



THE ROMANS DID SIDDERS

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INTRODUCTION & TITLES

Dominic Lynier and his Brother Felix

Background: Dominic (a palaeornithologist) features in all 3 movies.

SCENE: Exterior.

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Flying above Bavaria. Current day.

Our camera is in the dawn skies with a skein of greylag geese. We note the formation of the geese as they fly. Occasionally the geese call to each other.

This is a perfect, perfect scene.

SCENE: Interior.

London. An office within a private apartment. Current day.

Our camera backs away to reveal that Dominic is watching the geese flying via a laptop screen. On the desk we clearly view a name plate desk sign "Dominic Lynier MEarthSci". Dominic points to the screen as the camera backs further away to reveal that Dominic is with his brother Felix.

Dominic *commanding* Spread your fingers!

Felix *sighs* I can do that.

Felix spreads out the fingers of his right hand.

Dominic If your fingers terminated in dominant, specifically marked feathers your instruction to your fellow avian travellers would be visible. The signals you would transmit would be clear and identifiable. You would spread your primary feathers and honk.

Felix laughs and honks. He pretends that he is talking as a goose.

Felix *putting on a voice*

"C'mon fellas! Off to the Bahamas it is!"

Dominic *eager to explain*

The V-formation is stunningly simple and yet stunningly effective. Any bird can be the leader. He/she streamlines the journey for the rest of the flock. That's nature embracing physics.

But on tiring, our leader drops back and another bird slots into the front position. They fly on and on for hours that way.

It's ... It's brilliant! Brilliant!

Felix *stands*

Well ... Speaking of flying for hours and hours, I have a Biblical trek ahead of me. From here to a stopover in Doha -- 7 hours. 7 hours! Your greylag geese would love that!

And then from Doha to Sydney – that takes another 14 hours or more. Yawn.

Dominic *amazed, laughs*

Really? I'll see your London-Doha-Sydney and raise you London-Singapore-Melbourne-Hobart. And then by private plane to Antarctica: to Cape Lloyd Station.

Mmmm ... My trick I believe. Winner takes all!

Felix *surprised*

Good God – Antarctica!

But I thought you were headed to the States for some polite litigation with ... with ...

Dominic

Yes. With Eric Conway. But that's later. Right now is Antarctica.

Felix Alrighty ... Leave you with that as I head off. I shall say
goodbye to the family on your behalf. I'll send them your
abounding love, Dom.

Dominic *waves Felix* Thanks! And make sure you have a great trip.

off [Calls out as Felix reaches the door.]

Hold on! Why Australia, by the by? Did you tell me?

Felix *holding open the door* Oh, that's where the fun begins. You see, the Lore Ancient Squad (of which (as you are aware) I am a founding member) is being sent to the Antipodes in light of a find in Sydney.

Dominic looks a question.

Felix Yes Bro, it's the find of the century, in fact. Roman remains
 have bobbed up.

Dominic *puzzled* But that's grist to the mill for your Squad, surely?

Felix *flippant* Quite! Bread and butter ... In the wilds of Shropshire,
perhaps ... But not very often buried in Sydney, however.

Dominic (shocked) suddenly stands.

Dominic *aghast* **Sydney?! Roman remains -- That's total crap!**

Felix *waves goodbye* And yet we are being sent to investigate ... Cheeri-bye!

Dominic But ... Sydney Australia! That's beyond crazy!

Felix *smiles wickedly* Never – the – less ...

SCENE: Exterior.

Flying above The Eure Valley. 911 AD.

We return to the scene (on Dominic's laptop) that we first saw.

Only now, the view beneath the greylag geese is early medieval. This change will be seamless. That means lots of forest, smoking fires, small holdings, and wooden houses.

Our camera is still in the dawn skies with a skein of greylag geese. We note the formation of the geese as they fly. Occasionally the geese call to each other.

Again, this is a perfect, perfect scene. And at the end of the title roll, Hermann will describe the scene in voice-over.



Music: the TRDS love theme.



And thus the movie begins in earnest:

THE ROMANS DID SIDDER

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HERMANN WORKS ON THE JOURNAL 911 AD

The Vikings On French Soil

Rollo is played by the actor who plays Calvin.

Hermann is played by the actor who plays Bruce.

SCENE: Exterior.

The Eure Valley. 911 AD.

Hermann's voice-over overlays the following scene.

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Please be aware that (like Caesar in his Commentaries) Rollo will speak about himself (via his scribe Hermann) in the third person.

Our camera is still focused on the dawn skies with the skein of greylag geese.

Below the geese, our camera takes in the arrival of Vikings (not dressed in battle dress – no horns or helmets please!) on a deserted, windswept Norman beach.

Some of the Viking ships carry horses. The Vikings also transported their own wagons and drays. These will be unloaded onto the Norman beach along with the horses. Rollo and Will can clearly be singled out as they inspect the landing from a vantage point.

Our camera follows the Viking men as they troop off towards Chartres.

Then back to focus on the geese.

Hermann *voice-over* For 10 moons have we survived in this land.

during action as above There are several chieftains. The leader is the mighty Rollo, whose magnificence in battle is known to all.

In company with Rollo the Walker is his son Will (who has seen 17 winters).

Our brothers, cousins, kith and kin have come here too from the north – braving the mighty rolling seas. And from that beach where we made ground have we foot-slogged here to Autricum (that they call City of the Carnutes). We have heard this place called “Chartres” by the local folk.

With every sunrise, a skein of geese pass overhead, bound for a pretty meadow nearby. Our lads have seen that and they smile.

SCENE: Exterior.

The Eure Valley. 911 AD.

Hermann's voice-over overlays the following scene.

This meadow (as Hermann describes) is utterly charming.

Our camera lands with the greylag geese in this meadow.

From nearby a volley of arrows fires off. The arrows land where the geese feed.

There is a flurry of outrage and fright from the geese. Seven of the geese have been shot. They die quickly in the grass. A couple of dogs caper forward in the company of the hunters (who rush forward). The delighted men shout with pleasure. It is Will's job to gather up the geese (by their feet) and take them to the war camp.

Hermann *voice-over* Thus (before the sport of the skirmish) some of the lads
during action as above have stalked out across the plashy ground hunting this
flock of geese with bow-and-arrow. Goose-flesh (cooked
right) is very nutritious and tasty. We collect other victuals
as we require, this being a rich, plentiful land.

The women who dwell in these parts might grouse at our
cheek. At our theft of food that ought to fill their children's
bellies.

But no man dares to say us "nay".

SCENE: Exterior.

Somewhere in Normandy. 911 AD.

Hermann's voice-over overlays the following scene.

At the camp (the war camp), two old women sit about (and sing) as they pluck the dead greylag geese. Note that every feather is put into a hessian bag. The innards of the animals are also collected. No part of any animal is wasted.

Dogs eagerly snuffle about or quest the air.

From hooks the carcasses of slaughtered deer hang, ready for roasting.

Nearby stand baskets made of wicker or reeds which are laden with fruit and vegetables. There is a large fire burning close at hand. This fire is situated in a ring of sturdy rocks. Over the fire, two men erect a simple spit (that will be rotated by a hand-crank during cooking.) In the background, Rollo stands as he watches several warriors preparing for battle.

Hermann *voice-over*

The warriors will be ready for the conflict. They will be fed and armed. Rollo knows how important proper preparation is.

Rollo holds that hungry men have never won wars.

"Give me a soldier whose gut grumbles in pain and I shall have merely a man who has no strength to wield a sword in anger".

However that may be, many of the lads find this countryside so bountiful that they plan to return here and settle at some future time -- when the gelt fills their leather purses.

SCENE: Interior.

The Eure Valley. 911 AD.

Hermann sits in a rough chair at a rough table in Rollo's rough head-quarters.
Hermann scratches away (writing on vellum) with a goose-quill pen and ink.
The leather hanging door flings open. Light pours into the room. We see Rollo's silhouette in the doorway.
Hermann looks up as Rollo enters.

Rollo In your journal, I hope that nothing is omitted. Nothing left out ...

Hermann You have previously expressed your wish that all is included.

Rollo Nothing is too petty, too mundane; nothing must be passed over. I want our folk in Denmark to sail with us in our ships. I want them to feel the rhythm of the horse's gait as we ride about. You must be a poet here, my skald – describe the journey to glory in such words that will ring through the mead hall.

Hermann *nods* It shall be so.

Rollo struts about looking at everything he can. Then he plumps down on a chair which he drags towards the table. Rollo leans forward. His voice shakes with passion. Hermann ceases his writing in order to listen.

Background: Björn Ironside found his success in 858 AD.

Rollo *under-voice* Know this. The much-honoured son of the famed Norseman Ragnar Lodbrok (the man called Björn Ironside) pillaged

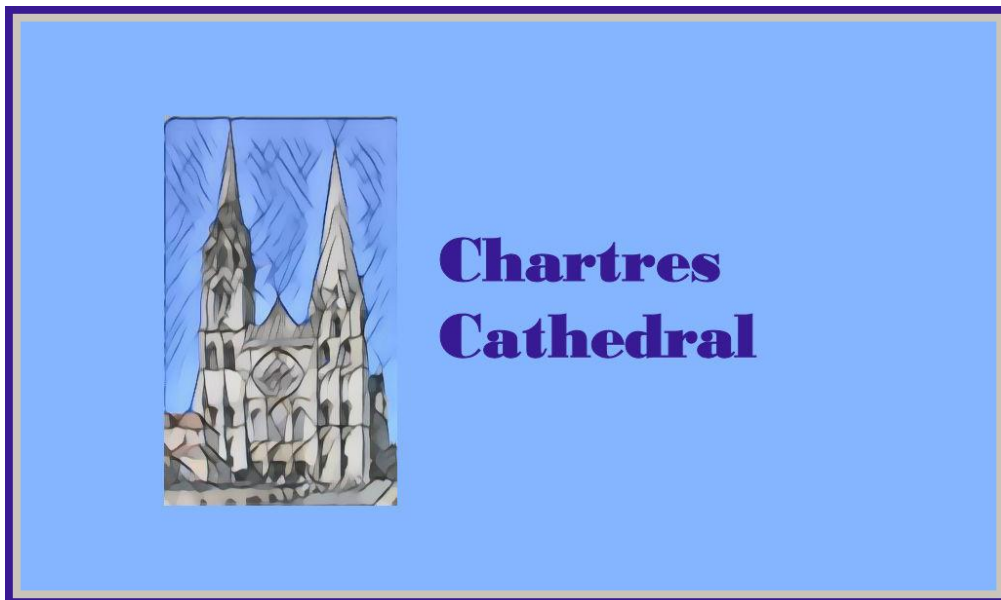
West Francia to much purpose some long time since. We shall follow in Ironside's footsteps. Every step of that fierce trek will be recorded by you, skald!

I have my eyes set on that place called City of the Carnutes. Mark that down, poet! I shall lead my warriors to harry and despoil that place, and its little church will yield up its riches, just as it did for Ironside.

Did not Charles the Bald pay him Danegeld as tribute? I shall demand that the King of the Franks pay me out likewise.

[Real menace.]

Find me out his appellation (this Frankish king) that I may shout his name into the wind as I confront him all powerful in my battle array.



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WITH THE VIKINGS AT CHARTRES 911 AD

Rollo The Walker Making Camp

SCENE: Exterior.

The Eure Valley. 911 AD.

We continue to watch the preparations for the attack, with Rollo wandering about giving orders.

His diarist is Hermann follows Rollo about scratching on vellum with an ancient pen.

Music.

We have a romantic theme (silky and sumptuous) that we have already heard.

However, the main theme for "The Romans Did Sidders" is a very strong, moving military number with an emphasis on a marching drumbeat as used by the Roman legions. It plays now as we watch the Rollo preparations.

Hermann makes a glancing mention of the beserker gang which follows later.

Hermann *voice-over*

We are now encamped at Autricum (that is known hereabouts as Chartres). Our leader Rollo thinks it a charming and commodious ville.

Armour is redded-up. Swords are polished bright. Every belly is filled with venison and goose as well as such greens

that can be gathered.

Before we attack, the men will raise the fury.

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CHARTRES CATHEDRAL Current day

MASTER'S THESIS

BACKSTORY:

Jack Cutler (who is 28 years old and as it happens is the nephew of Dame Naomi Cutler) is heavily involved in his local cricket team the Liburnians. Later, Jack will be called upon to assist Dame Naomi with the Roman situation.

Jack does not yet have a romantic interest and wants one. It eats away at him that other blokes have girlfriends -- why not he? Gordon Danvers (a team-mate of much the same age) tries to line Jack up with his sister Penne.

Penne Danvers (25 years old) is extremely good-looking and has a lovely figure: however, Gordon realizes that her hang-up with her thesis overwhelms most guys.

Penne's thesis is: a connection between the Norman Rollo The Walker and the seminal Chartres Cathedral.

Major point: Penne's supporting text has long been viewed as just another hoax.

SCENE: Exterior.

Picturesque suburban cricket oval in one of Sydney's leafy suburbs.
Current day.

Jack and Gordon are batting. They come together in the middle of the cricket pitch from time to time as is normal with a pair of batsmen. However, they talk more of social issues rather than of the proclivities of the game. As they talk, they do a spot of "gardening" (as would be the case with batsmen).

So: there will be snatches of batting action along with and during this conversation.

Gordon

No!

I'm telling you that she's a real looker. Totally gorgeous.
And I would trust her with no other bloke than your good self.

The cricket intrudes.

Jack

Watch this bowler. He's trying to incorporate spin but he's not that good at it. But you know -- any moment he could get lucky.

How come she's still on the loose if she's so wonderful?

Gordon

Because she's a scholar. And her rantings and ravings get in the way of romance.

That's it in a nutshell. If she could bloody shut-up about her fucking thesis she'd be a knockout.

Jack

Then how come you're --

The cricket intrudes.

Gordon If that bloke hadn't mucked-up that would-be catch I'd be in the pavilion right now.

Listen! If you can get past all the bullshit (and you're the man to do it!) then you're in with a chance. I'm telling you that my sister Penne is a gem. Well worth the effort.

[Advisory shout after Jack hits the ball]

No!

The cricket intrudes.

Jack *breathless* Alright. Give me yer sister's number. I'll let you know how it goes.

[Advisory shout after Gordon hits the ball]

Yes! Take the single!

The cricket intrudes.

SCENE: Exterior.

Outdoor tables and chairs at a fish 'n' chip cafe. Current day.

Jack and Penne (on their first date) eat fish 'n' chips out of takeaway containers (in their fingers).

[The book upon which Penne bases her Masters Thesis is: "Rollo the Walker: His Defeat of The City of the Carnutes".]

Jack *gloomy* She's my auntie.

 I mean -- she's my Mum's auntie (by marriage). Mum's usually with her but -- she can be hard yakka and Mum needs me to be a helper as well.

 You know what I mean ...

 So, I have to drop everything to go and "mind" her while all this kerfuffle is going on. That means taking time off work during our busiest time. I work in a Government department. It's a --

Penne *bright* Why don't you introduce me to her and then I could mind her on your behalf?

Jack *surprised* You?

Penne Yes. Me. Your Mum might like that.

 I can spare the time and you can't. Anyway, we'll probably hit it off.

 She and I ... And your Mum ...

 And (unlike everyone else on Earth) Dame Naomi might just happen to be interested in my thesis -- my life's work.

Jack *worried* Gordo told me about your thesis. He reckons that to get to you I have to jump on board with your --

Penne *laughs* 10 points for honesty there!

 You know what? You might like it.

Jack *doubtful* What makes you think that?

Penne It has battles, bloodshed, powerplays – what Aussie boy doesn't salivate for those things? ***And Vikings!*** Bonus!

Jack *shocked*

You've got all that in a thesis? Jeez!

Penne

I mean by that: the basis for my research is a journal. And that journal is like a Boy's Own Annual for medieval warriors (especially Vikings).

