wedding. Where's Toby? I'll get Toby to chuck him out. Who the Devil does he think he is?

Judith *long-suffering*                      Roger --

Roger *working himself up*                                      Bloody cheek! It's bad enough that we have to stomach that half-wit from South Australia who's been exposing our kinfolk to all manner of danger. But this ... this is the thin edge of the wedge!

Judith *patiently trying to make herself heard*              Roger, you're too loud. Someone will --

Roger *over the top now*                              I don't give a hoot who hears me!

Judith *calmly*                                      Well, I do. We must maintain a civilized tone.

Roger                                      Marrying my sister! When I see him again, I'll pop him a bunch of

fives. Or at least, have Toby do it.

*Judith turns with deliberate intent towards Roger, her face set hard.*

*Judith with calm dignity* Roger! I've heard enough. Keep your mouth shut. Please desist from all further attempts to ruin our only daughter's special day, to which I have travelled thousands of miles.

*Roger is appalled at this outburst. All the people (bridal party and media folk) have all pulled-up short to stare at Judith.*

*Judith has had enough. During this curt speech, Roger is dumbfounded, gobsmacked.*

*Judith thin-lipped, severe* Mr Pitch sounds to me to be a quite charming gentleman of the Aboriginal persuasion, and your sister appears to be utterly happy with him. He strikes me as a man of good heart and sound judgement, even though his rough edges possibly require some smoothing. Time will tell ...

Mr Bradley (or should I say "Colonel" Bradley) is a much-decorated member of a crack Secret Service unit. He does emanate from Down Under, certainly, but the persona he has adopted is only an act (nothing more), allowing him to perform undercover work for the Commonwealth. Underneath that unprepossessing exterior, there lies an extremely competent, energetic man.

Of course, I haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting him; I'm simply going on what our sons have expressed to me. Howsoever ...

Each of these gentlemen, so I understand, has acted above and beyond what has been expected of him. That includes our two sons and your two nephews.

But ***you***, Roger, have shown not the slightest shred of common sense throughout this entire episode. Every clumping stride you've

taken has been a false step.

Henceforth, **my** word shall be law in this family, and you will adopt a retiring and deferential demeanour in the face of my future edicts.

*Judith has floored everyone. There is a shocked silence in the cloister.*

*Judith smiling to all  
about her*

Well! I'll make my grand entrance now.

*[To Raine]*

Good luck, darling! It will be wonderful; and you look good enough to eat.

*With that, Judith turns, and walks with elegant grace into the Cathedral. Her speech is now met by applause and cheers from many of those present. Shame-faced and blushing, Roger joins Raine, as the official bridal party gathers to enter the Cathedral.*

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene v:** Late 1969, St Paul's Cathedral, The Chapel. The Wedding.

*The events which now occur in St Paul's Cathedral jump from location to location.*

*Our camera is looking down on the congregation in the chapel. The various guests are assembled, with the last few guests scurrying to their seats. It is William (who has never seen Trahilai/Anguella) who ushers Francis and his stepdaughter to their pew. Anguella wears a large picturesque hat.*

Walking Down The Aisle: Margaret and Albert Pitch.

Accompanied By Didgeridoo.

*Although the Pitch couple and Judith were seen to enter the Cathedral in the previous scene, they have not yet walked up the aisle. They do so now. We hear an eerie sound from above. Several guests look up and about, in consternation. Jack squats in the clerestory playing a large and beautifully-decorated didgeridoo as Margaret and Albert Pitch make their surprise entrance. We hear an audible gasp from several members of the congregation, as the well-dressed, proud couple walk serenely up the aisle, ushered by William Pendlebury.*

#### The Groom and Groomsmen.

*The groom and his attendants stand in position, with the groom (glowing in his wedding finery) looking expectantly towards the huge portal for his bride. The best man is the groom's brother: a naval officer seen earlier in a sexual clinch with the bride-to-be. In fact, all of the groom's supporters at one time or another have had sex with the bride.*

#### Mother of the Bride.

*Judith is radiant. She walks regally down the aisle, escorted by Laurence.*

#### The Wedding March: Bride, Her Father and Bridesmaids.

*Then the grand music of the magnificent chapel organ is heard.*

*As the bride's party cluster about in the vestibule, with everyone excessively "busy" (except for the serene bride) the organist plays Mendelssohn's "Wedding March".*

