



We met playful Torrens Winterbottom in "Hope for Homeless Men".

He rebranded himself Torrens Winter.

Then Torrens grew up into something of a rascal
working as a vet on the islands of Torres Strait.

Torres Strait separates New Guinea from Australia.

It has always been somewhat of an enigma ...

The magic of "Torres Strait" is spellbinding.

A grand yet unbelievable stage expands as this story unfolds.

Bruce Is this gonna be a long tale of woe?

Mark No ... Yes ...

Simon Which is it? Long or not?

Mark *sighs* It's so bloody involved that I need to tell it you in blobs.

Simon Blobs? What are they when they're at home?

Mark *determined* Fairfax wanted a top-notch bio on John Philip Stafford-Bright. No ... Not a "bio" as such: more a feature celebrating his life before it was all too late. Without blowing my own trumpet, I was the best man to send for that project. Sorry! Best "person" to send. *Mea culpa!*

But it was nevertheless a difficult gig. Hard yakka. He was (to quote my old man) as "tight as a fish's arse". You almost needed a stump grinder to get anywhere near the "inner JP".

Alright then -- let's just get JP out of the way first! St Martin's Hotel, Sydney ... where I first met "Gorgeous" (and of course JP).

End unload to cops.

The Interview

THE INTERVIEW PART I: Foyer of St Martin's Hotel, Sydney February 2015

St Martin's Hotel is at best a 3-star hotel: very worn down and in need of refurbishment.

Mark (in business suit and carrying briefcase) stands about in the small unassuming foyer, glancing at his watch, sighing and looking both bored and frustrated.

Sheryn Stackpole races into the foyer and on seeing Mark, rushes over to him. In return, he seems pleased. Mark extends a hand for the handshake and she takes his hand quickly. As they speak, Sheryn leads the way to the lift and they ascend to the 10th floor. Then they leave the lift, walk along the corridor and arrive at room 114.

Sheryn *breathless*

Sheryn Stackpole.

Sorry. It was like a car yard out there. I bought a tiny little car like a sewing machine on wheels to drive on the footpath. You know like they do in the movies. But I never have the guts to drive up there!

Mark *laughing*

Side-walk motoring ... It no longer works like you see in the movies because the pedestrians are all wearing earplug devices and can't hear you coming. They don't jump out of the way, I mean, and so you're no better off.

Sheryn laughs delightedly, but then her mood changes.

Sheryn

Well, I hope you won't think that you're wasting your time, Mr Telmer.

Mark

Mark.

Sheryn

Mark!

There are just so many no-go areas that Mr Stafford-Bright won't

consider. You absolutely **cannot** mention the Torres Strait. That's way out of bounds.

Mark *frowning, quickly* Torres Strait?

Sheryn gives an artistic shiver.

Sheryn That's where he was born. His mother cleared-out when he was only a toddler. She was a mousewife – terrified of her drunken husband.

Don't even **think** of mentioning the Lincoln Petrochemicals deal, the riots in Paris (May 1968) nor anything to do with his two failed marriages.

Mark *displeased* Ah ...

Sheryn *apologetic* Yes, I know it's difficult for you. That doesn't leave much ...
But I've always found that if you get him going, he'll roll along. He'll talk about all manner of other things and you'll get a fairly readable magazine-type story. But if it's insightful journalism that you're after – then forget it!

Here we are!

Sheryn knocks briskly at door 114 and then enters, followed by Mark.

This is simply a hotel room. There is a double-bed with two bedside tables, a small coffee table with two chairs, a wardrobe and en suite bathroom.

J. P. Stafford-Bright is still in pyjamas and dressing gown. He sits on one of the chairs at the bare coffee table. He looks Mark over in the way that old men look at younger men: frowning with both contempt and anxiety.

Sheryn *bright* Good morning, Mr Stafford-Bright. May I introduce Mr Mark Telmer of Fairfax? He's after a magazine-type interview. I've given him the usual heads-up on the permissible subjects he may cover in researching his article.

Mark smiles warmly as he reaches for and takes JP's hand in a firm handshake. The old man seems unwelcoming.

JP disparaging I've known more Fairfax reporters than you've had hot dinners ...
All of them ratbags. You'll send your fair copy to Stackpole for her
final approval before anything's printed. Sit down.

Mark lowers himself onto the remaining chair, whereas Sheryn sits on the bed.

Mark finds this inappropriate and offers his seat to Sheryn. JP waves this gesture off irritably.

JP No, no ... She's going downstairs to get us some cappuccinos and
some of those nice cakes they have. Two each and one for you
(you're always watching your figure).

Sheryn stands and looks at Mark, lifting an eyebrow.

Sheryn That alright?

Mark Yeah, sure.

Sheryn *smiles* Do you take sugar?

JP irritable Just grab some of those little paper things: white sugar and that
raw stuff and coffee crystals and some of those wooden stirring
sticks.

Come on! I'm dying here from dehydration and the gnawing pains
of hunger.

Sheryn ducks out of the room.

JP I'm near the end. I've got to get my affairs in order.

But I don't like talking with women. They always send female
reporters and I can't relate to them.

I know that sounds politically incorrect but I couldn't give a rat's
...

When she comes back, we'll send her off again to buy something
or other ...

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*Mark and JP are alone in the hotel room. The coffee table is now covered in empty coffee mugs (cardboard), dirty paper serviettes and empty cake boxes. Among the rubbish stands Mark's voice recorder. It would appear that JP is in full swing. Both men roar with laughter.*

*JP delivering the end of an anecdote* ... anyway, he didn't have a bloody clue which road to take in Sydney (he was from Adelaide) so he hired a taxi to drive to the wharf and followed him in the semi-trailer. Paid a taxi to lead the way! That's a dead-set fact!

*The men laugh amiably.*

*JP winding down* There's a taxi with no passengers whizzing around Sydney, closely followed by a South Australian hick truckie in a Mack truck.

*Mark nods. JP becomes thoughtful.*

*JP* If I was in my usual rude good health, we'd be leaning on the bar in some hotel or other, drinking lager beer and laughing too loudly, amidst a pall of cigarette smoke. That's all gone now ... Everything's trendy and sissy and no-one's allowed to smoke unless they can find a clump of pampas grass to hide behind. God I hate what they've done to the world!

*Mark* I can remember when I was a little tacker being taken to the pub with Dad. I barely came up to their knees: all the tradies and workmen. There was a smell of beer and ciggie smoke. And the noise of all those blokes talking at once was overpowering.

*JP grinning fondly* And what did they give **you** to drink?

*Mark chuckles* Lemonade with a straw. And the barman put a cherry on a toothpick in it. I thought I was in Heaven. My three sisters were never invited along ... only me.

*JP laughs and then sighs. His mind is somewhere else.*

JP Let's get this done.

Write down this name: Lloyd Winter. He goes by "Winter" but the real family name was "Winterbottome". His father was the vet: Torrens. Torry some people called him ... The Tor-Man.

**The Interview is on pause ...**

**Mark unloads the tale to the cops ...**

POLICE PART II: Harbour Side, Sydney May 2015

Bruce He sounds like a sour old bastard to me. "The world owes me big time".

Mark Right.

Simon *reading* This vet bloke gets mentioned a lot here --

Mark Let's come back to him. Jot down a note that we have to return to the Tor-Man. Oh! And Lloyd (his son).

Okay. So Miss Snooty-Drawers Stackpole (whom I now worship) ... Anyway, she warned me off talking about the two failed marriages. And then what does old JP do? He marches straight

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. ([www.qld-tm.net.au](http://www.qld-tm.net.au))



*JP softened tone* We used to call those tarts “dreamboats” back in the day. She was a looker alright. Probably gone to seed by now, like they all do: fat and frowsy with a hacking cough. Drinking too many highballs and rooting too many sailors and smoking too many death-sticks ...

*JP shambles back to the suitcase, returning the photograph as he diligently searches for an old newspaper article.*

Mark Are you going to tell me who she is?

*JP brisk* That’s Mrs Stafford-Bright mark one. Gaynor Mangold she was when I met her in Paris. She was a very minor British starlet (totally lacking any vestige of talent) and part-time model.

*JP hesitates slightly before stretching out his hand to Mark. Mark takes the old newspaper article being thrust at him. It is a somewhat battered front page from the Guardian that features the same beautiful young woman (this time involved in some kind of violent protest). The caption reads: “Our English Rose Caught Up in Paris Fracas”. The accompanying photo was taken in the late 1960’s (judging by the girl’s stunning makeup and hairstyle). Yet her face is smeared with something (perhaps mud or blood?)*

Mark Ah yes! I’ve seen this one. Quite a landmark: Paris in the grip of street violence during May 1968; and here we have a stunningly beautiful young Englishwoman swallowed-up in the fighting.

*JP makes a loud disparaging “Humph!” noise.*

*Mark musing* An editor gets hold of a photo of a brawl and slaps it on the front page. People “Ooh!” and “Ah!” for a couple of days and then it’s passed over for another titbit of news. But this is poignant. This brings tears to the eyes of men who dream of rescuing her from the melee. And women sigh because --

*JP snatches back the article to Mark’s surprise. JP has turned nasty again.*

*JP snitty* Don’t crap on like that or I’ll have you thrown down the stairwell.

*Mark blinks at JP.*

Mark Sorry ... It's just ... Her face ...

JP *nasty* Yes, you want to know what that muck on her face is, do you?

What a crock! She managed to get herself into the thick of the riots in May 1968 and some poor mug's blood was spattered over her. She wasn't touched (at least I'm guessing that that was the case) but whipped around in her best looks (the make-up and hair are superb, as you can see) just as the photographer captured the moment. That snap made it into all the leading British tabloids: "Lovely English rose caught-up in the horror of Parisian street fights ... "

*[Snarls]*

Don't get me started!

Mark Why were you in Paris in 1968? What were you doing there?

JP *angry snarl* Weren't you told by that Dragon Lady not to quiz me on that subject? Shut down your recording ... I'm not talking to you any more ...

*Mark is caught off guard. He reaches towards the recorder but does not commit to switching off.*

Mark I'm so sorry ...

JP *working himself up* The only journalistic lesson to be gained from that fucking photograph of my first wife is this: men go into the matrimonial fray with their dick clutched in their hand and they don't use their magnificent brain to guide them. I should have been dealt-with by a firing squad instead of marrying that Mangold gorgonzola.

Don't get me started!

I hate all of it. Everything that exists in current-day Sydney upsets me to the point of murdering all the ad men. Why stop there?

Murder ***everyone!***

Where are we going? Come on Telmer where the fuck are we

going?

Are we Australians or what? Lollies are now candy, scones are now biscuits, biscuits are now cookies, nappies are diapers, Father Christmas is now called Santa Claus, sweets is now dessert, and on and on and on ...

Jesus! A fucking nightmare! I'll die screaming about it!

And shut that fucking thing off!

*JP is totally irritable now. He waves in the general direction of Mark.*

*But (after his temperamental tirade) JP gradually becomes more serene. Mark is extremely reluctant to switch off his recording device, but he seems to have no choice. Mark clicks the button and stows the device away in his briefcase.*

JP *very calm* Yes, shut it off. I want to say things to you that are off the record.

*[Chuckles]*

Don't worry ... Every journo who rocks up here gets the anti-Yank diatribe. I apologise for that. Not your fault ...

*JP rescues the photograph again and looks at the divine beauty looking back at him. JP screws up his mouth in distaste and shoves the photo roughly into his dressing gown pocket.*

JP I want to tell you something that I've never discussed with another living soul.

I can't believe (looking back) that my Father was ever even remotely interested in raising beef cattle. He was in Torres Strait for some reason, sure, but it didn't wander about on four legs ...

What do they call it? A hidden agenda.

*JP wriggles about in his seat.*

JP It was all poop.

If you were a fair dinkum cattle farmer, you'd have set up in the Channel Country, not on some God-forsaken hell-hole in Torres

Strait. He called the place "Glamis Castle", which gives you some idea of my Father's delusions of grandeur. Never set foot in Pommiland or Scots-Wa-Hey.

Tell you what: I'll give you the key and you can go there and have a look around. And a chit signed by me in case there's any squatters. You can kick them out for me.

Mark *wide surprise*

That's fantastic! This little magazine article will have to stretch to three parts, I think.

JP *more animated*

All the better! Write a book!

Take that bitch Stackpole with you ... that Sheryn girl who's supposed to look after me. Have a naughty with her on the beach ... It's what she needs more than anything.

*So shocked is Mark by JP's suggestion that he emits a loud crack of laughter. He tries to turn this into a cough, shaking his head as he does so.*

JP *grinning*

Ah! So you're married?

Mark

No! No, I mean I was hundreds of years ago.

JP

Why'd you split?

Mark *rueful*

I was married to the job, so I was told.

JP *irascible*

Married to the job! Don't make me spit chips!

They want a nice home and all the best furnishings. They want babies who turn into brats who then proceed to wreck the best furnishings that you've only just finished paying off. And then the cycle begins again, only **now** everything costs 12 times as much ... "Married to the job" ... And that's because to keep Madame happy, you have to work hard at your job just to keep it. But you're neglecting her in the meantime. Bloody women!

*[Real venom]*

God! I hate women!

Mark Might I suggest that you pay Ms Stackpole out and get a bloke to take her place?

JP Not possible. Tried it. Must have tits. Females have a nurturing side. Fact of Nature.

My bloody dam didn't – but we are not going there!

*[Pause]*

Have you rung Lloyd Winter yet?

Mark *argumentative* No, how could I? I've been with you all morning.

JP *nodding* Oh, yes ...

I can't give you his direction, but I can speed you on your way to find it. There was a superb mansion called La Perouse to the West of Sydney. Been pulled down in the '50's to make way for shit-house flats and so on ... They wouldn't have got past the National Trust nowadays.

God! I'd like to murder someone for tearing that glorious structure down ... Rip their bloody throat out ... Progress, eh?

Anyhow, next door to that was Worrilee. That stayed in the family and they'll know where to find Lloyd.

Mark Are you winding off?

JP *at sea* What?

Mark *amused* This interview: are you winding down? "Get out, Telmer, and take your effing recorder with you."

*JP laughs as he writes the promised note.*

JP If you don't want that flibbertigibbet to go with you to Cholwich Island, take Lloyd. Better still, take them both.

Mark And you say that the property was called "Glamis Castle"?

JP                                Yeah ...

                                      Bloody wanker!

Mark                             How many times have you been back there?

JP                                Never. Not once. Not as a grown man, that is.

                                      Take yourself there and see if you can figure out what my Father was on about. Get Fairfax to pay for it all. They've got more money than anyone else.

Mark *rueful*                    That's not how they tell it.

JP                                Pshaw!

Mark                             And ... If you don't mind my saying so, I've enjoyed this little get-together. Can we do it again some time?

JP                                Sure! If you want to.

Mark                             But this place is a hole. I hate to see you boxed-up in here. My daughter and I are driving off to see some horses up in the bush on Friday arvo. You could come with us.

JP                                Will your daughter mind?

Mark                             No! She'd love it. All she thinks about are horses anyway.

JP                                That would be lovely then.

Mark                             And after that, Torres Strait. I'll give you the low-down.

**The Interview is on pause ...**



## TORRES STRAIT FIRST INTERLUDE

~ 1932 ~

We the audience are now to become privy to the “goings-on” in Torres Strait. The presumption will be that “Monsieur Allé” is Glasgow Stafford-Bright in disguise.

All those who witnessed this scene are dead by 2015.

The words “Torres Strait 1932” will have to be clearly visible on the screen.

*The scene is of a moonlit night on Torres Strait. The “Strait Star” is seen to glide along: silent, menacing.*



*Then two persons row to the shore. They are both women disguised as pirates. One person remains in the boat while the other dashes up the beach towards a large, impressive bungalow.*

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

Inside the bungalow, the “pirate” creeps about holding a hessian sack. The “pirate” unlocks a safe as if “he” knows the code off by heart. The “pirate” removes valuables from the safe, stowing them in the hessian sack. The family dog is pleased to see this person and stands about wagging its tail. The person reaches down to gently pat the dog.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*The calling card of this “pirate” is a cross made from strips of palm leaves.*

*The safe is left open. The “pirate” drifts away, followed by the dog (full of delight).*

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

Dawn breaks. We hear some screams and shouts from within the bungalow. A woman’s hand holding a cross made from strips of palm leaves wafts over the scene.

Male *voice-off* What? What did you say about the safe?

Female *voice-off* We’ve been burgled! Oh no! It’s that Monsieur Allé. We’ve been done over by that sea-rover Monsieur Allé!

Male *voice-off* Oh shit! Shit! Shit!

