



Cast requirements: Page 1
Background: Page 11
Full Synopsis: Page 13
Special Notes (all 3 movies) and alternative ending: Page 35

Which Actors Are Required For Which Films?

Character	Film #1	Film #2	Film #3
Abul	Y	Y	
Adjutant Sampson			Y
Archie	Y		
Basrani/Mimette		Y	Y
Boy			Y
Bruan/Harry		Y	Y
Buddy		Y	Y

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Callum *	Y		
Chips	Y	Y	Y
Curl	Y	Y	Y
Cynthia	Y		
Debra/Theressa	Y	Y	Y
Demelza	Y	Y	
Dingo/Vincent	Y	Y	Y
Donger	Y	Y	Y
Doxia/Dorothea		Y	Y
Dr Lilliban	Y		
Dr Marell	Y	Y	Y
Dr Nettlethwaite		Y	Y
Fergus *	Y		
Feral/Martin	Y	Y	Y
Kala/Sarah			Y
King Jethrodates			Y
Knackers #1	Y	Y	Y
Knackers #2	Y	Y	Y
Knackers #3	Y		Y
Lion	Y	Y	Y
Lord Bellamy			Y
Louis-Jean LeBarron		Y	
Mahala	Y		
Mandro		Y	
Modra	Y		

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Mullet/Roland	Y	Y	Y
Nona/Adeline			Y
Patto/Dani		Y	Y
Peewee	Y	Y	Y
Pharaoh Jethpa		Y	Y
Phooey		Y	Y
Pooter (voice only)		Y	
Prof Gordon Summerhill	Y	Y	
Prof Lloyd Bartholemew	Y		
Sir Gavin Spasey			Y
Snackbloke	Y	Y	Y
Socks	Y	Y	Y
Squizzy/Sir Percy	Y	Y	
Stewie		Y	Y
Stiffy/Miles	Y	Y	Y
Stranger/Eagle/Prof Phantom	Y	Y	Y
Topper	Y	Y	Y
Ulpia	Y		

* We hear the voices of Fergus and Callum late in film #3.

† The British teadrinkers could be dragooned into service in the 2 "big" scenes: Film #2 (The Palmiery Ball) and Film #3 (The Ball at the British Embassy).

Film #1 -- Graverobbers of Antiquity, The Curse: DRAMATIS PERSONAE

"real-life" CHARACTER	"real-life" ACCENT	"dream sequence" CHARACTER	"dream-sequence" ACCENT
Captain Miles Renauld	cultured French	Stiffy	Australian tradesman
Lieutenant Roland Ferrier	cultured French	Mullet	Australian tradesman
Lieutenant Vincent Lorent	cultured French	Dingo	Australian tradesman
Lieutenant Martin Leveque	cultured French	Feral	Australian tradesman
Theressa Trilbeway	middle-class London	Debra/Debbie	middle-class Australian
Prof Gordon Summerhill	middle-class London		
Demelza Brenton	middle-class counties		
Prof Maurice Phanton	cultured French	The Stranger/Huge eagle	cultured French
Colonel Lloyd Bartholemew	British officer type, blustery		
Dr Claude Marell	cultured French		
Dr Trevor Lilliban	upper middle-class English		
Madame Mahala	acquired foreign	Ghost appearing in tombs	upper-class English
		Chips	Australian tradesman

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		Donger	Australian tradesman
		Socks	Australian tradesman
		Knackers #2	Australian tradesman
		Curl	Australian tradesman
		Squizzy	South African
		Fergus	South African
		Callum	South African
		Archie	South African
		Knackers #1	Cockney
		Lion	Cockney
		Peewee	Cockney
		Topper	pleasant Cockney
		Modra	Australian tradesman
		Jacob	Australian tradesman
		Ulpia	vile Australian ("Kath and Kim")
		Cynthia	vile Australian ("Kath and Kim")
		Master & crew of Boat #1	Australian tradesman

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Film #1 -- Graverobbers of Antiquity, The Curse: The CHARACTERS and DESCRIPTIONS OF APPEARANCE

THE CHARACTERS OF 1931	
Captain Miles Renauld	<p>Same actor plays Stiffy. Late 20s -- about 28 or 29.</p> <p>Pronounced MEE-lays.</p> <p>Kind, well-mannered, taciturn, thoughtful.</p> <p>A competent officer who cares for his men.</p>
Lieutenant Roland Ferrier	<p>Same actor plays Mullet. Around 31 or 32.</p> <p>Academic and to some extent, haughty. Very punctilious. A man of means. Somewhat quirky and self-possessed.</p> <p>Much cleverer than his alter-ego Mullet.</p>
Lieutenant Vincent Lorent	<p>Same actor plays Dingo. Late 20s -- about 28 or 29.</p> <p>The smallest of the quartet.</p> <p>Punctilious, honourable.</p> <p>Would rather be whipped than offend.</p> <p>Inclines to melodrama.</p>
Lieutenant Martin Leveque	<p>Same actor plays Feral (Debbie's brother). Mid 20s - - about 25 or 26.</p> <p>The tallest of the quartet.</p> <p>Most relaxed and "boyish" of the group. Easy to talk to, happy. Athletic.</p>
Theressa Trilbeway	<p>Same actor plays Debra. Mid 20s (around 23, 24).</p> <p>Summerhill's widowed daughter.</p> <p>No-nonsense, tends to be terse. Fascinated by Egyptian relics but losing patience with her father's flirtations.</p>

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	<p>Becomes prettier and more likeable as the dream continues and as she falls in love with Miles.</p> <p>She is extremely wealthy, having inherited all her late husband's fortune (Trilbeway's Spices and Condiments.)</p>
Prof Gordon Summerhill	<p>Theressa's father. Very old-world. Charming, an old-fashioned gentleman. But weak and intimidated by all women. Weather-beaten, battered tweed with leather elbow patches, even in the heat.</p> <p>A younger (but not much) James Fox.</p>
Prof Maurice Phanton	<p>An eminent French archeologist, whose greatest disappointment was to break into the real Kahmood tomb (following his discovery that the upper tomb had been a dummy), only to find it cleared of treasures by grave-robbers.</p>
Colonel Lloyd Bartholemew	<p>A blustery British Army officer who dabbles in archeology.</p>
Dr Claude Marell	<p>A punctilious but likeable French physician, serving the French Army officers at "The Palace" in Cairo.</p>
Dr Trevor Lilliban	<p>Small, middle-aged, bright-eyed.</p> <p>Can be talkative and overpowering. Or more thoughtful.</p>
Madame Mahala	<p>The supposed re-incarnation of an ancient priestess. Over-the-top.</p> <p>She does the singing, rolling, thrashing bizzo and dressed bizarrely.</p> <p>But in Act 4 she indicates that that was a front: she is really a clever, scheming sorceress. Her real name is Mavis Broughton.</p> <p>Think Frances La Tour.</p>
English tea-drinkers at the Oak Nut Hotel	<p>Mrs Catesbury, Lucas Brenton, Lucas's sister, Demelza Brenton, Col Bartholemew, and Mr & Mrs</p>

	<p>Healy.</p> <p>Demelza goes on to become the new Mrs Summerhill and features more prominently in later films.</p>
Sundries	Sultan, Saleb (servant at hotel), Egyptian carriage driver, Abul (Mahala's servant) and various maids and servants
THE CHARACTERS OF 1500 BC	
Stiffy	<p>Same actor plays Miles. Late 20s -- about 28 or 29.</p> <p>Phoenician, no-frills, a born leader, straight down the line, in charge, and brave. Thinker, planner.</p> <p>Leader of Modra's gang #6 ("The Pubic Punics"). All 4 men in this gang are heroic and unafraid.</p>
Mullet	<p>Same actor plays Roland. Around 31 or 32 years old.</p> <p>Strong, athletic, hard-working. Faithful friend. Does not put himself forward.</p> <p>A bit slow-witted.</p> <p>Member of Modra's gang #6 ("The Pubic Punics")</p>
Dingo	<p>Same actor plays Vincent. Late 20s -- about 28 or 29.</p> <p>Can be moody, difficult. Has a nasty edge.</p> <p>Member of Modra's gang #6 ("The Pubic Punics")</p>
Feral	<p>Same actor plays Martin. Mid 20s -- about 25 or 26. The tallest of the 4.</p> <p>Wild, free, always coming up with zany ideas. Athletic.</p> <p>Member of Modra's gang #6 ("The Pubic Punics")</p>
Debra/Debbie	Same actor plays Theresa. Mid 20s (around 23, 24).