And you know what? Several academic heavies have used pejoratives such as "spurious" and "con" and "fraud" in connection with the journal.

So, I was thinking ... Well, since your auntie is not being believed either – well, we're like sisters in misfortune, aren't we?

Jack *at sea*

If you say so ...

Penne

We're both suffering from disbelief. She and I are on the same wavelength. We'll get on like a house on fire.

Jack frowns, wrinkling his brow.

Jack *unsure*

I don't get where you're coming from ...

Penne *patient*

Your auntie is the one who discovered the Roman treasure and the soldiers buried in her garden. Right? And most people are hailing it as the biggest hoax since the Piltdown Man.

Jack *at sea*

Uh? Who?

Penne *explaining*

Some bones of an early hominid were unearthed in the early 1900s. He/it was dubbed the Piltdown Man but it was debunked in the 1950s when the technology caught up. A

medieval skull with a chimpanzee jawbone. No! Wait! ...
With a jawbone of an orangutang. Something like that.
Total deliberate fraud.

The upshot is that everyone with a pulse is trying to crash
down on my core readings in the same way -- and also on
your aunt's findings.

Jack It's 100 percent true. She showed me the brooch and the
other things she dug up. They're genuine. Straight up.

Penne *nods* My bloke (Rollo the Walker) actually led a Viking siege on
the city of Chartres. Fact! It's just that the scholars find the
account of that siege (the one about which my thesis
revolves) is bogus.

Jack *confused* He's not a Roman, then? I thought --

Penne No. Viking.

[Her lips begin to tremble.]

I don't understand what there is to disbelieve ...

Penne begins to cry. Jack does not have a clue how to proceed. He makes noises
in his throat as he reaches out to touch her hand.

Penne *crying* It's just not fair ...

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AUDRA AND GREGOR IN CHARTRES 911 AD



AUDRA & GREGOR

Gregor is played by the actor who plays Adrian.

Audra is played by the actress who plays Anne.

Bega is played by the actress who plays Cloriel.

SCENE: Exterior.

A rough roadway in the forest of Normandy. 911 AD.

This scene turns out to be a "vision" seen by Anne. She will wake with a start (in current day), so vivid is this vision.

We have not seen Adrian's face yet. This works in our favour. The man riding the heavy farm horse (Gregor) has his back to the camera throughout this scene.

By means of a tandem saddle, Gregor rides with Audra behind him. Audra sits side-

saddle, gripping a strip of hessian which has been tied around Gregor's chest. She appears to be quite afraid. Gregor's voice is very muffled as he wears a thick woollen scarf over the lower part of his face.

We hear the deep tones of Gregor, but his voice is indecipherable. Audra's voice trembles when she speaks.

Audra I am in full agreement, Gregor. I have no other course. We cannot proceed as we are ...

SCENE: Interior.

A modest, tiny church in Chartres. 911 AD.

[This church is on the site of what will become Chartres Cathedral.]

Audra is interviewed by a holy man who has been dragged away from his physical activities. He is very dirty and sweaty.

Priest *severe* I may not long leave off my duties. We are in daily dread that the men from the North are close at hand and mean to strike e'er cock-crow.

Now ...

The man-servant who rides with you tells me that you are keen to become his wife. I have sent him off to cool his heels whilst I quiz you alone on this matter.

I must know if you fully comprehend what it is that you will do by taking this step.

Audra Yes, Father.

Priest *severe* That man who has been a faithful servant to your family all of your life will become your liegeman by this act – do you welcome that change in your circumstances?

Audra Father, I do.

Priest *severe* It is **he** that will make the decisions in your life. It is **he** that will be the master in your household. Your name will be gone for you will have **his** name.

Audra I understand it. I truly do.

Priest *severe* And he will handle you with hands that are rough. Handle you and make babies in your belly. And all this with God's holy blessing.

Audra Yes, Father. I have no choice other than this. A lone woman is at the mercy of all. I have no choice but to wed my trusted companion.

Priest *nods reluctantly* Then I shall call him in. I shall cleave you to this man by what powers have been invested in me by God. However, speed is of the essence (as I told you).

Your hands and his hands will be bound together at the wrists. You will each declare your oaths (in God's hearing) to be faithful and true one to the other until death separates you. When I untie the bindings, you will then belong to him as his wife, his love, his chattel.

I am giving you this last chance to back away from this momentous decision that you make.

Choose wisely for 'tis your future until death divides you.

God is my witness to the truth of what I tell you.

Audra *whispers*

I can do no other. I must cleave to him, Father. Please go and fetch the man.

Audra trembles as the priest leaves her.

SCENE: Interior.

Anne's bedroom in Oxford. Current day.

Anne sleeps restlessly in bed in her very dim bedroom. She snaps awake in such a dramatic way that she sits bolt upright, gasping. Her eyes are wild. She is visibly shaken.

SCENE: Exterior.

The Sydney Botanical Gardens. Current day.

Penne and Jack wander around, hand-in-hand. It is a glorious day. They seem to be enjoying themselves. They stop to admire a very beautiful part of the garden.

Jack Look! Without going off into waves of tears, can you tell me what is the problem with your thesis. Please.

Penne You're joking, aren't you?

Jack No, I'm not. Why would I be?

Penne Most people find it the most nauseating put-off.

Jack Tell me about it. Impress me. If I can stand at the wicket

without trembling in the face of the demon fast-bowler from Dreymond, I can face-up to what you have to tell me.

Penne *laughs*

The name of my source manuscript is "Rollo the Walker: His Defeat of the City of the Carnutes". It's Rollo's account of his attack on the church at Chartres. Written in the 3rd person and probably dictated to a scribe ...

How's the demon fast-bowler coming along?

Jack *smiles*

He's good. Go on.

Penne

It's written in Old Norse. Around 911 AD. So it's basically a Viking account of a Viking attack on a Frankish church.

Still good?

Jack

Yeah. But you said something about people not believing it.

Penne

Oh, that.

The way that the sagas rocked along was poetic and charming. The Rollo spiel is not like that at all. It groans rather than rocks.

Even more disturbing is the title. Rollo didn't manage to defeat anyone (as he claimed). He could barely make it through the siege before the Frankish King arrived just in time. He sent Rollo and his crazy Vikings packing. No raid. No victory.

And worse than all that --

Jack

Sorry, but it sounds really boring.

Penne

Do you want me to shut up about it?

Jack

Just cover the "worse than all that".

Penne

Mmmm ...

It's really weird. It gets to the point where King Charles the Third arrives with the relief troops, and then the whole tone changes. It's like two people wrote the MS in the guise of Rollo. It ends with Rollo praising himself and glorying in the marvellous victory which never happened. It's a lie.

Scholars writes the manuscript off as being fabricated by the guy who found it: Pierre-Mars Ruellen.

Jack

And the "Old Norse" – is that the opposite of "Young Norse"?

Penne *laughing*

Somehow ... Somehow I'm going to prove that it's not fake ...

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THE ROMANS DID SIDDEERS
ADRIAN & WANNABEE ASSOCIATES

SCENE: Interior.

A busy office in the Sydney CBD. This is Wannabee Connections. Current day.

Adrian stands, leaning on a desk. He is on a phone call using a mobile phone.

Surrounding Adrian, a group of spectators (being some of his co-workers including Ben, Marcia and Gina) display their involvement in this phone call: interested, advisory, scared, impatient, and so on.

Adrian is pleading with the Australian Prime Minister (Douglas Ton) to hear reason. However, Douglas is not letting Adrian get a word in. Adrian evidences frustration and despair as he interacts (in mime) with the surrounding colleagues.

Adrian *desperate* ... no, please Mr P--

Slight pause.

Adrian *desperate* Sir! I need you to understand that --

Slight pause.

Adrian *desperate* But Mr Prime --

Slight pause.

Adrian *desperate* Mr Pri--

Slight pause.

Adrian *deflated,* Okay. You got it, Sir.
defeated

Slight pause.

Adrian *small voice* Yes! I'll take care of that right away, Sir. Thank you, Sir for
allowing me to share some of your most valuable time.

Adrian concludes the call, pockets his mobile phone and then looks about at the surrounding group of co-workers who appear to hang on his utterance.

Adrian *in despair* I know when I'm licked. This is me doing my best
impersonation of being licked. Shattered and licked ...

Ben *hopeful and yet not hopeful* Will the PM listen to reason? I mean -- he's just ***gotta*** listen to the voice of reason!

Adrian gives a long sigh, shaking his head. The spectators sigh and groan.

Adrian The Right Honourable Douglas Ton (AO) is determined for us to press ahead. Thus, we shall press ahead. Full steam ahead as per instruction. From on high.

Marcia *disbelieving* He wants us to "press ahead" alongside the boys and girls from the "Lore Ancient Squad" in the UK?

Adrian *nods sadly* Yup.

Ben *with heavy emphasis* Who all believe (as we do) that this is a crock of shit?

Adrian Yup.

Kalvin is played by the actor who plays Rollo.

The boss (Kalvin) bustles forward. This breaks up the group of spectators.

Kalvin Lannsing! Can you give me a 5-minute run-down on what the hell is going on here?

Adrian Sure.

SCENE: Interior.

Small meeting room made of glass.

There is a medium-sized LCD screen which at the moment is inactive. During the following speeches (as indicated) Gina will activate the screen such that it displays (without sound) an old episode of Lore Ancient Squad. That way, we will preview the faces of Viv, Vivienne, Bruce and Felix. When Calvin and Adrian are seated, the screen will be in Adrian's full view, but behind Calvin's back.

The show will give us some "other interest" during what could prove to be a few long-winded speeches. But we have to get the plot out there – so ...

Kalvin hustles Adrian into this small glass-encased meeting room, slamming the door shut as he does this. With great meaning, Calvin shuts off the office from public view by means of savagely drawing blinds. Calvin mutters fiercely to himself.

Adrian sits, whereas Calvin plonks himself heavily into a chair with a resounding "whoof".

Kalvin Well?

Adrian takes a breath. We glimpse a very brief shot of Gina activating the LCD screen which is situated in the small meeting room via a remote control handset. The screen behind Calvin lights up with an episode of Lore Ancient Squad (no volume).

Adrian Okay. So a lady --

Kalvin *whipped-up* I've got Spankerman from the PM's office spitting fire and venom over the phone at me and I don't even have the tiniest **clue** what the deal is here. Which is weird given that I'm the boss.

 Everyone agrees on that ... Yeah?

Adrian Right. You're the head man. No-one's arguing about that.

[Takes a telling breath]

 So a lady in --

Kalvin *determined* Listen to me! My understanding is that the PM has sunk his teeth into this one and that he can taste it -- **taste it!** -- so we gotta deliver.

 Whatever it is -- we gotta deliver.

Adrian Sure. So --

Kalvin *really spiked* A man can only grovel so far, Lannsing. Do you understand what I'm saying?

 The Prime Minister. Numero Uno. The Head Cheese. Mr Bossman. Our Illustrious Leader.

 Personally, I can't stand the prick. Every time he gives me a spray, I feel an undeniable urge to give him a smack across the chops to go on with. I get **that** close!

[Change of tack.]

 Have you spoken with the Prime Minister's office? Are they in the loop with us?

Adrian Yeah. Just got off the phone with the Big Man himself.

Kalvin *interested*

Yeah? And what did he say?

Adrian *sighs*

He wants our weight behind this, Kal. We are to support this heap of horse-shit to the best of our ability.

I'd quote him but his words were all jumbled. I can't really remember ...

Kalvin looks concerned. His manner changes. He relaxes. He eases back.

Kalvin *confused, desperate*

Wants us to put our weight behind **what?** Will somebody please tell me what this is all about?

Adrian

Okay. Just listen!

A woman (a dame actually -- you know -- "AD") --

Anyway, an older female in Vaucluse with Pacific Ocean views (that you'd kill your own mother for) has been rooting around in her garden (pardon my French!) when she finds a brooch. An authentic lady's brooch from the time of Julius Caesar. First century BC. Spectacular brooch in perfect condition.

Kalvin *astounded and dumb-founded*

Julius Caesar?

Adrian

Yeah. So, she gets in touch with the peeps on "Lore Ancient Squad". Do you know it? It's screening right behind you as I speak ...

[Points]

It's a TV show from the UK where --

Kalvin turns to glance at the screen but is singularly unimpressed.

Kalvin *dismissive* Yeah, yeah -- my mother and grandma watch it. They perform archaeological digs that last only 3 days. And a herd of experts yabber on about it. Very popular.

Adrian *nods* You got it.

And (as you'd absolutely expect) these UK experts laugh it off. The Ancient Romans never got anywhere near Australia. Everyone and their dog knows that. File and forget.

Kalvin *appalled* But -- you're right! Everyone knows that! So how come our beloved PM is ... ?

[Suddenly struck by a thought]

Christ! Did the Romans ever even leave the Mediterranean Sea for God's sake?

Adrian *shrugs* Well, yes they did actually -- to visit Great Britain.

But no! They never ever came close to Oz. I mean: we're just too far away.

Anyway, this lady in Vaucluse gets all hot and steamy, demanding that the Lore Ancient Squad should not fob her off. Not only does she have this mint-condition Roman brooch but as well she has found Aboriginal artwork indicating that Roman triremes did in fact come this far south. And not only that but she keeps on digging in her garden to unearth what appears to be the grave of a

Roman soldier, complete with full body armour.

Kalvin *mesmerized*

Shit a brick!

Adrian *nods*

Correct!

I mean: were this to be genuine it would be as big as the Sutton Hoo ship burial or the Chinese terracotta army. It would be huge.

But it's all fake. It's just an enormous and elaborate hoax. Got to be ... Obviously!

[Slight pause]

And before you ask the inevitable question -- no! The PM does **not** believe that it is a hoax. He earnestly believes that this is the real deal. That's why he's figuratively creaming his jeans with excitement over this and wants us (that is, **your** company!) to jump on board ... Put our weight squarely behind it. That is his committed instruction.

Kalvin *still very confused*

But ... How did they ... How could they ... ?

Adrian *shrugs*

The PM has dredged out some whacko story about a Hungarian bloke during the Second World War rowing a canoe from Europe to New Guinea. To escape the Nazis. He hugged every coastline from there to here -- I mean from there to New Guinea, of course. For the PM that's the provenance right there.

Kalvin

But --

Adrian *very forceful*

Doug Ton is stressed-out, man. You can hear it in his voice. Like he has little pixies living in his head; and they're telling

him what to do. Our elected leader! Can you believe that?

Kalvin And ... This rower ... He made it to New Guinea ... Fuck-a-duck!

So that means that the Romans could have done just that same thing ... Like ... Before Christ was born?

Is that what the PM is saying? Or are his noggin pixies doing the talking?

Adrian sighs loudly, nodding (head down).

SCENE: Exterior.

Extremely long camera shot of the *Garden of Persephone*, Vaucluse.

In evidence: a dig team with eight trenches. Dame Naomi is hovering.

Milk this long shot from different angles.

There are diggers and there is a large film crew capturing the activity.

Standing on one side are: 3 of the Wannabees staff: Ben, Marcia and Gina.

On the other side are: 4 of the Lore Ancient Squad heavyweights: Viv, Vivienne, Bruce and Felix.

Bruce is played by the actor who plays Hermann.

The camera closes in.

Viv calls out to someone.

Viv calling out What's the body count now?

An indistinguishable voice calls back to Viv.

Voice Seven. All male. All decked-out in the kind of armour worn
by Roman foot soldiers.

Viv is impressed.

Viv mulling this over Seven legionaries ... Seven Romans buried here ...

Viv is now made aware of the presence of the three Wannabee staff members.

Viv And who are you people again?

Marcia We're the Wannabees. From Wannabee Associates. You'd
know us in the Mother Country as "Reckondotstate" -- our
London sister company.