*Roger escorts Raine (whose veil covers her face) to the altar.*

*All of the groomsmen smirk, nudge each other and wink at the bride. The groom remains oblivious.*

|                      |
|----------------------|
| The Ceremony Begins. |
|----------------------|

*Although the Archbishop (in all his rich regalia) is present at this wedding, it is the Vicar of London who actually performs the ceremony. The Archbishop stands solemnly to one side, with his be-robed satellites, looking out over the congregation.*

*Immediately, our camera moves away from the main characters of the marriage. Instead, we focus on the back pew where the ushers sit: Toby, Laurence, George and William. The vicar's voice drones on in the background. Toby is asleep, breathing deeply and almost snoring. Laurence is seated but has stretched out his legs. He is obviously musing on some higher plane. George and William sit beside Laurence. The two teenagers look tired.*

*Suddenly, George catches sight of a glint flashing from the belfry. George frowns, looking interested.*

*Anguella also sees the same glint flashing from the belfry. She excuses herself politely to Francis.*

Anguella *whispers*                      Excuse me.

Francis *concerned*                      You'll miss the rest of the ceremony.  
*whisper*

Anguella *rich ironic*                      Don't fret: I won't miss the fun.  
*smile*

*Anguella slips out of her pew and away along the side of the chapel.*

*As Anguella moves off, George sees her but does not recognize Anguella as she is wearing a huge hat.*

*George is alert as he stares up at the glinting metal. He sniffs, then his frown deepens. He sniffs again. Then George nudges William.*

George *sneering*                      I can smell it again. That horrible stink. I thought she was dead.  
*whisper*

William *trying to be*                      Might be a popular perfume?  
*helpful*

George *pulling a face*      What, for women who want to attract stoats from the sewer?  
William *giggles*.

|                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|
| George Is Winged In St Pauls Cathedral. |
|-----------------------------------------|

*Then there is an audible "pfft". George starts then whispers "Ow" as loudly as he dares. Suddenly, George is alert and anxious, clutching his right shoulder. He bolts from his seat, racing to the shelter of a large ornate pillar. George urgently signals to the surprised William that William should join him. With the speed of a frightened rabbit, William also takes shelter behind the pillar.*

*With grimaces and groans, George attempts to slither his right shoulder out of his suit jacket. William assists him.*

William *whispering*      What's happened?

George *in pain*      Christ! I don't know, I ...

*The shoulder is out of the jacket, and a bloodstain is seen to be building on George's white shirt. Both boys gasp.*

George *horrified*      My Lord! I've been ... I've been shot!

*William, rather than appearing appalled by this news, seems to think it manna from Heaven.*

William *excited whisper*      Wow! Flesh wound only, though. Either the sniper was a lousy shot, or this is just a warning. It's that smelly woman, isn't it?  
She's come back from the dead to finish us off.

George *scathing whisper*      Thanks for the message of comfort. If you can't be more helpful, you can just go back to your seat!

William *excited whisper*      There we were, thinking that we were safely out of the grass, when --

*Another "pfft" is heard. Both brothers freeze. They look (and the camera looks) at a tiny nick which has just appeared at head-height on the pillar. Laurence strolls up.*

Laurence *low voice*,      Are you fellows alright?

*chatty*

*William ungently drags his cousin into the relative shelter of the pillar.*

George *trying to be brave* I've been shot!

William *excited* George has been shot at! Isn't that the best?  
Let's take them on! We need firearms, weapons, pikes, lances ...  
Hey! What was that room called where we changed our clothes.

*Laurence is investigating George's wound. The latter cries out "ouch" as loudly as he dares.*

Laurence *absently* Er ... do you mean the vestry?

William *agog with thrill* There was loads of stuff in there. Maybe there's a secret arsenal:  
guns, rifles and grenades.

*Laurence and George look at William as if he were from Mars.*

George *violent whisper* You idiot! A cathedral being a weapons depot?

*Laurence laughs silently, his face crinkling and eyes watering.*

Laurence *laughing whisper* Would that be for fighting the Devil and his sides? I can just  
imagine the Right Reverend Bishop of London armed to the teeth.  
In his cassock and robes. What a hoot!

William *excited and sincere* Yes! Shooting up refugees who dare to seek sanctuary in **his**  
Cathedral.