Female *voice-off* He always leaves a palm cross to show that it’s him that’s done the deed. We could have been murdered in our very house!

Male *voice-off* I’ll jump in the motor boat. Upper Ipswich Island.

Female *voice-off* Why didn’t the dog bark?

Male *voice-off* The police! The sheriff! Every able-bodied man! We have to catch this no-good crook. By Jesus!

Female *voice-off* You can't leave me here on me own. I'll come with you.



POLICE PART III: Harbour Side, Sydney May 2015

Now Mark and the two policemen are laughing.

Simon *amazed* Never mind about anything else: did you get to root Miss Stackpole? "Have a naughty on the beach" he told ya.

Mark *smirks* Make another note under "Tor-Man", Lloyd and Cholwich Island. In capital letters write that Markie is to describe in graphic detail his encounter with Miss Stackpole on the sand, in the shade, in the nuddy.

Bruce *pleased* Fair dinkum? You scored?

Mark smiles broadly as he nods. Mark and the two policemen high-five each other.

End unload to cops.

The Interview

THE INTERVIEW PART III: Trip Through The Bush In Mark's Car,
February 2015

Mark's modern car tows a horse float.

Mark drives along, deep in thought. The bush scenery is superb. In the passenger seat sits a morose JP. Rowena Telmer sits in the back, busy with an iPad (looking up horses that are for sale in that area of NSW). Mark seems happy, despite his bad-tempered front-seat passenger (who wriggles about in frustration).

JP prickly, testy

I can't abide this ridiculous quiet. Somebody start talking.

Rowena smiling and apologetic

Sorry ... I was playing with my iPad.

JP nasty

Those bloody gadgets ought to be banned. A slut-faced woman reporter came to quiz me late last year. While I was politely and clearly explaining to this vixen the truth of the Universe, she drags out one of those bloody clever phones they have and starts tapping away on it.

"Pull yourself together!" I told her (on a roar) and chucked the frigging contraption down the lift well.

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

Mark is stunned, as much by JP's rancid remarks as by his daughter's quickness in dealing with the tetchy older man. Rowena (grinning broadly) leans forward such that she can speak to the back of JP's head.

Rowena I saw a great movie not long ago. It was about teenagers having a fated love: cancer patients. It was Danish or ...

"The Fault in Our Eyes"? Something like that. I cried and cried.

JP is unimpressed but Rowena's chatty ploy has diverted him.

JP *uninterested* Hmph.

Mark *evenly* Well you get the conversational gambit kick-started.

JP *snarling* I don't like those weepy girly films.

Rowena *defensive* It was an "everyone" film.

JP *argumentative* Give me adventure every time (that or a good Western).

Rowena Okay then. I saw another film: it was a real adventure gung-ho epic. You might have liked it. The latest X-Files tribute.

JP *scathing* Is that one of those man-wolves and robots hodgepodge things with all the action being computer-generated?

Rowena *shrugs* Guess so ...

JP looks angrily out of the window as he bangs his palm on his leg. He mutters and snarls. Mark glances at him. Mark realizes that he must make an effort.

Mark *pleasant* War films then.

JP *firing up* Don't get me started for Chrissake!

The war came to me, not I to it. The Domain Gas Company (as it was then known) sent me to Paris to negotiate with a bloke who wore a ghutra on his scone (along with a business suit). Jeez!

May 1968. What a time to rock-up in Paris!

The Interview is on pause ...

FLASHBACK

FIRST FLASHBACK: PARIS MAY 1968

General Coverage Of The Situation

We hear several announcers in voice-over as we watch a medley of stock footage from the reporting of the May riots in the Paris of 1968. The announcers will be an English-speaking Frenchwoman, a male BBC announcer and a terrified woman speaking in French (with subtitles).

The salient points will be:

- Leftists have taken control of Paris.
- Blockades prevent people leaving the embattled city.
- Police being stoned by protesters in running street battles.
- Pitched battles between students and police in the Latin Quarter under a pall of smoke.
- Television coverage of Georges Pompidou begging for calm from his people.
- Injured students and police being carted off to ambulances.
- The red communist flag being raised over The Bourse.
- Students control The Sorbonne.

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

FIRST FLASHBACK: PARIS MAY 1968

Taking “That” Photograph

In a side alley (away from the brouhaha) our camera closes in on Gaynor Mangold and a photographer (Brendan Teague). Gaynor is breath-taking: stunning, stylish and carefully made-up. She carries (not a handbag) but a cube-shaped cosmetic case, as was popular at that time.

Gaynor *uncertain* If this doesn't work, Teague ...

Teague *reassuring* It'll work! Close your eyes!

Gaynor obeys as Teague splashes fake blood over Gaynor (who shows the expected amount of disgust and discomfort).

Teague *emphatic* Okay. When I call your name, whip around. Look slightly alarmed but serene. Don't squint up your eyes: they need to be wide open.
Now go! Go! Go!

The pair rush up the alley and straight into the fracas. They are surrounded by violence, noise and mayhem. Gaynor is not sure where to go or what to do but presses on regardless. Then Teague shouts her name. Gaynor swings around and is photographed several times. One of these photos is the one which JP showed to Mark (in the form of a front-page newspaper article).

FIRST FLASHBACK: PARIS MAY 1968

The Young JP Meets Gaynor

The role of the young JP is played by the actor playing Bayeau Lanfranco.

Wearing a pencil-slim business suit (as would have been the style in 1968), the young JP is seen to be assisting frightened citizens to the safety of a café. He sees Gaynor among the mob and is arrested

by her beauty. She looks up at the young JP in a flirty way as she passes him. Gaynor is still carrying the cosmetic case.

Rowena *voice-over* She staged the whole thing? What a complete and utter bitch!

JP *voice-over* She was that, certainly!

Rowena *voice-over* And you actually **married** her? What a rip-off! Did she ever tell you the truth?

Inside the very dimly-lit café, the young JP rushes to Gaynor's side as she sips a coffee with great elegance. The young JP is appalled at the blood on her face.

Young JP *very concerned* Are you injured? Do you need a doctor? Um ... *Avez-vous le* ... um ... ?

Gaynor It's alright. I'm English. And I'm quite unharmed. Thanks for the concern.

Young JP *frowning* But your face is covered in blood.

Gaynor One of those Molotov cocktail things landed nearby and a poor wretched man was smashed-up by it. I was the collateral damage, as you might say.

Gaynor now dives into the cosmetic case and cleans herself up. As she cleans and then applies new make-up, the young JP is riveted by her.

Rowena *voice-over* And did she ever tell you the truth about the blood?

JP *voice-over, grim* No she did not.

Rowena *voice-over* So then how did you find out?

JP *voice-over* Funny you should ask ... Strangely enough, I was totally lost in Tokyo some years later. In fact it was after I'd shed Mrs Stafford-Bright number two. (That's another story of terror and remorse ...)
Anyway a very kind but drugged-out English photographer named Brendan Teague shimmied up to me in a bar and we got talking. He had gone straight downhill from the time his photograph of my

ex-wife graced the front page of The Guardian. Whereas the lovely Gaynor had conquered London and become my wife. Minor triumph!

Teague told me about the truth behind the photo. But then, he was very pissed-off at the paltry sum he was paid for it. Might have been bar talk ... but it does sound like the sort of contemptible stunt that she'd stage.

Rowena *voice-over* I'm guessing that she was a real piece of work to live with and that you very soon divorced her after the usual "acrimonious discussions".

We hear JP laugh just as Gaynor applies the finishing touches to her make-up. She closes the case and looks longingly at the love-struck young JP.

JP *voice-over* Ah, Rowena, Rowena ...
Gaynor had a body to worship. Unfortunately, several other men were devotees there besides myself (in spite of our marriage vows). And she provided the ultimate template for acquisitive selfishness ... and unspeakable venom when chance permitted ...



END OF FLASHBACK

[Long sigh]

Barley sugar ... They used to hand out sticks of barley sugar to keep kiddies from squealing and screaming.

Do you know that one of my earliest memories is of Brennie taking my lolly out of my hand and biting off the point on it? So that I wouldn't get my mouth scratched?

Mark *surprised* Er ... Well ... There you go ...

Both men laugh at the absurdity of this pronouncement.

Mark What in the name of all that's wonderful made you think of that?

JP *shrugs sadly* Your daughter is so caring and kind. I was remembering something from a long time ago. Someone was kind to me ...

Mark cannot make out what JP means or where the conversation is going. Despite being a journalist, Mark also finds it difficult to deal with this kind of maudlin talk from a fellow male.

Mark and JP watch Rowena as she fusses over a superb chestnut gelding. She speaks to some off-screen person.

Mark fetches a couple of hay bales. He and JP are able to sit in the shade. Rowena is now sitting on the gelding's bare back. She grins at the two men before trotting off.

JP *very quiet* I was born in 1930.

Mum pissed off in 1932, so of course my memory of it is totally nothing. Others told me about it later.

My father was Glasgow (that was his Christian name but he wasn't Scottish or anything) ...

We farmed beef cattle on Cholwich Island in the Torres Strait. My mother ... Couldn't stand my father's temper. He was a foul-mouthed bugger of a man ...

JP stares out into the bush. Mark (for something to do) fiddles with some strands of hay.

JP *far-away voice* There was only Dad and me. I would have been two years old and

my Mother left me there with Dad, on Cholwich Island ...
Dad and me and some natives and all those ruddy cattle ...

Mark *kindly*

Did you ever see your Mother again?

JP

I dunno. Might have done. I honestly can't remember ... She was scared of Dad, so if she tried to see me and he put the kybosh on it ... But I don't remember. Two years old.

It was all about that terrible storm. The wind blew the palm trees over. It was that strong. I'll bet they still talk about it today.

[Takes a big breath]

Now Dad's agent was a bloke called Blair Toovey in Sydney.

The Vet was coming on his usual rounds. Toovey had organized that. A rota. This vet (it would have been Torry Winter for sure) was flying out from Weipa in a Moth (I suppose it was). Had floats on it.

The violent storm -- then the plane wreck -- then Torry helping Dad to haul that thing out of the water at Byngham -- and dragging it through the water to Cholwich.

[Despair]

What did he want with that heap of twisted metal when a man had lost his life? Eaten alive? Can you beat that?

Torry mentioned to me later that he never got over that.

[Whispers]

Never got over it ...

The Interview is on pause ...



TORRES STRAIT SECOND INTERLUDE

~~ 1932 ~~

Again, the words “Torres Strait 1932” will have to be clearly visible on the screen.

As JP was way too young to recall the following memory, it would seem that it will die with him. You can imagine that Brennie bit the point off his lolly many times following this scene: and JP will remember that. In 1932 Brennie is about 6 or 7 years old.

However, the girl he calls “Brennie” is in fact Brenda Tirritana of Embley Island in Torres Strait.

Interlude i: Glamis Castle In Its Heyday 1932

The islander women are Dolly and Gussie who work for Gertie Stafford-Bright. The pianist is Peggy Connell.

The scene starts with us hearing Dolly singing the last couple of lines of “My Sweet Little Alice Blue Gown”. Peggy plays the badly-tuned piano. The outdoor scene into which the song intrudes is glorious: Glamis Castle (perched on the highest ground of Cholwich Island) is in its heyday. Our

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

camera spots the grounds of the Castle in the foreground, with the superb waters of Torres Strait in the background.

The song continues up until Gertie discusses biting off the point of the barley sugar stick.

Gussie is leading 18 month-old Jack down towards the house, with the young Brenda (whom Jack calls "Brennie") following. Jack toddles along as best he can down an attractive rock stairway. The child squawks some random sounds (which might be words). Young Brenda picks flowers for Jack.

Gussie *kindly* Come along, Jackie. Good boy!

From what we have heard so far, Gertie Stafford-Bright comes across as potentially being a pathetic mousewife. In reality she is a proud, determined woman. Gertie sits on a cane chair on the porch in the shade. She is stitching an altar cloth. On seeing Gussie and Jack, she calls to Gussie.

Gertie *calling out* Give the child a stick of barley sugar, Gussie: but only if he's been a good boy. Lulu's mite can have one, too. She's always a good little girl, aren't you Brenda?

Gussie *smiling and calling out* Jackie has been good, Missus.

Gertie *calling out* If he sucks it to a point, bite it off will you? Or Brenda can do that.

The camera now closes in on Gertie as she finishes her stitching.

Gertie *to herself* We hardly want to drag the infant off to the hospital with lacerations to the mouth caused by a dagger-point on a lolly stick.

Gertie turns towards the direction of the music.

Gertie *calling out* Play it again! That's my favourite!

The camera focuses on Dolly. Peggy strikes up and Dolly launches into "In my sweet little Alice blue gown". Dolly possesses a sweet coloratura and sings pleasantly.

Nearby to the piano sit Glasgow and Roy who are incapable due to uncontrolled laughter. They can hardly breathe, are red-faced and crying. They have been set-off by the mention of "Monsieur Allé" which they have translated into "Mister Gone". They sit at a large table near a bright sunny window. The table has on it a lace tablecloth, a bowl of fruit and much impedimenta, along with crystal glasses and a large bottle of Gilbey's gin. (The label on the bottle will have to be correct for 1932).

Gertie stalks into the house and interrupts the singing: it grinds to an immediate halt.

Gertie *yelling out* What are those gents giggling about?

Dolly gives Peggy a quick look and then excuses herself with a brief "Sorry Ma'am".

Gertie *cross* They're not laughing at your excellent singing, Dolly, I hope?

There is a telling pause, in which Dolly and Peggy glance at each other.

Dolly *blushing* No Missus. They find his name is funny ... That "Mr Gone" ...

Dolly's last two words are mouthed rather than spoken. The effect of Dolly's words is to send the two men into renewed helpless laughter.

Gertie You mean Monsieur Allé?

Bentong rises and staggers off, still crying with laughter. Under his wife's sullen gaze, Glasgow attempts some self-control. He returns to his glass of gin and swigs it down. Glasgow "comes down" from the comic interlude.

Glasgow I just found his name funny, that's all. No need to work yourself up, Gertie.

Gertie Well, there's nothing funny about a marauder ... A rover who --

Glasgow This all sounds like the plot of one of those Ronald Colman flicks: gay blades slashing it out on the beach for the price of the pirates' gold while the terrified maiden watches them. Theatrical mish-mash. Plain unadorned tripe!

[Disgusted]

"Monsieur Alle"! My fat aunt!

Gertie Are you saying that this ne'er-do-well doesn't even exist?

Glasgow I'm saying that some French bloke (or Dutch bloke: everyone gets them mixed up) is innocently fishing or diving for treasure or just beach-combing ... Or whatever he's doing ... And some shit-for-brains has decided that he's up to no good. That's what all this fuss is about.

Peggy We had some stuff stolen out of our shed: ropes and chains, Mr S-B. Some tools ...

Gertie *admonishing* And mind your language, Glaz. Children and ladies.

Roy Bentong saunters back into the room, resuming his seat at the table and drinking his gin.

Glasgow *insulting tone* And when a chook goes missing you always blame a fox.

Gertie I've already contacted the Governor of New South Wales (I was at school with his daughter Patricia, you know) and his –

Glasgow *affronted* Oi! We don't happen to fall under the jurisdiction of New South Bloody Wales!

Gertie *with emphasis* And the Governor informed me that the best way to deal with these bushranger types (French or not) is to form a vigilante group of the local able-bodied men (including the natives). The idea being that a show of force will scare him off.

Glasgow And you want Roy and I and all the other buggers within cooe to buckle our swashes and to stand about on the shore looking threatening in case this Froggie happens to flaunt himself in these waters? Is that your plan, Gertie?

Gertie Far more useful than swigging Gilbey's gin so that you and Roy can giggle inanely, Glazza.

Bentong *to Glasgow* Say! Listen to me: that Gauguin painting stolen from Bill Grundy!

Glasgow Yep?

Bentong Well, Gertie's got me thinking ... Could that French bloke have swiped that? I mean ... Well, it'd be worth a few bob, wouldn't it?

Gertie There! You see?

Peggy has been telling me that the foul freebooter has been seen by the natives. Floats by in the dead of night.

Glasgow *unconvinced* Does he now? And does he have tattoos, a gold tooth and an eye

patch?

In the uncomfortable silence, Peggy stands. She mouths "I'd better go" to Gertie. Bentong takes the hint and likewise prepares to leave, swigging down the last of his gin. He stands.

Bentong Yeah. I'd better take off as well, like Mrs Connell. Thanks for the drink, Glazz.

Gertie turns her attention to Bentong.

Gertie And those women and girls, Roy? You promised me you'd organize a proper Church of England vicar to look after their moral welfare. Have you managed that yet?