Whatever ...

We're fully endorsed by the Prime Minister of Australia, the
Right Honourable Douglas Ton (Order of Australia).

There is a questioning pause. Viv looks at each Wannabee in turn.

Gina *with emphasis,* We're the money.
grinning

Camera backs off to embrace the superb views as important-sounding music strikes up.

Pages 38 – 41

**GREGOR ENTREATS THE FRANKISH KING
TO FIGHT ROLLO AT CHARTRES 911 AD**

SCENE: Interior.

A royal castle in West Francia where King Charles III (the Straightforward) resides at this time.

The king strolls about surrounded by a bevy of hangers-on. Poor people jostle to get close to him.

The king stops and says something profound.

Gregor calls out.

The king demands that the man who spoke come forward.

Gregor bustles forward, pushing his way through the crowd.

Gregor quickly drops to his knees in front of the King.

Gregor Permit me to speak, gentle king.

King You have my ear.

Gregor But one moon since I was head groundsman of the Martin

Estate. I am known to all as "Gregor" and have but lately wed the beauteous Audra, mistress of that house.

King Indeed?

Gregor King Charles, I have witnessed several old women from the North going about in the woods close by to Chartres gathering those seeds and berries with which the men will soon make berserker gang. I have come here to your royal court to warn you of this.

Nobleman #1 How many?

Gregor These godless men number anywhere from 100 to 300 heads. It is difficult to be certain – my informants can count but they cannot be counted upon.

A titter of mirth arises.

The King himself hauls Gregor to his feet. Gregor now stands straight and tall.

King Who leads this traitorous rabble?

Gregor My King -- the leader of this raiding party is he that is
known far and wide as Rollo the Walker.

[A gasp of alarm arises amongst the crowd.]

Also, his son William will fight beside him. And the word on the street, in the towns and in the forest is that many more Viking chieftains have joined Rollo. The thought overall is that they mean to plunder the great riches of the church at Chartres.

The King and the nobles mutter to each other. This news is very grave.

Nobleman #2 It is the most horrible, grisly affair this berserker gang. If they would but come into God's grace, they would give up this barbarous ritual.

Nobleman #3 Gregor, you are commanded to join King Charles's relief forces. We shall take on this heathen Rollo along with his grimy men. God smiles upon this venture.

The King moves forward to quickly pat Gregor on the shoulder, and smile at him.

The Vikings In Chartres



Pages 41 – 47

WITH THE VIKINGS AT CHARTRES 911 AD

THE BERSERKERGANG

Getting psyched-up for the Siege of Chartres.

SCENE: Exterior.

A kilometre from Chartres. Night. 911 AD. Part I.

So important is this scene (and its repetitions later on) that the details are enumerated below. It is vital that the warriors go into the raid as enraged and “drugged-up” as possible.

[Note that – LATER -- the Australian Prime Minister will wax lyrical about the (imagined) Roman troops arriving in orderly fashion in Australia. This scene will contrast strongly with that scene.]

I want this berserkergang to be wild, earthy and overwhelming.

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MUSIC: we can start with some strident, staccato brass and woodwind. Then we will not need any music as the extremely noisy berserker gang gets started.

Then at the end, as the berserkers march towards Chartres, we shall hear the staccato notes again – louder now and with more menace.

HERMANN	As expected, we shall hear excerpts from Hermann's journal as the berserker gang proceeds. However, I want to give the impression that Hermann finds the excesses of this preparation for war distasteful. Rollo and his men go too far! When Hermann sums up (further on, after the defeat) we shall hear the disdain in the tone of his speeches. Must mention the Siege of Paris in connection with Rollo.
START	The berserker gang begins when Rollo shouts "Berserker gang!" several times. Note that most of the men are from Denmark and are therefore legitimate Vikings. Others emanate from Viking settlements in Normandy. We see a crude statue (made of wood) representing Odin.
FIRE	A massive camp fire is already burning. When the warriors dance near the fire, their eyes will glisten, glow and gleam. Some of the warriors light flambeaux from the fire.
BLOOD	The carcass of a stag has been dumped near the fire. Men hack at the dead beast with daggers. Beside the fire, the warriors gorge on the raw venison such that the

	blood drips from their mouths and onto their beards. Blood sticks to their teeth. Many men streak the blood over their chests and abdomens if they are bare-chested.
DANCE	This is a male dance with Germanic origins. There is foot-stamping, jumping about, clapping, chest-thumping and shield-biting (as seen in the Lewis chess pieces).
SOUNDS	The men howl like wolves or roar like bears. Or else they simply shout encouragement to each other. Crude leather-and-wood drums are beaten.
UNIFORM I	If bare-chested: A very thick gold belt is worn around the waist. The trousers are leather with some kind of ironwork triangle guarding the genitals. Bear masks for the face. Bearhoods are worn: as seen on Trajan's Column where the Germanic troops are featured. There are many photos of modern day beserkers (re-enacting) on the web.
UNIFORM II	If chest is covered: What looks like a leather "onesie" with sleeves. Several chieftains wear shirts made of bearskin.
ARMS	The swords are made of iron. They have been polished and burnished to glow in the firelight. The large shields are made of thick embossed leather.
ARMOUR	The chieftains have iron armour in the form of vests and skirts. Also seen is the aketon (padded jacket).
HELMETS &	The helmets are similar in shape to upside-down ice cream cones

HEADGEAR	(with softer point). They have bull horns out the side, or stag antlers from the top. Other options are symbols of wild boar on the top of the helmet (this was very popular).
DRINK & DRUGS	Casks of wine proliferate and the men drink liberally, slaking their mouths with their hands. Seeds and berries are freely available for drinking (infusions), sniffing or eating (the idea being that these substances are hallucinogenic).
KING	The King of the Franks is Charles III known as "The Simple" but it would be more fitting to call him "The Straightforward". There is another noble who appears in the actual history of Chartres (Robert I) but I don't need to include him. So King Charles III (having been warned by Gregor) provides a counter-attack to Rollo, rescues Chartres and is thus hailed as the victor.
AFTERMATH	PTSD – Post traumatic stress disorder. Especially as in this case the raid is routed before it gets going.

SCENE: Interior.

A kilometre from Chartres. Night. 911 AD.

Hermann is huddled under thick blankets in a rough camp hut. He has a tiny fire to warm him. On the small table sit some small portions of meat and vegetables, a chunk of rough bread and a beaker of wine. **Also on the table is a small wooden box (photo below) on which the camera must rest for a second. This box will resurface at the end of the film when Cloriel speaks to Penne and Anne via Zoom call. It gives the provenance.**

Hermann writes the journal by the light of several tallow candles which drip onto the table. We can vaguely hear the festivities in the background. Sometimes the wild

noise obtrudes.

We receive the strong impression here that Hermann writes to please Rollo; but that his own thoughts are quite different to those of Rollo.



Hermann *writing*

It is the long-held custom for warriors to be wick; for them to be pitch prior to taking up their arms against other men.

Hermann takes a draught of wine, then nibbles some food. A great burst of noise from the beserker gang gives Hermann a start. He scowls.

Hermann *not writing*

Wick! Pitch! If by "wick" he means drugged senseless, then "yes" wick it shall be.

But to my mind the men were better to be drilled in the manner of the old Romans that one hears of. These

fighters of Rollo charge in with no thought, no plan ...

It is nothing more or less than senseless carnage. Battle for the sake of battle along with any goodies they can grab. And all that on a full stomach, no less.

Hermann sighs, then once again takes up the quill pen.

Hermann *writing* The men are eager to test their strength and resolve. Eyes glowing with desire for triumph, they throw themselves into the fray.

Hermann puts down the quill pen as if it is disgusting to him. Again, Hermann eats and drinks. More berserker noise obtrudes.

Hermann *not writing* I don't even need to see it with my own eyes to know what it is.

And there they are: building their fury to a point way beyond what mortal man can withstand.

My stern prediction is that the gods in Valhalla will see this bestial display for what it is. And that they will lend none of their weight to the upcoming battle.

Hermann (reluctant) takes up the quill pen once more.

SCENE: Exterior.

A kilometre from Chartres. Night. 911 AD. Part II.

The berserker gang continues: loud, savage and bloodthirsty.

Pages 48 – 54

THE ROMANS DID SIDDEERS

UNCLE DAPTO

SCENE: Exterior.

The archaeological dig.

Note the bold contrast here: the madness of the berserker gang in the dark (lit only by fire), and the bright Sydney sunshine of Dame Naomi's garden.

This scene takes place in Dame Naomi's *Garden of Persephone* and has all the appearance of any episode of "Lore Ancient Squad". There are diggers, trenches, map-readers, scholars poring over learned texts and so on. We watch the activity during Adrian's voice-over (below).

Then we see Uncle Dapto (grinning broadly) in the background, watching proceedings.

Adrian voice-over

Uncle Dapto is a very well respected tribal elder.

He started off in the bush as a jackaroo and then graduated to being a clerk of the course within his local New South Wales racing circuit. Still turns up at the races whenever there's a meeting and whenever they need him.

He bumps into lots of folks that way.

Bottom line is that if you need to know anything about anything then go no further than ask Uncle Dapto.

SCENE: Exterior.

The archaeological dig.

Uncle Dapto (still smiling) moves forward bearing small branches of a local eucalypt and a possum coat which he will exhibit to the ladies. Uncle Dapto marches up to the finds-table where the main Lore Ancient Squad members are gathered.

Throughout the scenes which feature the Lore Ancient Squad performing their archaeological tasks, their usual camera crew will be ardently filming the progress.

Uncle Dapto Hello everyone. You've scored a good spot for your digging, eh?

The Lore Ancient Squad members are unsure what to make of Uncle Dapto. Viv is the first to recover his poise as Uncle Dapto looks about -- very pleased. Viv extends a hand of welcome.

Viv *smiling* Hello, Sir. I'm Viv Dolmey. And this lady is my partner-in-crime Vivienne Castlethwaite. And here we have Bruce Hywnes and Felix Lynier.

Hands are shaken. Murmurs of welcome are emitted. Uncle Dapto signals to the

camera crew that it is okay for them to film him.

Uncle Dapto You call me Uncle Dapto and we'll all be apples, eh.

Vivienne is unable to stop admiring the possum coat.

Uncle Dapto I brung the possum coat for the ladies and girls to take a squizz at. And you keep these gum tree samples to bring you good digging, eh.

The other females on site are called over to admire the coat. Uncle Dapto turns to Viv, Felix and Bruce.

Uncle Dapto And just so as you fellers know, I done time at a Roman Catholic school when I was a young tacker, so you can all spout your Latin at me whenever yer ready, eh.

This statement evinces laughter from the men.

Vivienne And this coat was made from possum skins, was it, Uncle Dapto?

Uncle Dapto My word yes! That old coat is my Mum's and before her her Mum's. Then it will go on to my sister who gets called Auntie Bess, eh. It's not cold enough for it now but in the

Winter -- my word!

Many pleasantries filter through from the background.

Felix quickly produces photographs of rock drawings supposedly proving that Roman triremes visited these shores. Uncle Dapto merely snorts and shakes his head. Uncle Dapto wants to view the graves.

Uncle Dapto

You blokes can show me these graves now, eh.

I realize that they would have told you not to mention the dead in front of this old blackfella but in the interests of helping to solve this little conundrum I'm prepared to waive that restriction. What have we got, eh?

The 4 main Lore Ancient Squad presenters (Viv, Vivienne, Bruce and Felix) lead Uncle Dapto to each of the 7 graves. Uncle Dapto squats down as he silently studies each body in turn. Then Uncle Dapto shakes his head as he stands. When he speaks it is with deliberation.

Uncle Dapto

These are white-man burials. Blackfellas never touched this lot.

Viv *frowns*

But the PM is utterly convinced that the Roman troops were attacked by aboriginals as they marched up the beach. He's certain of it.

Uncle Dapto

Yeah, I heard all that before, eh.

The Big Kahuna reckons that a few Roman blokes were

decently buried and the others were fed to the sharks.

Yeah ... I heard all that ...

Vivienne I'm awfully sorry Uncle Dapto if this is offensive to you.
We're just trying to tie the PM's words in with ... with ...

Uncle Dapto That's a delicate matter for you to ask me that (whether my people killed your people) but in this case it's a "no". A hard "no".

This whole thing is a set-up, eh. These poor blokes will turn out to be Aussies: white-man Aussies.

[Looks about]

And I want you to tell me, eh -- does any of these blokes have a distinguishing red Maltese cross tattoo? Do ya know?

The question surprises Uncle Dapto's audience. They look about, puzzled and uncertain.

Uncle Dapto Okay. What about branding? You know, a brand that you'd use on cattle or sheep eh. Did any of these blokes have that?

Again, this question puzzles and disturbs the English people.

Uncle Dapto You've got a very important lady coming to talk to you.

She's a professor from Oxford. I been to Oxford, eh.

Here Uncle Dapto roars with laughter.

Uncle Dapto No! I don't mean that I was a student there. No way! But I get dragged over there from time to time to talk to the learned ones about my stuff. Stuff that got nicked from Australia many, many years ago and ought to be returned here. But that's another story, eh.

Anyhow, I met this beautiful lady at Oxford and she's coming here to see you and she'll sort all this out. I'm going to send her an electric letter about what I found.

Uncle Dapto nods firmly.

Bruce *puzzled* And what is the significance of your question re the red Maltese cross tattoo or cattle brand? What's that about?

Uncle Dapto Just this.

People got stirred up about blokes (males that is) not wanting to go and fight in the First World War. They didn't just send white feathers like you see in the movies. Nah! Out in the bush these "cowards" ... these "poltroons" were tattooed or branded (depending on what mood they were in) with the red Maltese cross.

They tried it on us blackfellas but we were too quick for

them, eh. But there's been a yarn floating around forever that out in a place called Yoori Yallock (out past the Black Stump it is, eh) not only were the conscientious objectors defaced with the red cross, but they were necked as well.

Vivienne *unsure* Necked?

Uncle Dapto makes the universally understood throat-slit gesture. The Lore Ancient Squad heavies are shocked, stunned and uncomfortable.

Pages 55 – 62

THE ROMANS DID SIDDEERS

DR ANNE GLENN

SCENE: Exterior.

This scene again takes place at *Garden of Persephone*. Current day.

The visit of Uncle Dapto has finished: he has gone (along with his Mum's possum coat) but the eucalypt branches remain. His words have caused somewhat of a stagnation -- Viv, Vivienne, Felix and Bruce seem to be moving aimlessly about.

From deep in the background, we see Adrian escorting Anne (Dr Anne Glenn) towards the excavations. She is well known to all 4 of the Lore Ancient Squad people. They greet her effusively and hands are shaken, cheeks are kissed. Then the 6 people (Adrian, Anne, Viv, Vivienne, Bruce and Felix) take stock of the finds-table. There is some conversation (sotto voce) and loads of pointing until we (the audience) now join in the conversation.

After her long flight, Anne is exhausted. She runs her fingers over the shiny eucalypt leaves left by Uncle Dapto.

Point of interest: Anne has already dreamt that she melds with the Audra character. However, she does not realize that Audra's husband Gregor melds with Adrian Lannsing (whom she has just met). [When Audra was featured up to this point, Gregor's face was not seen.]

Anne *tired* Thanks. I had plenty of time to read your initial findings (that you emailed) on my long, long, long, long flight here. I'm pretty sure that I've mastered the basics. And thank you ...

Viv We're keen to give you as much help as we can. What do you want us to do?

Anne Erm ... Yes, please continue with the dig.

[Nods, then turns to Adrian]

Adrian, I need to speak with the property owner before the inevitable jet lag sets in. Will you be my aide-de-camp there?

Adrian *nods* Sure. Her mono is Dame Naomi Cutler and you'll find that she's quite lucid (even despite her age).