*William is wide-eyed. He stares towards the other side of the chapel.*

William *trance-like whisper* Look at Dad!

|                                  |
|----------------------------------|
| Gordon and Fiona Add Their Mite. |
|----------------------------------|

*On the opposite side of the chapel from where William now stands, Holly sits next to the aisle, and  
Gordon one in from her.*

*As Gordon watches the wedding drone on, he sees out of the corner of his eye (and the camera sees this too), a malefactor in the clerestory. This villain is stalking Jack.*

*Without pause, Gordon whips out a gun (with silencer), and shoots the unsuspecting man. The latter dramatically drops with a loud thud to the hard stone floor below.*

*Those nearby this activity are astounded. Fiona Buxton immediately takes charge.*

Fiona *calmly*                      Fainted!

*Seamlessly, Fiona hauls the body away as the vicar waffles on in the background.*

*Gordon conceals the gun quickly, glancing at Holly and reassuring her with a kind smile and hand-pat.*

|                         |
|-------------------------|
| The Ushers Take Action. |
|-------------------------|

*George and William are transfixed. Laurence, however, expands his chest, taking a deep breath.*

Laurence                      Our family needs us. Jack needs us. Let's go!

*Laurence hares off. William assists George to remove his jacket, and then the pair tear after Laurence.*

*At the foot of a very slender, steep, ancient flight of stairs, Laurence stops. He grabs his groin with his left hand.*

Laurence *whispers,*                      "This is a dick. I am a man. I can face death (either mine or some  
*gritted teeth*                      other stiff's)."

Whew! That's better. On with the society wedding of the year!

*Laurence takes the stairs three at a time. William and George stare at each other in wonderment.*

George *amazed*                      What did 'e say?



|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| The Gunfight in The Clerestory. |
|---------------------------------|

*Up in the clerestory, Jack is firing bullets (using a silencer) at a group of assassins who have infiltrated the wedding. One of the miscreants is Anguella, with huge hat removed.*

*The fight is very exciting, involving Gordon (from his pew), Jack, William, Laurence and George. Jack has passed a small revolver to Laurence, whose aim is quite good. William and George whisper advice. Two of the miscreants are severely wounded.*

*Below them the wedding ceremony continues unabated.*

Vicar *kindly*                      You may now kiss the bride.

*Lord Anstey lovingly lifts the veil, revealing Raine's beautiful face. She forces a chaste smile, as she accepts the light kiss on the lips which is bestowed upon her by her new husband. Unlike other weddings in films, there is NO applause to greet this first kiss: only a few of the congregation will smile, and/or shuffle in their seats.*

*Organ music is heard. The members of the congregation rise to sing.*

*The hymn is audible. A boomerang whizzes through the chapel above the congregation, up into the clerestory. It whacks one of the miscreants in the head as he is sneaking up behind George and is about to pistol-whip George. The appearance of the boomerang confounds the assassins and causes a gasp from the congregation.*

*The camera has followed this action, then returns to focus on Sir Lentock Broughborough and Desmond Grantley.*

Sir Lentock                      Now who on Earth has the foresight to bring along a boomerang to a wedding ceremony?

Desmond *quietly*                      That would be Mr Pitch, the bride's uncle-by-marriage. As you'll recall, Sir Lentock, Pitch was an international Test cricketer many years ago. For Australia.

Sir Lentock *wryly*                      And yet ... by some strange means, he was prescient enough to bring that ancient weapon along with him to the grandest wedding of 1969.

Even more enthralling, I wonder where (and how) he concealed it?

*These two men resume the hymn-singing.*

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Maria Takes Charge. |
|---------------------|

*Rather than joining the hymn-singing, Maria Mayhew-Spinks purses her lips in extreme anger. With calm resolve, she retrieves a tiny, bejewelled pistol from her capacious handbag (in which she has also hidden the velvet gem bag from the Old Silk Road). She chucks her hymnal to one side (as if by accident), then acts the part of an embarrassed parishioner, stooping to pick up her clumsily dropped book. While squatting on the floor, and unable to be seen, she looks up, seeing Anguella from below. Maria adroitly picks-off Anguella with her expensive gun, the latter drops like a stone to the floor of the clerestory. Calmly, hymnal in hand, Maria resumes her seat without giving the game away.*

|                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| To The Vestry To Sign The Registry. |
|-------------------------------------|

Sir Lentock                      Grantley, do you think that the bride can have the slightest idea that her wedding is being hijacked by these thoroughly undesirable folk? And in this utterly deplorable manner?