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	As Debra, she is more feminine than Theresa. Trails along after her brother (Feral), and has a "the-man-comes-first" mentality.
Chips	<p>Leader of Gang #4, whose nickname is "Bunch of Fives".</p> <p>He is wiry and older than the other grave-robbers (except for Squizzy). He is based on "Chips Rafferty".</p> <p>Chips talks like an old Aussie (Chips Rafferty): she'll be right, stone the crows, strike me lucky, nong, she'll be apples, two-up (come in spinner), lousy, too right!, bonza, dinkum oil, on the crewet, how're they hangin?</p> <p>He started the Human Tower circus trick; he cannot swim.</p>
Donger (son of Knackers #1) Socks, Curl, Knackers #2	The other members of Gang #4. They are not featured in this film as much as they are in Film #2 "The French Touch".
Squizzy	<p>The Hittities all have South African accents. Squizzy is the leader of Gang #5: "The Eagle Boys".</p> <p>Big, solid, gruff, and sporting an eye-patch, Squizzy is the oldest of Modra's boys.</p> <p>He is a gazetted womanizer and thug.</p>
Callum, Fergus, Archie	These are the other members of Gang #5. Callum and Fergus feature more in Film #3 "Hittite Bullshite".
Knackers #1, has the nom-de-guerre of "Telzer"	<p>Cockney. Very, very Ray Winstone.</p> <p>An ugly character, yet there's something likeable about him. Dominates those around him. He has been incarcerated as a galley-slave, believing that it was Stiffy who caused this vile servitude. Vows revenge against Stiffy.</p>
Sidekick of Knackers: Peewee	A very reliable henchman. We see much more of him in the 2 later films.

Sidekick of Knackers: Lion	A dopey strongarm.
Sidekick of Knackers: Topper	An absolute classic! Very droll; he enjoys conversation and often goes off into his own little world. He is very important in the 3rd film "Hittite Bullshite".
Ulpia and Cynthia	Totally "Kath and Kim". Ghastly women: rapacious and self-righteous. Everything is at fault, and needs instant improvement. Shockers. These 2 have some great lines. Cynthia is Ulpia's sister. Ulpia is Modra's 2nd and last wife.
Modra	The organizer of the tomb looting gangs. Evidently involved in several double-games. He is a complex man.
Jacob	Modra's son by his first marriage. A sleaze. Beneath contempt.
Dog: Howzat	QLD Blue Heeler. The dog provides loads of opportunities for humour. Enters the inner chamber with Debra and does some funny things: barking at statues, carrying grave goods etc.
Snackbloke	Of Oriental appearance. Bobs up in all 3 films, whereupon canned applause greets him. He responds to the fake cheering with a happy smiles and waves. He speaks a completely unknown language; however, a variety of unexpected people can understand him. He is a purveyor of fast foods, usually from a small boat.
Sundries	Assorted pirates, Assorted galley slaves, the hot food purveyor at Byblos market, stevedores at Byblos, street people in Byblos

"THE CURSE" BACKGROUND

There are three films in the "Graverobbers Of Antiquity" comedy series.

This opening film ("**The Curse**") features the four Phoenicians: Stiffy, Mullet, Dingo and Feral.

The second film introduces Queen Basrani, her hand-maiden Doxia, the high-minded Bruan and Stiffy's younger brother Patto. Due to the preponderance of French themes, the film is entitled: "**The French Touch**".

The third film concentrates on the search for the Golden Eagle of the Hittites. The boys are welcomed into the wonderful world of King Jethrodates in "**Hittite Bullshite**".

If you are female, then you'll find yourself sitting on the steps outside your back door sobbing into your hands when you read of the horrible deaths of Feral, Mullet and Dingo in ACT IV. Vincent's death in ACT V is truly sublime.

Our four French officers stationed in Cairo in 1931 are cultured and haughty. In turn, each man journeys via a drug-induced dream back to 1500 BCE.

In 1500 BCE, they are Phoenician graverobbers, who closely resemble knock-about Australian tradesmen. This situation causes great opportunities for comedy, adventure, drama and romance.

The Phoenicians belong to a trade union: TAGRATL (The Association of Grave Robbers and Tomb Looters). They work in a gang ("The Pubic Punics") under their boss Modra. Modra is a cunning man-on-the-take who is "blessed" with a grasping wife (Ulpia) and vile sister-in-law (Cynthia).

There are other gangs, but the number of graverobbers is dwindling owing to a new-fangled practice: those burying the dead pharaohs (whose tombs are ripe for plunder) have insisted on establishing mortal curses. Now the game is not about grabbing hordes of gold but it is simply about staying alive!

Modra's boys use the services of an extrovert wizard (Pooter) who knocks-up spells and enchantments for them. Otherwise they invent their own workarounds.

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Further, the mighty god Baal demands the sacrifice of every first-born son. Thus, each man reminisces about his dead eldest brother. One of the graverobbers (Chips) takes part in a Human Tower which becomes a feature of the second film.

Add to this the presence of villains galore ...

The 1931-level is not as comedic as the other. It is whimsical, sweet and wholesome. We need the 1931 background to put the French officers and the English hangers-on into perspective.

"THE CURSE" FULL SYNOPSIS

The opening scene gives us a taste of what is to follow, although I have cheated here in not employing a "dream" to get to this point. This prelude is merely a warmer, so that the long introduction is not too tedious.

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### **Professor Phanton's last words as witnessed by Dr Marell and Bartholemew**

This is a very necessary and vital scene on which not just this film depends: all three films in the "Graverobber" series rely heavily on this scene. As he dies, Professor Phanton describes a curse which will take six men and five women back to ancient times. One of these eleven people will "fly". The little boy who fans the dying man will later describe a bird hopping on the window sill and flying away. In the final film ("Hittite Bullshite"), Dr Marell and his English counterpart Dr Nettlethwaite will realize the true significance of the dying man's last words.

### **Visiting the ravaged tomb of Anoheth**

Professor Phanton's death is explained: he fell down stairs whilst under the influence of alcohol. We learn that there had been a long-running rivalry between the Professor and the bluff Colonel Bartholemew.

Bartholemew and the others (on visiting Anoheth's tomb) discuss the bad luck of following in the wake of tomb looters: of their perpetual disappointment that every tomb has been despoiled almost before the pharaoh's corpse was cold. This discussion echoes the newspaper headlines viewed in the opening scenes (where Phanton lies dying).

The tourists and experts also discuss the curses laid on the grave plunderers.

A likeness of Anoheth still appears on a wall of the tomb, complete with the elusive "Chain of Ra".

### **Mahala**

Unfortunately, we have to wait until Film #2 ("The French Touch") to learn what lies behind Mahala's nefarious activities. In this first film, she is merely the mysterious dispenser of the "elixir of

dreams” and is much-mistrusted by Miles. However Martin entirely trusts this strange woman. During the tour of Anoheth’s gravesite, Dr Liliban will describe this eccentric woman to Theresa, and reveal that she is able to sketch (unseen) the various grave goods stolen in times of antiquity by graverobbers.

### **Cairo, the oak nut hotel, the palace and the characters therein**

It takes us a while to get into the comedy. That’s because we have to get a handle on the fact that the French officers (stationed at the Palace) are well-born and haughty. Some of the material has already been heavily culled; probably more could be cut. However, the overall feel to the first 18 or so pages of script must be of a privileged, cultured and leisurely life in the Cairo of 1931. The English dilettantes and the French officers provide a robust background to the mayhem of the graverobber scenes.

A convivial afternoon tea is interrupted by the arrival of a letter (delayed) from Professor Summerhill’s daughter (Mrs Theresa Trilbeway) stating that she is arriving in Cairo. The Professor bolts off to collect her. During this repast, Demelza reveals that she had spotted (and photographed) a man-sized eagle flying over Cairo that morning. The Colonel has even more interesting news: somehow the body of Professor Phanton has disappeared.

It is evident that Theresa (in being a rich and beautiful young widow) can and does act with glacial indifference towards her fellow humans *until* (that is) she becomes Feral’s sister Debra. Miles is an impoverished French duke who must marry into wealth. He is a very honourable man and chooses not to pursue Theresa, even though he is captivated by her *until* (that is) he journeys back to ancient times as the redoubtable Stiffy.

Theresa’s widowed father Professor Summerhill is looking for a life companion: he becomes enamoured of Demelza.

And now for the action. Theresa is given doctored orange juice and collapses.