Anne briefly farewells the Lore Ancient Squad people. Adrian and Anne walk off towards the mansion.

Anne *frowns* I find it hard to believe that Australia has Dames -- and Knights (one presumes).

Adrian Er ... We don't give them out anymore. She got in just before the whole honours and titles thing was quashed.

They continue to walk. Then Anne stops abruptly.

Anne *nervous laugh* We're not acquainted, are we? I mean to say ... We're not

old friends from years ago? I've got a funny feeling that ...

Adrian shakes head I'd remember if we were.

Again, they walk. Anne desperately racks her brains. What is it about this man?

Anne Your voice! I've heard you speak before.

Adrian shrugs Maybe. On the phone?

Anne worried No ... You didn't have an Australian accent.

Adrian laughs Well, it certainly wasn't me then. I never do voices.

Come on! Let's put this down to jet lag.

Pages 57 - 64

THE ROMANS DID SIDDEERS

DR ANNE GLENN DELIVERS HER SUMMATION

SCENE: Interior.

Dame Naomi's grand loungeroom.

Both Jack and Penne are seated on a couch.

When Adrian and Anne wander into the loungeroom, Jack stands.

Jack Hello. I'm Dame Naomi's nephew Jack Cutler and this is a

friend who is helping me in supporting my aunt during this interesting time. Penne Danvers. And here is the lady herself: Dame Naomi Cutler.

Jack shakes hands with Adrian and then with Anne.

Adrian How do you do? I'm Adrian Lannsing of Wannabee Connections, Sydney. And this is Dr Anne Glenn of the Oxford University. You may have caught her many appearances on the "Lore Ancient Squad" shows on television.

It is all gracious smiles. Jack's mother (Valme) appears with a tea tray and loads of cakes. We hear Jack murmur "Thanks, Mum". The visitors sit as tea is poured and passed about.

Dame Naomi appears worried.

Dame Naomi What's the verdict? I know you well enough (Dr Glenn) to be afraid that it's bad news.

Anne *slight smile* Yes. You're right. It's a hoax. Somebody (or several people) has/have gone to considerable effort and expense to try and convince the general public that seven bodies buried in the grounds of Garden of Persephone were the remains of Roman legionaries.

Dame Naomi *deflated* I was afraid of that ...

Penne *snaky*

And you have come to this conclusion because ... ?

Anne

Apart from the most obvious howler (that the human remains were not nearly old enough to have come from 100 BC), the disposition of those bodies was not carried out in the expected "Roman way".

Moreover, soil testing indicates that the interments took place around the time of the First World War or perhaps just prior to it.

[Turns to Dame Naomi]

The spectacular Roman brooch which you found was indeed a genuine Roman article from the time of Julius Caesar but it had been professionally cleaned previously then muddied-up before being chunked into the dirt.

The decay on the metal of the men's armour was inconsistent. And --

Here Anne turns to Adrian.

Anne

Adrian, are you at all familiar with a practice which seems to have been popular in Outback Australia as well as in some places on the US frontier say 80 years ago? It is based on reworking tins or cans in order to fabricate what is known as corrugated tin sheets?

Adrian *frowns as he remembers*

Yeah ... Yeah my grandfather had a shed made of that stuff. The brands that were originally on the tin cans surfaced on the corrugated tin sheets. Like "Johnson &

Johnson" and "Swallow's Biscuits" and "Witches Soap" (as I recall).

Anne *nods*

Correct. All seven of the bodies (when examined during autopsy) bore the effects of having been laid out (while deceased and naked) on just such corrugated tin sheets as you describe. That feature did not fade out even following decades of interment. Also, the armour supported this finding.

This peculiarity may (in time) help us to identify the bodies. May even indicate the perpetrator of this elaborate con job.

Dame Naomi gasps in shock. Jack takes her hand, trying to soothe her.

Anne

As I intimated, this was an expensive exercise this hoax. What puzzles me is that it only came to light when Dame Naomi happened to dig in her garden.

More gasps. Before anyone can speak, Anne nips in.

Anne

Jack, I rang ahead to ask for the ownership papers for this spread. Did you manage to locate them?

Jack nods. He grubs about, finding a manilla folder. This he hands to Anne who thanks him silently.

Anne

What do you Aussies say? "Dodgy".

My area of expertise is in the arena of blame. I point the finger of blame. Yes, others will label the doings as "dodgy" -- however, my aim is to nominate those who executed said "dodge": -- by whom was it arranged and for what purpose.

That's what I do.

[Slight smile]

Furthermore, I am more than interested in the rôle of your Prime Minister in all this. He has given to Adrian a definite and determined "go-ahead" in the realm of bringing the matter to a worthy conclusion. Now that would count as fishy in anyone's book.



The only people present are Anne, Penne, Valme and Dame Naomi while the tea is drunk.

Anne

So -- here's my plan.

I will investigate the previous owners of Garden of Persephone, Dame Naomi.

I shall be looking for a character from the 1910's and thereabouts who had plenty of time, plenty of money, and

a penchant for this kind of trickery. Maybe even priors ...

A very serious crime has been committed and I'm the woman to unmask it. The Lore Ancient Squad lads and lassies have previously labelled me as "the Debunker".

Penne *as keen as a blade*

God! This all sounds utterly familiar ...

This is the Piltdown Man controversy revisited, isn't it? And from about the same time ...

Anne *nods*

Exactly. Piltdown Man #2.

Thank you for the tea. I'll continue to liaise with the Lore Ancient Squad crew and I'll be scrupulous in keeping you informed of any discoveries.



Anne is standing, swallowing the last drops of tea in her cup.

Anne That was a very, very refreshing cuppa. Thank you!

Valme You're welcome. Would you like another?

Anne Thanks, but I'd better head off.

Dame Naomi Penne, show Anne your big essay. I guarantee that if you can get **anyone** to show interest in it, Anne will be the one.

Penne My thesis? Of course. "Rollo the Walker: His Defeat of the City of the Carnutes". It was discovered in a Rouen loft by

Pierre-Mars Ruellin in the 16th century. And (of course) from there it was claimed that he actually *wrote* it.

I shall (with my boundless research and worthy manuscript) debunk the debunkers.

Just a quick glimpse and then you can bow out with a clear conscience.

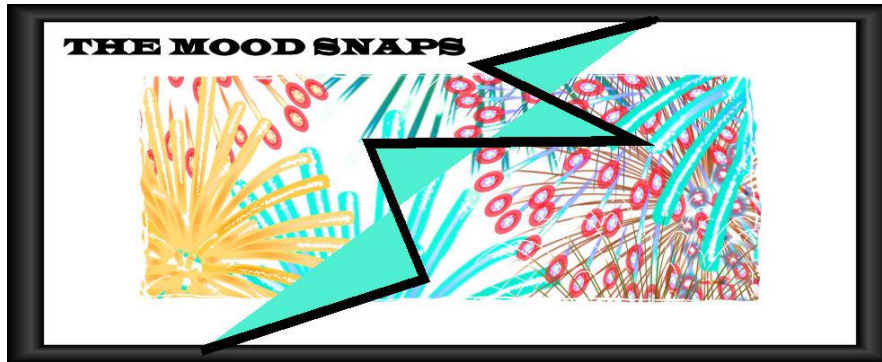
Anne The *magnum opus* beckons.

Penne dives into a copious bag and pulls out a stack of loose pages. These she hands to Anne without ceremony.

Penne *proudly* You are welcome to join the noble throng of scholars who find this journal a crock. But I hope that you won't. Except for the fact that it claims victory, everything else in it gels.

 The Frankish King forced Rollo to accept the Faith and become one of God's flock. However (true to his makeup to the very end) Rollo refused the foot-washing rôle and had a proxy do it for him. So when all is said and done ...

Dame Naomi's mobile phone rings. Penne goes quickly to a side table to rescue the phone and hand it to Dame Naomi.



Meanwhile, Anne has gone pale. She is trembling. Anne pops the manuscript onto a nearby chair then beats a hasty retreat (calling “Goodbye” as she goes).

Pages 65 – 71

DAME AUDRA OF MARTIN ESTATE

The Journey to Saule Farm

SCENE: Exterior.

A quiet corner of Garden of Persephone.

Anne is distressed. She sobs slightly as she finds a solid tree trunk on which to lean.
Anne makes a huge effort to control her emotions.

Anne *savage, to herself* Come on, woman! This is madness! Madness!

SCENE: Exterior.

The hubbub of the streets of Chartres. 911 AD.

The threat of a Viking attack has caused chaos among the people of Chartres. Audra stands as far out of the way as she can. She holds the reins of the old farm horse. There is always the fear of someone taking possession of the horse. When Bega and her son rush up (breathless) Audra evidences great relief.

Previously, Gregor has found this middle-aged kinswoman (Bega) who will accompany Audra. Audra will be up on the back of the tandem saddle (as before)

and Bega will ride.

Bega *breathless* Dame Audra of Martin Estate? I am a kinswoman of Gregor's and ready to take you to Saule Farm. It's not that far.

Bega (a middle-aged woman) rushes up. Some of her belongings are packed into a swag. She appears keen to get going. Yet she finds time to reach out and stroke Audra's cheek.

Bega's son Mother will care for you. Let her take Gregor's place in the saddle. And pray that you stay out of sight of the Northmen.

Bega Throw me up, Son. We must skedaddle.

The business is soon achieved. Bega's son legs Bega onto the horse then lifts Audra to sit behind her. The length of hessian is placed around Bega such that Audra can cling on. There is a hasty goodbye. Bega looks back to say a last farewell to her son but he has gone.

Bega My son loaned his fastest steed to Gregor, leaving us with this slug.

Audra And where is my husband, can you tell me?

Bega Your husband has travelled to warn the Frankish King of what that rascal Rollo intends. He must arrive in time or all

is lost, I fear.

BREAK

In the darkness of the woods, Bega has brought the old horse up in a thicket. Out of sight, Bega and Audra watch a group of four Viking women taking a baby into the woods.

Audra *whispers* What is this?

Bega signals for quiet.

BREAK

The four Viking women wander out of the woods, having left the baby defenceless. Both Bega and Audra are appalled at this neglect.

Audra *whispers* Can this be true? They show no remorse at all. The mother of the babe cannot possibly want her child to die.

The four Viking women disappear from sight.

Bega spits meditatively.

Bega She will weep for that baby lost in the woods at her own pace and in her own space. I have heard tell that back in their own lands (in the North) they have dug wells for the purpose. They chuck the new babies in and all forgotten.

Audra *appalled* There is no need for this savagery – Food is to be found behind every hedge in this land. It makes no sense to me.

Bega *laughs* I'll warrant it is a girl. See if I'm not right. Unless it is deformed.

[Makes the sign of the cross on her chest.]

It will die of course. No food and no protection. It will die and the carcass cleaned-up by wood animals. That is the law of these Norsemen. They prefer the boys. Girls are not valued. Girls are quickly dispensed with (as you have just now witnessed). That is why I despise these Norsemen and wish them dead.

Audra *with conviction* God sees no bonus in boys. We shall rescue that child. We'll save her and nurture her.

Bega Will Gregor welcome an instant child? And that a daughter?

Audra *proudly* He opened his arms to me (a mere woman).

Come! Let us find the baby before the wild dogs do.



Audra *holding the baby* Liffy will be her name.

Bega Do you know what you could do: train her up to be your maid when you may come back into your own at Martin Estate.

Audra Yes. She will give as much help to our little family as any boy could.

Bega And when your true worth is reinstated, will you still cleave to your husband, or will you slough him off?

Audra *very firm* Bega! How could you think such a thing!

My wedding vows which I made with Gregor were spoken before God. Even were I not to love him (which I do with all my heart) that must prevent me from parting from him.

Bega *shrugs* Do you know that the conjugal pact you made with my kinsman could be thrown to the wind if it were a Viking pact? The wife can simply end the marriage by making it so.

Ah! They are savages. Pray that they will find God that He may bring them to their senses.

Audra We must bustle now to Saule Farm. Surely they can spare some milk for this wee poppet?

LIFE AT SAULE FARM

Audra and Bega and the baby (named Liffy) ride on on the old farm horse until they arrive at Saule Farm where they are sheltered. Here we see the happy, lovely life of

the Frankish people. There is singing, dancing, music (inside the home building) and outside. Everything is made of wood and very small. The animals are not well-bred as would be the case after the Agrarian Revolution. Life is hard but unbelievably happy. The two women are able to care for Liffy.

While this bucolic scene plays out, we shall hear again from Hermann in voice-over: his own thoughts, not what he is writing for Rollo.

Hermann *voice-over*

My head would be separated from my corps were I to scratch out the words that I *really* wish to write. My true worth as a skald would be clear for all to see.

I would be lyrical and poetic (if that were allowed by my master Rollo). The menfolk hereabouts are as powerful and fit as any Varangian. The beauty of the women takes away the breath from my lungs.

These Frankish people sing all day long. Sing and dance about. They are so filled with joy! Without the gods of Valhalla to vex them, they have only one single god (and he evidently cares for them beyond belief). Happily do they go about their daily chores.

I envy them. I do! I envy them.

My companions are rough, boisterous and rude. It would be heaven itself to dwell here in this green land ...

SCENE: Exterior.

A quiet corner of *Garden of Persephone*. Current day.

We have to assume that Anne saw and heard the above.

Anne is now even more distressed.

Instead of leaning against the tree trunk, she now sits on the ground.

She sobs outright. There is no-one to hear her.

Pages 71 – 75

THE ROMANS DID SIDDEERS
ADRIAN CONFRONTS THE PRIME MINISTER
AT KIRRIBILLI HOUSE

SCENE: Interior.

Kirribilli House, Sydney. Current day.

An elegant room. Adrian was originally fobbed off with an underling then the PM storms in and rants bitterly at Adrian (who tries to keep a straight face). A real hissy fit.

PM *enraged*

That's simply unadulterated crap.

What's your name again, you worm? Oh yes! Adrian Lannsing. Well, you've scored a big black X against your name, Lannsing. You and your tinpot company are fired! No Chrissy card for you!

And for your info we've done a deep dive on this Glenn vixen: she's a shambolic if ever one existed. Funny that you couldn't see through her.

I'll insist on my own expert Professor Llewelyn Judd and his fellows examining everything. **Everything!**

Adrian uneasy

So --

*PM is an apoplectic
rage*

Nothing is to be touched! Hermetically seal that dig!

I'm sending in armed troops – I want that entire site at whatitsname cleared of all personnel. That includes the Looneytunes from the UK who are cranking out their TV show based on this episode. It's all to be stopped. Halt! No more! The Glenn woman will have her travel visas and all that bizzo rescinded as of 5 minutes ago. She flies out on the next long haul. And that aboriginal hoon who's trying to big-note himself. Top dog Dapto! He can spend a few nights at His Majesty's pleasure and see how that fits his contours.

Adrian appalled

Uncle Dapto? You're going to throw him into the clink? Whatever for?

PM screaming

I'll think of something ... I'll think of something ...

Those "holier-than-thou" bludgers murdered clean-living Roman legionaries who were only fucking doing their fucking job. Their duty!

Adrian completely lost

What?!

Sir! Mr Prime Minister! You can't --

PM overtaken with

You're a tosser! Get out! Get out!

fury

The PM pushes Adrian out of the room. Alarm bells screech. Adrian is hauled out of Kirribilli House as if a criminal.

SCENE: Exterior/Interior.

Kirribilli House, Sydney and then Garden of Persephone.

Adrian's own car remains in the carpark at Kirribilli. We see it in the background and we observe Adrian looking at his car longingly.



Adrian is driven directly to Garden of Persephone.

As he disembarks the official vehicle, Adrian complains.

Adrian And what happens to my car? It's still at Kirribilli ...

Driver Give us yer keys and I'll make sure it is returned to your private address.

Adrian thinks. He is put out. But there is no other course of action. Adrian passes the car keys to the driver.