Bentong *nodding* Aye! Yes, I've done that Gertie. I've done that. Yes.
profoundly

Gertie A good man of the cloth, is he?

Glasgow *scathing* What's it matter if he's a defrocked priest or a kirtled friar? Who cares a rat's?

Gertie *with emphasis* I care!

Bentong They're only sluts fit for a smoky factory, Gertie. Or slogging on a plantation. You might as well better save the bleeding heart stuff for folk more worthy, eh.

[Aside to Glasgow]

Except one that I've got my eye on. A glossy-skinned thoroughbred.

Bentong and Glasgow swagger off. Gertie purses her lips: she is frustrated and put-out.

Gertie *annoyed* I supposed the next learned maxim will be that they're saving these poor wretches from their drunken and abusive menfolk. God give me strength!



A native rows Dolly and the child Brenda back to their island. Brenda waves frantically to Jack, who stares at her without response. Dolly hums "Alice Blue Gown" as Brenda sucks on the barley sugar stick.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*Gertie is accompanied by a couple of native women as they pick foliage to bring inside the house. Youtha strolls up, dripping wet.*

Native woman            Cripes! Here's Youtha dripping wet.

Gertie                    Lord! What happened to you, Pet?

Youtha *dark*            The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Gertie *to the other woman*            Go inside and grab a big towel for this poor girl, will you?

*Gertie watches the native woman scamper inside.*

Gertie *frowns*            Well?

Youtha                    They head off tonight. If that gutless wonder Snout touches me ...

Gertie                    No. He's useful at times. Just find me that piece of jewellery.  
Either him or Bentong has nicked it from me.

Youtha                    You got lumbered with the phony and now one of them has the  
genuine article.

*The native woman rushes up carrying a towel as instructed. Youtha murmurs "Ta" and begins to dry herself.*



## Bay unloads the tale to the cops ...

### POLICE PART IV: Harbour Side, Sydney May 2015

*Three men (Mark along with policemen Bruce and Simon) sit at an outdoor table overlooking Sydney Harbour. It is a sunny weekday lunchtime. People come and go about them, chattering and laughing.*

*The role of Bayeau Lanfranco is played by the actor playing the young JP as well as Torrens.*

*Bayeau strolls up. We see (but not hear) him being introduced. Hands are shaken.*

*Bayeau (in polo shirt and shorts) sits down just as a waitress places their lunch plates on the table.*

Mark *to Bayeau*                    Is this okay for you to sit outside? In the heat?

Bayeau *stoic*                        Ah ... I'll be fine. Getting used to it, Old Mate. Besides, there's a sea breeze. No, I'll be fine.

Mark *to Bayeau*                    Good. Is that what you wanted? I couldn't understand your order much: water taxis zoom past and I can hardly hear --

Bayeau                                Yes, lovely! Thank you.

*The men begin to eat as they speak about the case.*

Simon *reading*                    Yet to cover: Tor-Man and Lloyd Winter. Cholwich Island.  
Sand/shade/nuddy.

Mark No. That lot has to wait until Bay says his say.

*[To Bayeau]*

Is that alright? Spill your guts (as it were).

Bayeau For me to tell all? Yes! Certainly. Where do you want me to start?

Mark Your mother died. But before doing so she told you about your father. Maybe kick-off there.

*Bayeau squirms. Then he nods. He eats and then goes into his side of the story.*

Bayeau *sadly* My mother suffered an accident. At home. In London. Let's begin at that point.



## SECOND FLASHBACK: London February 2015

### Up-Market Private Home

*It is night. The private home in London is very swish: it is being used as the base for an elitist party for advertising agency people. Our camera starts outside such that we can hear the delightful hubbub of a convivial crowd enjoying themselves. We reach the front door and move inside just as something nasty happens.*

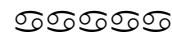
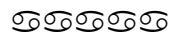
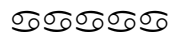
*The happy noise turns sharply into a babble. There are squeals and alarm. The happy faces now display concern and distress. People mill about. There is confusion and muddle.*

---

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. ([www.qld-tm.net.au](http://www.qld-tm.net.au))

- Liberty? It's not Libby is it?
- What happened to her?
- Is it serious? What's the problem?
- Good God! Is Liberty alright?
- Oh! my God! Is she alright?
- Will she be okay?
- Has somebody called an ambulance?
- She fell down ...
- No! So soon after her heart episode.
- This must do irreparable damage, you know ...
- Poor thing!
- I'm not sure what happened, but ...



*Outside on the street, a middle-aged woman (Liberty Lanfranco) is stretchered into an ambulance. Her son Bayeau Lanfranco climbs nimbly into the ambulance and the doors are closed by the ambulance people. A small crowd of distressed party guests congregate in the garden and on the footpath; their concern continues.*

## SECOND FLASHBACK: London February 2015

### A Very Exclusive Private Hospital

*The same party guests are now dressed-down as they swan into Liberty's hospital room. Liberty lies back in her bed, smiling weakly as people bearing glorious floral tributes troop in. There is a babble of best wishes and "get-well-soon" messages.*

Tinkerman *theatrical*      Darling! How can we hope for artistic progression without our

“Grande Dame”?

*This brings a titter of appreciation from all.*

Rosalie *unctuous* I shall dedicate tonight’s performance to you, Libbie. And I know how it might be compassed! I’ll have the stage announcer give out a message of hope for you just as I go on.

Bayeau *laughing* No! Really, I don’t think my Mother wants her wretched incident to form part of “A Life In Our Times”.

Liberty *weakly* Hitting my scone on the basin as I plummeted towards the bathroom floor is perhaps the least romantic reason for hospitalization. Besides, the next step will be for some well-meaning fool to blurt out that I’ve been overdoing it of late (which of course I have!) and some idiot will then dredge up my age.

*Liberty gives an artistic shudder. The well-wishers find this speech utterly amusing. However, Bayeau looks concerned amidst the continued cheerful chatter.*

Bayeau *authoritative* Okay, friends. Show’s over. Dame Liberty must rest.  
Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers and cards ...  
I’ll update my Facebook page with her current condition as it improves ...  
You’ve all been so kind and thoughtful ...

*A uniformed nurse enters the room to assist Bayeau in shepherding the visitors out. There is a hubbub of witty, terse farewells and lots of kisses for Liberty.*

*When Bayeau is finally alone with his mother and the nurse, there is a contrasting silence.*

Liberty *weakly* Nurse ... I’ll be quite okay with my son. I promise to rest once I’ve spoken with him.

*The nurse nods briskly and is gone from the room, closing the door swiftly behind her.*

*Bayeau quietly surveys the cards, fruit baskets and floral tributes which dominate the room. He chuckles at one of the cards. In the foreground, we see that Liberty is weeping. Bayeau then notices this as he speaks.*

Bayeau Carson will have ordered that fruit basket from the Continent:  
what's the bet?

Hey! No tears!

*Bayeau reaches out and takes Liberty's hand as he lowers himself into a chair beside her bed.*

Bayeau *tender* That's not like you to cry.

*[Pause]*

What ... Are you overwhelmed by the visual proof of your public's devotion?

*Liberty laughs through her tears.*

Liberty I might have died, Bayeau.

Bayeau *re-assuring* It was merely a warning. It was the angels' way of telling you to get back in control of your health. You were doing so well with the walking club. Heaven knows why you gave it up.

Liberty *insistent* No. Listen to me.

***I might have died.***

*[Artistic pause]*

I might yet die. And the truth will then have died with me.

Bayeau *amused* What truth? That I'm not your son?

Liberty Of course you're my son. But you're on the right track.

Bayeau That I'm not George Lanfranco's son? Well I've known that for years.

*Liberty is surprised by this admission.*

Liberty Did he tell you?

Bayeau Nah. I knew. Our willies were nothing alike.

*Liberty is shocked and then sees the funny side and chuckles weakly.*

Bayeau Seriously, Old Girl ... I loved George as if he were my real, actual father. Stuck to him like glue. Which was entirely reasonable of me since he had money and my life was thereby made pleasantly comfortable.

Liberty God you're an arse, Bayeau. You not only resemble your biological father in looks but you have inherited his nastiness genes.

Bayeau Not certain if that's comforting or not ... So ... Who was he?

Liberty "***Is*** he".

The swine is still alive, so I understand.

He is an Aussie: J.P. Stafford-Bright. That's hyphenated: Stafford-hyphen-Bright. John Philip. "Jack".

*Bayeau calmly takes a card from one of the flower arrangements and scribbles on the back of it with a biro as he repeats his mother's words. "J.P. Stafford-Bright".*

Liberty *matter-of-fact* He's now a minor celebrity Down Under (though Heaven only knows why) even in his dotage. Spent his childhood in Glamis Castle which is --

Bayeau *aghast* Glamis Castle! Where the Queen Mother lived?

Liberty *amused* No, no, no! Let me finish ...

It was a conceit of his maniac father (whom I never met). An island (whose name escapes me) in ... Oh! That stretch of water separating Australia from Asia ...

A beef cattle ranch on a wind-swept tropical island it was. Have you ever heard of anything more ridiculous? And the house was named Glamis Castle. That's all I can remember ...

*Bayeau frowns heavily as he scratches with the biro on the stolen card.*

Liberty *reminiscing* My parents begged me not to marry him. But you know what starry-eyed younger women are like. I was thoroughly smitten.

And if you want to know why, look in the mirror.

Ah ... He was a dish. What do they say? "Marry in haste, repent at leisure." Well, I certainly repented: with bells on!

Bayeau *mentally  
calculating*

But then George Lanfranco married you. That must have been **after** I was born. Surely he realized that I was not his son.

*Liberty does not answer. She merely looks prim. Bayeau sighs heavily.*

Bayeau *somewhat  
bitter*

And my beloved Aussie pater has chosen not to have anything to do with me.

Liberty *warning*

Just a moment now! As far as I am aware he is totally ignorant of your existence.

*[Light laugh]*

So both men were deceived ... Shame really ...

*Bayeau gives his mother a speaking look. Liberty stares back at him as if self-conscious. She shrugs a little.*

Liberty

Don't cripple-up with bitterness, Bay. I want you to know that ... That JP and I divorced before I found out that I was *enceinte*. No communication between us, Darling.

Anyway ... at least I've told **you** now. If I die in the operating theatre with all those dedicated people crowded about me, leaning forward to save my mortal remains --

Bayeau *annoyed*

You're not being operated on! They're releasing you after dinner. Get a grip, woman!

*Liberty is disappointed. She looks up at the ceiling and sighs heavily.*

Liberty

That lack of sympathy is so in keeping with your father's ego. I'm more than glad that I told you the truth at last. I can now blame JP for all of your shortcomings.

*There is a long pause. Liberty now weeps. Bayeau takes her hand and makes soothing noises.*

Liberty *lachrymose and very theatrical* I've bought my ticket to the grand opera in Heaven, Bay. I can hear my maker summoning me to take my final bow.

*Bay looks on: a mixture of sympathy and amusement.*

## SECOND FLASHBACK: London February 2015

### On The Stage At The Night Owl Theatre

*From the wings we view Rosalie as she delivers a brief oration to the solemn audience. We also see a bereft Tinkerman dabbing at his eyes with a large red handkerchief. Rosalie is dressed in black, weeps theatrically and is under the merciless glare of spotlights. When she completes her oration, she totters off the stage in a highly emotional state to heartfelt applause.*

Rosalie *weeping* ... and although her favoured milieu was the madcap world of advertising and promotion, it was here in this very theatre that her life's work began when she was simply a starry-eyed Liberty Spintler playing ingénue roles with aplomb.

Her contribution to the London drama scene will ever be felt and long appreciated I'm sure.

It is thus that we dedicate tonight's performance to a grand and wonderful lady whom we shall miss in extremis.

Liberty Lanfranco.

Thank you for your patience.

## SECOND FLASHBACK: London February 2015

### Darling Old Tinkerman Takes A Hand

*Backstage at the Night Owl Theatre, Tinkerman is tottering on a ladder in a dim, tiny walk-in cupboard. We see his legs. A female tries to squeeze into the cupboard.*

Tinkerman *voice-off*,      Careful! Don't rock the boat!  
*alarmed*

*The female assistant sticks her head around the door. She seems confused as well as surprised.*

Female                      What are you up to, Tink?

*A pall of dust puffs down, causing the girl to cough (somewhat put on as well). Tinkerman can be heard: annoyed and with random grunts.*

Tinkerman *voice-off*      Some smarties hold with the view that *La Belle Libertée* has left a veritable hoard of treasure hidden away somewhere in this rank and noisome --

*A cardboard box filled with impedimenta plummets to the floor, causing the girl to squeal in alarm.*

Tinkerman *voice-off*,      Why don't you go back to your regime of necessary but boring  
*further annoyed*              activities, there's a dear.

Female *appalled*              You'll do yourself a damage, that's what! Up a ladder at your age!  
Here – let me help you, for Gawd's sake.

*The girl attempts to slip into the cupboard by squeezing herself around. However, she cannot manage it. Voice-off, Tinkerman gives a cry of triumph. As he speaks, Tinkerman descends the ladder. He will have to negotiate the large cardboard box that has fallen.*

Female                      Is that what you was looking for, Tink?

Tinkerman *descending*      Maybe, maybe ...  
*the ladder*                      Yes!

Now, this is just the kind of cardboard box (adorned as it is with

roses and ribbons) that might (nay "would") appeal to the lovely Lanfranco. As attractive as a chocolate box. This (my dear) may be all that remains in this rotting hole of the life of Liberty Spintler: actress extraordinary.

*More dust swishes about as Tinkerman dusts the box off with his hand. The female gives a short cough (again, probably faked).*

Female                      Go on, then! You gonna open it?

*Tinkerman does not answer the girl immediately. He opens the box and riffles through it. The girl cranes her neck to see what is in the box. Tinkerman does not look at the girl as he speaks to her.*

Tinkerman *drawls*              The contents are comprised of letters, lavender sachets and a few photographs. Hmmm! Hardly a "Queen's treasure" but much-valued nevertheless.

Female *curious*                      What you gonna do with them, Tink?

Tinkerman *with authority*                      I'll be handing them over (intact and untouched) to the lady's loved one. To her son, to be exact.

Female *enraptured*                      Ooooo! He ain't half a dish!

*Tinkerman escapes from the cupboard by means of pulling and shoving the door. When free, he gives the female an extremely false but charming smile.*

Tinkerman                      Cheers, then!



**END OF FLASHBACK**



**End unload to cops.**

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)



## TORRES STRAIT THIRD INTERLUDE

~~ 1932 ~~

Again, the words “Torres Strait 1932” will have to be clearly visible on the screen.

We the audience are privy to this flashback. Everyone else is long dead in 2015.

### **Interlude i:** Aboard Snout’s Ship “Strait Star” 1932

*In the bowels of this large boat (or small ship) we find Roy Bentong moving along, with Snout at his heels. We have come across the pair as they are in the throes of a robust conversation.*

|                                     |                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bentong                             | ... so I left him there, weeping into his Schnapps.                      |
|                                     | Didn’t mind his gold going West. Plenty. More buried in the sand.        |
| Snout <i>laughs with nasty leer</i> | Crying over his lost woman (then) if not over his loot that was filched. |
| Bentong <i>stopping</i>             | Ah no! It was his Gauguin.                                               |
|                                     | Imagine a man like that owning a genuine work of art painted late        |

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE’S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE’S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE’S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE’S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE’S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

last century by Eugène Henri Paul himself.

*Snout snorting in  
disgusted disbelief* As if that might probably be true!

*Bentong adamant* It was nicked. I mean that old Bill nicked it first.

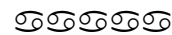
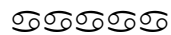
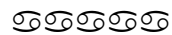
A minor artwork: one of the tributes to Tahitian women. "Idle Time" it was dubbed. Just a pretty island girl laid back in the manner of – it is very reminiscent of his "The Siesta".

*Bentong resumes his walking with Snout in his wake.*

*Bentong* She's fiddling with the ornate fringing of an opulent cushion.  
Genuine Gauguin!

*Snout is not convinced.*

*Snout disdainful* Rubbish!



*Bentong and Snout sidle into a small cabin which is filled with women of all shapes and sizes. They have been separated into three groups. Most of the women are only partly dressed. They are all weeping, cringing and frightened. A couple of tough men with whips oversee these women. When Bentong looks them over, it is in the manner of a prospective buyer sorting out cattle. The standout beauty is Lulu (Brenda's beautiful mother).*

*Bentong business-like* Alright. What have we got here, Wal?

*Snout squeezes past Bentong such that he is able to point out each group of women.*

*Snout* These would be kitchen staff, I reckon. Or work on the plantations.

*Bentong nods knowledgeably.*

*Snout* These are the best ones: rooters.