## ~~~ EXPERIENCE OF THERESSA/DEBBIE ~~~

### The Perfect Tomb Looting

The work order (from Modra) for Gang #6 (the Pubic Punics) is to break into the tomb of Pharaoh Anoheth and steal the grave goods using nets, ropes and muscle-power.

Stiffy, Feral, Dingo and Mullet are on a fishing boat on the Nile in 1500 BCE along with Feral's sister Debra and Mullet's dog Howzat (a Queensland Blue Heeler). There is a deal of amusing by-play and rough skylarking. And then the guys get down to business.

Fearing the curses of the dead pharaoh, the boys decide to take precautions. The wizard Pooter can provide anti-curse preparations, but the side-effects of these are unpredictable.

On the advice of a crony, Stiffy decides that Anoheth's curse is specifically targeted at human males, and does not include women or dogs. The plan is as follows:

- Stun the guards using arrows knock out drops.
- They will enter the crypt via the secret back entrance
- At the entrance to the burial chamber, the men will gather outside whereas Debbie and Howzat will enter that chamber.
- The men will carefully pass the ropes and nets through to Debra who will load up the grave goods.
- And then the men will drag the ropes and nets through the hole.

The actual execution of the plan is very amusing since a huge goddess (a Mahala lookalike) gets very shirty that a woman and a dog have violated her precinct.

A very conspicuous gold bull statuette is featured in what seems like a very straight-forward robbery. The graverobbers get away with the loot without any possibility of being cursed. They chat about Gang #4 ("A Bunch of Fives") being sent to the Tigris. The Pubic Punics are merry and cheerful.

It is very evident that Stiffy is keen to pair-up with Debbie.

## ~~~ POST EXPERIENCE OF THERESSA/DEBBIE ~~~

Dr Lilliban has told the others that Mrs Trilbeway has succumbed to heatstroke; however, she has been slipped a Mickey Finn. Theresa is enraptured by her “dream” and fervently wishes to return to it, by whatever means possible. Dr Lilliban warns of the dangers of drug-induced dreams.



### The burial chamber of Cheofes, Memphis

As the tourists tramp about in the earthquake-affected tomb of the mighty Cheofes (a magnificent pharaoh, judging by the size of the tomb) Theresa is in her best looks and has lost her petulant ill-humour. She chats with Dr Lilliban as to how happy her dream/experience made her. Then the French officers arrive and Theresa becomes very keen to avoid them (as she believes that she will give the game away by referring to them by their ancient names).

By happenstance, Theresa approaches Miles. They make some stilted and unsatisfying conversation, leaving them both ill-at-ease.

Later, it is revealed that Vincent spends his spare time in France inventing labour-saving devices.

*[This fact is used to open Film #3.]* During some merry chat, Theresa does the thing that she dreaded: she calls Vincent by the name “Dingo”. Vincent is understandably offended, and thus Theresa is forced to describe the secrets of her dream/experience to the young French officers.

Martin visits Mahala to beg for more elixir on Theresa’s behalf. Mahala seems more interested in Miles (whom she senses is outside in the truck). She warns that Theresa must not attempt to visit the past for a second time: that it is dangerous to do so. (Over the course of the three films, Martin, Roland and Vincent have more than one dream and yes ... there is disaster to follow).

However, Mahala hands over the phial for Martin to use himself, with the stern proviso that Martin must relate to Miles what he saw, as this may help persuade him to be less reluctant to meet her.

Later, Martin is thrilled to be about to venture back to Ancient Egypt. He mistakenly believes that he will rewind Theresa’s dream. This is not so.

## ~~~ EXPERIENCE OF MARTIN/FERAL ~~~

No tomb is breached: Byzantium (ACT II)

### **The home of Modra and his wife Ulpia (accompanied by her sister Cynthia).**

Ulpia and Cynthia have the common, strident Australian voices of vile football barrackers, and their manners and general demeanour are atrocious. These bitchy harridans are surrounded by put-upon slaves and are carried about triumphantly as if they were royalty.

None of Modra's loot can be sold on until these rapacious harpies have gone over it first (for their own decorating plans).

Privately to his guards, Modra reveals that his quest is to find the mysterious Chain of Ra and is intent on strip-searching everyone in order to find it.

### **Modra's Games**

The Games take place on a large grassy area with stands and parade ring.

Although Ulpia had declared this day to be a holiday for the slaves, they work even harder than usual.

On the grass can be seen a variety of entertainments: weightlifters, tug-of-war, bull and dog fight, tumblers and acrobats, human towers, wrestling and graceful movements (girls only). On the track/ring, several superb horses (with coloured rugs and coloured mane plumes) trot about, ridden by jockeys in bright cloaks and turbans. They speed up to full gallop and race around the track, with the jockeys grabbing scarves from designated marshals as they gallop past them.

In the stand, there is a "royal" box, where Ulpia, Cynthia and Debra will sit (the boys sitting on forms nearby.) There is a table laden with small marble trophies. Modra is busy doping his horse ready for the third race when the guys spot Chips on the grass.

**The Human Tower:** with Chips (in a very skimpy costume) at ground level, up to four men clamber up onto the shoulders of the man below him, forming a human tower. Although it is performed here

by Chips and several Assyrian acrobats, in Film #2 the tower will be populated by our friends, the graverobbers. Later it proves to be a life-saving expedient. Again, the tower will be seen in Film #3 such that Boy exhibits his athletic prowess by doing a handstand at the top level.

Ulpia warns the graverobbers that she and Modra (along with Cynthia) are soon to embark upon a Mediterranean cruise, during which time Modra's clueless son Jacob (from an earlier marriage) will give out the work orders.

An amusing carpentry demonstration is watched by the boys, as they discuss their mooted trip to the beach to unwind as Modra and his harem take their fantasy cruise.

As they wander about near the Games (actually in the market) the men wonder about Modra's recent behaviour: demanding that they strip naked on a regular basis as if Modra is checking-up on them.

### **The dodgy pie incident**

At the market, Dingo gets back at Mullet for some earlier jape by hiding dead mice in a pie which Mullet is about to eat. This is a very funny scene which also highlights how earthy and violent these men are.

### **The floaties made of sheep carcasses at the beach on the Adriatic**

Feral has four "empty sheep": the insides of shorn sheep have been extracted such that the skin of the sheep can be inflated, for use as flotation devices. The body orifices of the sheep were sewn up and sealed with tar. There are some very amusing comedic moments provided by the floaties as the men swim about naked.

We learn about the religious practice of sacrificing the first-born son. Apparently all sorts of dodges and workarounds come into play to avoid this infanticide. The man being passed off as Stiffy's brother (Patto whom we do not meet until Film #2) is in fact a first-born son. He is in reality Stiffy's cousin whose mother died in childbirth. Patto was raised as if a later son of Stiffy's mother and thus survived. Nothing bad happened to the family: which brings into question this seemingly senseless slaughter. *[Note that at the end of Film #2 we get to meet the ghosts of the elder brothers through Patto's excursions.]*

Later (and extremely drunk), the men congratulate themselves on the ease of the first tomb looting (of Pharaoh Anoheth). Stiffy is very much in love with Debbie and pledges himself to marry her.

## ~~~ POST EXPERIENCE OF MARTIN/FERAL ~~~

### The French Figure-Garden At The Palace

At the back of the Palace, the aridity of Cairo has been challenged by a small garden with its regimented little hedges and formal layout. Hence, it is called the figure garden. The four Frenchmen, Theresa and Dr Lilliban discuss what Martin now tells them all.

He recalls the ending (which we the audience have not yet seen).

At Modra's shop in Byzantium the Pubic Punic found Modra's son to be in command. Or rather he was in the arms of a prostitute when the boys barged in. Without leaving the arms of his whore, Jacob handed to them the instructions for the next assignment, which was to be the long-lost grave of the Pharaoh Cheofes, at Memphis.

In 1931 the party had seen the incontrovertible evidence that Cheofes' tomb had been racked by earthquakes and tumult. However (in 1500BCE) their clear instruction from Modra via Jacob was to raid **that same** burial chamber, and clear it of its valuables.

Martin's vision ended there, with the boys all staring at a papyrus chart covered in hieratics.

Stiffy read out that the location of the Cheofes riches had been recently discovered at the deathbed of one of the royal servants. So, that then became their immediate destination.

Martin wonders about Mahala. She seemed to make it very difficult to get hold of the potion, but then (once that was achieved) she insisted that Martin was to tell the others of what he saw, particularly Miles.

The Dr Lilliban, the four French officers and Theresa rehash the stuff that Martin and Theresa have so far discovered of the ancient ones. They describe each character and the nature of the graverobbing work, including the organizer and fence, Modra.