Adrian It's running short of petrol. You might want to fill it up at the PM's expense.

Driver *shrugs* Sure. I'll do that for ya.

The Commonwealth car drives off. Adrian watches it head off into the distance. Then he watches the Lore Ancient Squad people shamle off.

Bruce *in despair* Oh Adrian! What did the PM have to say?

Adrian *nasty* He swept through his Thesaurus such that he could berate us all as "rascals" of the highest order.

[Looks about.]

What's it like here?

Bruce *almost in tears* God! Big brutish warrior types (armed to the gunwales) have moved us off the site. Not allowed to take **anything** from the find-table. I was lucky to make it out with my duffle. All our tools thrown into the back of a – what do you call it? A "ute"? Well, that anyway. And even Uncle Dapto's botanic tribute had to remain *en situ*. I'm warning you, Adrian: I'll need several **very** stiff drinks before I recover.

Adrian *concerned* Nobody was roughed-up, I hope?

Bruce emits a broken sob.

Bruce *bereft* Our Viv tried manfully to protect the treasures but he was summarily pushed out of the way by a couple of lads who would make the headlines on UFO cage fighting. Likewise, Felix when he came to Viv's rescue. I simply turned to moosh and allowed these beasts to frog-march me off as I whimpered like a lost child.

Adrian *very concerned* And Dame Naomi? She's okay, is she?

Bruce *more hopeful* Oh yes! All the peeps from the mansion were ferried off in a limo. Which means that the riot squad is now in full and untrammelled charge.

Adrian Good-oh! You get yourself and the other boys (and Vivienne) somewhere nice and I'll sort things out here.

Adrian quickly strides into the dig area. One of the uniformed troops installed there at the PM's request approaches Adrian, then pulls up short. The soldier smiles broadly.

Soldier Lieutenant Lannsing! Have you been chunked into this mess? Are you here to help us with the riff-raff?

Adrian *grins* No Spider. I **am** the riff-raff!

Pages 75– 80

PENNE AT THE ROYAL PARK HOTEL, SYDNEY

SUITE 142

Master's Thesis

SCENE: Interior.

Royal Park Hotel, Sydney. Current day.

Dame Naomi, Penne and Jack's mother Valme have been duly delivered (in pomp and ceremony) to the stylish Royal Park hotel, Sydney. The Lore Ancient Squad team are also domiciled at this hotel.

Suite 142 contains a king-size bed along with two king singles. The bathroom is luxurious and the views of Sydney Harbour are stunning. Thus, the three ladies believe that they will more than enjoy their stay (however long) under the direct insistence of the Prime Minister.

Penne has commandeered a handsome writing table upon which she has spread out her thesis notes (along with several worthy tomes). The ladies are enjoying small talk when there is a knock at the door. They are expecting Anne. Her arrival is greeted with enthusiasm.

Anne Good afternoon, Ladies.

Dame Naomi, I was utterly appalled when I learnt from Adrian that you'd been summarily moved from your home. I trust that you are lawyered-up ready for some sweet litigation?

Dame Naomi laughs at the suggestion that she has been at all inconvenienced.

Dame Naomi Nonsense! We're having a wonderful time. Nothing but the best!

Valme gestures to a mobile tray table in the corner of the room which is covered with treats as well as the usual tea set.

Valme Afternoon tea on an auto-tray. There's plenty left over if you want to dig in.

Before Anne can speak, Penne gushes on the subject of the spectacular views.

Penne Actually, the PM has done us a huge favour. Who can make a stab at guessing how much he's paying for this luxurious room for us?

Anne is drawn over to the large window.

Dame Naomi *waspish* How much the **Government** is paying more like it!

Anne That was the most incredible event -- evicting a squad of highly accredited archaeologists and palaeontologists without ceremony from their valid labours. What is the Prime Minister **thinking!**

Valme *lop-sided smile* I actually voted for that idiot.

Anne Flying from London to Berlin or Rome is a doddle. But flying to Australia takes innumerable hours. It's a massive undertaking. And then to be forbidden from doing one's job!

Dame Naomi *riddled with guilt* Oh! This is all my fault! I absolutely **insisted** that the Lore Ancient folk should run their eyes over Garden of Persephone. What a mess I've made!

Valma and Penne rush to reassure Dame Naomi that she could not have foreseen this outcome.

Anne My task is to make sense of all this -- but at the moment nothing makes any sense at all!

Anne turns to Penne's table.

Anne Well, I'm glad that you managed to smuggle out your books and papers, Penne.

Penne *proudly* Yup! My Master's thesis ... Rollo the Walker who was ... whew! ... he is described as a Norse warlord. But he is better remembered as the great-great-great grandfather of William the Conqueror.

Rollo and his Vikings stormed the site of the future Chartres Cathedral in 911 AD.

Rollo described what happened. All the minutiae ... and he either wrote it himself or at least it was dictated by him.

Background:

Rollo's son was William Longsword.

Rollo's grandson was Richard I of Normandy.

Rollo's great-grandson was Richard II.

Rollo's great-great-grandson was Robert the Magnificent.

And Rollo's great-great-great-grandson was William The Conqueror.

Anne *frowning* I was told that your source has been slammed far and wide as a fraud. What's that about?

Penne *doubtful where to start* The general consensus is that Rollo was a slash-and-burn Viking. The very last thing he would be expected to achieve was anything even remotely close to a diary of his work.

And yet he did.

Anne shakes her head.

Anne *puzzled and surprised* But that means that you are working from an original -- an account from the Viking side and not from a terrified onlooker? Brilliant!

Penne produces a manilla folder from the welter of papers on the writing table.

Penne *proudly* Eleven trips to Chartres. I photocopied that lot (with full approval from the Monseigneur and wearing white cotton gloves) direct from Rollo's memoirs.

Penne happily dives into her copy of "Rollo the Walker: His Defeat of the City of the Carnutes".

Penne reads aloud as she translates from Old Norse Listen! I'm pretty sure that this is where the lads go berserker.

 "It has long been the custom for soldiers to be wick. They must be pitch before they take up their arms against other men."

Penne hands the papers to Anne who eagerly scans several of the pages.

Music: haunting flute and harp.

Anne I want to compare it to the Paston Letters. About four hundred years after Rollo. But there's no comparison, is there?

Penne shakes her head No way. This is not pleasant day-to-day family ramblings. And neither is it a soul-stirring saga.

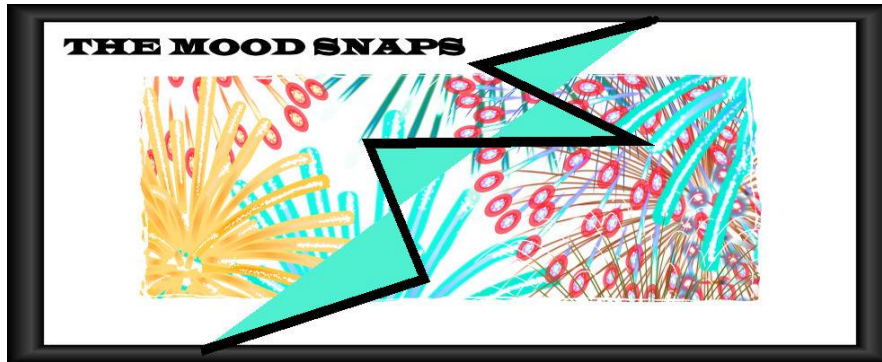
 Rollo was clearly a violent chief – and he wanted the entire world to know that.

Anne arrested Old Norse? You read and understand Old Norse?

Penne Yep.

 Is that one of your languages, too?

Anne nods Well, I wouldn't call myself fluent but --



All of a sudden Anne is arrested. She almost forgets to breathe. Here is the next break to earlier times. However, it is in the form of a flashback with voice-over from Anne. The flashback will end with Anne falling into a faint.

[This happened previously in "George and John" where Nerine was found semi-conscious after her "dreams" and again in "The Thread" where Marl blacked-out.]



AUDRA & GREGOR

Pages 82 - 86

DAME AUDRA & THE MAN SHE LOVES 911 AD

FLASHBACK: Fleeing Chartres

PLOT PROGRESSION:

There have been several "visits" back to 911 AD made by Anne.

The next "visit" is a flashback to the days before Audra and Bega head for Saule Farm.

We need to establish that Audra is very devoted to Gregor: he is her lifeline. The upshot is that (since Gregor and Adrian are one-and-the-same man to Anne/Audra) the romance between Adrian and Anne can blossom.



SCENE: Exterior.

The locale is a sweet, cosy Medieval laneway with Chartres Cathedral (as it was in 911 AD).

The large farm horse walks along to the lane. By means of a tandem saddle, Gregor rides with Audra behind him. Audra sits side-saddle, gripping a scarf which has been tied around Gregor's chest.

Gregor reins in the horse then vaults off with ease. He then assists Audra to dismount into his arms. He gently places her beside the horse.

Gregor There you are, my Lady.

Just as Audra begins to move away, there is a loud, many-voiced brouhaha. Audra stops, alarmed. Gregor rushes to her side. Pulling Audra to his side with one arm, he extracts a dagger from his boot with the other.

Gregor *softly* Be still, Lady. No harm shall come to you while I breathe.

Audra smiles with kindness.

Audra I know that, good Gregor. Of all my servants --

Gregor I shall find another horse. With all possible speed I must get myself to the King's court to beg for his aid.

There is a woman nearby: Bega. She is a kinswoman of mine. And there will be a speedy horse that she might let

me borrow.

[Holding Audra by her shoulders.]

Will you put yourself in my hands? Will you trust me?

Audra Of course.

Gregor *very low* If we can live through this ordeal, mayhap we can be happy together.

The brouhaha is now very close. The townspeople run through the streets, screaming that the devils from the North approach. Audra clings to Gregor whose arm encircles Audra. They stop, looking at each other and then they kiss.



SCENE: Interior.

Suite 142 in the Royal Park hotel. Current day.

As indicated, Anne drops to the floor in a faint.

Dame Naomi and Penne appear concerned. Valme moves up to Anne to chafe her hands.

Valme What's the matter? Are you having a turn?

Penne *concerned* Anne? Anne? Are you okay?

Anne recovers.

She pulls herself together. She swiftly scrabbles around in her brain to come up with an explanation for her faint.

Anne

Oh dear ... Jet-lag sometimes does this to me ...

Sorry if I startled you.

[She stands, trying to look normal.]

The brooch! That's what I meant to do.

Now that I have reassured myself that you lovely ladies are none the worse for wear, I'm excusing myself such that I may follow-up with the history of the Roman brooch (circa 50 BC).

Bye for now.

Anne scoots out of the hotel room. Penne (frowning) flips through the Rollo diary. Then she picks up her mobile phone and calls Adrian.

Penne *speaking on her* Adrian? It's Penne Danvers.

mobile

Yeah. Hi.

Um ... Look I don't want to worry you be Anne Glenn was here at the hotel. She was interested in my thesis work.

Small pause.

Penne *speaking on her mobile* Yeah. Right. I mean, you'd expect her to be interested in her field of expertise. But I don't know what happened ... She sort of had a seizure or something. She blacked right out for about a minute, I guess.

Small pause.

Penne *speaking on her mobile* No. She snapped out of it then almost ran out of the room on the hunt for more info on that Roman brooch that Dame Naomi found.

Small pause.

Penne *speaking on her mobile* Would you? Oh, that'd be great. It's just that I've never had anyone do that before and it was a bit iffy ... You'll make sure she's okay? Great!

Pages 87 – 90

THE ROMANS DID SIDDER

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF THE ROMAN BROOCH

AND CHECKING OUT THE ARTWORK

SCENE: Interior.

A display of jewellery as found in a museum. Current day.

Voice only. The brooch holds centre page (a photo of it at least).

Female voice

I located some very dusty old records for you as requested, Dr Glenn. Complete with a job number: MTH521.

And -- Yes! That particular item was part of a Treasures of Rome exhibition which was mooted to be held at the Melbourne Town Hall just as World War I was bursting forth. Unfortunately, due to the exigencies of the War, the thing never got off the ground. All the treasures were hastily shipped back to London.

Voice of Anne

And this one? Was its absence noted?

Female voice

I've no idea. Let me get back to you on that point. Having the job number will no doubt prove expeditious there.



Adrian What this?

Uncle Dapto Anne from Oxford showed me what a Roman ship looked like. (Don't ask me to pronounce it, eh). And she asked me to draw it as if it was old-style blackfella rock-art.

Which I done.

Adrian So, this is your take on an Ancient Roman trireme?

Uncle Dapto Yup. Remembering that I'm a horseman not an artist. But I done it in the style that would have been the "go" back then.

Adrian Okay.

And this one here is what was found at Dame Naomi's place? Yeah?

Uncle Dapto *nods* Correct. Spot the difference, eh.

This one I done is a blackfella pretending to be a blackfella artist. But ***that one*** is a whitefella pretending to be a

blackfella artist. Not even close.

Adrian *pleased*

Goodoh. Thanks, mate. I'll get these to Anne.

And I'd better try to catch up with the digging people from the UK that you met.

Uncle Dapto *laughs*

Oh, they've had a pretty rough time, mate. If I know anything they'll be working their way through a large bottle of Scotch whiskey right now, eh.

Adrian *grins*

That is not a bad thought. And even better if I join them.
See ya – and thanks!

Pages 89 – 97

THE ROMANS DID SIDDEERS

An elegant bar in the Royal Park Hotel, Sydney.

PLOT PROGRESSION:

One of the characters in movie #2 & movie #3 links here: Dominic Lynier (who appeared with his brother Felix at the very beginning of this movie).

SCENE: Interior.

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A very stylish and well-stocked bar in the Royal Park hotel, Sydney.
Current day.

The Lore Ancient Squad team are domiciled at this hotel.

Bruce sits on a stool at the bar, looking very downcast and glum. He is the worse for the drink. A large bottle of Scotch whiskey stands empty on the bar.

Felix stands nearby. He is roundly (and loudly) berating all and sundry, being better for the drink.

Here Felix draws a swig from his cocktail and then continues to pontificate.

Felix *loud, aggressive* I have never once -- not ***once!*** -- in my somewhat glorious and always precious professional career been thwarted in the ... in the ...

Damn! My mind has frozen up. Give me a prompt, Bruce old Boy.

Apparently, Felix has become forgetful as Bruce is able to pick up the threads of this one-sided conversation.

Bruce *very sad* "In the performance of my " --

Felix *brightens* Thank you! (Ever the wordsmith, Mr Hywnes).

Let's see ...

Thwarted in the performance of my professional endeavours -- Thwarted at gunpoint, mind you! ... by beefy

military types who are acting at the behest of any Right Honourable Prime Minister that --

Bruce *brightening*

You are a "Right Honourable" yourself, Old Man.

Felix *blind-sided*

Yes of course. And my brother Dominic and my sister (who is now married). Funny that you should remember that.

[Becoming teary]

Dearest Papa ... Lord Lynier ...

Bruce

Now, I've met your brother when he guest-starred on a couple of our dig-gigs. As I recall, your Dominic is a very talented palaeo -- what's it ...

Felix

Palaeornithologist. Yes! That's right. Birds. In our case, he blathered-on about eagles. Or sparrows, was it?

No! Hawking! It was hawks.

[Warning tone.]

Don't ever mention any of your theories on the evolution of birds in his presence or he'll completely lose it. Loopy! Potty! Fisticuffs!

Bruce *very puzzled*

But I don't have any of those theories. Never did. I'm absolutely a "which-came-first-the-chicken-or-the-egg" man.

Felix

Well, you'd better keep it that way. Stick to your credo at all cost. Safest ...

Then again you might be fine – my Bro is in Antarctica or some far-flung continent staring up into the skies as white-bellied birds circle overhead ...

Ah ... me ...