Desmond                         No, Sir Lentock. Not the smallest notion. She's totally unaware of anything other than her own happiness, Sir.

Sir Lentock *drily*                Tosh! That young lady has nothing other on her mind than having captivated a very handsome fortune with the attendant prospect of domestic bliss enacted at the forefront of London Society.

*Both gentlemen glance upwards. Several men can just be seen to indulge in an all-out tussle with the Old Silk Road antagonists (minus Toby, who is still asleep).*

Desmond *doubtful*                So, your belief is that she won't care, Sir?

Sir Lentock *smiling*                Oh, she'll care, Desmond. When the newsreels reveal to the world

*coily* at large what went on behind the scenes at her nuptials in the august precincts of St Paul's Cathedral, I should imagine that she'll care very much indeed.

Hmmmm ... interesting ...

Desmond *even more doubtful* So ... What will she do, Sir?

Sir Lentock *vastly amused* Bellow and scream, I've no doubt. What else is there to do?

|                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|
| Signing The Registry. The Awful Truth Revealed. |
|-------------------------------------------------|

*In the vestry, the scene is very comfortable. Raine sits at the well-appointed desk, signing her Wedding Certificate. Her fond bridegroom leans over her shoulder. Several photographers are about to record the moment for posterity. As the light bulbs flash, Tess (looking grave) enters the room. She approaches the radiant bride, to whisper urgently in her ear.*

*Raine is utterly appalled by what Tess tells her. She stares up at her chief bridesmaid with a look on her face of absolute horror.*

*Sir Lentock and Desmond are seen to smile smugly, sitting in the congregation, just as they were previously.*

*Raine is heard screaming from inside the vestry. The two men glance at each other, smiling even more smugly.*

END OF SCENE

**V, Scene vi:** Late 1969, Outside St Paul's Cathedral, After The Wedding

*On one side of the Cathedral, police vans are parked, and many policemen in SWAT jackets lug the miscreants into the vans. Jack stands about speaking to officers with Fiona, Laurence, Gordon, Holly, William and George beside him. Several bodies are removed, covered on stretchers. George has his shoulder attended to by a first aider.*

*The other guests have assembled away from this scene. Maria walks briskly up to Sir Lentock Broughborough and Desmond Grantley. They stand in the glorious sunshine amidst other wedding guests. Sir Lentock smiles at Maria, whereas Desmond displays delighted surprise at her sudden appearance.*

Desmond *surprised*            Miss Broughborough! You look enchanting.

Maria                        Thank you, Desmond, however (if you don't mind) I'd rather it were my stage name. "Mayhew-Spinks" has such panache.

*[This with flirtatious look]*

Anyway, I hope you're keeping well.

*Desmond nods, happy to have been included in Maria's thoughts.*

*Maria smiles prettily. She looks directly into Sir Lentock's eyes, and he looks back into hers fondly.*

Maria *softly*                Hello, Dad.

*Maria hands to Sir Lentock the heavy velvet bag.*

Maria                        This is just a sample. We have bags of loot for you.

Not quite the bushel of gold as hoped, but the ice and the gold ought to enable you to purchase about 15 new jets for the RAF. Thereabouts ...

*Sir Lentock looks surprised: his eyebrows shoot up. Then he rummages in the bag.*

Sir Lentock *very pleased*            Oh, yes! They're superb. Thank you, my dear. Wonderful lads, our Air Force boys.

*Sir Lentock kisses his daughter's cheek.*

Maria *sighing*                And I apologize on Jack's behalf for all the marriage mayhem. Honestly! That was **his** idea to clean up his enemies in the holy

precinct, not mine. Littering the cathedral with bodies! I ask you!

Sir Lentock *grinning* He's always had an eye for the theatrical.

Desmond Miss Brough -- ... I mean, Miss Mayhew-Spinks. Are you and Colonel Bradley ... um ...

Maria *laughing* Dear Jack and I? No. Emphatically not.

*The camera moves position such that we are able to see in the background various introductions. Jack and Fiona are now with Judith.*

Maria He's fallen for the elder Buxton girl. She'll do very nicely for him.

Sir Lentock The scholar? ... Now wait a bit ... Her thesis is ...

Maria "*Ubi Nos Congregati Sunt*". She's very clever. Never know, when it's completed, Cruickshank might be able to weave it into a half-decent play.