It seems clear that more dream/experiences are to follow. Roland is now determined that he will be the next "guinea pig": hopefully his dream experience will take him to the anticipated tomb robbery of Cheofes.

Miles is highly offended by his ancient name of Stiffy, despite the protests of Martin that the real meaning of "Stiffy" was "unlucky".

### **Professor Phanton's Museum**

Professor Phanton built a museum at Memphis to house and display some of the finds from his digs. It is a small stone building, where everything is poorly presented in dust-covered display cabinets.

The paucity of Phanton's collection worries Theresa: where did Modra's gravegoods end up? Why do they not show up in international catalogues of discovered antiquities?

And then her mind jumps to the next puzzling question: what is the purpose behind the dream experiences? What can be gained from them? Mahala's sketches of the goods (which do not now seem to exist) mean that she is somehow seeing into their minds.

Theresa must explain to Miles her gathering affection for him, and due to felicitous happenstance, she corners him in the museum.

Theresa tells Miles that they had fallen in love, in those old times. They depended upon each other as equals. There was nothing then about the impoverished *Duc* and the *nouveau riche* young widow. Debbie and Stiffy were planning to be married.

Miles finally admits to her that he admires her fondly with every fibre of his being. But as the impoverished *Duc*, he must have scruples. He needs to marry a rich woman, and that is what she is. His honour forbids him to follow his heart.

### **Roland Is Off On His Safari**

Roland's cavalcade is a very grand affair, exactly as would be undertaken in the 30's. There are several recumbent camels sporting colourful caparison, and a bevy of dutiful, humble Egyptian guides and servants. The luggage is strapped onto the camels.

Roland appears, very much the seasoned traveller, in full safari outfit, including pith helmet and a riding crop under his arm. His servants rush back and forth at his bidding amongst bits of impedimenta.

He will photograph and gather geological, biological and botanical specimens for inclusion in his opus: "*Cairo, A Journey Across The Sands.*" To Vincent he indicates that Mahala has already supplied a small sample of her mysterious concoction.

Roland and his party set off through very picturesque and fertile land towards the arid desert.

### Roland's Camp in the Desert

In the annex of the tent, Roland is found to be busily pounding the keys of an old Remington typewriter.

He has extracted the phial of potion from the luggage. After gazing at it he swallows the potion in one hit directly from the phial.

Soon a couple of servants carry him off into the tent proper.

## ~~~ EXPERIENCE OF ROLAND/MULLET ~~~

*At the very beginning of Film #2 ("The French Touch") Roland will relive this dream, but with himself rather than Stiffy as the hero.*

### **The Tomb Of Pharaoh Cheofes: Memphis**

Mullet's dream (breaching the big tomb of Cheofes) occurs in ACT III. In Scene (vi) we find Roland headed off on his safari. During the night, he succumbs to the so-called "elixir of dreams".

In 1931 the guests of the Oak Nut Hotel and the French officers toured this antechamber to the large burial chamber of Cheofes (described above). They commented at that time on the desecration wrought on the chamber by the graverobbers and by the earthquake. Here, we see the actual act itself. It is a huge tomb. The walls are utterly beautiful, and there are some superb stoneworks. The gravegoods are sumptuous, stunning. Of all the grave robberies, this one and the Kahmood robbery in Film #2 have the most amazingly gorgeous settings.

The antechamber is breached by each of Modra's gangs in turn due to a work order stuff-up by Modra's useless son Jacob. There is a large, solid door, heavily bolted on the East wall.

|                |                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WEST wall      | Gang #6 (1st to appear) the "Pubic Punics" with Debbie and Howzat.                                                                             |
| SOUTH wall     | Gang #4 (2nd to appear) Chips, Donger, Socks, Curl, Knackers #2 (called "Bunch of Fives" and Phoenician as is Gang #6).                        |
| NORTH wall     | Gang #5 (last to appear) Squizzy, Callum, Fergus and Archie (called "The Eagle Boys"). They are Hittites and speak with South African accents. |
| EAST wall/door | The door to the chamber itself.                                                                                                                |

As the members of Gang #6 ponder the heavy door, the members of Gang #4 arrive. Then Gang #5 bursts into the antechamber. This causes some problems as old scores must be settled.

After a break (standing for the passing of 3 ½ hours) an all-in brawl has erupted in the antechamber.

The precursor to the earthquake (shudders and rumbles) alarm the men.

Frightened to enter, the men hover about in the antechamber until Howzat rushes into the tomb, followed urgently by Mullet.

Pooter (the wizard) has provided orange smoke-bombs which will act as counter-curses (allowing the men to breach the tomb without worrying about the dead pharaoh's curses). These smoke-bombs are chucked into the tomb. *However (as we will discover) these devices have a most unsatisfactory side-effect.*

The tomb is unbelievably majestic and stocked with brilliant grave goods, including a stash of beer for the pharaoh's afterlife.

As Mullet hands out beer to all the men, a spotlight mystically appears.

In the spotlight two Egyptian male dancers perform, to be followed by Egyptian women dancing evocatively, gods with jackal heads and a Boris Karloff "Mummy" raging with the graverobbers in an impromptu disco. The only person not entranced is Debra, who continues to work stoically.

As the men watch/join the entertainment, Debbie gradually gets tired, frustrated, angry, fearful and distressed. Aloud she expresses her chagrin that all of this muscle-work has fallen onto her shoulders.

Debra realizes that Pooter's counter-curses have back-fired. She collects them (extinguishing them as she goes) and then spurs the groggy men into action. Soon they are hauling in the treasure.

Debra hightails it to the huge door in time to find armed guards appearing in the antechamber as they clamber through the three wall holes made earlier by the graverobbers. Thinking quickly she smashes the beer amphora, letting the counter-curses escape into the antechamber before slamming the door. However it is now possible (she realizes with horror) that she has inadvertently locked herself and the men inside the tomb.

The men do manage to swing the door open a fraction, such that they look in amazement at the guards singing rollicking songs.

The earthquake takes over. In huge alarm, Stiffy orders Debbie to hang onto him as the tomb plunges into darkness.

*[Vincent will pick up this dream and see it to its conclusion.]*

## ~~~ POST EXPERIENCE OF ROLAND/MULLET ~~~

### **In The Desert, Roland's Tent**

Roland does not dwell on his dream/experience: on waking, he leaps into action. Not only does he type-up the events he witnessed as Mullet (second-in-command to Stiffy), but he also produces many quick sketches of the gravegoods looted from the haul. Later, Roland will complain to his friends that this exercise of memory kept him up for most of the night.

### **In The Market Place**

Our party wander through a crowded, busy market whereupon Roland joins them, brandishing his night-time notes. The Frenchmen read avidly: they are delighted that the proposed robbery of the tomb of Cheofes went ahead as planned.

When questioned as to the fate of his mooted travel guide, Roland is flippant. However, we later learn that Roland's opus actually became a best-seller, winning many awards.

The theatricals (in essence a silly French farce) proceed. The audience is entranced, including the all-important Sultan. The love affair in the farce presages that between Dani Renauld and Mimette Charliez in Film #2.

It is revealed (during the performance) that Vincent has been “summoned”: he has been sent a small package containing a phial of “juice of dreams”.

Whereas the others were excited to be travelling back in time, Vincent feels foreboding. He talks of darkness, fear and despair. These emotions foreshadow his ultimate fate (refer end of Film #3).

When the little man handed him the box, he felt the cold hand of Death passing over his heart.

### **Vincent's Bedroom, Late At Night**

Vincent takes solemn and lachrymose leave of his friends, as if this journey to the past will encompass his own death. Finally, he is tucked into his bed (complete with mosquito net) by weeping servants and friends. The friends remain with him. Miles reveals that he made a valiant but futile attempt to stop Vincent possessing the phial.

Vincent sleeps, but his body moves about as if he is having sex with a woman. The friends are concerned and confused: they reach for Roland’s notes.

As discussed below, Vincent will awaken from his experience, complain of this and that to his sleeping pals, and then return to his sleep and his dreams.

## **~~~ EXPERIENCE OF VINCENT/DINGO ~~~**

In Modra’s shop (Byzantium) his son Jacob is playing-up with some scantily-clad girls. Lion, Topper and Peewee arrive, followed by Telzer/Knackers #1 (who pretends to be urbane and caring).

Knackers congratulates Jacob on this very easy and lucrative earner that Modra has set up.

We learn that Knackers was shopped by someone (he believes it to have been Stiffy), spending many years on a slave galley. During his chat with Jacob, Knackers reveals that he has had Modra murdered for not dobbing Stiffy in. Lady Ulpia and Lady Cynthia are to be sold into slavery.