[Trying to wind the conversation backwards in his head]

Now -- where in my rant on the subject of the Australian Prime Minister had I reached before you nipped-in with my soubriquet?

Bruce *confidently winds back the conversation*

Thwarted at gunpoint by beefy military types who are acting on the instructions of the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Australia.

Felix *starts off very pleasantly*

Oh yes!

[Remembers to be savagely angry]

You could not name any Right Honourable Prime Minister that you would find in any Commonwealth realm who would have insulted my good self in that cavalier fashion.

Never! Not once!

Until now ...

Adrian strolls up. He nods to the barman who provides a pot of cold beer from the tap.

Adrian

Cheers gentlemen.

Felix and Bruce murmur something or other as they continue to drink.

Bruce *gloomy*

Unthinkable. Bloody unbelievable. I'm totally shattered by

the whole episode.

Felix *even louder*

This man (and I'm aware that he has Oriental forebears) has stamped his Right Honourable foot as would a petulant child --

Adrian *interrupts*

Don't get diverted by his being of Chinese appearance. Loads of Sydneysiders have ancestors who came to Oz during the Gold Rush. When was that? About 1850 or something ... so they're 4th or 5th or 6th generation. They don't identify as Chinese at all.

Felix

The situation my dear friend Adrian of Busybee Constructions is deteriorating as each second passes. You can say nothing to lift my spirits. Our spirits. Mr Hywnes and my Right Honourable self are inconsolable at this impasse.

Bruce

Prostrate with grief.

Felix

Correct. Thank you.

[Points to Bruce]

We are (as you can clearly witness) prostrate with grief. And despair ...

Viv enters the bar and sees some acquaintances to hand. He comes up to the three men, slapping a newspaper on the bar (and in so doing gives Bruce a start).

Viv *angrily stabbing the newspaper with a*

We stated clearly that this was not to be publicly announced until we had our ducks in a row. Look what the

finger

arsehole has done!

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIND OF THE CENTURY:
THE ROMANS VISITED SYDNEY!**

Prime Minister Ton will address the nation tonight

Adrian *snorts*

Yeah, yeah ... The Romans did Sidders and the PM is giving himself a one-pumper ... Can anyone advise where we go from here?

Felix

Tell me again! What **were** your instructions from Australia's head honcho?

Adrian

He simply gave us a right royal spray. That's all. "Cease and desist!"

How long have we got until our beloved leader wags his jaw on the teve?

Viv *reads from the newspaper*

Er ... 8:30.

Adrian *in command*

Guys, we need a plan. We can't just sit around waiting for 8:30. One of us has to experience a flash of inspiration.

Felix *laughs*

I'm at my best (inspiration-wise) when 3 sheets to the wind. Ready to do the haka in the face of the enemy. So,

let's keep the beverages rolling, shall we?

Bruce *hopeful* Liquid brain rehydration, is it? I'm up for it.

Viv *rubbing his hands together* Hear! Hear! Another jug of something 4.5% proof ... Solely for the purpose of brain-storming (of course).

Adrian *shrugs, smiling* Okay. Keep the drinks chugging through.

All 4 men (very pleased with themselves) are quickly served by 2 barmen.

Bruce has the newspaper to scribble on, and he reefs a biro from one of his pockets. Bruce will scrawl the points raised by Adrian, Felix and Viv as they drink their alcoholic beverages.

Adrian *thinking quickly* Okay. No matter what the experts tell him, the PM refuses to follow any other course. He wants it to be true that the Ancient Romans made it to Sydney. He vehemently supports his credo by waving some Aboriginal artwork in our faces. And a brooch.

He demands that some nebulous person (complete with a pulse) can and will give him a 100% assurance that the 7 bodies at Garden of Persephone are the remains of Roman soldiers. He cannot and will not rest until he has sacked all of us nay-sayers,

He reckons that he'll find some expert to mouth his words and then he can with confidence announce to the world his glory.

Felix snaps his fingers.

Felix *very bright*

The leader of the Opposition! Of course! She has a right of reply (if your Australian Parliament works in the same way that the UK one does).

Adrian (eyes blazing) touches Felix on the shoulder.

Adrian *thrilled*

Which it does ... Which it certainly does ...

Pages 97 – 109

**THE ROMANS DID SIDDER
CRISIS MEETING WITH THE
SHADOW PRIME MINISTER**

SCENE: Interior.

Inside a taxi. Current day.

Adrian has given the address to the driver. The taxi heads off with Adrian and Anne sharing the back seat. Adrian automatically takes Anne's hand in his.

Adrian

Not sure how much exposure you ever get to parliamentarians. I suppose you bump into them from time

to time.

Anyhow, Ellyn MacMahon is very personable. I think you'll like her. She's a straight shooter.

Anne (nodding) tries to look at Adrian but cannot. Adrian notices that.

Adrian What I thought was that I could offer to help Ellyn with her right of reply speech. I mean – she will want to give all the possible background to the 7 bodies and et cetera. What happened to them and who is responsible.

Anne *nervous* Yes ... Yes ... The rebuttal ...

But you have to discuss all that with this Professor Judd fellow. Find out his disposition.

Adrian *equably* Well said. Yeah, I'll run through all the points with him.
Sure! Good idea!

Anne We're collecting the Professor on the way, yes?

Adrian No. He wanted to use his own transport. So, we go straight to Ellyn MacMahon's apartment.

Adrian sighs. After a short pause, he turns to Anne.

Adrian *gently* Hey! Have I said something or done something to upset you?

Because if so -- I am totally sorry and I won't do it again.

Anne is dumbfounded. She appears very nervous. It takes her a second or two to answer, and then she stumbles with her words.

Anne *nervous* No! No, you haven't. Not at all.

Adrian *softly* Then something has upset you. You'd better tell me.

Adrian softly strokes Anne's arm with two fingers. Anne looks at him, a little frightened.

Anne *as nervous as a cat* No ... No ... um ...

Adrian There used to be a Dr Anne Glenn who was almost bouncing off the walls in her eagerness to get everything done at maximum acceleration. Now I find that same lady has disappeared into the mist. What happened to her?

Anne can no longer hold out. The finger-stroking on her arm is very evocative.

Anne *trembling* I've -- She's -- I've fallen in love with a reliable, sturdy man named Gregor.

These words stun Adrian. He looks shattered. He disengages himself from Anne, shifting in his seat. When he can trust himself to speak, he does so.

Adrian calming himself Have you? That's interesting. "Reliable" ... "Sturdy" ...
Hmmm ...
Really interesting. I'm ... I shouldn't have started kissing you and stuff ... I didn't know that you were already taken. You should have told me, I reckon.
Anyway -- won't happen again. Sorry.

Anne evasive Adrian, when you collected me at the airport you were the man-of-the-hour: helping me with my baggage, shepherding me about ... Is that some sort of throwback to the olden times of courtly manners?

Adrian at sea I dunno. Could be ... Might be ...

Anne You were in the military at one stage, weren't you? That's come up in conversation.

Adrian nods That's right. So what?

Anne And you were married, too. That's right, isn't it?

Adrian snorts as he speaks abrasively I'd hardly call it a marriage. We were together for less than 6 months as it happens. That woman was some sort of bitch. A 24-carat bitch. Even somebody high on drugs enjoying their adventure in the clouds would find it hard to find anything good to say about that time in my life.
See, some ladies can't resist a bloke in uniform. My ex threw herself at me from the first batting eyelid. Once caught and married, her success instantly led to boredom. For both of us. And we both began our extra-marital activities.

There is a pause which Adrian finds devastating.

Adrian Let's not talk about her. She was poison.

 So? You haven't given me the lowdown on your beloved.
 You've tried to divert me but not working.

Anne swallows hard.

Anne Alright.

 He's a man's man. Very masculine. Strong and brave. A real
 hero.

Adrian Wow! That's impressive!

Anne If you must know, he lived in France over a hundred years
 before William the Conqueror.

Adrian *confused* Uh?

Anne *very small voice* And I love him to the end of the universe. We have gone
 through a wedding ceremony at Chartres.

Adrian did not catch that last part of the speech. The taxi driver has asked a question which Adrian answers (leaning forward). They have reached Ellyn MacMahon's domicile.

SCENE: Exterior.

Alighting from the taxi. Current day.

Adrian jumps out of the taxi then assists Anne to alight. They are hand-in-hand.

Their eyes meet. Anne is stricken and nearly in tears.

We very vaguely hear Adrian ask: "What's that you said about William the Conqueror?"

SCENE: Interior.

The up-market apartment of the Leader of the Opposition. Current day.

As the scene opens, Adrian and Anne are shaking hands with Prof Llewelyn Judd and Ellyn MacMahon (who gestures for her guests to sit).

The TV is on (very quiet) and the show is a T20 cricket match.

[Note: We will relive the sentiments regarding the PM with the wash-up of the Rollo situation.]

Ellyn is reluctant to talk about the PM. But then after much reasonable argument from Adrian and Anne, Ellyn relents.

Ellyn *shakes head*

We all know that this is an improper forum to discuss the Prime Minister's mental health. I cannot and will not appear on the television in a couple of days' time to run him into the ground. Not going to happen.

Adrian

Precisely.

My strong belief is that you would do better to steer clear

of even mentioning him. Rather, you would walk through the points of the crime (the 7 murders) and the hoax (as Dr Glenn has researched). That is you would say (in brief): "there never were any ancient Romans in Sydney. Here is the proof. QED."

Ellyn The aboriginal artwork seems very convincing ...

Anne Discussions with a much-respected aboriginal elder have thrown more light on the artwork. It was totally bogus.

Ellyn And the Roman brooch?

Anne *nods* Yes, that too.

Ellyn it was an elaborate fraud.

Adrian will assist you in writing it up – if you can just hang out for a couple of days before you appear on television to answer the PM's speech.

Ellyn *points to TV* We don't yet know what he intends to say.

Adrian Yes, we do. And it's going to upset loads of people. We want you to pour calming oil on the troubled water, given that there is no way the PM will back off from this madness.

Ellyn *glancing at clock* Well, we have less than 10 minutes. Shoot!

Adrian Okay. The Prime Minister has taken unnecessary and drastic action to close down the Lore Ancient Squad dig at *Garden of Persephone*. He threatens to jail the aforementioned elder who has assisted us, and has taken steps to oust Dr Glenn from this country. Finally, the PM has ***insisted*** that Professor Judd here must support what is

clearly insupportable.

Ellyn And you want me to hold forth (just in this room and to go no further) on the PM's mental health. Is that right?

Prof Judd Yes. So that we can understand the crazy events we've witnessed – but in no way are our discussions here to be published nor broadcast.

Ellyn *shrugs* Okey-doke.

Recall that I'm not a medical expert of any kind.

[Slight pause.]

Yes, I've spoken to several medicos about the PM's condition (about certain symptoms that have slipped through the cracks) but ...

Adrian glances at Anne. Prof Judd shifts in his seat.

Prof Judd Neither am I a medical person, but I don't have to be hit over the head with an iron bar to realize that our country's elected leader is at least one sandwich short of a picnic. A brick short of a load. Not the full quid.

Adrian *grins* Well said!

Ellyn drops into the upper corner of an armchair. She looks directly at Prof Judd.

Ellyn Go on! What have you noticed?

Proj Judd *shrugs* How many ways are there to say that someone is unglued? And this is our most senior official. This is the man who will take private calls from the British PM or from the President of the US or from the Chinese high command. And here he is spouting fairy tales which even an 8-year-old would cringe at.

Ellyn What have you --

Prof Judd *urgent* A gag has to be applied and fast! What is this deluded man going to say next? My heart is in my mouth 24/7! And in (what?) 5 minutes he will spill his guts in the public forum. "Sick with apprehension" doesn't even come close to how I feel right now.

Ellyn leans forward to put her hand over those of Prof Judd.

Ellyn Okay. This is what I know.

Doug has been blocked. His hobby-horse was to be a huge secret undertaking in Central Australia. Parliament smashed him. When that happened, he flipped out. He did not suck his thumb sitting with his back turned to all and sundry. No! He became (your word, Prof) "unglued" – completely and utterly unglued.

What I was told by the experts is that there *is* such a thing as dying from disappointment. Really bitter galling disappointment that is. Anxiety, depression, cardiovascular

issues.

They all stop to look at the TV. The batsman has hit a huge 6.

Ellyn This crazy Romans in Sydney chaos has completely tied him in knots. He actually has visions of legionaries stepping off triremes in order to land at Dover Heights. He shudders in his sleep as he "witnesses" aboriginal men spearing the travel-weary Roman warriors before casting their bodies into the Pacific Ocean. Nothing and nobody can shift him.

Prof Judd *firmly* Well, something and/or somebody must do just that.

Ellyn *nods* It can't come from me but ... I'll speak to a few contacts in the Cabinet ...

Aidan Better still the G-G.

Prof Judd The Governor-General? Yes! The only man with any power over the Prime Minister is the King's representative.

Anne Or the King himself? Go for the gold, perhaps.

The cricket disappears from the TV to be replaced by an official-looking notice that the Prime Minister is speaking from Kirribilli House, Sydney. Then PM appears at a well-presented desk, complete with Australian flag.

PM *smiling broadly* Good evening.

It is with extreme pleasure and delight that I bring you this

most momentous news.

Our history has changed. It is no longer the case that Captain James Cook discovered Australia in 1770. An earlier landing was made (near Vaucluse) at the time of the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar. This landing was of several Roman legionaries who came in triremes (as recorded by the aboriginals of the time).

All of our history books must be rewritten to reflect this earth-shattering event. All statues of Captain Cook are to be hauled down, to be replaced with statues of the Ancient Roman heroes who actually founded our great country.

Prof Judd, Ellyn, Anne and Adrian stand before the television set, gobsmacked. The PM's voice drones on, but we shall concentrate on the action closest to the camera.

Ellyn *hand over mouth* Oh my God! Four, three, two, one --

Ellyn points into the air and (as if by magic) everyone's mobile phone goes off. There is instant pandemonium.



THE WORLD REACTS.

We see some quick vignettes of world leaders expressing concerns for the Australian Prime Minister.

We hear non-Australian accents speaking: “Very worrying”, “Clearly having some kind of breakdown”, “I’ve just now contacted the Australian Governor-General to bring order to the –”

SCENE: Interior.

Inside the taxi. Current day.

Anne opts to sit in the front passenger seat next to the driver. Adrian sits in the back seat.

Anne I’ve turned my phone off. Too many wild calls.

Adrian Same here.

Anne I can’t cope with this.

Adrian Same here.

The driver is fiddling around with a hand-held metre so he is distracted.

Anne glances back at Adrian. He looks like a lovesick puppy. Suddenly Anne becomes resolute. She moves the rearview mirror such that it directs towards Adrian. Adrian is surprised. The driver is still distracted.

Adrian *warning* Hey! You’d better not dick around with the taxi ...

Anne *firmly* You’ve been asking me about Audra (my alter-ego) and the

man she's married: Gregor. That's him: there, in the mirror.

Adrian *shocked*

Me?!



SCENE: Interior.

Anne's bedroom in the Royal Park Hotel, Sydney. Current day.

Anne is naked in bed in her very dim bedroom with Adrian (also naked) beside her.

They are kissing very passionately. We see on the bedside table some of the pages of Penne's thesis core work (as penned by Hermann).

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THE SIEGE OF CHARTRES 911 AD

As dictated to Hermann by Rollo



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Director's call

AS USUAL, I SHALL NOT "DIRECT" THE ACTIONS HERE.

BATTLES ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO SCRIPT. THE DIRECTOR WILL WORK FROM MY NOTES AND MAKE A GOOD FIST OF IT.

ROLLO & HIS VIKINGS LOSE THE BATTLE – THEY RETREAT TO THE FOREST, BROKEN AND DEMORALIZED.

NOTE ON EARLY MEDIEVAL BATTLE:

If you think about it, the Battle of Hastings occurred only 155 years after this siege (the former being on a much grander scale, of course).