And the rest for the factories.

Bentong *pointing* Yeah? And this one? Put her with the factory girls. She's diseased.

*Snout stares at the terrified woman, interested.*

Snout Is she? How can you tell?

Bentong *matter-of-fact* By the eyes. And by the scabs. Factory. She won't get no money as a sex object.

*[Points to Lulu]*

This one is for me. She's a thoroughbred.

*[Satisfied]*

Right! Good. I'll head over to visit the Scottish bloke: make serious inroads into his gin supply.

*[Recalls something]*

Oh! Have you got somebody on board to satisfy his missus? She insists on a holy man to --

Snout *dismissive* Yes! Yes! One of the matelots claims to have been thrown out of a Jesuit seminary on some dodgy grounds or other ... Reckon he'll do for Gertie.

Bentong *seeming to be pleased* Right you are! That's close enough to a C of E cleric. That'll keep her happy.

Good work! Beaut!

And don't forget that lovely one there is for me. Put her to one side. I got some bootie that would look lovely on that caramel-coloured neck of hers ...

*Bentong approaches Lulu. She glares at him defiantly. With extreme tenderness Bentong slides the tips of his fingers along her upper arms. Lulu continues to glare at Bentong, unflinching. Bentong drops light kisses on Lulu's neck.*

*With great care, Bentong reaches around the back of Lulu's neck such that he can untie her sarong. He does so. We cannot see Lulu's breasts (Bentong stands in her way) but understand from Bentong's reactions that he is very impressed with her womanly figure.*

*Lulu quickly restores the sarong to its proper place, tying the ends around the back of her neck. Bentong cannot stop touching Lulu, kissing her superb skin. He has fallen completely under her spell.*

Bentong *whispers*            Matter of fact ... I'll take her now.



## POLICE PART V: Harbour Side, Sydney May 2015

*A sadness has descended upon the party of four men. They have finished eating. Their discarded plates and so on lie about on the table.*

Bayeau *to Mark*            Oh! By the bye -- Weenie is joining us.

Mark                            Great!

*Mark glances at Bruce and Simon.*

Mark                            My daughter Rowena. Horse-mad.

*Simon and Bruce nod. Bayeau looks at each man in turn.*

---

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

Bruce *to Bayeau* I'm sorry about you losing your Ma. I guess that then you flew out here to meet JP? Your Dad?

Bayeau *blushing* Before we follow that lead, I need to make something clear.

Erm ... Weenie and I are an item.

*[Pause]*

Actually, we're engaged to be married.

*Mark immediately reaches over to shake Bayeau's hand. They both smile warmly.*

Mark *surprised* But you've only known her five minutes.

Bayeau *sincere, determined* As soon as she handed me the toast I knew. Like snapping the fingers: immediate and utter.

Mark Good work! Well ... You'll be my son-in-law.

Bayeau I'm not going to call you "Dad". Too spooky.

Simon *reading* Tor-Man, Lloyd Winter, Cholwich Island, sand/shade/nuddy ... AND ... Rowena's efforts to make an honest man of you, Mr Lanfranco.

*They all chuckle. The waitress comes over to clear off the plates.*

*Once Rowena arrives, the party of five will decamp to an open-air bar nearby.*

Bayeau Alright. Here we go. My constant whining about the heat once I hit the ground in Sydney, Australia.

**End unload to cops.**

# The Interview

## POLICE PART V: The Sydney Flat Occupied By Mark Telmer

February 2015

*Bayeau knocks at the door to Mark's flat. Mark swings open the door. He is speaking on a mobile phone and eating toast-and-Vegemite. He looks surprised and pleased that his visitor is Bayeau.*

Mark *into phone,*  
*thickly*

... and I'll be out of circulation for at least two weeks and no idea at all whether I'll have a decent phone reception up there: so can't promise to ring you at any time. Hang on a tick, will you?

*[To Bayeau]*

Bayeau Lanfranco! How the hell are you? Come in and graze on some brekky: toast and Vegemite. Come in! Come in!

*After a brief handshake, Bayeau hesitantly follows Mark into the flat as Mark continues to talk. Bayeau looks about. Mark makes his way to the kitchenette where he zaps two pieces of sliced bread into a toaster and slams down the toasting knob.*

Mark *into phone*

Even email. Yes. When I get the word from my peeps up North, I'll be heading back up to Outer Woop Woop: that place way beyond the Black Stump where the men are men and the cows are nervous. So all bets will be off. I can promise nothing. Four days ... Five days ... Who knows? They'll contact me by carrier pigeon when they're ready.

No. Okay. Listen, I gotta go. Somebody has flexed up and needs my urgent attention. Sure. Okay.

*Mark finishes his phone call, pockets his phone and warmly grabs Bayeau's hand. Bayeau is in a trance-like state and unable to speak coherently.*

---

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. ([www.qld-tm.net.au](http://www.qld-tm.net.au))

Mark *very genial* I've been expecting you, sort of ... How was the flight?

Bayeau It's so bloody hot.

They ... They landed the plane and I ... I've never dreamed that anything could be so ravishingly beautiful.

*The toast pops up. Mark shoves a clean plate, knife, butter, toast and a small jar of Vegemite towards Bayeau. As he speaks Mark rushes about packing a large hold-all and backpack.*

Mark Yes. Sydney Harbour is a stunner: it's a ripper. I'm going to get my daughter Rowena to take you to JP ... To your father. Unfortunately, you've caught me just as I'm about to fly down to -

Bayeau Don't tell me! To "The Black Stump". I hope for your sake that it's not as hot as this.

Mark *laughs* Not a chance! Actually, I'm nicking down to Melbourne for a couple of days. The seminal adjective used to describe Melbourne would be "frosty": weather and atmosphere alike.

*Bayeau shudders. Mark pulls a chair up to indicate to Bayeau that he should sit at the table. Bayeau does so.*

Mark But in a few days' time – yes, I'm off to the proverbial Black Stump. I fly up to Cape York and from there by boat or seaplane to Cholwich Island. Hey! That's your Grandpa's old place. You might want to join us. By "us" I'm not using the royal "we". There's a small party of like-minded people who --

*Bayeau is lost. He stares at the jar of Vegemite.*

Mark It's okay. You just have to imagine that it's Marmite. You have Marmite in Pommiland, don't you?

*Bayeau (still seemingly under some kind of spell) obediently butters his toast, spreading on the Vegemite very thinly.*

Mark *calling out* Rowie! Can you come here please, Hon? We have a visitor.

*Mark gives Bayeau a knowing look.*

Bayeau Do people die of heat exhaustion out here?

Mark Invariably.

*[Conspiratorial]*

Look! If you could just make out that you like horses (even if you don't) that would help.

*Bayeau is lost. He speaks the only thought in his head.*

Bayeau It's only 8:30 in the morning and it's so bloody hot. I'm not used to it.

And in answer to your question, yes I quite like horses. I owned a couple of pacers (to my cost) at one stage.

*Bayeau tries the toast and it seems to be acceptable.*

Mark *calling again* Rowie!

*[Lower voiced, to Bayeau]*

My daughter has met your father so she'll be perfect to introduce you. They liked each other (I think) which is something.

And the word on the street is that he doesn't yet know of your existence, but I don't believe that for a miniscule nanosecond. He's very fly your Dad.

*A car horn sounds just as a tousled Rowena strolls in, tying the belt of her dressing gown.*

Rowena The taxi's here.

Mark Right. If you could make sure that Bayeau gets to St Martin's Hotel ... JP is staying there under the name of Gridley. Tell Sheryn Stackpole that I'm your father and she'll take it from there. There's 200 for taxis. Nice to meet you, Bayeau. I'm off.

*Mark chucks some folding money onto the table, collects his belongings, kisses Rowena and then scoots out of the room, leaving a sleepy Rowena looking at a bemused Bayeau. Bayeau ceases to eat.*

*The toast is almost touching his lips but stops there. Bayeau has been hit for six. Rowena touches his shoulder gently.*

Rowena I'm sorry about your Mum dying.

*Bayeau tries to speak but cannot frame any words. Mark (hearing Rowena's words) recalls that he has not said anything appropriate. He shouts an afterthought as he rushes out of the door.*

Mark *voice-off* Yeah ... Sorry about your Mum dying like that. Bye.

*There is a scuffling sound and then the sound of the door slamming. That sounds brings Bayeau to his senses. He attempts normality.*

Bayeau *needing re-assurance* I'm trying to cope with the heat. It's like Africa, isn't it? Hot and steamy. And the view from the plane window just before we landed: the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House and the stretch of glistening water.

Man! I was blown away.

Rowena *nods* The view from this flat is the pits: your basic stone canyon. But if you go out on the little balcony and crane your neck, you can just see the very top of the Bridge.

Dad didn't make you a cup of tea, did he? Would you prefer tea or coffee?

Bayeau *stumbles for words* Er ... tea would be ... I can't take it in. I'm going to meet my real father after all this time ... And it's so bloody hot!

Rowena *smiles* You'll get used to it. I'll grab you a cuppa and then I'll jump into the shower.

I hope you really do like horses. I can bore you shitless in the taxi with my horsy pics on my phone.

Bayeau *laughs* That sounds great! And I hope this is not inconveniencing you, my being --

Rowena No, no, no! JP and I hit it off (for some reason) and I'm looking

forward to seeing him again.

**End unload to cops.**



## **TORRES STRAIT FOURTH INTERLUDE**

**~~ 1932 ~~**

Again, the words "Torres Strait 1932" will have to be clearly visible on the screen.

We the audience are privy to this flashback. Except for the child Brenda, everyone else is long dead in 2015.

*Lulu and Youtha escape from the boat. Lulu is wary of Youtha and keeps her distance as the two women swim strongly. Lulu wears the genuine Radnor Trove diamond necklace. Youtha chips at Lulu, but Lulu strikes out in the dangerous shark-infested waters.*

---

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. ([www.qld-tm.net.au](http://www.qld-tm.net.au))

Youtha                    You may as well give it to me now.

Lulu                        Never! That toad gave it to *me*.

Youtha                    Have you got a safe place to lock it away from Mister Gone?

Lulu                        He's not coming near me. He won't find it.

*Youtha's laughter floats over the waves.*

Youtha                    Bet he does. Bet it's gone by daybreak.

Lulu                        You wish!

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

Lulu safely reaches her island (which is not Cholwich). She staggers from the rolling waves onto the beach.

Lulu is assisted by the island women (who fuss over her) and she is pleased to hug Brenda.

Lulu Those awful men tried to strip me. All those terrified girls! What is this world coming to?

Native woman And that bit of glass around your neck ... Did those "awful men" give you that?

Lulu *laughing* Sure they did! In payment for services rendered ... But they **weren't** rendered! I voted to outrun the sharks and to hell with those rascals.

Native woman You never jumped overboard?

Lulu *proudly* Sure I did! And I'd do it again a 100 times over. Girls, if you see that sneaky boat the "Strait Star" then run a mile. Don't let them catch you like they caught me. And don't ever again trust the Youtha pussy. She's a rum runner with all the rest of them.

Lulu swiftly squats down in front of Brenda.

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

Lulu *warning* Listen Honey! You must never, never, never go back to Cholwich Island. You hear me? Stay right away.

Brenda *tearful* How can I play with Jackie?

Lulu *with finality* You finished with Jackie and all his tribe. They are no good people. I bet that Youtha is with them now, snitching on me.

Brenda reaches out to touch the superb diamond necklace glinting on her mother's neck. Lulu stands.

Lulu You hear what I tell you, Brennie. Now I've got to wash this loot and hide it good and tight.

As Lulu jogs towards the jungle, we hear her words wafting down to the beach.

Lulu *distant* They stripped me down to my waist and touched my bare boobies. I felt like a cheap call-girl. The way they looked at me ...

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

*When Lulu wakes, the necklace is gone. She stares disconsolate at the place where she buried it. Tears stream down her cheeks.*

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

Glasgow *voice-over* Storm coming. Christ! It's a biggun.

That Vet is due today. Are seaplanes any good in a storm?



© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)



Room 114 At St Martin's Hotel 22nd February 2015

Rowena and Bayeau stand nervously in the doorway of room 114. JP is in pyjamas and dressing gown. He stands with his back to the new arrivals, staring out of the window. Rowena tries to inject an upbeat tone into her voice.

Rowena Hello. It's good to see you again. I hope that you're well ...

Bayeau's face indicates that his emotions are tearing at him. JP does not turn away from the window.

JP *rancid as usual* What can you expect at my age? I'm all set for the big dirt dive.

Rowena glances at Bayeau and then tries again to engage JP.

Rowena Mr Stafford-Bright, this is a friend of mine: Bayeau Lanfranco. I'd like to introduce you to --

JP turns, looking directly at Rowena. JP grins in a nasty way.

JP What is he? Your boyfriend? Do you want me to find him a job?

Rowena rushes into speech. At the very same moment, JP transfers his attention to Bayeau. JP stands staring in disbelief.

JP Suffers A Heart Attack On Meeting His Son 22nd February 2015

Then JP has a serious fit (during which his eyes roll and he grabs helplessly at his own throat) and then he falls back, dead. At first Rowena does not take this in.

Rowena *answering JP* Oh no! He --

Rowena looks helplessly at JP. The pair (Rowena and Bayeau) stand for a few seconds, looking aghast, gutted. Music: strange, eerie and other-worldly.

The music fades out. Bayeau snaps out of the immobility which has been caused by his stunned disbelief. He grabs the phone and connects to the concierge. At the same time, Rowena leaps into action: she has studied some rudimentary first aid. She drops to her knees beside the deceased JP, feeling for a pulse.

Bayeau *urgent* Hello? An elderly gent has just keeled over. Looked like a heart episode. Room ... uh ... Room 114. We'll require an ambulance. I'm an overseas visitor. Yes. I don't know the procedure in Australia. Okay ...

Bayeau hangs up. He then joins Rowena at JP's side. Instinctively, he touches JP's face. Rowena appears to be riven with frightened disappointment. She bites her lip and absently touches her hair.

Bayeau They're coming right up. We'll get them to organize an ambulance.

Rowena *stricken* Bay, I can't find a pulse.

Oh, my God! I should have warned him. This is my fault for not warning him.

Bayeau Warned him about me? He probably would have said: "No! I don't want to see him under any circs."

Rowena has begun to weep. Absently, Bayeau strokes her arm.

Rowena *through her tears* And called you a lot of rude names.

Bayeau He looked straight at me as if I was his worst nightmare and then --

Tears stream down Rowena's cheeks as Bayeau continues to comfort her.

Rowena *bereft* I'm pretty sure that he's dead. Oh, God this is awful. Dad will --

Bayeau It's me. Don't blame yourself. He looked at me and then keeled over. Just as if ...

A scruffy overweight man arrives. He stands in the doorway taking in the scene. He is dressed in very shabby clothes.

Concierge What's goin' on?

The camera moves back as the concierge joins Rowena and Bayeau. None of their conversation is now audible.

The Interview is over

N N N N N

We Ponder Life During JP's Funeral 1st March 2015

This is a very long scene in that it is broken into three parts.

Bayeau, then Sheryn and finally Lloyd will present flashbacks (which may or may not relate to JP).

JP's funeral takes place in Sydney's St Andrew's Cathedral. There is a plethora of TV cameras.

There is a short segment of visuals dedicated to the arrival of dignitaries and swells at the funeral. We watch them arrive and we watch them being seated. All this occurs (to an accompaniment of solemn music) over as short a period as is possible without giving the feeling that it is rushed over.

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

| |
|---|
| Bayeau: Remembers That He Hardly Knew His Father 1 st March 2015 |
|---|

Of course Bayeau is seated in the front pew. Our camera focuses on him. We hear him in voice-over as he thinks about the strange turn of events.

Bayeau *voice-over* It comes to this: just before she died, my Mother told me of my missing Father. Just as I am about to meet this man for the very first time, he keels over dead.

I now qualify as an orphan. Back in England Tink is helping me to sort out my Mother's appurtenances, whereas in Australia that task (on behalf of my Father) is being undertaken by Ms Sheryn Stackpole.

What a vast cock-up! Incredible! Totally and absolutely incredible!

Bayeau tries desperately to appear grief-stricken but cannot.

Bayeau *voice-over* The only son of one of Britain's most adored actresses cannot summon to his visage one single jot of emotion. Wish I had Tink's aptitude for drama.

Bayeau looks down.

Bayeau *voice-over* Every eye will be watching me. Every eye. Every eye.

The only crumb of comfort was the touch of that girl: the daughter of the journalist. Rowena. Yes, Rowena! I'll press on with that. She is exactly right for me. That sweet honesty ... She'll be somewhere behind me. If you must cry (Lanfranco) think of how Mum would have adored Rowena.