Putting fear into Jacob, Knackers pushes him to reveal the location of Stiffy which the frightened lad does. (Stiffy is in Memphis). The faithful henchmen murder Jacob.

At this time Vincent awakens in order for him to explain to the audience that he (as Dingo) cannot have seen this confrontation and murder, so must have been told about it later. He sips the last drops of the elixir and then (as Dingo) re-joins the group at the end of Roland's dream.

## **Memphis, The Antechamber And Burial Chamber Of Cheofes' Grave**

Much of the comedy and action in this scene revolves around the side-effects suffered by the males (due to the use of the orange smoke-bomb counter curses). Debra is unaffected. Thus it falls to her to perform many of the masculine tasks. So long as the males do not breathe-in the toxic orange fumes, they can function correctly.

The antechamber is like a scene from an old Music Hall. Several of the guards are attempting something which looks alarmingly like the Cygnets' Quartet from Swan Lake.

The door opens slightly and Debra rushes into the antechamber from the bigger burial chamber, with Feral's ropes over her shoulders. She ties the guards up.

Dingo takes a gulp of air, then rushes in (not breathing) to finish off the rope work, swiftly and dexterously. He casts an eye over the others, then grabbing Debra, runs back in through the doorway. Once inside, he takes an enormous gulp of air.

### The Earthquake

There is a huge rumble, as of thunder overhead, and then the earth begins to shake violently again. Debra heads back to the antechamber for the discarded torches left in there. She will attempt to light them from the counter-curses. The guards are singing in harmony, like a choir.

Just as she manages to get one torch alight, and go back into the chamber, the men have gathered near the doorway with the heavier gravegoods. As Debbie collects the last of the counter-curses, and once-again bottles them, the guards begin to struggle in their bindings, and yell out. The three gangs begin to push, pull, and drag the final goods into the already very crowded antechamber. Howzat begins to bark at and bite the guards.

There is a sensation of the tomb twisting and turning in space. Everyone (gangs, guards, dog) is still, listening. There is an eerie electronic sound.

Over the next few minutes, there is a last violent attempt by the grave gods to protect the treasure, which is now almost all out in the antechamber. All these events happen over each other in swift succession. Everyone yells, screams and looks horrified. Except Feral, who is spoiling for a fight and seems to enjoy himself hugely.

- A rush of fire: a firestorm, which extends into the antechamber. Some of the guards writhe in pain, but others have the ropes burned from their wrists.
- Huge Egyptian gods loom up out of the rock, trying to kill, smash, destroy anybody they can catch. These characters will be the ones we saw dancing earlier, only magnified to colossal size.
- A couple of gang #5's members are thrown against the rocks.
- There is a fight over the people on the ground (that is, the still-tied guards) between the freed guards and several gang members. They use huge swords. For the gang members, they acquired their swords from the tied guards.
- The earthquake splits open the chamber, leaving a gaping slit, filled with red-hot molten rock. Several guards spill over the edge, but the heroes only teeter then rebalance.
- Feral uses a golden scimitar from the gravegoods against all the gods. With clenched teeth, he hacks, punches and lunges.
- Debbie and Howzat struggle with the freed guards. Chips, Socks and Curl come to their rescue. Debbie turns away, to be confronted by a weird deity which shrieks at her. Without pause, she bops it on the nose. It falls apart, weeping pathetically.
- Stiffy is in a desperate fight to the death against a couple of guards and a bevy of gods. He has taken the high ground and looks extremely heroic: strong, fit, and masculine. His loincloth now looks more like a skimpy posing pouch.

The upshot is that there had been no way that the heavy stuff could have been brought to the surface. Now, however, the violent earth movements have caused the ceiling of the antechamber to explode upwards and outwards. Quickly, the gang members carry, drag, push the stuff up the hills caused by the explosion. More gang members appear from the rubble, and head towards their respective wagons. The most pressing need is to get the goods into the wagons and get out.

## ~~~ POST EXPERIENCE OF VINCENT/DINGO ~~~

### Vincent's Quarters In The Palace

Vincent is found to have rolled right out of bed, but is lying within the confines of the mozzie net, as if it's a trap. He starts thrashing about, yelling and shouting for help. With much humorous banter the other men free him. He is about to tell them what he saw in his dream-experience but insists that Theresa must also be present.

### The Sultan's Magnificent Palace

Now Vincent will tell the small party (which does not include Miles) the substance of his journey back to the Egypt of 1500BC. Theresa is dressed scantily as a harem girl, wearing a costume of old gold (at the pleasure of the Sultan). The officers are stunned and arrested, even gasping at the beautiful sight of Theresa in her exotic outfit.

Mahala turns up. Ostensibly she is to read the Tarot cards for the Sultan, who is heavily into spiritualism and the occult.

Mahala reveals that the potion/concoction ("the juice of dreams") is just a drink. The only people who found the elixir to have "magical" properties were Theresa, Martin, Roland and Vincent. Others who drank were completely unaffected. The elixir came to Mahala from Professor Phanton (who had always claimed that he had been cursed).

Mahala desperately wants the Chain of Ra. She presents a reasonable argument: the gravegoods cannot have simply vanished. They are all catalogued somewhere in the world. But not the Chain of Ra.

It is now clear that Mahala assisted the three Frenchmen and the young English widow to journey back to the past so that she could obtain this priceless relic. Her last hope is to convince Miles that he also must journey back.

Apart from Mahala's quest, the members of the small party are eager to find out what happens in the end.

Without warning Miles visits Mahala some days later, announcing that he knows what he must do.

## ~~~ EXPERIENCE OF MILES/STIFFY~~~

### **Heading for Byzantium, On The Mediterranean Sea**

The boys stand on the bow of a large boat, hair wind-blown, looking out to sea, as the waves chop about the boat.

### **Knackers, Lion and Topper, Also At Sea**

The villains await the arrival of the Pubic Punic as they journey to Byzantium.

Lion earns the wrath of Knackers #1 because of an interruption; however, Lion's comments are important. Lion wishes to tell his boss that it was Squizzy and not Stiffy who shopped him. Lion apparently got the two men mixed up.

Along with this news comes further concern: all three of Modra's former gangs are together on a boat: they all did the Memphis job at the same time since Jacob mixed things up.

### **The Three Gangs, The Loot, At Sea, Heading For Byzantium**

Three utilitarian boats plough through the Mediterranean Sea in a formation, such that they are at shouting distance from each other. On board each boat is a wagon and a few strong horses, along with Carthaginian seamen.

Boat #1 = Stiffy and his Gang #6 (the Pubic Punic)

Boat #2 = Squizzy and his Gang #5 (the Eagleboys)

Boat #3 = Chips and his Gang #4 (the Bunch of Fives)

The sailors are tense, sensing something bad coming from the horizon towards them.

A carrier pigeon arrives on Boat #1, with a note informing Stiffy that Modra is dead and that the new destination is Byblos. Stiffy passes this news on to the other two boats.

This information has benefits as well as disadvantages: the graverobbers are now free to sell their goods off and rake-in a large profit; however they do so without Modra's wide-spread protection.

Another carrier pigeon brings the message that Knackers #1 is labouring under the misapprehension that it was Stiffy who shopped him, and that Knackers #1 means to kill him.

The thing that the sailors were dreading comes to fruition: savage Minoan pirates are bearing down on them.

Stiffy makes a hasty decision, and signals to the other boats: they will undertake the time-honoured Carthaginian manoeuvre.

### **Farewell To Debra**

In a tiny cabin, Stiffy approaches Debra as she lies on couch.

Debra is to remain there with Mullet and his dog guarding her

She will also have Stiffy's moneybag in which the Chain of Ra is hidden.

Stiffy explains how he laid hands on it: in the antechamber, when no-one was looking Stiffy carefully unwound the bandages of the Anoheth corpse and stole the priceless jewel. He did the bandages up again, nice and tight, and no-one was the wiser.

Debra reveals that Ulpia and her sister had been looking through Debbie's robes (probably in search of the chain).

Stiffy and Debra say goodbye to each other with much ardour.

### **The Carthaginian Manoeuvre**

The plan is for all the men to board the second boat, which is that of Gang #5 (Squizzy and the other Eagleboys). Once all the men (apart from Mullet and Chips) are stationed on this one boat. The other boats head for Byblos. [Mullet had to stay with Debra and Howzat on boat #1, and Chips couldn't swim.]