Basically – whatever worked for the Battle of Hastings will work here: arms, costumes, battle formations, fighting methods.

However, I want the Viking troops to be dressed in the same gear they wore in the berserkergang. They got themselves worked-up and then headed straight into battle. Remember that the main aim of the berserkergang was to fire the men up: so any time delay would have had a negative effect on their bellicose mood. Also it will be easier for us (the audience) to identify the Viking fighters by their whacko "uniforms". The Frankish fighters will stand out as ***not*** wearing bear skins and so on.

I want the troops who have mustered to King Charles's flag to be much more organized: to fight in formation rather than charge in as the Vikings would be expected to do in their drug-induced state.

WHAT I WANT THE SIEGE TO RESEMBLE:

During the scenes, we shall hear (from time to time) Hermann's narration in voice-

over. Remember that Rollo has told Hermann what to write. Remember also that the title of the journal suggests that Rollo was successful. This is the lie perpetrated by Rollo.

The bottom line is to see the following:

- Rollo and the drugged-up Vikings raiding the church
- Viking violence as the treasures are foisted from the brave souls guarding the church
- The timely arrival of King Charles, his nobles and his men
- Gregor will be seen to fight manfully
- The beaten Vikings are forced to surrender their loot
- Rollo, Will and the chieftains will be seen to flee as they are outnumbered and disgraced
- Wounded Vikings are seen to make it to the forest where they fall to the ground in agony
- Other Vikings rush past them: there is no brotherly compassion as one would expect from troops in battle

Hermann *voice-over*

The Northmen fought in the manner of lions: brave and unrelenting.

My fingers are sore ... But never would I dare to complain – not to Rollo. He would hack off my fingers rather than soothe them.

So where am I? ... “brave and unrelenting.” Never can we forget in our long lives the looks of fear in those that we would destroy.

Pompous ass!

Here the noises of battle obtrude. We see Gregor (teeth clenched) wielding his heavy sword with great skill and valour.

Hermann *voice-over* We're losing this ruddy fight. Doesn't he know that? Is he so pixilated that he honestly believes himself the victor? Or is he just pretending (to keep our spirits up)?

Nobody and nothing can shift him.

SCENE: Interior.

Anne's bedroom in the Royal Park Hotel, Sydney. Current day.

Anne is asleep in bed in her very dim bedroom. She snaps awake in such a dramatic way that she sits bolt upright, gasping. Her eyes are wild. She is visibly shaken.

Adrian is beside her. He too wakes up. He takes her in his arms, soothing and caressing.

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WHAT HAPPENED IN 1915

Anne and Jack sort it out

(with loads of assistance from others)

SCENE: Interior.

The loungeroom: Anne is in the company of Valme and Dame Naomi at Garden of Persephone.

Anne's mobile phone rings. She quickly answers it.

John *mobile phone* Hello? Dr Glenn?

Anne Yes, this is Anne Glenn speaking.

John *mobile phone* Good afternoon. I'm Harvey – John Harvey of Severn Gap which is quite close to Yurri Yallock.

Anne Ah ... Yes!

John *mobile phone* You were speaking to my offsider in Yallock. She thought I might be able to supply the information you seek ... I'm halfway through a research paper for the University of Sydney on just this subject.

Anne Excellent!

John *mobile phone* Yes. To cut to the chase: my investigations show that (according to old records) we are short 7 human corpses. 8 young men were slain in the summer of 1915 in separate incidents. One of these victims later turned up (that is to say his body turned up) in a haystack. The other 7 boys disappeared without trace. Although their remains were carted to the mortuary in the proper manner, the remains vanished prior to burial.

As you can imagine, that all caused a big kerfuffle at the time.

Anne That sounds like I'm on the right track.

John *mobile phone* Yes, so it would seem.

They were white boys who attended the St Gabriel Temple in Yoori Yallock. The overwhelming philosophy of St Gabriel's was pacificism. No-one minded the pacifism until the Great War saw Australian boys and men trooping off to Europe to fight for Great Britain. That was the way in those days. Our Mother Country meant everything to us.

As you can imagine, the St Gabriel boys were conscientious objectors. They refused to fight. And the warmongering bullies of the area rewarded them by forcing them to have their skin marked either by branding or tattooing.

Anne *quickly* Red Maltese cross?

John *mobile phone* That's right. And then 8 of these boys was murdered by person or persons unknown, as I have already told you.

A couple of aboriginal boys saw the victims laid out naked on sheets of corrugated tin (they thought) ... and then dressed-up in some kind of uniform. From the description, these uniforms might have been those of the Ancient Romans but that cannot be confirmed.

Anne That's extremely helpful, John.

1915, you said?

John *mobile phone* That's right.

Anne The summer? I'm sorry ... being British I'm a bit hazy about when ...

John *mobile phone* Of course. December to February. So the first 2 months of 1915.



Anne *slight smile* Yes. You're right. It's a hoax. Somebody (or several people) has/have gone to considerable effort and expense to try and convince the general public that seven bodies buried in the grounds of Garden of Persephone were the remains of Roman legionaries.

Anne *to Adrian* Adrian, are you at all familiar with a practice which seems to have been popular in Outback Australia as well as in some places on the US frontier say 80 years ago? It is based on reworking tins or cans in order to fabricate what is known as corrugated tin sheets?

Adrian *frowns as he remembers* Yeah ... Yeah my grandfather had a shed made of that stuff. The brands that were originally on the tin cans surfaced on the corrugated tin sheets. Like "Johnson & Johnson" and "Swallow's Biscuits" and "Witches Soap" (as I recall).

Anne *nods* Correct. All seven of the bodies (when examined during autopsy) bore the effects of having been laid out (while deceased and naked) on just such corrugated tin sheets as you describe. That feature did not fade out even following

decades of interment. Also, the armour supported this finding.

This peculiarity may (in time) help us to identify the bodies. May even indicate the perpetrator of this elaborate con job.

Anne after a pause As I intimated, this was an expensive exercise this hoax. What puzzles me is that it only came to light when Dame Naomi happened to dig in her garden.

Anne after a pause What do you Aussies say? "Dodgy".

My area of expertise is in the arena of blame. I point the finger of blame. Yes, others will label the doings as "dodgy" -- however, my aim is to nominate those who executed said "dodge": -- by whom was it arranged and for what purpose.

That's what I do.

Anne after a pause So -- here's my plan.

I will investigate the previous owners of Garden of Persephone, Dame Naomi.

I shall be looking for a character from the 1910's and thereabouts who had plenty of time, plenty of money, and a penchant for this kind of trickery. Maybe even priors ...

A very serious crime has been committed and I'm the woman to unmask it. The Lore Ancient Squad lads and lassies have previously labelled me as "the Debunker".



Anne drums her fingers on the table. She looks about her for the papers that Jack gave her.

SCENE: Exterior.

A suburban cricket ground.

We are aware that Jack Cutler plays cricket with the Liburnians alongside Gordon Danvers.

Our camera picks up the action but is much further away than when we previously watched the cricket game. Once again, the Liburnians are batting.

Penne sits on the grass with other cricket fans in a very lovely setting on a beautiful sunny day. As it happens, Jack and Gordon are together on the pitch as batting partners. We see Penne smiling broadly as she claps – her brother Gordon has hit a big six.

Penne Well played, Gordo! Woo-hoo!

With his next shot Gordon takes a single. That puts Jack on strike. Trying to emulate his friend, Jack hoicks the ball up into the air. He is caught. We hear the sounds of thrill from the opposition supporters; disappointment from the Liburnians supporters. However, Jack (extremely annoyed with himself) returns

to the club house to polite applause.



Jack strolls to where Penne sits. He plonks himself down beside her. Jack pulls Penne to him so that he can kiss her. Penne knows better than to mention the dicky shot which has forced Jack off the field.

Gordon is on song. Jack and Penne join the enthusiastic cheering as Gordon smacks the ball, taking 2 runs.

Jack Hey. Something I was gonna mention ... Do you still knock around with that Pommie doctor?

Penne *frowns* Pommie doctor?

Jack The one who's helping you with your thesis.

Penne *bright* Oh, you mean Anne – she's like a much-loved sister. I see her all the time.

Jack Well, when you see her next time, tell her that she's right on the money. She's on the right tram.

Penne In what way?

Jack She asked me to get hold of info on the past owners of my auntie's property. I did that, gave her the papers and then she left them lying about. Before much longer, everyone got turfed out (as you know, courtesy of the PM) and when we were allowed back in – there they still were.

Penne Okay. I'll do that. Did you see the PM on the teve?

Jack Who didn't? It was the biggest joke.

A whole bunch of Uni kids on holidays have been wandering around the City dressed up like Captain Cook. Another herd of students are done up as Roman legionaries. It's like O-week on steroids. It's just crazy.

Gordon goes down on one knee to smack the cricket ball clean over the fence for another 6. He has thereby scored 51 runs. Jack stands to applaud the 50 runs (the half-century). When he sits down again, Jack nods to Penne.

Jack Look! I'll need to catch up with the Pommie doc in person so I can tell her what I found out.

SCENE: Exterior.

Outdoor tables and chairs at a fish 'n' chip cafe. Evening. Current day.

Anne, Jack and Penne eat fish 'n' chips out of takeaway containers (in their fingers).

Jack has brought with him the ownership papers along with notes of his own. Whilst speaking, Jack will often refer to these notes.

Jack *low-voiced* This goes no further by the way. I'd get the sack.

Penne *conspiratorial* The database at his office is all-reaching. He's like a policeman – he can look up anything.

Anne *worried* Ooh! I don't want you to get into trouble, Jack.

Jack

No worries.

Anyhow, the bloke you want is Nicholas Tyburn who hit the air in 1896. And his mate was Gus (Augustus) Brayland. About the same age.

So, the very famous William Wentworth started the construction of *Garden of Persephone* (which I never pronounce properly, apparently). He died and some other builder took over. The owner was Colonel Grant Tyburn. But he died of typhoid not long after he bought it. Bit of a downer ...

His son was Errol and Errol's son was this Nicholas dude.

Anyway – without all the fluffy stuff here is what I found out. Gus had 2 brothers (Henry and Lewis). With Nick, the 4 of them belonged to a far-right group which demanded that Australians join the fight in Europe (that is World War One).

None of these 4 blokes joined up by the way. They just ponced around – well-educated, well-heeled, and totally up themselves.

[Jack catches himself short.]

Oh, I'm sorry. Do you know what that means: "up yourself"?

Anne *laughs*

Yes, I do. But that puts them right on the scene ... When was this, do you know?

Jack *pleased*

Yep. Not long after New Year of 1915, Nick hatched a plot to queer the pitch for local dignitary Sir Carmichael Glynn-

Fletcher who was a serial nuisance and dedicated amateur archaeologist. The plan was that they would mock-up a mass burial (the same as you saw) and get this Glynn-Fletcher bloke all hot and bothered. Get him to investigate it, you know.

Anne *nods*

In fact, it was just a prank. Except that the murders make it a very serious prank.

Jack

I can't make any connection between these 4 rich guys and the murdered blokes. If we had that it would tie everything up.

Anne

My educated guess is that the far-right organization would have held lists of conscientious objectors. These 4 men could simply drive to Yoori Yallock and ...

Hmm ...

I'll call Adrian with this – this is what we need for Ellyn's TV speech. Thank you, Jack – you are a gem!



SCENE: Interior.

Adrian's flat. Current day.

Adrian is seen to be flat-out writing the speech for Ellyn. He taps away on his laptop, while yacking on his mobile phone with Anne.

[The reference to the Central Australia jape is a precursor to movie #3.]

Adrian Nicholas Tyburn and his mad mate were really something else. Not only did they vamp up Dame Naomi's garden as a waste-of-time jest, but they also apparently staged another horror story in Central Australia.

 Anyhow, that's nothing to do with us.

 Now, what did you just say?



SCENE: Interior.

The television studio as seen earlier. Current day.

Ellyn MacMahon faces the camera at the same desk where the PM made his infamous speech, complete with Australian flag. She is delivering her right of reply speech.

Male *voice-over* Ladies and gentlemen, the Right Honourable Ellyn MacMahon, Leader of the Opposition. Viewers are warned that some of the material presented may be disturbing. Discretion is advised.

Ellyn *slight smile* Good evening.

 I wish to share with you the following information which has been validated and verified to my complete satisfaction.

 In 1915 an elaborate hoax was to be played on a Vaucluse dignitary. A dedicated amateur historian and archaeologist, the intention was that this gentleman would be tricked into

believing that a Vaucluse property (the Garden of Persephone) contained the graves of several Roman legionaries.

The ruse included buried jewels and what might appear to be a rock-art representation of Romans landing at Dover Heights as depicted by indigenous artists.

The intended victim of this dupe in fact passed away without ever becoming aware of the ruse. Everything remained *en situ* until discovered by the current owner of Garden of Persephone quite recently.

The camera closes in. Ellyn's expression changes: she is now quite solemn.

Ellyn *solemn*

This seeming prank has a very disturbing down-side. The Roman remains were in fact the bodies of Australian teenage boys who had declared themselves to be conscientious objectors (at the time of the First World War). They were all humiliated by being forcibly branded or tattooed, then they were coldly murdered in order to give the hoax veritas.

The camera moves back again.

Ellyn

All Australians loathe and despise this kind of brutality. We all love a joke – but this joke went way too far.

It is impossible with the great removal of time to definitely

name those responsible for the murders. They will remain as cold cases. However, the perpetrators of the fraud are known. I shall table this matter in its entirety in the next sitting of Parliament.

Thank you for your attention.

Anne and Penne watch this on TV.

Ellyn I shall table this matter in its entirety in the next sitting of Parliament.

Thank you for your attention.

Penne turns down the TV volume.

Anne And that's that!

Penne That was superb. She wholeheartedly avoided any mention of Douglas Ton. And all bases covered.

Anne *nods* Yes, Adrian scripted that while on the phone with me. We only just made it, actually.

Penne But it was exactly what was needed. I'm really pumped.

Anne Before I fly off to the UK, I have an idea which directly concerns you, Penne.

Penne Me?

Anne "Rollo the Walker: His Defeat of the City of the Carnutes".

All the critics (who state without contradiction that Pierre-Mars Ruellin penned the work himself in the 16th century) could be silenced with one thing: a provenance.

Don't ask me to explain it to you but my response to the critics would be this: a Viking skald named Hermann wrote the journal as dictated to him by Rollo. Hermann left off (after disagreements with Rollo) and then someone else took over. That's why it seems like the journal was a patchwork.

Luckily for us, Hermann left an Easter egg which ties him irrevocably to the authorship. Monsieur Ruellin found the journal: true. But that was all he did. And if I can resolve all these loose ends, then your thesis becomes a best seller once it is published.

Penne stares at Anne in disbelief, mouth agape.

Anne Now that the Romans have been put to bed, I'm after that Easter egg that Hermann hid so cleverly. But I'll need your help ...

Penne is in awe. She can do no more than nod eagerly.

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A PROVENANCE IS DISCOVERED AT CHARTRES

Penne's core work will be vindicated

PLOT PROGRESSION:

Penne's issue is that everyone with a pulse has slammed Rollo's journal as being a hoax – a fake -- perpetrated by Pierre-Mars Ruellin in the 16th century. Ruellin was a noted scholar, specializing in old Germanic languages. He was well-schooled in Old Norse. And he had a penchant for visiting sites that had been raided by Vikings in the 800's and 900's. It seemed obvious to the scores of critics that Ruellin had knocked-up the ink-and-vellum manuscript that purported to be penned by Rollo himself (or by his scribe using his words).

In order to prove the validity of the Rollo journal which Penne is researching, a provenance is needed. Anne has a bright idea (emanating from her last Frankish vision) which she follows through with one of her acquaintances at Chartres Cathedral.