I wish Rowena could have sat beside me. She could have held my hand.

Bayeau lets out a withering sigh which causes his lips to tremble.

Bayeau *voice-over* At last! A semblance of something ...

You can get through this Old Boy if you can just find something to concentrate on. But you must look defeated as you do so. Okay so relive the most recent phone call from Tink.



THIRD FLASHBACK: Late February 2015. London. The Night Owl Theatre.

Tinkerman uses a hands free phone. He is sifting through the box he discovered in ACT II, Scene v. We hear Bayeau's responses via the phone.

Tinkerman ... mostly amatory correspondence liberally doused with perfume.
Heavy perfume at that!

Bayeau *via phone* Amatory correspondence? From whom?
aghast

Tinkerman The Scottish bloke.

Bayeau *via phone* **Which** particular Scottish bloke?

Tinkerman If you are (as you now claim to be) the son of this Australian maniac JP hyphen surname, then it would be his father. The one named after the capital of Scotland. No! I tell a lie. It is **not** the capital but quite a busy burg nevertheless.

Bayeau *via phone* Glasgow?

Tinkerman That's it (I think). You see, it's not quite clear. The letters were posted from a ship which was named "Strait Star". After some major detective work by Yours Truly, I surmise that this vessel

provided the postal service for the islanders. Viz: the Torres Strait Islanders. In a couple of the missives, the gent concerned refers to himself as "your father-in-law-once-that-was". So ... two plus two ...

Bayeau *via phone* Glasgow! Yes, he was in Torres Strait and yes he was Ma's father-in-law for a brief while. And he's my grandfather ... I guess.

Tinkerman Plus (big plus) he comments on the progress of Baby Bee. That'll be you. We can confirm that if you tell me of your birth date.

Bayeau *via phone* April 19th, 1976.

Tinkerman Ah, yes. That tallies. The letter I am now holding in my hot little hand was dated November 1977.

Bayeau *via phone* That's incredible! And when do they go up to? I mean, what's the latest date?

Tinkerman Just before his death in 1980. That was the last one.

Bayeau *via phone* And tied up in a gold ribbon, you say?

Tinkerman Correct.

Bayeau *via phone* And when you say "amatory", are they – you know – are they full of sentimental crap?

Tinkerman Not at all. I called them "amatory" because I wanted to wind you up. No, they are more over-friendly, in the manner of familial correspondence. Glasgow knew about his grandson (you!) and asked after him and gave sound advice and received photographs from your Mother and breathed not a word to his own wayward son (the boy's father which is to say **your** father). As a disinterested observer, I sense that Glasgow loved your Mother in a paternal way. Really loved her. She had given to him a boy of whom he could be proud whereas his own child had gone off the rails. Evidently he didn't want JP to spoil the joy.

My guess is that he would have died happy (old Glasgow).

Bayeau *via phone* I just don't ...

Tinkerman But you haven't asked me the really appropriate question.

Bayeau *via phone* Which is?

Tinkerman The picture that posterity has painted of this crusty old fart living in a remote corner of tropical paradise is one of cruelty and violence. But, that's not what I'm feeling on reading these letters. There is something likeable and even somewhat sad about Glasgow hyphen surname.

Bayeau *via phone* I wouldn't know. Never heard of him until the other day. And would you believe that I will be the star attendee (if that's the right word) at his only son's obsequies. Another man of whom I know nothing.

Life is so tough!

Okay then --

Tinkerman Er ... Before you ring off. There is a chit here which will enable me to access a safety deposit box at Libby's bank. Shall I make hay whilst the sun shines, or must I await your inevitable return?

Bayeau *via phone* Sure. Go for it, if you have time. There'll be nothing of value. You have everything that mattered in that cardboard box into which you have been diligently dipping.



END OF FLASHBACK

A very official-looking man is droning on from a position next to the sumptuously-presented coffin. He is gesturing towards Bayeau and naming him. Bayeau executes a most tragic sniff then dives for his hanky.

Sheryn: Remembers JP and the Lincoln Petrochemicals Deal 1st March 2015

The very official-looking man continues to drone on from a position next to the sumptuously-presented coffin. His voice is not clearly audible to us (until advised).

Our camera finds the pew on which Mark sits. He is seated between Sheryn and Rowena. Next to Rowena is Lloyd. We move in closer to Sheryn, who thinks the following speech (in that her lips are not moving) as she relives an imagined memory.

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Sheryn <i>voice-over</i> | Funerals! What a complete pain in the arse. This bloke who is boring us shitless with a litany of JP's supposed achievements probably never even met the man. What a cock-fisted planker! |
| The Official <i>audible</i> | Jack was pivotal to Australia's development from being a servile lackey of the British government under the Menzies regime to becoming a strong independent country in its own right. A proud nation with its own destiny. Jack was part of that fervent patriotism rooted in the 1960's and Jack will ever be remembered as a true Australian through his altruistic actions both here and abroad. |
| Sheryn <i>voice-over</i> | Tough talk from a celebrated crony.

I'd sneer if I could get away with it. Cameras ... someone might spot me. It's like being caught by the TV camera picking your nose at the footy.

Yes, JP as a young bloke was the Enforcer, the Dominator, the Executioner, the Destroyer of Men. But did his efforts ultimately benefit Australia or did they just line his own pockets? |

Bits and pieces that he told me would seem to indicate the latter

...



FOURTH FLASHBACK: JP's FLASHBACK JP of Paris 1968

(as told to Sheryn)

The tenor of this flashback-scene is reminiscent of a James Bond movie. The dialogue is crisp and terse. We (the audience) need to have the "Petrochemicals Deal" fleshed-out such that it forms an integral and linked part of the tale. It is night-time in Paris.

The young JP sits in luxury in the back of a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce. Judging by the scenes whizzing by the car windows, the scene is indeed set in Paris. His companion is Farun al-Baghi, wearing a ghutra. Both men are clean-shaven, well-groomed and wear the kind of suit fashionable in 1968: very slimline single-breasted continental made from shining silk. They sip champagne from elegant flutes, smug and haughty. When Farun speaks, we hear the rich mellow tones of a gentleman who has been well-educated in the UK: an Oxford man.

Just so that we are aware what this scene is all about, remember that earlier, JP had said: "The Domain Gas Company (as it was then known) sent me to Paris to negotiate with a bloke who wore a ghutra on his scone (along with a business suit). Jeez!"

Farun Your Minister for Minerals and Energy: his name is magnificent!

Young JP King O'Kearney. An Oxford man, like your good self.

Farun I fed him to the sharks. He trusted me implicitly. I sold him down the river, JP: sold him to his effing foes.

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

Young JP *nods* Fed him to the eager, squawking beaks of the Shadow Cabinet.

Farun laughs. He slaps JP on the leg.

Farun Don't trust me.

Young JP *as if making an oration* A man of the nation, O'Kearney wanted to bypass Big Business. He wished to place the natural resources of my Great South Land under the control of government men, not corporation men.

Farun *nods* Commendable. His wise judgement was universally applauded.

Young JP To finance this grandiose scheme without having to bother with bureaucracy and red tape and the usual blocking points (committees, reviews, rubber stamps) ...

Farun He contacted me. At least his secretary did that. Me!
Now ... I wonder which Ozzie guy might have been instrumental there? Hm?

Clearly a good choice at any rate: an Arab-looking chap with a confidence-inspiring masculine voice and a winning smile.

JP Employed by one of Britain's most prestigious petroleum concerns. (But O'Kearney wasn't to know that because I misled him).

Yes, I swung it for you, Farun.

Your brief being to secure a gargantuan loan of Middle Eastern petrodollars such that King O'Kearney could bypass all those committees and rubber stampers.

Farun Do you know: I made an absolute **fortune** from that affair.

JP Then promptly made **another** fortune through betraying him to the lynch mob. In any other field of endeavour, you'd be called a rotter.

Farun roars with laughter.

Farun Don't trust me!

The limousine arrives at its destination. The men alight with assistance from the chauffeur. The luggage compartment is flipped open. JP lights a cigarette as the chauffeur removes various suitcases and places them on the footpath.

Farun Did our friend survive? Politically, I mean.

JP No. There was a tearful resignation captured by 18 television cameras and 27 radio microphones. That count might not be absolutely accurate, of course, but close enough ...

Anyway, word on the street is that the current Australian Government will get the big heave on the back of that major scandal.

As he speaks, Farun is interested in the luggage. From among the throng, he rescues a briefcase. This he gives to JP. Then Farun proceeds to handcuff the briefcase to JP's wrist. Finally, he dangles the key in front of JP, slipping it into JP's breast pocket.

Farun Pity ... Pity ...

Now! This is not to be in any way construed as a sweetener nor as payment for services rendered. But I am the bearer of something precious. For you.

Young JP *polite* You are too kind. I do not deserve such high regard. I am more than honoured.

Farun Young man, I am completely won over by your so evident good sense, charm and dignity. You are a man's man, as they say.

Young JP Thank you. Thank my Father for all my masculine attributes. I owe everything to him.

Farun And from your Mother? Did she not endow you with many favourable qualities?

Young JP *dark* No. I despise her as a weakling who walked (no! **ran**) out of my life of her own volition. I have nothing but contempt for women like that.

The Minister for Minerals and Energy (King O’Kearney) was virtually booted out of politics for good.

King O’Kearney ...

He drifted into sheep grazing but could hardly have been said to have been successful. Good old wool had been supplanted by polyester and et cetera. Poor old King was once again in the lower bunk of a 2-room shack.

The Arab guy went from strength to strength and the petrol company swiftly changed its name from “Domain” to “Lincoln”. And our JP was made rich by the contents of the briefcase. No wonder (then) that JP keeps his trap shut about **that** nasty little episode.

The very official-looking man continues droning on from his position next to the sumptuously-presented coffin. His voice is not clearly audible to us (until advised). Our camera returns to the pew on which Lloyd sits next to Rowena. We move in closer to Lloyd, who thinks the following speech (in that his lips are not moving) as he relives an imagined memory.

Lloyd: Remembers His Father Torrens Winter

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Lloyd <i>voice-over</i> | My Father died in 1994. Having -- |
| The Official <i>audible</i> | Patients in hospitals, children in schools, the lost people on the street (tired, hungry and frightened): all owe a huge debt of gratitude to Mr Stafford-Bright ... His benevolence was the stuff of legend ... |
| Lloyd <i>voice-over</i> | This bloke needs to put a cork in it.

Where was I? |

Dad! Born in 1904 into the comfort and security of a well-to-do Sydney family. He was a happy boy: bit of a scallywag (as boys are). He fell into Veterinary Science by accident. His profession took him to the islands in Torres Strait. His profession *and* his acquaintance with the father of John Philip Stafford-Bright.

The male voice of the Official drones on in the background. Lloyd is uncomfortable and shuffles about in his seat. He looks around him.

Lloyd *voice-over* Dad had toyed with the idea of becoming a doctor prior to his final choice of career. From what I heard, my Dad was a bit of a dag.



FIFTH FLASHBACK: 1920 at Worrilee Sydney.

The following is reeled straight out of "HOPE FOR HOMELESS MEN" because it gives a clear insight into the character of a younger Torrens.

This action occurred in 1920. At Worrilee Torrens (a 16 year old teenager) has turned his bedroom into a first-aid camp operating during some nebulous world crisis. His half-brother Marcus hands over a bottle to Young Torrens. Young Torrens investigates the bottle.

Young Torrens *scornful* That's not quinine! It's ginger beer, you duffer.

Marcus *quick-witted* We had to smuggle the medicine to you in this disguise.

[Conspiratorial whisper]

The German and Belgian spies were confiscating all of our supplies, except for soft drinks.

Young Torrens rolls his eyes but takes the ginger beer anyway and after flipping the top open, begins to drink.

Young Torrens *begudgingly* Come in, then. But you can only stay a few minutes. As you can see, the casualties are mounting by the hour.

Marcus *equably* If I were you, I'd call in reinforcements from the Red Cross.
I require (most urgently) those vital papers that were smuggled to you.

Give me the gen, and then I promise that I'll leave you in peace.

Young Torrens *curious and challenging* Why do you want the notes?

Marcus *ad-libbing* I'm not at liberty to tell you that, Sir. Explosive situation. Possible crisis looming.

Young Torrens *frowning* It'll cost ya.

Marcus nods. He had already anticipated this. Marcus pulls a paper twist of lollies and a £2 note from his top pocket. Silently, Marcus places them on a small table which is already covered in junk. Young Torrens grabs the loot, extracts a musk lolly from the paper twist, puts the lolly into his mouth and then pockets the remaining loot. Then he screws his fake monocle into his left eye.

Young Torrens *cloak-and-dagger* This is a very serious matter, Lord Harberry. Should these papers get into the wrong hands, then Europe might implode. Any slip-up and it could be war!

Marcus *plays along* Yes, I'm well aware ... I'll guard the State papers with my life, Sir: depend upon that.

Young Torrens studies his half-brother's face through the monocle and then nods solemnly.

Young Torrens *decisive* Very well. You've an honest face: I believe that I can trust you. I'll get them for you.

Young Torrens moves first this box and then that box, running the school project to ground in a battered old satchel. He hands the complete satchel to Marcus (who is desperately trying to hide a smile).

Young Torrens Now go! I have to return to the sick patients. God only hope that your medicine arrived in time!

The brothers shake hands solemnly, and Marcus makes to leave by the bedroom door.

Young Torrens *urgent* Someone might be watching ... You'd better leave by the back exit. You only have to climb out of the window and shinny down using the bushes as a step ladder.

Marcus No. I think that I'll take my chances and exit via the door like any civilized man.

Marcus mocks Young Torrens by bowing.



Return to the Funeral of JP

*The very official-looking man continues droning on from his position next to the sumptuously-presented coffin. His voice is not clearly audible to us. **Our camera returns to the pew on which Lloyd sits next to Rowena.** We move in closer to Rowena who weeps. She dabs at her eyes with a hanky. Mark quietly takes her other hand to hold it.*



TORRES STRAIT FIFTH INTERLUDE

~~ 1932 ~~

Our scene begins during a violent storm. Torrens and a pilot are in a seaplane, in the air trying to land on the violent sea below.

The words “Bynham Island, Torres Strait 1932” will have to be clearly visible on the screen.

We the audience are privy to this flashback. Everyone else is long dead in 2015.

The role of Torrens is played by the actor playing Bayeau Lanfranco and the young JP.

Our narrator Blair Toovey pieces together this story.

The small de Havilland Moth (complete with pontoons) is caught in a wild storm. It is day, but the weather is so foul that it is hard to see.

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

The noise is horrific: the plane struggling, a dog howling, the shouts of pilot and passenger, and the raucous wind.

The following quick scenes follow in very quick succession:

- *The pilot struggles with the plane, gritting his teeth.*
- *The pilot yells something indiscernible.*
- *We glimpse Torrens behind the pilot's seat trying to rescue something. He too grits his teeth.*
- *From outside the plane we see it crash into the waters of Torres Strait, flipping immediately onto its side.*
- *Torrens chucks the dog out of the plane. In terror, the dog strikes out for the beach on Byngham Island.*
- *Torrens has a large pack in his hand. He leaves the plane with less dignity than the dog. Torrens follows the dog towards the beach as best he can, given that he is weighed-down by the large pack.*
- *The pilot scrambles out of the plane (with grappling hook in hand) as Torrens (exhausted) reaches the beach. The pilot clings to the pontoon. He is thrashed about by the waves and wind.*
- *Torrens stretches out on his back on the sand, chest heaving. The dog (Blackie) is terrified, and huddles close to Torrens's side.*
- *A palm tree crashes to the ground nearby to Torrens and Blackie. The sound and the proximity of the crashing tree stir Torrens into action. He and the dog stagger off towards a rocky outcrop where there are no trees to endanger them.*
- *The pilot still clings to the pontoon, spitting out salt water and trying to work out what to do. The plane slowly sinks into the water.*
- *Torrens points to Blackie.*

Torrens *authoritative* Stay, Blackie! Stay and mind the pack! Stay!

Torrens sprints down the beach. He cups his hands around his mouth. He is almost blown along the beach by the wild wind.

Torrens *shouts* What's the matter? Can't you swim?

Pilot *shouts* I can't leave the plane. I can't leave her.

Torrens *shouts* Come on, mate – she's going down. Swim for the shore.

The pilot returns some comment which is lost to the wind.

Torrens *shouts* Come on! The weather isn't getting any better ... Make a run for it.

If the pilot was able to respond, we cannot hear this. Now, the pilot is under attack from a shark. He screams and yells, fiercely poking the shark in the eyes and snout with the grappling hook.