### **Knackers #1, Lion And Topper, Revisited**

Knackers #1 and his boys are still on board the fighting ship, and still at anchor. Snackbloke pulls alongside and is told to leave. However, he conveys the message to Peewee that the former members of Modra's gangs have headed for Byblos in favour of Byzantium.

Knackers #1 then decides after all to buy some of Snackbloke's offerings.

## **Fighting The Pirates, On The Decks Of The Galley**

Our boys now fight the pirates who fight back, but our men quickly gain the upper hand. Loads of action by the three gangs, sword fighting, general fighting and wrestling. And plenty of comedy in this scene. In control, our boys start tying-up the vanquished pirates.

The rowing slaves will be required to assist them to get to Byblos (so they cannot be freed just yet).

## **The Lower Decks Of The Galley: The Slaves**

The scene downstairs is just like that from the film "Ben Hur".

Feral is extremely funny, motivating the galley slaves to row strongly to Byblos.

## **The Rescue, The Pirate's Galley**

Stiffy is told that the master/captain of the pirates has gone to bed with a headache.

The reason is soon revealed: he is being harangued by Lady Ulpia and Lady Cynthia in his cabin.

When Stiffy arrests him, the captain is utterly thankful for his deliverance.

Stiffy is also confounded by these two "ladies". The captain comments facetiously that Modra is a lucky man to now be dead.

## **At Byblos**

Alongside the huge hulking galley, there are three smaller sail boats; all are tied up at the dock. They are being unloaded by an army of men, around whom stand a phalanx of heavily armed guards.

With the ship of Knackers #1 arriving into port (just as the freed galley slaves make a run for it), Stiffy plans to marry Debra. The men are hungry; they will all buy pinkie rings in the market and then have a large meal following Stiffy's nuptials. Along with all that, they have to unload the cargo of treasure from Memphis and look out for an unwelcome encounter with Knackers #1.

## **Down A Crowded Alleyway In Byblos**

Stiffy and Debbie are married. The boys and the new bride quickly find some food and eat hungrily. But they realize that they are being watched: by Knackers #3 (who sent the notes via carrier pigeon). He wishes to speak with the Pubic Punics. Meanwhile Stiffy escorts Debra back to their booked room.

## General Chase Scene: A Hue and Cry For Stiffy On Several Fronts

This is the obligatory chase scene. It starts with Stiffy receiving another of Knackers #3's messenger pigeons.

From then on, he keeps bumping into people who are after him: first it is a large contingent of male Sea People, who are after the fabulous Chain of Ra. Then it is Knackers #1 along with Topper, Lion and Peewee who pursue Stiffy for revenge.

Squizzy bobs up in the busiest part of the market, wearing a very frightening African tribal mask. Stiffy pulls up short at the sight of it; Squizzy adds to the aura of fear by jiggling about making outrageous noises. Then, just as Stiffy grabs for a nearby spear with which he intends to impale Squizzy, the latter rips off the mask, laughing heartily. Stiffy relaxes, grinning in spite of himself.

Much as he would love to pass the time of day chatting to Squizzy, Stiffy must beat a hasty retreat. So he king-hits Squizzy, who drops like a stone.

It's now all about running to escape. Stiffy runs with Chips and Donger in the manner of the usual stuff of filmic chases.

While Stiffy is chased, an escaped grave god looms up out of the dark alleys and confronts the three men with violent menace. They stand their ground. The grave god looks embarrassed, then subsides with a sniff. The chase resumes. Breathless, Stiffy, Donger and Chips round a corner into a dead-end.

An old stranger (actually, this is the ghost of Professor Maurice Phanton, from the beginning of the film) stands in his way. He is very Biblical in appearance with his long robes, long white hair, and a long white beard. [We will meet this character again in film #3.]

Stiffy is grabbed by the stranger, and is mesmerized by him. Also, the stranger protects Stiffy as he natters on in a theatrical manner.

The stranger informs Knackers #1 (who has rocked-up to finish with Stiffy) of the truth: it was Lady Ulpia who shopped him. The stranger also knows of the theft of the Chain of Ra (which worries Stiffy) and advises that Knackers #1 and Stiffy will no longer be enemies.

*In the early scenes of Film #2, we shall find Knackers #1 taking over from Modra. They will work out of Byblos. By then Stiffy will have left the graverobbing trade to become a vintner; however, the seeds of the plan are laid out here.*

### The Sea People attack Stiffy

The Sea People have captured Knackers #3, Dingo, Feral and Mullet, along with Debra. Huge men hold them firmly. Several other strong Sea People grab Stiffy, who struggles wildly to free himself. Stiffy suffers a body search (for the jewels). This draws a blank. The Sea People leader decides to pressure Debra by harming Stiffy. He has at his disposal three super villains.

### Muscleman Leopard

Without pause, Stiffy lays into the himbo with punches, kicks, head butts and other random acts of violence. The himbo doesn't even get started. He rolls about on the ground, groaning. Meanwhile, Stiffy has bounded towards Debbie, whom he valiantly attempts to free. Once again, Stiffy is grabbed by several Sea People.

### Bubba, the Tattooed Wonder

Looking highly displeased, the leader of the Sea People snaps his fingers imperatively, summoning Bubba. Bubba leaps around amongst the appreciative Sea People, doing acrobatics and appearing both frightening and mad. As he runs at Stiffy, our hero throws the assailant to the ground with some brilliant Kung-Fu moves. The pair indulge in some super-fast, super-exciting tussles. Naturally, Stiffy beats the wild man to a pulp.

The Sea People look at each other with trepidation, and admiration for Stiffy.

### Gus, the Gorilla

A huge man built like a gorilla shambles forward, picking his nose and looking at the dirt under his fingernails. This time, it is Stiffy who tries to be frightening, as he struts and roars. The other Pubic Punic's barrack and cheer.

Gus rolls his eyes and becomes very pugnacious. Stiffy and Gus immediately go into battle. This is the kind of fighting seen in cage fighting events.

Stiffy is besting the gorilla, by using some devilish, speedy movements and martial arts. To the shock and horror of the crowd, the Sea People use small blowpipes to fire tiny poisoned darts at Stiffy. Stiffy is distracted, and falls because he overbalances. The gorilla takes his chance, jumping on the hapless Stiffy, and pinning him to the ground. The gorilla begins to pulverize Stiffy. Debbie screams out that she has the necklace, so leave her husband alone. But she is unheard over the roar of encouragement from the crowd.

Howzat is sooled onto Gus by Mullet. Howzat manages to free Stiffy; the other man having rolled off Stiffy in an attempt to escape the dog's attack. The Sea People appear to be ready to kill Howzat. At the instant when one man raises his sword to deal the death-blow on Mullet's dog, the members of Gang #4 ("Bunch of Fives") leap forward.

Pandemonium breaks out. Chips and Donger free Mullet, Feral and Dingo. Now, all the men who formerly served Modra join in the fight. The Sea People are vanquished in an all-in brawl. Our boys are seen dusting themselves off, to the cheers of the appreciative crowd. Handshakes and man-hugs all round.

Where did Debra hide the jewel? Aaaaaaaaaaaaaagh!

The absolute lowest point in the narrative occurs when Stiffy bemoans the disappearance of the Chain of Ra. Debra reassures her new husband that the Chain of Ra is safe, hidden from the probing hands of the Sea People: she has it concealed inside her body as only a female could!

So Stiffy is somewhat revolted at this thought: more so because he is unable to have sex with his bride owing to it being the wrong time of the month (again!)

## **Final Scene 1500BCE**

The four members of Gang #6 run from the market place to the harbour, where boats are tied up. The boats lead to the subject of fishing, beer drinking, honeymoon protocol, pussy power, swinging the wedding tackle ... and then they wander off.

On the way we learn that Knackers #1 is taking over Modra's old business, in partnership with Knackers #3, and Knackers #2 will be their chief assistant. Squizzy is stuck with Ulpia and Cynthia.