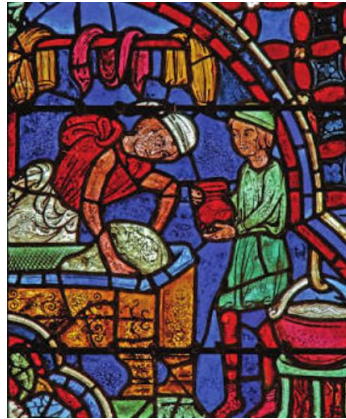
Bottom line: To quash the belief that Ruellin was the author of the journal, Anne needs to provide concrete evidence that it was the skald Hermann to whom Rollo dictated the events of 911 AD as Rollo saw them.

Sweeping montage.

We shall see a medley of stained-glass windows from Chartres.

These will have an agricultural theme. There are many to choose from: here follow

some ideas.



AUDRA & GREGOR

Page 127 – 130

ROLLO THE WALKER 911 AD

Denial of His Defeat

SCENE: Interior.

Anne's bedroom at the hotel.

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Anne picks up the manuscript and kisses it. Then she jumps into bed with Adrian.

Anne *whispers* Hold me! Hold me as tight as you can.
urgently

Adrian is only too happy to comply with this request.

SCENE: Interior.

A kilometre from Chartres. Night. 911 AD.

Hermann is found once again huddled under thick blankets in a rough camp hut. He has a tiny fire to warm him. On the tiny table sits the small wooden box, and not much else (save for Rollo's heavy leather fighting gloves.)

Hermann has been writing the journal by the light of several tallow candles which drip onto the table. Men outside the tent groan and sob.

Rollo entered this tent some time before demanding that Hermann read the last paragraphs of the journal. Hermann's veracity greatly displeases Rollo.

Hermann *reading* ... and lo! These mighty Frankish warriors did wrest the
little church from Rollo's men who were --

Rollo *enraged* That's simply unadulterated crap.

What's your name again, you worm? Oh yes! Hermann the
Skald. Well, you've scored a big black X against your name,
Skald. You and your ink and your vellum can rot in Valhalla.
You get nothing more from me. Understand?

Hermann *reasonable* You asked for the bare, bald truth. I saw with my own eyes
(as did everyone else) that the Frankish King did arrive
upon the scene with an unassailable force --

Blind with fury, Rollo snatches up a heavy glove. He slaps Hermann across the face with it. Hermann takes the slap, even though his face aches and throbs.

Rollo *incandescent
with rage* There! That is all you ever get from me! A slap across the
chops to go on with.

[Points to his own chest.]

Rollo the Walker. Number One. Headman. Your boss. The
Illustrious Leader.

[Pointing at Hermann in pure anger.]

My diary is entitled "His Defeat of the City of the Carnates".
Not "His Defeat by these Frankish pricks". If you choose not
to write it my way, then you can go and do the other thing.

I have other soldiers by me who are able to write. One of
them will take up what you've scrawled so far and finish it
off to my satisfaction.

Rollo grabs the many pages of vellum on which Hermann has slaved with quill
pen and ink.

Rollo *is an apoplectic
rage* Nothing is to be touched! Cast not your ink-stained fingers
upon this draft again!

It's all to be stopped. Halt! No more!

Get out! Get out of my encampment! ***Get out!***

SCENE: Exterior.

Outside. 911 AD

Hermann has been forcibly ejected and rolls on the ground before picking himself up. He scampers away.

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ROLLO THE WALKER AND KING CHARLES III

911 AD

The famous foot-kissing incident

SCENE: Exterior.

Somewhere paved with cobblestones. Daytime. 911 AD

The action will marry-up to Hermann's description of events (below). The King mentioned is King Charles III the Straightforward.

Hermann *voice-over*

It was now the time for Rollo the Walker to embrace God and take Him into his heart.

The Frankish King came upon the scene magnificently

robed. He strode up to Rollo, demanding that the leader of the Norsemen must show fealty in order to win the offered Lands of Normandy. He must submit to King Charles and mend his naughty ways. As a pledge of good faith, Rollo must kneel before the King of the Franks in order to kiss his foot.

This Rollo refused to do.

King *angry*

You do not ***dare*** to defy me! Drop to your knees and kiss my foot as your pledge before God that you will renounce your rebellion. You will not receive my offer of Normandy if you do not.

Rollo *defiant, with arms folded over chest*

So far is it beneath my dignity that I shall ***never*** deign to kneel in homage to you or to any other man no matter the prize.

King *angry*

Know this then: the wages for your recalcitrance will be horrible, vile and unbearable. Atone for your sins! Kneel you and kiss my foot!

Rollo *insouciant*

If it must be done, it must be done. But not by me ... my page will stand as proxy to perform what is unthinkable for myself.

Rollo casually gestures to one of his Vikings close by. But our camera also catches Rollo winking at the man who approaches the king. The man does not kneel but rather grabs the King's foot, bringing it to his mouth. As the King topples over, the Viking licks the King's foot in a very lascivious way. Those gathered about cannot help but titter.

It is Hermann (along with other members of the court) who assists the King to rise and stand once more.

As the King attempts to compose himself (seething in rage as he is), Hermann (kneeling) leans forward to kiss the King's foot.

Hermann *aloud to King* Sire! On behalf of my master and friend, and in light of your generous bequest of the Lands of Normandy – I do seal this homage with a kiss. I shall embrace your God as my own God. My life's work will be to bring the Norsemen into your holy flock. God save the King!

Rollo *furious* You maggot-blasted scum!

Rollo goes to kick Hermann who cowers away. It is Gregor who goes down on his haunches to protect Hermann.

Gregor *to Hermann* Come! I shall give you food and shelter. Follow along we me and my kin. You'll be safe.

Page 133 – 143

HERMANN & AUDRA

911 AD

The Provenance is Made

SCENE: Interior.

A tiny secluded corner of the house at Martin Estate. Daytime. 911 AD

Gregor has organized for Hermann to have his own corner, shielded off with thick woven curtains.

Hermann is back in the business of writing. He has been provided with ink, a fine goose quill and some vellum sheets.

He holds up a glass bauble on a gold chain. The light shines through the glass revealing about 5 grains of wheat which have been encased therein.

Hermann smiles. He puts down the bauble such that he may continue writing.

Hermann *writing*

I (Hermann the Skald) do hereby swear that I have forsaken my former master Lord Rollo (whose journeys and rascally deeds did I lately record with ink on vellum). Dame Audra has returned to her Martin Estate where she and her noble husband Gregor will ever dwell in peace and prosperity. I shall live on the Estate with them and give help where I am able. For those of my readers whose hearts beat for the sake of a love-match, I can inform them

straightway that I have my eye on the widow Bega who will make me a worthy helpmate in my later years.

This is one Danish skald who will know extreme happiness for the rest of his days in the bountiful land of the Franks.

SCENE: Exterior.

Martin Estate. Daytime. 911 AD

Many farmworkers (along with Bega) are busy at their labours.

Hermann (holding his prized wooden box) is with Audra. He has handed her the glass and wheat bauble necklace.



Hermann *to Audra* I have expended what was left of my savings Dame Audra to purchase for you this bauble to wear about your neck.

Audra Hermann! So very kind. But I cannot --

Hermann *insists* Take it good lady as a token of my admiration for you and your people (the Franks) and your country (the fields of the Carnates).

I had instructed that the glassblower encase some grains of wheat in the glass. And this he did. That will be my proof that I do earnestly love this country.

Audra Thank you so much Hermann.

Hermann And this box. It is locked. I want you to ensure that it is buried in the church. Then those who follow you and me and your good man Gregor will prise it open to wonder at what Hermann had achieved. The story of Rollo the Walker was wrested from my hands. I do not weep for it. I no longer care for it. But the box will be a special object for future generations to marvel at.

Audra Do you still have the key to this beautiful box?

Hermann nods.

Audra Then open it, please. This lovely glasswork will be stowed in the church, in the box. That seems to me the best way.

Hermann unlocks the box. Audra places the necklace in the box. Hermann locks it. Audra smiles.



Hermann takes the key and swallows it with his beaker of wine.



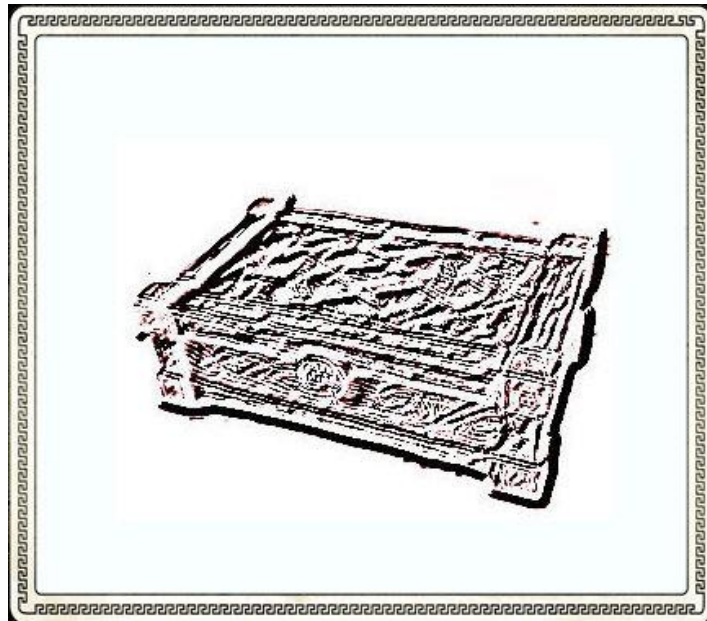
He is next seen wandering about in Bega's wake, helping her with her work. A young maid trails after them carrying the baby Liffy. Audra is seen walking about with Gregor who leads a nice-looking horse.

SCENE: Interior.

The usual loungeroom at *Garden of Persephone*. Daytime into evening then into night. Current day.

Penne are busy with paperwork whereas Anne is on her mobile phone.

Cloriel is played by the actress who plays Bega.



Anne *mobile*

Cloriel! I've sent you a photo of a locked wooden box that I've drawn. It predates the Norman Invasion of 1066

(which occurred in England, of course). I'm praying that you can lay your hands on it. It would have been found when the old church was dismantled in preparation for the building of the cathedral.

Cloriel *mobile*

Yes. I know it very well. That box is in the museum here. And what about the other photo you sent? The sketch of the glass ornament? I'm afraid I've never seen that piece.

Anne *mobile*

No. The bauble necklace is in the locked box.

Here's what I need: the box is to be unlocked and the glass bauble to be drilled into. Or broken if that is what it will take.

The glass encloses grains of wheat. I need the wheat to be carbon-14 dated. And the process is to be filmed, if you could please organize that.

All this activity will be at my expense.

Cloriel *mobile,*
doubtful

I'll get back to you, Anne.

This is way beyond what we usually allow. However, your name will add much weight. I'll work through the official channels.

Anne *mobile*

And Cloriel -- there is a small message in the wooden box -- ink on vellum written in Old Norse. I have a young lady here on standby to read that message. So, when you find it, please photograph and send urgently.

Cloriel *mobile*

To Australia?

Anne *mobile*

Yes. To Sydney, Australia.

Cloriel *mobile* Very well. Will do.



Anne's phone rings.

Anne *mobile* Yes, Cloriel?

Cloriel *mobile* Our expert on wooden objects is convinced that the box you are after has never been unlocked since the key has not been located. It has simply sat about all these centuries as an *objet d'art* but nothing more.

However, modern laser technology will permit the box to be broken into (with the least possible damage).

Do you still want us to proceed?

Anne *mobile* Yes. Yes, please. It is the contents of the box which are vital. That means breaking into the box by any means.

Cloriel *mobile* Okay. I hear you.

Anne finishes the call. She turns to Penne.

Anne This tension is killing me.

Penne I can't believe that we're so close. Thank you one million times.



Anne is exhausted. She has flopped herself onto the table, drowsy and dozing. Penne works at her thesis as usual.

Then Anne's phone makes a tinkly noise indicating that a text message has arrived. Anne stirs.

Anne *sleepy* This may not be from Cloriel but cross your fingers.

Anne fiddles with the phone. Penne watches, breathless. Anne instantly wakes up.

Anne *excited* A text message ...
Yes! It's the note that Hermann wrote. Can you possibly read that?

Penne jumps up, grabbing Anne's phone.

Penne *very keen* Okay, this is looking good.
[Reading.]
I (Hermann the Poet) do hereby swear that I have forsaken my former Lord Rollo (whose journeys and rascally deeds I I lately recorded with ink on vellum). Dame Audra has

returned to her ... um ... Martin Estate where she and her noble husband Gregor will dwell in peace and prosperity. I shall live on the Estate with them and give help where I am able. For those of my readers whose hearts beat for the sake of a ... a ... a love-match, is it? ... "a love-match" ... I can inform them immediately that I have my eye on the once-married Bega who will make me a worthy helpmate in my later years.

I am a Danish wordsmith who will know extreme happiness for the rest of his days in the bountiful? -- "bountiful" it must be -- land of the Franks.

Anne and Penne dance about, hugging each other in the manner of young women who have received good news.



Anne's laptop rings, indicating a Zoom call request. As Anne accepts Cloriel's invitation, Penne drags up a chair to sidle up to Anne.

Cloriel Anne, I had to let you know that our expert has been most helpful. The carbon-14 dating of wheat grains is rather a commonplace, straightforward procedure, as archaeologists frequently need to know when wheat was first introduced to a geographic area. Your sample grains are ideal for analysis as they are whole, undamaged and clean.

The glass encasing the grains has been demolished, and a tiny vacuum cleaner (of sorts) has removed from the grains

any glass dust.

I'll have a result for you in a couple of hours.

Penne How accurate is the dating?

Cloriel Oh ... It won't be spot on to the year (of course). Anne needs assurance that the grains pre-date the Norman Conquest of England by Duke William. Well, we can certainly give a "yay" or "nay" on that.



Once again, Anne's laptop rings, indicating a Zoom call request. As Anne accepts Cloriel's invitation, Penne sidles up to Anne once again.

Cloriel Hello, ladies! It's all good news.

We have identified that the bibs and bobs found within your wooden box (apparently belonging to a "Herr Mann") were written in Old Norse.

The date of prior to 1066 is confirmed for the wheat grains. Anywhere from 800 AD to 1000 AD.

Anne That certainly puts the box and its contents at the time of the Siege of Chartres of 911 AD, do you think?

Cloriel *nods* I'd go further and say that that's definite. And the notes within the box all support that.

Anne And the processes and investigations were all filmed as I requested?

Cloriel Certainly.

Penne Oh, Cloriel. I can't tell you how momentous this is. I --

Penne bursts into tears. She covers her face with her hands then quickly vacates her seat, effectively leaving the Zoom call.

Anne smiles with sympathy and understanding. Cloriel is startled and confused.

Cloriel *concerned* Oh dear. Is the young lady quite well?

Anne Yes, she's overjoyed (if anything).

Do you know Cloriel – it has occurred to me that I am always the odd-bod who rips theories and claims apart – the Debunker. But here I am (for the first time) actually ***supporting*** a credo, proving that it is genuine and not a fraud.

Cloriel I'm glad. Glad for you and glad for the young lady.

I'll gather up all the threads and email them across to you in Sydney.

Along with our invoice for the work undertaken. Sorry it has rather too many zeroes in the euros column.

Anne Don't think about it. It was all well worth it (in the end).

We wind up with the bucolic scene at Martin Estate.

Hermann is seen walking about in Bega's wake, helping her with her work. A young maid trails after them carrying the baby Liffy. Audra is seen walking

about with Gregor who leads a nice-looking horse.

They kiss with the setting sun behind them.

END OF MOVIE

The next in the series of 3 is "Antarctica: Who Knew?",
which is followed by "Riding My Chainsaw With You".