Torrens (realizing what is going on) looks terrified and appalled.

Torrens *shouts, terrified* Can you get yourself out of the water, up onto the fuselage? Oh God! Oh God! Help him, someone!

Torrens takes some tentative steps towards the water. The pilot shrieks in pain and wild alarm as more sharks attack him. The wildly choppy water is now tinged with blood. The pilot is ripped apart by the sharks. With just his toes in the water, Torrens grips his head in blank despair. Blackie begins to howl.

Blair *voice-over* Byngham Island is only a titchy little island. Not much at all. Nothing like Cholwich.

Winter knew exactly what to do. He had rescued the pack containing all his veterinary supplies and other safety gadgets: flares and such like.

I am one of the few people on Earth who've heard this story. I always reckoned that the sharks were attracted to that locale by the smell of the dog in the water.

That pilot was married with a couple of kiddies ...

Poor bloody bugger ...

We watch Torrens and Blackie on the rocky outcrop, huddled together under a large Macintosh tarpaulin held up crudely with sticks and weighted down around the edges with many rocks.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*The storm still rages during the night. Torrens stands and fires off the Very pistol. Into the sky soars the beacon. And then Torrens returns to his makeshift shelter.*

*During Blair's voice-over (to follow) we shall see Torrens and Blackie acting-out the activities described by JP.*

Blair *voice-over*

In the morning, Winter could take stock.

The plane had almost sunk down – only a smidgeon of the pontoon showing above the water. The storm had gone quiet. Torrens quickly lit a fire with the aid of the boy scout fire-lighting kit which he found in his pack. He lit the fire on the rocks where he and the dog had spent the night. And he found a babbling stream of clear, cold water that only existed courtesy of the previous night's storm.

*Seen from behind, Torrens is naked as he and the dog wash themselves in the water. Torrens breaks down and sobs, squatting in the water.*

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

Dressed again, Torrens (with Blackie) returns to the rocky outcrop in time to see a small motorized vessel approach the beach. It is manned by two natives and Glasgow Stafford-Bright. Glasgow waves to Torrens. However, he is more interested in investigating the plane wreck than in picking-up the Vet.

Blair *voice-over*

Glasgow came to the rescue (after a fashion) and spent the rest of Winter's visit enlisting him into helping salvage the plane.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*Now our view is of Torrens and Glasgow arguing with each other on either side of a chicken-wire fence on Cholwich Island (which turns out to be part of an animal enclosure, housing a few goats). The fence is two metres high. Several colourful vines grow at random up the chicken-wire.*

*Torrens has had enough. He gestures that he is fed up and begins to walk off.*

Glasgow *angry* Hang about, young Vet. I got something to ask you.

Now I had to put my age up to just squeeze into the very tail-end of the Great War. Stupid thing to do ... got badly injured when a grenade misfired.

*Torrens marches back to the chicken wire fence.*

Torrens What's that got to do with me?

Glasgow Just this. The doctors told me I was sterile from that blow-up. Can't have any children they told me.

Torrens *shrugs* I suppose they must have been wrong.

Glasgow That kid of mine doesn't look anything like me. But he has your eyes.

So my question to you Mr Winter is: did you ever have any dealings with my wife?

*Torrens gives the impression that such a liaison would be unthinkable.*

Torrens With Gertie? No mate.

Glasgow People say that you've had your dick in every half-decent female on these islands.

Torrens That's not --

Glasgow Every native woman from here to Sumatra has whelped off you. Same eyes.

And many of the white women.

Torrens *laughs* You'd better ration your Gilbey's old Glasgow. It's making you start

at shadows that aren't there.

*Torrens waves a sketchy farewell then walks off. Glasgow shouts after him, imitating a female voice.*

Glasgow "Oh we all love Torry. Can't wait for the Vet-man to arrive".



The Wake Following JP's Funeral 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015

*The wake for JP is held in a very smart function room. Quite a crowd has gathered. They speak in low voices. Mark sits at a table with Bayeau and Rowena (who wears a very attractive little black dress).*

*Lloyd can be seen standing at a short distance from them. He is in discussion with an attractive businesswoman in her late 30's.*

*Sheryn plonks herself down in a spare seat. She immediately dives on the plate of savouries on offer.*

Sheryn *exhausted* Funerals! What a complete pain they are. Sangers ... what have we got ...

*A cup of tea materializes beside Sheryn. She absently says "Ta" as she fingers the sandwich points.*

Mark It just occurred to me: you don't have a job anymore.

Sheryn *borders on sarcastic* Well yes, I'm still gainfully employed, actually. As it happens. Thanks for the heartfelt concern.

The solicitor guy asked me to stay on for as long as need be to

help him sort out JP's affairs.

Not right away ... I have three days set aside for grieving and reflection.

No! Our very real concern centres upon **you**, Mark. You don't have a story anymore.

Mark *smug*

Oh yes I do. Indeed I do. I have a chit for Cholwick. I have a gold-pass ticket to rummage about through old Glasgow's private concerns to my heart's content. Signed by the man himself. RIP.

Rowena *uncertain*

Is that ... But ... Will you still go ahead *without* JP?

*Mark nods and makes an "Mmm" sound.*

Sheryn *eyeing Rowena*

Dearest, you look stunning in that dress.

Mark

She never wears dresses; only jodhpurs.

Rowena

Fat chance! I only wear jeans. But ... you know ... "funeral" ... Do the right thing ...

Sheryn

What did my old man used to say? "You scrub-up well."

(Thanks by the way Rowena for not mentioning to the police that Bay and JP were closely related. Otherwise, World War III would have erupted in the media. Quick thinking.)

Rowena *shamefaced*

Not really. I didn't mention it because I forgot.

Mark

Talking of scrubbing-up (as you were), I have hired some island people to clear the land on Cholwich right at this very minute. We can go there immediately and get into the house-slash-castle and find out all about the "goings-on" for which Glasgow Stafford-Bright was so famous.

And we ought to chance a confidence from some old lady on Embley Island.

You never know ...



## THE TRIP TO CHOLWICH ISLAND APRIL 2015

### ARRIVAL AT THE ISLAND

*All this happens while Mark, Lloyd, Sheryn and a pilot sit in a seaplane bobbing about in Torres Strait just off Cholwich Island. What we see: waves rolling lazily onto the beach. From this, a mock-up of Mark's magazine story takes centre stage.*

*Mark is imagining what the finished product will look like and murmurs in a low voice to himself. We see the magazine article (were it now completed) slipping in and out of focus. The story is entitled: "Don't Get Me Started ...".*

*A black-and-white photo (very grainy) of the old JP dominates the first and second pages. There are photos of the young JP and of Glasgow. Cholwich Island with Glamis Castle predominant (when in its heyday) are seen.*

Mark *voice-over*

*speaking in low voice to himself*

"Root".

The noun "root" ... that part of a plant which conveys nourishment and provides stability. "Root".

So how come we Aussies use the word "root" to signify coitus and have done so since God played full-back for the Jerusalem Panthers?

"Root" ...

*The imagined magazine article focuses on an alluring photo of Sheryn Stackpole.*

Mark *voice-over*

*speaking in low voice*

At the behest of that gnarled fossil (the late J.P. Stafford-Bright)

I'm to have a **root** with his "nurturing" Girl Friday somewhere in

*to himself* this back-of-beyond ...

I don't usually jump to another man's call ... except when it suits me. This might be one of those occasions.

"Root" ...

*Now the camera focuses on Mark. He stares out of the window of the seaplane.*

*Mark voice-over still speaking in low voice to himself* I can't print any of that. I'm not penning a sex dossier.

The article will be bald and lacking any titillation. Just sensationalism. The Lincoln Petrochemical Company business, riots in Paris (1968) and two failed marriages. An opinionated old curmudgeon accustomed to having his own way.

An opinionated **late** curmudgeon ... An extremely strange and difficult childhood, followed by a whirlwind life filled with intrigue, double-dealing, wild romance and --

*The magazine article fades away as does Mark's voice. Instead, we return to the scene of the waves as they roll onto the beach of Cholwich Island.*

*Mark voice-over still speaking in low voice to himself* J.P. Stafford-Bright was dossing at a virtual hovel when he could well have afforded a 5-star hotel room. What's that all about?

What is **any** of this all about?

*Mark's voice changes. He is now speaking aloud to his companions. They are all seen conversing.*

*Lloyd musing* The jungle fights back ...

Cripes! That's the "castle" that Dad told me about ... In the pirate stories ...

*Sheryn* It wasn't clearly visible from the plane because of all that vegetation ... Bougainvillea and so on ...

*Mark* Funny how JP would never let anyone discuss Torres Strait in his presence and yet here we all are ...

*Sheryn* He was what my father would have termed "a ratbag".

Lloyd *laughing* It's a long time since I've heard anyone called that!

Mark If I'd lived here as a boy, I could never have torn myself away. This is paradise. Maybe gone to seed just now ... but in its day: an island in paradise.

Sheryn Lloyd, were you just saying something about pirates?

Lloyd I've just had a lightning bolt.

Dad told me bedtime stories, only they were delivered when I was in the bath. The pirates were ...

Aw! I forget their names now ... But they came to a princely castle to drink rum and paw over their evil-got gains ...

That there'll be the castle!

Fancy me remembering that ...

Sheryn *in dreamy voice* Fancy that ... I always loved fairy stories.

Mark Let's hope the Tirritanas come through. I instructed them to make a start but the job's too big, I guess.

Scythes, mattocks (or do I mean machetes?) ... Something to hack away the encroaching jungle. Would a backhoe get through that mess?

We only want a meagre path up to the castle. But ... Maybe we could ... Nah! Pythons in the undergrowth, probably ... Aw! They'll know what to do ...

Sheryn *sing-song* Or else we could get Prince Charming to ride up with his trusty sword to cut away all the brambles.

Mark *at sea* Uh?

Sheryn "Sleeping Beauty". The castle was covered in nettles et cetera while everybody inside slept on for 100 years. Prince Charming heroically rescued them all.

Mark *sarcastic* Fat chance of him rocking up!

*Mark sighs as if he is defeated.*

*Mark nods to Lloyd and then shows a pleased face to Sheryn, who is still put out by Mark's words.*

*Mark then turns to the pilot.*

Mark We'll need to meet with a family on one of these islands hereabouts. They may have the very equipment we'll need to hack through this lot. They float it around the various islands on a large tender.

Sheryn *aghast* How do you know about who lives where and what equipment they have?

Mark *winks smugly* Research: the journo's stock-in-trade. Slip 'em a couple of dinas and it's done!

*Sheryn rolls her eyes and makes a despairing sound. Mark grins, turning back to the pilot.*

Mark *to the pilot* I'm after the Tirritana family on Embley Island. Can we fly there and ...

Pilot Sure! I know Phil Tirritana.

*We watch the seaplane take off as the camera turns back towards Glamis Castle.*

*Our camera then shows us a victory lap of the island from the air. The voices are "tannoy-voices" as would be heard through earphones.*

Sheryn *mocking* These Titticaca people have seen you coming, City Boy. A tall poppy with deep pockets. You'll land in the bright new world of equipment hire, holding deposits, hourly rates, pay slips, Workcover and GST. And the "couple of dinas" stretches into \$115,000 (or thereabouts). But who cares? Dear old Fairfax can afford that: afternoon tea money to them.

*Lloyd suddenly gives a shout. Lloyd is triumphant, snapping his fingers.*

Lloyd Got it! Bad Bentong and his lackey Sad Snout. I still chuckle even

to this day over the misadventures of those two pathetic pirates.

## THE TRIP TO CHOLWICH ISLAND APRIL 2015

### GLAMIS CASTLE

*Sheryn stands in an untidy, cluttered bedroom, beside a bed which is littered with drawers pulled out of a chest of drawers. The contents of these drawers spill out over the bed. Rowena stands by with a big cardboard box. Sheryn briefly peruses each card or paper as it comes into her hand (she holds a handful of stuff) then chucks it with an off-hand flipping movement onto the bed from which Rowena rescues it for the box.*

Rowena ... but in reality (when the Beauty's love turns the Beast back into a handsome prince again), he picks up his old habits and becomes a selfish arsehole all over again.

Sheryn No, I disagree. Having been trapped in the body of the Beast for all that time he now acquires redemption ... absolution ...

*[Now referring to the trash they are handling]*

There's nothing here: only rubbish.

Rowena Only for a tiny little while, though.

Think about it! He's a prince so everyone sucks up to him and tells him how marvellous he is and (being a prick) he laps it up. Then he falls into his former nasty me-me-me lifestyle and forgets the lesson he learned.

Sheryn *laughing* You've just spoiled a perfectly good fairy story for me!

Rowena You don't come across as the fairytale type.

Sheryn *rueful* Working with and for a man like JP made you turn in on yourself.

Now **there** was an arsehole!

*Sheryn comes across a large envelope filled with letters, invoices, bills and other notes. She shrugs.*

Sheryn *annoyed*

See what I mean? This is what craps me off.

JP roared me up something fierce if I even **mentioned** Torres Strait in passing ... Yet, here we are (under his expressed instruction) in all our glory rummaging through his Dad's old rubbish ...

*A dazzling thought has occurred to Sheryn. Looking puzzled, Sheryn plonks herself on the bed.*

Sheryn *thoughtful*

Damn!

*Rowena stops to look at Sheryn.*

Sheryn

Where's your Dad? I forgot to tell him something that I've just ... Years ago it was ...

Rowena

Dad? I think he's off with the Titticaca people, clearing off land.

Sheryn *annoyed*

He's a bloody journalist. **This** should be his focus, not land-clearage.

Rowena *laughs*

He's being blokey. Happens from time to time.

*Sheryn sighs and humphs. Then she leaves the room. Alone, Rowena works through some manilla folders. We vaguely hear a female voice calling "Mark!" outside.*

*Suddenly, Sheryn returns to the room. She resumes her seat on the bed.*

Sheryn

He's coming.

Rowena

What is it? What's got your goat?

Sheryn *determined*

I need to put all this into perspective.

*Mark now strides into the room, looking puzzled. He is dirty and dripping with sweat.*

Mark

Yeah? You found something?

Sheryn

A couple of years ago, I was at a loose end. JP had already told me all about the background to most of his concerns. Only one

item wasn't clear: this island. JP didn't know anything about it anyway. All I had to go on was that Glasgow S-B had been up to something nefarious here. So I researched.

*Mark drags over a chair, chucking off it all Rowena's hard work. She squawks as Mark sits. Mark can now look straight into Sheryn's face.*

Mark                    Just hang on a minute, Sweetie. I'll pick it all up ... What research, Sheryn?

Sheryn                 Okay. We know that JP thought his Mum had simply run off. Then she's pinpointed to Potts Point where she was murdered. Person or persons unknown ...

A NSW police officer was sent here to investigate the "goings-on". He was never heard of again.

Mark *appalled*        What?!

Sheryn                 My gut feeling is that he had his throat slit before becoming shark bait. Never heard of again.

*[Takes a big breath]*

In 1932 a woman called Lulu was kidnapped. However she escaped her captors. Swam through shark-infested waters back to her island. Pretty gutsy, I thought.

She had around her neck a superb diamond necklace. Which later vanished. When it finally turned up in the 1950's it was a fake.

*Mark stares at Sheryn.*

Mark                    Go on about the missing detective.

Sheryn                 Nothing to tell, I'm afraid. He came here and that's that.

But there was a robbery from a rich islander in 1932: the Radnor Trove diamond necklace. It was totally genuine. All the islanders believed that a pirate called "Monsieur Allé" was the thief. The woman called Lulu was adamant for all of her life (apparently) that

it was pirates who captured her. And that one of the pirates fancied her – gave her the necklace in return for sexual favours.

Mark *lost*

I don't ...

Sheryn

There's more. I didn't say anything in front of Lloyd because it's not very savoury. Lulu kept her sexy looks, even into her 30's and 40's. She fell under the spell of the visiting Vet and in 1947 had his child. The Vet was (of course) none other than Torrens Winter. On one of his regular whistle-stops (as was his habit).

*Mark's hand shoots out to grab Sheryn's forearm.*

Mark *shocked*

You've got to be kidding me! Why didn't you tell me before?

Sheryn *justifying herself*

It was years ago that I jumped into that history and I'd forgotten. But coming here has rushed it all back into the front of my memory.

Full picture now. When Lulu was 18 she had a daughter called Brenda. Brenda became the matriarch of the Tirritana family. Their Granny now. And then when she was 40 Lulu had this **other** daughter (name unknown) fathered by Lloyd's father. That means that Lloyd has a half-sister wandering around.

Rowena

This is getting really spooky.