## ~~~ POST EXPERIENCE OF MILES/STIFFY ~~~

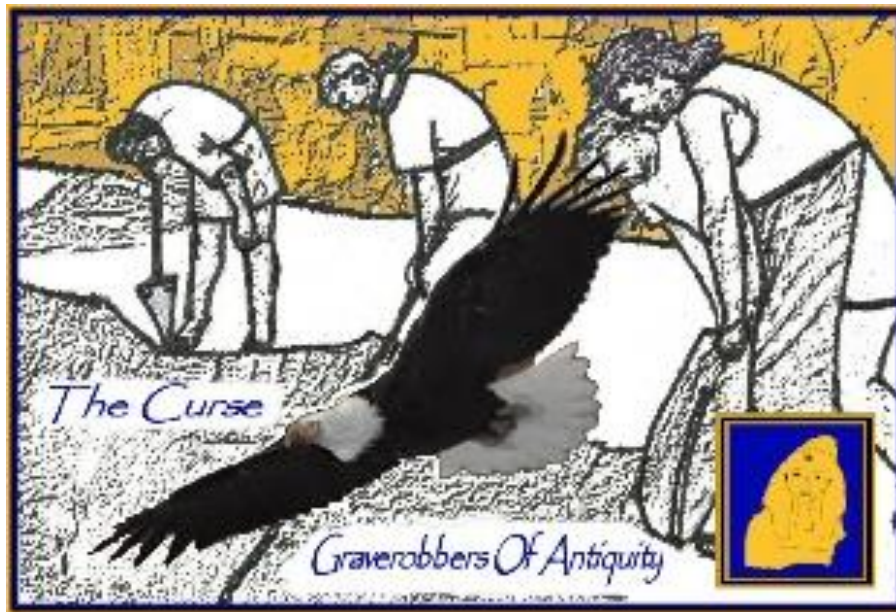
### 1931 A Swanky Hotel In London

This is a highly humorous scene.

The original ending was romantic and not funny. It was a case of Theresa wanting Miles to propose and Miles hanging back because he had no right to offer his poor self to the rich young widow. As Lady Ulpia says: "Yawn".

So instead of having a formal ending, I've pushed the two "ladies" into a commanding position. They quickly precis the ending in comedic terms.

To find out what ACTUALLY happened, during the credits we'll see a version of the original ending with actions only (no speech). This is found in the Special Notes section (below).



## The Original Graverobbers

For many years prior to September 2009, a story existed which formed the basis of Graverobbers of Antiquity.

Here are the salient points upon which the earlier story (a shocker!) was based:

- Meg Ryan (!) was a lonely American spinster who had somehow latched-onto a desultory group of British archaeologists and "groupies" who were stationed in Cairo in the early 1930's.
- The aim was that Professor Summerhill and the American lady would struggle through a long drawn out romance.
- However, Summerhill's daughter (Theresa) who was a young widow, would arrive in Cairo with the aim of breaking-up this soupy romance.
- In her turn, Theresa would fall in love with 2 of the French officers also stationed in Cairo. One of her beaux was to be serious, moody; the other, to be jolly and funny.

She would eventually fall for the funny officer. The reason that this particular pairing would prosper was that in the "dreams" she and the amusing officer would enjoy a series of marvellous adventures.

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- There was a very important scene where Theresa would stand on the balcony and look across the street towards the Palace, where the French officers were stationed, and she would envy the young ladies dancing with them.
- The tea-drinking scene was in the original; also, the arrival of the French officers into the tomb (walking downhill over rocks) was very much part of this early draft.
- The plot included a horrid girl (the daughter of another archaeologist) who conned Theresa into drinking some unspecified liquid. This took her immediately to Ancient Rome. From there, she wandered around Egypt on her adventures.
- The graverobbers were dark, evil types, hiding in shadows. As I recall, Theresa and her French officer went back in time to "clean-up" the graverobbing gangs.

*Yes, I agree. It was appalling.*

## **The AFL Football Game Early In 2009**

Early in September 2009, the Adelaide Crows played the West Coast Eagles. I'm pretty sure that that was the game.

I was in the room when the ad came on the television, and by chance saw it.

It was a XXXX beer ad, whereby a group of 4 young Australian men were in the process of building a boat as a background to their beer-drinking. You might be able to catch later renditions of the theme: go to <http://www.indeepwater.com.au/>.

Without pause, I was on the website, downloading and viewing the 12 episodes. Here were my graverobbers! Not the shadowy ne'er-do-well characters who had up to then been a minor component of the "dream" sequences, but solid, earthy Australian tradesmen, afraid of nothing.

The 4 original graverobbers (Stiffy, Mullet, Dingo and Feral) were born. They shooed-away the grave ghosts without once showing fear. They played practical jokes on each other, did not EVER indulge in introspection (except when they were on-the-go), and simply lived for the moment. From being minor characters, the graverobbers were now the meat and potatoes of the entire story.

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## Accents (British and US) In Films

It occurred to me many times that accents did not work in films where the characters revisited ancient times. The bad guys might speak as if German, and the good guys always had proper English accents. Or all the people could stick with their American twang. Or they could just pull a "Sean Connery" and use their own interesting accent irrespective of the role.

I thought it might be interesting to use modern accents as a guide to where the characters hailed from. For instance, if South African, then Hittites from Anatolia. Or if Cockney, then Babylonian. The Egyptians and Nubians had posh, English accents. And of course, the Phoenicians were Ocker.

## The Development Of Some Of The Characters

From seeing the XXXX ad on that fateful Saturday night, the stories bounded along. Some of the newer characters had their roles greatly expanded in the later 2 films, or I lost interest in them altogether.

- Mahala had a short stint. I got rid of her as soon as possible. She had served her purpose.
- Likewise, Dr Lilliban had originally been a major villain who had a shoot-out with Miles at L'Aiguilera. No dice! Too vile for words. So he was shifted on to Constantinople with some of the other English toots.
- The doctors Marell and Nettlethwaite became quite important in congealing the various plot devices. I liked Marell very much. All he had had to do in the first film was look after the health of the French officers. By degrees, his role expanded.
- Buddy was originally just a nameless clerk who pointed the boys in this direction or that as the plot progressed. But the insertion of the Leather and Pigskin match solidified Buddy (who of course was inspired by Lance Franklin) as a major player.
- The "John Goodman" character King Jethrodates is wonderful. I loved the pig-spotting, where the boys are gung-ho in contrast to the King's gentle sport. Yet, behind it all he was a merciless killer.

## Serendipity

- Jane Powell starred in a film called Rich, Young and Pretty. Her portrait was painted in that film by Marcel Dalio. He uttered the words: "It's the French touch". And that gave me the title for the second film.
- In The French Touch, the inclusion of a sub-plot (whereby Dani and Harry spend most of the film tarting-up the screenplay for a 1930's gangster movie) was a marvellous stroke of luck. It took the pair in and out of Egypt, which fitted the main story perfectly.
- In fact, everything which came up in the 3 GOA films was utterly serendipitous. I've never had anything "work" so well, without having to spend hours rewriting.
- The bulls-lions-eagles worked a treat. I was able to hinge many scenes on the GOA trinity.
- The Eagle/Phanton/Stranger character was a positive Godsend. He/it gave the stories a really solid backbone. I was able to "book-end" the 3 films with this plot device.
- The legend of Telepinu of the Hittites allowed the 3rd film to advance with some kind of meaning.

## CGI, And Its Role In The Three Films

I love the music of Mahler. It contains grand, sweeping passages interspersed with soft, lyric phrases. If just majestic and overpowering, the music would not work. Because it is part of a change-of-mood structure, it is brilliant beyond words.

Okay! Same works for CGI. As humans, we really cannot take in a vast tranche of CGI action, bombarding us with adrenalin-rush situations, one on top of the other. In the GOA films, the CGI scenes are paced such that we (the viewers) get the maximum impact without overkill.

## And so to sum up ...

In the scenes where the action takes place in times of Antiquity, the men change character from haughty French officers to down-to-Earth Aussie tradesmen. So one will encounter the odd, infrequent swear-word (of the 4-letter variety). The nature of the work and the natures of the men are to blame for these lapses in decorum. If you are offended, then simply avert your gaze. (The ceiling works for me.)

I've been writing for years and years and have come to the conclusion that all I'm really good at is dialogue. So the stories are in the form of film scripts or screenplays, as that's how I think. However, there's loads of action and CGI described. You just have to use your imagination ...

Clearly, from a historical point of view, there are numerous examples of anachronism. So be it. To get things moving required taking "poetic licence". No further correspondence will be entered into on this matter.

Finally, nobody of any race, creed, or gender is under attack here. This is just a yarn; an entertainment. There is no political bias here; no barrow to push. We are dealing with Bronze Age people, who existed many centuries prior to the current era.



Miles

*[Weakly]*

Water, please ...

Mahala

Of course yes yes. Here drink.

*[Takes a glass from the bedside table, and a ewer of water, and pours. Then hands glass to Miles, who is now up on one elbow. Mahala continues, somewhat distressed]*

I can't understand it, Captain Renauld. There should have been no danger ... But this elixir of dreams ... you reacted badly to it. It could have killed you! Ah, don't talk of it.