Sir Lentock *grave* Francis Cruickshank. I'm terribly sorry for the loss of his daughter.

Maria *blithely* **Step**daughter. I understand that she was caught in the crossfire. Wrong place, wrong time.

But, on the whole, Frank will recover and be much the better for her loss. I know that sounds harsh ... It's just ... She was acquisitive, almost to the point of greed, was his stepdaughter.

*Sir Lentock nods, thoughtfully, then visibly brightens.*

Sir Lentock What next for you?

Maria *smiling* Apart from adopting St Gandore as my patron saint, it'll be married bliss with dear Toby. A life dedicated to the British theatre. Starting with Frank's current *opus magnum*.

Sir Lentock **His** diamonds should have come to me. That is, to my Government department. They're all part of this same horde, Maria: King David's mines.

*Maria shakes head, smiling naughtily. Then she kisses her father's cheek.*

Maria *cajoling*

They're quite separate, and you know it. Toby and Laurence snaffled them in South America. They are only a meagre few, after all ...

And they're being employed to their best possible advantage in financing this wonderful play, and in buoying-up the British theatre industry as a whole. Perfect!

Dad, don't be greedy. You know what happens to people who are greedy ...

END OF SCENE

## **V, Scene vii:** 1970, The Queen Alexandra Theatrette Last Scene "Cupiditas"

*Music: A lone cello wends a tune.*

*The very small stage is set to represent a lovely grove wherein a picnic has been set.*

*Into this scene (from stage back) walks a young man. He paces about a little then bends down for the wine. He drinks straight from the bottle. As he stares off into the distance, he laughs. The lights dim.*

Gus Cassius

The unholy fellowship of three now dwindled to a pair.

He that first died had secretly plotted the demise of the other two: with doctored wine. And his murderers supped, watching each other closely, even as they laughed and ate.

Came a fight, a flashing blade, a strangled cry. And it was done.

The last rioter roared on laughter as the two friends lay cold on the ground, robbed of life. For which one would save a soul from fire, flood or famine, from loneliness or grief does one name a friend "a friend".

And so, for all that one might take a bushel of bright gold florins, did the one murder the other: so to be the sole survivor. Now one

of three ...

With a salute to God, the last rioter broke open the wine bottle,  
and drank ...

"Cupiditas ..." The Arch-enemy from the Underworld has come.

*The music quietens to silence. There is an extended pause, where our camera scans about at the small audience. Everyone is still. Then everyone relaxes and a grand burst of applause is heard. Once again there is bustle.*



*A small crowd of devotees and other theatrical people mill about in the foyer under huge signs that announce "Cupiditas – The arch-enemy from the underworld approaches".*

*As promised Toby wears a tuxedo complete with feather boa. Maria has matched his boa with one of her own. She wears it over a stunning black spangled gown. Maria is at her most beautiful.*

*From a doorway Gus Cassius appears with a couple of close friends. There is a round of warm applause for Gus, who waves generously to all his fans.*

Maria *pleased whisper*      Yes, it's without doubt Cruikshank's greatest work. Hey-ho,  
Geoffrey Chaucer!

And his mouldy old Pardoner.

*[Pause, whilst she studies Toby's face]*

And you are happy, too!

Toby *under voice,*  
*smiling warmly*

Yes.

To finally stage something really **worthy**. If I'm remembered for anything, it should be for **this**.

*However, the loudest applause bursts forth when Pasquale ushers Francis Cruickshank into the foyer. As our camera backs away, we see Francis go straight to Toby and Maria, warmly embracing them. The fact that Maria executed his stepdaughter is either unknown to Francis (or is forgotten) ...*

END OF SCENE

END OF ACT V

END OF FILM

### **POSTSCRIPT & CLARIFICATION**

The underlying story of the Pardoner's Tale related to three revellers who came across a bucket of gold: #A set off by himself fetch the victuals, leaving the other two (#B and #C) to plot against him.

Neither #B nor #C realized that #A had distrusted them and had poisoned the wine.

On murdering #A, the remaining two were now in danger, each of the other.

#B was murdered by #C.

Then #C drank the poisoned wine.

All three men died because of their greed.

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Film #3 in the series is "Chamber Musique For a Witty King".

This is RAF Squadron Leader William Pendlebury's story from 1986. The scenes including King Charles II are sumptuous and unforgettable.

There is heart-stopping adventure, William marries the only woman he could ever love and his heroism earns him the DFC.