*Mark is distraught. He jumps to his feet and wanders about the room in a daze.*

Mark

JP was a baby. I mean a toddler. His mother – JP told me about the beautiful life they all lived here on Cholwich. Brenda was a little tacker who minded JP and was his little friend. Has to be the same "Brenda".

Jesus! Her mother had an affair with the Tor-Man. That is ...

Sheryn

Let's the two of us go over to Embley Island and wind up their ham radio. Call the coppers (Simon and whatsisname).

Can you handle a speedboat?

*Mark nods "Yeah". Mark and Sheryn up stumps and leave in a rush.*

*Rowena sighs, allowing the papers she is holding to drop onto the bed. Then she retrieves all the sorted papers (that had been piled on Mark's chair) and replaces them on said chair.*

Rowena                      Dunno. I only came for the holiday.

                                    You know, JP falling down dead like that right in front of my very eyes put the wind up me. This paper-shuffling might have given me something to do to take my mind off it.

                                    That's what I thought, anyhow.

*Rowena stares at the door, shrugs, sighs.*

Rowena *to herself*              It's time for Clyde to be trotted about, I think.



## SIXTH FLASHBACK: ROWENA'S FLASHBACK April 2015

### Exercising Clyde on Cholwich Island

*Phillip has travelled across to Cholwich from Embley in his motor boat. He has brought with him some boxes of provisions and other general impedimenta. He is hot and tired. The motor boat is tied up at the foot of the grand set of steps that lead up to the garden of Glamis Castle. Phillip is unloading the boat, assisted by Rowena.*

Rowena                      If I was stuck on a bus in Sydney, I could simply play Sweetchops on my mobile phone with my friends. That or Scrabble. But Sweetchops is better. And that way I wouldn't be bored.

Phillip *unconcerned* Right.

Rowena But there's no phone reception here, so that's out.

Phillip Yeah, I know.

Rowena Well, I was thinking: you've got a fat pony that needs exercise and I've got this huge island to explore. If your children wouldn't mind, could you bring Clyde over here on the tender with his gear and I could keep myself amused and at the same time get some of his weight off.

*Phillip cannot take in this idea at first. He stares at Rowena.*

Rowena Dad will pay for it, of course. And I'll look after him as if he was my own.

Phillip *shrugs* Yeah, if you want to. Okay.

Rowena And your kids won't mind?

Phillip Nuh. Don't suppose so.

Rowena They won't miss him too much?

Phillip Not miss him at all, eh. They spend all their time playing games on their GaymBoyz. They're not interested in Clyde at all.

Rowena Don't you think that's terribly sad?

Phillip Yeah. I do. I should sell him. Move him off the island.

Rowena No, I didn't mean that. I meant: isn't it awful how kids now don't play anymore. They just lock their imaginations away and mindlessly play those computer games. My step-brothers don't even talk (except to scream out what level they've reached) ... they just grunt and keep on playing.

*Phillip stares at Rowena. Then he recalls the various phone messages and memos he has shoved in his breast pocket. He retrieves these and hands them to Rowena.*

Phillip Yes. I'd better give you these before I forget. And I'll ferry Clyde

across along with his stuff. Later today or tomorrow.

Oh! And how's the Pom doing on my spare motorbike? Not killed himself yet?

Rowena *laughs*

He only uses it in the mornings or late in the afternoons. Yeah, I think he's trucking along alright, when he's not moaning and complaining and whingeing about the heat.

*Phillip laughs and waves farewell as he turns to depart.*



## THE TRIP TO CHOLWICH ISLAND APRIL 2015

### A SECRET ROOM IN GLAMIS CASTLE

*Bayeau (wearing only a pair of shorts and with a wet towel around his neck) is trying to unlock a locked door inside Glamis Castle. With disappointment, he chucks aside a large bunch of keys. Instead, he tries to open the door with bent wire. He mutters to himself, getting more and more intense in his efforts. Suddenly, there is a snap. Bayeau stands back (surprised) and tries the door. It opens. He peers inside. Music becomes evident: moody "something-is-up" music.*

*The room was evidently used to house Gertie's artist equipment. It is a ginormous mess, covered in dust and spider webs.*

*Bayeau runs his hand over the dusty, over-crowded shelves. He frowns. He is puzzled.*

Bayeau *to himself* My Grandmother worked in here. This is all her stuff. Wonderful ...

The palm crosses:

---

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)



Mark                                   What's the matter? Missing JP even in spite of the pasting you've been giving him?

Sheryn *teary*                       Yes. Sort of. No ... You were right (what you said at JP's wake): I don't have a job anymore. But what you should have said was: I don't have a *life* anymore.

Mark                                   I can give you a life. That's easy done.

                                          Do you want to tango with me in the horizontal plane?

Sheryn *confused*                   Aeroplane? What?

Mark                                   No. Two-dimensional plane. Rumpy-pumpy. Rooty-tooty. Having a naughty. Swinging the wedding tackle. Throwing the leg over. Letting sweet Nature have her way. You know: that stuff. Man woman. On the beach.

Sheryn *amused*                   What did that old buzzard say to you?

Mark                                   JP?

Sheryn                               Of course JP! No! I mean Arthur Askey. Come on, out with it! What did that miserable whinger say to you?

Mark *shrugs*                       Not much ...

Sheryn                               About screwing me on the beach?

Mark                                   Yes ... That was to be my highlight of this trip, actually. I wouldn't have bothered to come here but for that.

Sheryn *laughing*               Do you have the slightest idea what –

Mark                                   What about over there, in the shade of those pandanus palms?

Sheryn                               Some people call them "screw pines". How utterly appropriate! Alright ... We'll strip off everything and lay all the clobber on the ground, and then lie on top of the clothes. To avoid getting sand into our pink grotty bits.

Mark                                   Fine! Do you want the top berth? The power position?

Sheryn Yes, but ... But my tits will swing in your face.

Mark *chuckles* Great! Let's go!



POLICE PART VI: Harbour Side, Sydney May 2015

*Our party has moved on from the café. On the same walkway, they now head towards a trendy, busy open-air bar.*

*Mark, Simon and Bruce stroll along this wide, well-kept walkway beside Sydney Harbour. The three men laugh loudly and chat in a very friendly manner. Mark assists the policemen to carry their load of papers (in briefcases and boxes).*

Simon *chuckling* Sand/shade/nuddy! I love it. Pity we can't shove that into our report.

Bruce *feigns solemnity* Maybe we can. The use of screw pines as a high-level resource in police investigations. Might work ...

*Walking behind the three men are Bayeau and Rowena, hand-in-hand. They are obviously very much in love: the older man (Bayeau is 37) with the lovely young woman (Rowena is 22).*



© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

*At the bar, Sheryn has bagged a table. She rises (her face wreathed in glad smiles) and then walks straight into Mark's welcoming arms. They kiss in a very ardent manner. Bruce and Simon grin as they watch.*

Simon *grinning*                      Notes for Mr Telmer: we've covered the Tor-Man and Lloyd Winter. Cholwich Island. And now that the scene has been set: sand/shade/nuddy.

*Wrinkling her brow, Sheryn looks a question. Mark makes the introductions.*

Mark                                      This heavenly creature was JP's right-hand: Sheryn Stackpole.

*Sheryn shakes hands with Simon and Bruce.*

Mark                                      Sheryn, these are the worthy rozzers who are following-up on my article. Sergeant Bruce Altimo and Senior Constable Simon Beresford.

*In the background we see Bayeau and Rowena organizing drinks.*

Simon                                      How do you do, Sheryn? We're keen to interview you. But I need a small shandy or --

*Simon spots Bayeau and makes a happy "Ah!" sound.*

Bayeau                                      Beer alright, gents?

*Everyone is now set with drinks and "Cheers!" have been celebrated. Mark and Sheryn sit side-by-side opposite Simon and Bruce. Bayeau and Rowena sit on stools at the bar.*

Mark                                      I guess now we get to the nitty-gritty. The body.

*Bruce and Simon nod.*

Bruce                                      Now we get down to the nitty-gritty. Correct!  
You guys went to Cholwich Island after the funeral. JP's funeral. Mark and Rowena, Bayeau, Sheryn, Lloyd and ... ?

Mark *shakes head*                      No-one else.

Simon                                      And while Rowena was riding about on a pony (exercising it) ...

What pony? Was it running wild on the island? Or what?

Mark

No, no, no. I mentioned it but you've forgotten.

The Tirritana family on Embley Island had a ham radio. As you know, there was no transmission anywhere on Cholwich so we tended to head for Embley whenever we wanted to get in touch with anybody. Okay, so the Tirritana kids had a fat old pony that needed --

Bruce

Yeah, yeah. So it was shipped over to Cholwich on the lighter for Rowena to ride. I get it.

So there's your daughter trotting about when she comes across a huge pile of junk at the end of the island. And she spots the wreckage of that plane the Vet arrived on in 1932. Which sank with all hands. The pilot attacked by sharks. And (anyhow) that all occurred on Byngham Island.

Um ... ? Care to wise me up?

Mark

JP's father Glasgow insisted that the plane be salvaged. Why I don't know.

Bruce *reading*

Okay. Then Rowena dismounts from the pony to have a poke around in the badly rusted chassis of the plane. And she finds the partial remains of a skeleton.

Simon *reading*

The old lady of the Tirritana family (an elderly matriarch named Brenda) had been acting like a deaf/mute for decades. Then she meets Lloyd Winter and Hey! Presto! --

Bruce *looks at Mark*

She gives every indication that words will tumble like rain out of her mouth. She'll tell us all about it. But ...

Simon *looks at Mark*

Nothing. Nought. Nil. Miracles might happen but not for us.

Bruce

So who did **you** think the remains belonged to, Mark?

Mark

Gertie, of course. Gertrude Stafford-Bright. It was rumoured that

she had run off with some bloke. ***That's*** one of the reasons why JP wanted us to nose around in Glamis Castle.

Bruce *nods*

The human remains that Rowena uncovered were taken to Cape York for the resident Pathologist to check out. And yes! The body belonged to a female who might easily have died in the 1930s (when Mrs Stafford-Bright disappeared off the radar). Also, if it was Gertrude, then that would make her JP's mother and therefore Bayeau's grandmother.

Mark *nods*

Bay underwent a DNA test. Comparisons were made and it was a 100% match. QED.

Simon

And that pretty much identified the body as that of Gertrude Stafford-Bright. Right. Right on the money.

Bruce

But nothing to say how she died.

Simon

We suspect foul means. Murder.

Bruce

There's no other way to explain how her body wound up on that wrecked plane.

*There is a long pause.*

Simon *drawls*

So ...

Sheryn

So?

*Bruce lets out a long sigh as he makes to put away the paperwork.*

Simon

We had a pow-wow after you contacted us from Outer West Woop Woop. And the upshot is: --

Bruce

There's a bloke from Cold Cases who's going to come and help us. You might have heard of him. Ex-AFL footballer. Genius with this stuff. Ed Swan.

Mark *amazed*

Ed Swan? Indigenous legend? Played for the West Coast Eagles about ... um ... 10 or 12 years ago?

Simon *nods* That's him. At the time there were 805 jokes about "swan" becomes "eagle".

Bruce Don't worry. We will be traipsing around with him as his aides. So you won't have seen the last of us.

Mark *smiles* Good! You're both good value.

*The policemen stand then shake hands with all members of the party. As they leave, Bruce delivers a parting shot.*

Bruce We'll follow up with Lloyd and this Brenda lady on Embley Island. And I'll make sure that you all stay inside the loop. Ciao!



## **TORRES STRAIT SIXTH INTERLUDE**

**~~ 1933 ~~**

We the audience are now to become privy to more "goings-on" in Torres Strait.

All those who witnessed this scene are dead by 2015.

The words "The Office of Blair Toovey, Sydney 1933" will have to be clearly



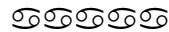
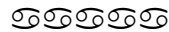


*[To the child]*

You go outside and play, Darling. Mummy won't be long.

*Brenda rushes off, blushing.*

*With his back to the camera, Torrens strips off his clothes. He allows them to fall unheeded to the floor. Then he climbs into bed with Lulu. They kiss, then make love in the dimly-lit room.*



*Torrens lies on his side, stroking Lulu.*

Torrens *whispers deeply* I've wanted you since I don't know when. From the first moment I saw you.

Lulu Me too.

Torrens I want to stay with you and have babies with you. Little Brenda would like that, wouldn't she? Brothers and sisters ...

*They both chuckle.*

Lulu You can't live your life based on how my daughter feels.

Torrens *adoringly* Loads and loads of babies.  
But for all that ... I can't ...  
My missus has just had our son. My little boy. My little man. I nearly cried when they told me he was a "he". Already got a little girl, you see: Katie.

Lulu What did ya call your son?

Torrens Lloyd. It's a Welsh name. It implies respect, holiness.

Lulu Then you'd better choof off home to him.

Torrens *sadly* I would rather stay here and make love to you all day long.  
If I get any babies on you, I'll make sure that you don't suffer by

it. Moneywise, I mean. I'll always look after you, my beautiful darling.

*They kiss ardently before making love again.*



## The Cold Case Investigation

POLICE PART VII: Cairns Airport, May 2015

Ed, Bruce, Mark and Lloyd

as they wait for the Beechworth Air King to Cape York

*While they await their flight to Cape York Ed and Simon sit about in a secluded corner with Mark and Lloyd. We can see all the usual bustle of an airport, along with*

*Bruce reading* Lloyd Winter. Born 1937 to Torrens and Moira (nee Fallowfield) Winter. In Sydney.

*Lloyd* Which makes me 77 years old. Retired, but when I was a working man I taught mechanics to boys and young men at a technical college. And any females who wanted that kind of education (not that there were many in those times).

*Bruce frowns* Holden or Ford?

*Lloyd shrugs* Either. Any make. We were generalists.

*Ed* Lloyd, are you able to provide any extraneous details related to

---

© October 2015 Property of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE

THIS DOCUMENT IS SOLELY OWNED BY QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE and is intended solely for use as an entertainment. QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE retains exclusive and inalienable rights to this document, which may not be reproduced in any way without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. Any disclosure, reproduction, copying, distribution, or other dissemination or use of this document or of the intellectual property contained in this document is strictly prohibited without the express authorisation and permission of QUEENSLAND TRUCKIE'S MATE. (www.qld-tm.net.au)

this skeleton that Rowena Telmer found?

Lloyd

I heard loads of info from my Mother. She went to school with Gertrude. Sydney Girls' Grammar.

Yes! I do have some useful information on old Glasgow S-B as it happens.

Ed *nods*

Fire away.

Lloyd

Now this all occurred when I was nothing more than a twinkle in my father's eye. At least I was on the way (I guess) ...

My mother Moira and some of the other Old Girls from Sydney Girls' Grammar met regularly at the Clyde River Club in Sydney for a bit of a chin-wag and round of mixed sandwiches. Cup of tea served up in the finest bone china ... you know the sort of thing.

So it would have been about early 1936 or thereabouts.



## SEVENTH FLASHBACK: THE CLYDE RIVER CLUB, SYDNEY 1936

### The Old Girls from Sydney Girl's Grammar School take High Tea

*High tea is being served by an army of black-clad waitresses (complete with severe white starched aprons and caps). It is the afternoon and the club is crowded with Sydney ladies of all shapes and sizes.*

*The young ladies (they are 28 years of age or thereabouts) who are seated at our focus table are: Moira Winter (nee Fallowfield), Lesley Crook (nee Tarnhope), Agnes Plummeridge (nee Grace) and Joan Bentley (unmarried). The ladies eat sandwiches and scones, drink tea and gossip.*

*A late arrival weaves her way between the tables as she approaches the ladies. She is waving a newspaper: this is Verna Westbrace (nee Christian). Our ladies call out "Verna!" as she nears them.*

Verna *breathless*

Look at this item!

That woman who was murdered at Potts Point – you'll never guess who she was! Gertie Auldern.

Give us one of those sandwiches, will you?

*The ladies are aghast. A sandwich is placed on a bread-and-butter plate for Verna. She emits a hurried "Ta" and sits down.*

Lesley *shocked*

Gertie Auldern? That we were at school with?

Agnes *shocked*

Never!

Verna

I almost fainted from shock when I read it. But here it is in black and white.

Joan

Whatever happened to her?

Verna

Family had bucket loads of money. Trips to London and Paris (if you don't mind). And that Tahiti cruise when we were about 15 or 16. She came back brown as a berry.

Lesley

She wasn't very pretty (I suppose) but bucketsful of personality.

Joan

Oh yes! Impersonating the French mistress. How funny!

Agnes

I recall how sporty she was. Do you remember? Mastered everything going: hockey, swimming, fencing, tennis. Marvellous at gymnastics.