Dr Lilliban

This is what happens when amateurs play the dilettante, Madame. Very dangerous! Very dangerous indeed.

*Miles drinks. There is a silence between them. Mahala is deep in thought, unable to comprehend. Miles unsteadily swings his legs over the side of the bed, keeping the sheet over his groin.*

Miles

I must return to my men!

Mahala

No, no, you are not yet well enough for that. Rest awhile. I almost snatched your life from you, and for such a thing.

Miles

"Such a thing" ... what is that "thing", Madame?

Mahala

The most beautiful thing that exists in the world. If exist it still does ... Is a man's life worth that? A nobleman. A French nobleman ...

Dr Lilliban

Hush, Mahala! This is not at all helpful.

Miles

It is no matter, Sir, Madame. I am not a man to hold grudges. I must arise out of this bed. Please assist me, of your good nature.

*There is a pause in the conversation to allow for Mahala to help haul the man to his feet. He keeps a grip on the sheet for modesty.*

Mahala

*[More to herself than to the man]*You were my last remaining hope. Where can that chain be, now? Where do I search for it? I have now no clue of what I must do, or where I must go for it. I was **so** sure that you knew where it was.

Miles

Will you be so kind as to get my uniform for me? I shall dress and return to my men. And have a shave, too, I think.

*Mahala goes over to a cane chair, on which Captain Renauld's uniform and effects have been spread. As she passes them to him, she starts with an important recollection.*

Mahala But of course, you do not know. That fine, beautiful creature who loves you with all her heart is leaving Cairo. She travels to Constantinople very soon. I think that her heart is lost to you, and that you have not ... mmm ... what is that "R" word?

Miles Reciprocated?

Mahala Ah! Always a man of education, and may I add, of fine judgement, you.

*Miles has dragged himself into his clothes as she spoke.*

Miles I go to Cairo now, to the Palace. Be assured, my friend, that all will resolve itself to everyone's satisfaction.

Mahala She may already have sailed ...

Miles Then I will follow her. I may be penniless and without hope, but I shall rub along in this matter to a wonderful conclusion.

*[Steps up to the woman and takes her hands with some fondness]*

Madame, I regret most profoundly that I did not assist you in your so worthy quest, but believe me, all will be perfect in the end. Further, I cannot tell you at this time. Trust me, no?

*[He pats her hand then leaves quickly]*

END OF SCENE

### **ACT V Scene xviii:** Cairo 1931, In Mahala's Garden

*The scene changes to Mahala's garden near the stables, at nighttime, with both moonlight and lanternlight.*

*Two Egyptian servants bring Miles' horse forward into the light of a lantern, from a stable.*

*Miles is seen to look back at the house as he mounts, giving a very wry smile, then gallops his horse into the night.*

END OF SCENE

### **ACT V Scene xix:** Cairo 1931, Morning. The Port of Cairo.

*Theresa and her father Gordon Summerhill sit at the port, in a breezy waiting room.*

*Theresa is composed, and resigned to the fact that (as she supposes) Miles does not love her enough to marry her, and that his sudden disappearance betokens his wish to distance himself from her. She wears a jaunty hat, pretty outfit and lace*

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*gloves. Her luggage is belted and corded, and waits for collection nearby. Professor Summerhill sits beside her, looking about him.*

Summerhill I certainly do not like the notion of you swanning about in Constantinople without companionship or protection of some kind.

Theresa *[Stiff and uncompromising as in Act I]*

Of course. I shall hire a respectable woman of age and character when I reach the English quarter. I understand from Mr Healy that there is quite a contingent of Brits in Constantinople. He's given me their address and a letter of introduction.

*Summerhill nods.*

Summerhill Is there any point in waiting to see the Captain? I mean before you leave?

Theresa *[Controlling her emotions with huge effort]*

No point at all, I'm afraid.

Summerhill Because I was sure that he --

Theresa He's an aristocrat. A French aristocrat. He will not for any consideration ally himself with a nouveau-riche Englishwoman of no heritage such as myself.

Summerhill If he loves you, Blossom, he won't --

Theresa Father, I've enjoyed my little sojourn in Cairo. Honestly, it's been marvellous. No doubt, I'll have a simply smashing time in Byzantium ... I mean of course, Constantinople.

Summerhill *[Gently]*

And those French officers came over to say goodbye to you. That was nice, eh? Those gifts they gave you ... very kind indeed.

*Theresa bows her head, trying to stop herself from weeping. Summerhill pats her hands.*

Theresa *[Through her tears, still looking at her lap]*

By the way, you must marry her. She isn't really that bad.

Summerhill Marriage? Must it come to that? May I not simply flirt outrageously with --

Theresa Marriage! Be happy, that's what you advised me. I believe that she is quite genuine in her affection for you. Marry her!

*For a few seconds, they look at each other. Theresa laughs a little. Then they hug and it looks like they have reached a good understanding.*



Miles We are meant to be together, I know that for a certainty now. But be assured that I will care for you, for your comfort and your happiness much more than that Stiffy cared for Debra.

Theresa We really did get married, then?

Miles In Byblos, of all places. And I fed you on some cheap food from a market stall. *Tiens!* What a brute I then was! You will eat like a queen from now on, *je vous assure.*

Theresa So tell me what happened! Did everyone survive in one piece?

Miles Later. You'll hear all about it when I tell the others. Oh! But ... there's something I must tell to you, for your ears only.

*Theresa looks a question. An Egyptian port official and some porters come in to the waiting room to carry off Theresa's bags.*

Port official *[Bows]*

Madame, would you please accompany me to the ship? We are now boarding.

Miles *in control of the situation* Leave them, as Madame will not be voyaging after all. I'll take care of the baggage.

*[Takes wallet out of pocket, and fishes out some notes. Hands the port official and the porters some money]*

*Gratified, the Egyptians bow, and move off.*

*Miles still has the wallet in his hand. He removes a postcard of Anoheth (the drawing from the tomb, where he wears the chain of Ra) from it, and shows it to Theresa.*

Theresa *[Excited, breathless]*

What is it that you have to tell me?

Miles *[Hands the postcard to Theresa]*

Who is that do you think?

Theresa Oh, ho. That's Anoheth the Pharaoh. Know him anywhere.

Miles *Bien!* You are ready for the diploma in Fine Arts, I think.

Theresa Don't tease me, Miles. It's Anoheth ... but so what?

Miles So what? Look, what does he wear around his neck. Tell me you recognize that.

Theresa Could it be ... Is it ... It's the Chain of Ra, surely.

Miles Correct.

Theresa

But --

Miles

This must be totally private, and you must not tell this to any other living person. But during your dream, the first dream, I (Stiffy) secretly took this Chain of Ra from the mummified remains of the Pharaoh Anoheth. Somehow, many, many people knew of this theft. However, my methods were cunning, bold. I gave it to you (Debra) as a wedding present in the very last dream. Debra managed (by the most foul means into which I will not drag you, Cherie!) to conceal the necklace.

Now, we apparently kept that chain for as long as we lived. And then, so it would appear, it was passed down to the next generation. And so on, down, down, down.

*[Hands her another photograph]*

This is a photograph of the Chain of Ra. Until the last few days, I did not know its real name. We always called it the Renault Ruby. You see, my lovely Theresa, the Chain of Ra is housed in a vault at my chateau in Tarbes. And it has been in my family for hundreds of years.

Theresa

You had it all the time! And no-one knew ...

Miles

When we are married, and living so happily in France, I will write to Mahala, inviting her to visit my castle. She'll finally see it, and be overjoyed, no doubt.

*[Laughs at her surprised look, and chucks her chin]*

Enough talk. We have other business to attend to, my wife.

*They go into a passionate kiss. The ship is seen in the background, about to sail.*

*Camera pans the scene, and catches up with Demelza Brenton and Gordon Summerhill.*

*Their walk now over, Summerhill and Miss Brenton climb into a carriage. When they are seated, the carriage begins to roll forward.*

Demelza

*[Blissfully happy, watching the view]*

You know, Lord Carnavon wrote to me. He's setting up an expedition with a very talented archeologist ... What was his name? Howard? No, Carter. Howard Carter! That's it. They think they might have established the location of the long-hidden tomb of Tutankhamun. Do you think we should join them?

Summerhill

Hmph! Probably cleaned out by the GOA's, just as everything else has been. Waste of damned time! I'd rather return to Crete.

Demelza

*[She pats his knee.]*

Crete it is, then.

*And off they go to the hotel in the carriage.*

END OF SCENE, END OF ACT V, END OF FILM

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