Lesley

Art! Her paintings: portraits and landscapes. She really had the knack.

Joan

That's right! You name it and she did it beautifully. Poor Gertie.

Lesley But murdered?! I can't take it in.

Agnes It's usually the husband. She married a plumber or carpenter (didn't she?) ... one of those useful trades.

Moira No, she didn't. You're thinking of Clarice Dunbar.

No, I kept in touch with Gertie for years. "Poor Gertie" nothing! By her own choice, she married a brute of a man. Ended up walking out on him. Left the child. What sort of a mother does that? No matter how awful things are, you stay with the offspring, don't you?

I'd say that she got what she was asking for.

Joan My God! That's terrible!

Moira It's a fact. She met this bloke in Cairns or Townsville and he whisked her off to his island up North. Somewhere up north of Australia. She wrote about how wonderful it all was and all the wealth they had ... "Raking-in the money", she said ... And then suddenly, she's back with her parents minus both husband and child. Wrote pages and pages to me about his abuse and his violent temper. And the goings-on ...

Lesley *appalled* Gosh! Then it might well have been the husband come after her for revenge. How terrible!

Verna *narrow-eyed* What "goings-on"?

Moira Anyway, it all gets rather Biblical because (before I met him) my husband Torrie did a very short stint on this bloke's island as Vet. So, he told me (in passing) about this horrible man and the little boy. It was only much later that I realized that the kid was in fact Gertie's.

Lesley I don't know many people who've **died** let alone been actually **murdered!**

Agnes *wide-eyed* Do you think that the murder has got something to do with the ...  
The "goings-on"?

Joan Should the police be focusing on the abandoned husband?

Moira I'm not sure that the police will have any idea about him. She  
went back to using her maiden name.

*[Flash of inspiration]*

Do you know what I could do? I could get Gertie's letters and  
show them to the police. There might be a lead ... A clue ...

Verna Should you be doing that in your condition?

Moira I don't see why not.

**END OF FLASHBACK**

**The Cold Case Investigation continues ...**

Return to Ed, Bruce, Mark and Lloyd  
as they wait in Cairns for the plane to Cape York May 2015

Ed Spot the goof?

Lloyd *surprised* Beg pardon?

Ed "That woman who was murdered at Potts Point" cannot have been Gertrude Stafford-Bright (for all that she was impersonating Mrs S-B). Rowena Telmer discovered Gertrude's skeleton on Cholwich Island (not at Potts Point). Follow?

Mark *rueful* Lucky you're wide awake. I missed that completely.

Lloyd Yes. Sorry. So did I.

No, I understand ...

But if I could just press on with ...

Mother duly marched off to the police station with my older sister Katie in tow and presented the correspondence: which they seemed to think might be very helpful.

Ed So this unidentified woman ... Was her murderer ever caught or at least identified?

Lloyd Don't think so. Unsolved case. A sailor or sea-faring man was mentioned but no trace of him was ever found. Unsolved case. File and forget.

Ed Where is the Clyde River Club? I can't place it.

Lloyd Oh, it's gone. It was in Pitt Street. Pulled down after the War. Another part of Sydney's history torn from us. They wouldn't be allowed to do that now. Everything must be preserved.

Ed *nods* Lloyd tell me what happened to the kid: to JP himself. He was two years old when his mother took off.

Lloyd Oh, he lived with us for a couple of years at Worrilee. He was four years older than Katie. I remember him being very studious: keen on science and maths he was.

Miss Stackpole (JP's Girl Friday) agreed with that summation. She felt that I'd nailed him absolutely. Old JP could figure out even the most convoluted and complex calculation in his head without using

any electronic device. Apparently he was amazing.

Ed *thoughtful* Mmmmmm ... Interesting ...

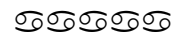
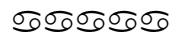
Lloyd Then off he'd go back to his father. It was a very unsettling on-off kind of life for a kid (being passed around like that). He lasted at Cholwich until he was 16 and then he bolted.

Ed But he kept in touch with you?

Lloyd With my family: yes. With Dad mostly. I sometimes thought that he hero-worshipped Dad a bit.

*A distorted tannoy message is heard. The words "Weipa Airport Cape York" are clearly audible. Bruce jumps to his feet.*

Bruce That's us! Let's go.



*Two other passengers (both elderly ladies) are on board the very small plane (a Beechcraft Air King). The seating arrangements are such that the four men are able to go into a tight discussion. Ed points to Lloyd.*

Ed *matter-of-fact* In 1936 your mother (Mrs Moira Winter) spoke to a Sergeant McIlwraith who passed the Gertie Auldern letters on to the highly respected Senior Detective Lawrie Carmichael. Carmichael's brief was to investigate the "goings-on" of which Gertie wrote. He duly left for Cholwich Island, Torres Strait: that wretched patch of earth towards which we are headed (on the other side of Woop Woop), that is holding us enthralled.

Carmichael was not ever seen alive again. Vanished without trace. Disappeared off the face of the earth.

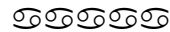
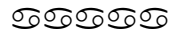
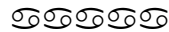
Mark The lovely Miss Stackpole believes that Carmichael was murdered

*(Imitates the throat-slit action with attendant clicking sound)*

and then fed to the sharks. Fed to the sharks!

Ed By whom?

*Mark looks a question. Ed answers the question by repeating Mark's throat-slit pantomime (with attendant clicking sound). The two men stare at each other, then Mark shrugs.*



*Between Cairns and Weipa some stunning tropical scenery can be seen from the small plane.*

*The intention is that from Weipa the quartet will take the hired seaplane to Cholwich.*

*The four men all stare out of the windows as the plane continues to fly along. Mark is evidently deep in thought. Bruce twits him.*

Bruce Mark? You're not off with the fairies, are you?

*Mark does not respond immediately.*

Lloyd *amused* He's in a brown study.

*There is a telling pause.*

*Without looking away from his viewpoint, Mark speaks unemotionally as his three auditors listen in rapt, astounded and shocked silence.*

Mark *firmly* I'm on top of most of the subject matter. JP drifted about London, New York and Paris in the late 60's at the behest of the Domain Gas Company that later melded into Lincoln Petrochemicals. JP was one of the bright boys wearing a pencil-slim shiny suit; hair flipped into an attractive masculine style and a few pieces of gold jewellery.

Those guys were all cut from the same cloth ... Dingy bars, secret deals, heavy drinking, smooth talk and toothy smiles ... JP would have it that us reporters were not to mention that part of his life



Ed Bill Grundy's insurance claim of 1933 as presented to Blair Toovey (accountant amongst other things). Bill lost his proof of ownership of the diamond necklace. Arson. He blamed Monsieur Allé or his sides for the fire as well as for the thefts and so on and so on and on ...

However Bill revealed that he'd had the foresight to have a good copy made. And here it is! Hanging around the swan-like neck of the luscious Ms Mangold.

Mark *spiky* Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

How did the dodgy copy make it to Gaynor?

Did JP give it to her? Then how did **he** get it? What the fuck ... ?

*Ed rests. He concentrates on the view from his window in the Beechcraft Air King.*

*Mark looks worried as he tries to work it all out, flicking through the photos.*

*Then Ed renews his questioning.*

Ed JP married twice. I believe that the second Mrs JP was mother to Bayeau.

Mark Yeah. Correct.

Mrs Stafford-Bright mark 2 was the formidable Liberty Lanfranco (nee Spintler, who died a month or two ago following a freak accident).

Now **she** realized **her** foolish marital mistake (I should imagine) before the honeymoon was barely begun. Her son (he's at that interesting age of late 30's-something) bears a very striking resemblance to a younger JP, although he's being passed-off as Mr Lanfranco's son.

*Bruce goes to speak but Ed motions to allow Mark to continue.*

Ed *riveted* Yes? Continue.

Mark I half expected Bayeau to rock-up in Sydney when he actually did rock-up.

There I was envisaging a touching scene whereby Bayeau Lanfranco grips his dying father's hand as they make a tearful father-son reunion.

Not to be ...

*The four men are uncomfortable. They look down at the tip of the state of Queensland. Mark speaks to some nebulous person – far, far away.*

Mark Apart from written evidence, the various witnesses to all this are dead and long-gone. So where do we turn?

JP voiced my very own concerns: what was Glasgow Stafford-Bright up to? Why farm beef cattle on that God-forsaken island?

JP himself was just a youngster or else wasn't there at all. So how could he tell us what went on?

Your father, Lloyd is dead: he took the truth to his grave (if he indeed knew it at all). Or maybe he told you some of the deets, by way of bedtime stories. It's possible. I need to know from you all that you can recall.

And there's only one other person who would have had the gen and may have written it all down.

Lloyd *interested* Who was that?

Mark The agent from Brisbane named "Toovey". Blair Toovey. He'll be well and truly gone to God by now, but there's a strong chance that he recorded some notes and may even have saved the Cholwich correspondence (tucked away in dog-eared manilla file, perchance?)

Lloyd My Dad dealt with Blair Toovey many times. He was straight-up. And of course there's also the elderly lady we met the first time

we were on Cholwich.

Ed *nods* And the elderly lady: Mrs Brenda Tirritana.

Bruce Who only responds when Lloyd holds her hands. (Only she can't speak a word).

Ed *ironic* Magic!

*The pilot indicates that a landing is imminent and that all passengers must be buckled up with all luggage stowed.*

## The Cold Case Investigation continues ...

*The heat is intense on the tarmac. A heat haze is clearly visible. We watch from a distance as the passengers disembark down temporary mobile stairs. The gentlemen assist the two elderly ladies. A smartly-dressed stewardess from the Weipa Airport rushes over. Now we move back into close-up.*

Stewardess Detective Inspector Ed Swan?

Ed *surprised* Yes?

Stewardess A gentleman is flying in from Darwin. His plane will be landing in 15 minutes. He has requested that you and your party might wait for him.

Ed *sharp* Who?

*The stewardess refers to a slip of paper.*

Stewardess A Mr Montesquieu Tinkerman. He flew into Darwin from Great Britain around lunchtime. From London, I understand. He's most urgent that he joins up with your party.

*The stewardess smiles. The men look dazed. They glance each to the other searching for inspiration.*

Stewardess *pleasant* Gentlemen, you'll be more comfortable out of the heat. Won't you

follow me to the departure lounge?

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

The four men (Ed, Mark, Bruce and Lloyd) stand about in the tiny departure lounge of Weipa Airport. They watch the arrival of a small plane and all wonder aloud if this could be the plane from Darwin bearing Tinkerman. Suddenly, they are approached by Dr Dignam.

Dr Dignam *smiling* Excuse me. I'm sorry to thrust myself upon you in this way. I'm Dr Cassie Dignam. I have a very small plane which I'll soon be flying over to Embley Island. I'd like to request Mr Winter might like to accompany me.

This causes massive confusion. None of the four men know what to say. Then Lloyd pulls himself together.

Lloyd Yes. I'm Lloyd Winter, Dr Dignam. But I don't --

Lloyd and Dr Dignam shake hands.

Dr Dignam *laughs* Bush telegraph. You've booked a seaplane ... But my girl is more fun. I promise you that I won't crash land.

Lloyd quickly informs the others that he will meet them at Embley. He and Dr Dignam move out of the departure lounge. A hot and very flushed Tinkerman staggers into the departure lounge.

Tinkerman *gasping* I'm Tink, for the uninitiated. Montesquieu Tinkerman Esquire.

Oh, this heat! Do you have a little shelter that I can snuggle up in with a refrigeration plant included? I've never known anything so hot.

Tinkerman staggers about as he is assisted into a chair. Water is fetched. His face is the colour of a lobster.

Bruce *jovial* Stiff upper lip, Old Boy. Don't let Britain down.

Ed joins in.

Ed *mocking* Where's that famous English *sang froid*?

Tinkerman *witty* If only my *sang* were *froid* then I wouldn't be rolling around in the manner of a hot dog frankfurt. Can this immoderate temperature be turned off, please?

Mark can hardly control himself.

Mark The season we are in is the big Dry – also known as "Winter". So it can actually get much hotter and steamier than this.

Tinkerman wails.

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

*Ed, Mark, Bruce and Tinkerman are transferred to the jetty in a mini bus. They climb aboard the sea-plane. Tinkerman fiddles about with his bumbag. From it he extracts the Radnor Trove diamond necklace. Without ceremony he hands it to Ed. Tinkerman is very relieved to do this.*

Tinkerman                              I have cossetted that thing and worried over it from Heathrow to Darwin and then onto Cape Yorkshire. Take it! If we go down over the briny, you're more likely to save it than I.

Ed                                              Is this the genuine article? The real deal? Or the ubiquitous copy that's doing the rounds?

Tinkerman *feigning outrage*                              Of **course** it's genuine! Do I **look** like the type of chap who'd deal in tat, Detective Inspector?

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

Dr Dignam flies a tiny plane (with room for only one passenger). Lloyd seems to enjoy his view of Torres Strait. The islands are very pretty.

Dr Dignam I've been caring for Brenda for many years. Although the

Tirritanas will have it that she is bound to silence, every so often she will say something relevant. Out of the blue. All unexpected. I've copied it all down into a special book. In all that time the total was five or six words only.

Lloyd I was blown away when she perked-up like she did – when I held her hands. That all happened last time we went to Cholwich – about a month ago.

Dr Dignam Ah! That will be due to her adoration of Torry. They all adored your father Torry.

Anyway, Brenda is in fact my half-sister. Her mother Lulu was also my mother.

Lloyd evidences passing interest.

Dr Dignam And my father was your father. I'm the illegitimate daughter of Torrens Winter and Lulu Tirritana. You might have heard of my existence?

Lloyd nods.

Lloyd *calmly* I thought that might be why you singled me out at Weipa. You bear a striking resemblance to my older sister Katie.

Dr Dignam *smiles* I'm really glad that you're taking it so well. I was worried that you'd go into denial. As it happens they were lovers for years. I think that she doted on him, and he on her. And I'm the living proof of their passion.

Lloyd *shrugs* So much strange stuff has gone down recently that I might be past the point of being shocked or surprised.

Dr Dignam Lloyd, I want to get this awful business sorted out. It's all so very mixed up. I want Brenda to settle and (when it comes her time to die) she'll be peaceful. That's what I want.

Lloyd Yes. Me too. Me too ...

Lloyd looks down at the waters of Torres Strait. They seem very near.

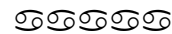
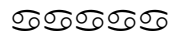
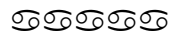
Lloyd There's one thing you might not know about our Father.

Dr Dignam What's that?

Lloyd When he was a young tacker he thought that Torres Strait was named after him.

Dr Dignam *chuckles* They call that phenomenon solipsism. I'm about to land, Lloyd. I'll try not to make it too bumpy.

Dr Dignam expertly lands the tiny plane in a paddock.



In the seaplane, Ed strings the Radnor Trove diamond necklace around his neck. Mark clasps it for him. The necklace is obviously meant to fit the neck of a graceful lady: not that of an ex footballer. Ed finds that it fits as snugly as a necktie. It is evident that there has been much humorous barracking between the men.

Bruce goes so far to imitate an over-the-top saleslady.

Bruce *thrilling* Oh it's **you!** I can**not** let you leave the store without buying this piece!

Ed looks daggers while the other men laugh.

Ed *warning* I'll give you all a hiding if I'm featured wearing this bauble in Footy Monthly magazine.

Tinkerman But it's the genuine article, Old Cock. I told you!

Darling old Glasgow S-B posted it over to Libby Spintler simply hundreds of years ago. And she popped it into a safety deposit box for posterity. Quite sensible really.

We'd never have found it but for my tenacity in sifting through the Divine Libby's accoutrements.

Mark Does Bay know that you've found it? Can we expect him here?

Tinkerman *nods* Yes, yes! Telephoned him from Darwin such that he could direct me to the nub of the action. Pictured Sydney. That sumptuous harbour glistening under a warm sun.

But no! I was to set out in a sewing machine with wings headed for the vicinity of Weeper. Why call a village "Weeper"? "Fiery Furnace" it ought to be named. Gives a whole new meaning to the concept of "searing heat".

Well! The earth beneath the tiny wee aeroplane cruising from Darwin was more than spectacular, I have to say gentlemen. What must the early explorers have thought?

Mark is bemused.

Mark *laconic* I didn't ask for the travelogue, my Pommie mate. Is Bay coming here or not?

Tinkerman Not. He is swooning in the arms of his stunning Venus.

Mark stiffens aggressively.

Mark Be careful what you say, Mate. That "Venus" is my only child.

Tinkerman pats Mark's shoulder in a kindly way.

Tinkerman Well (according to my pal Bayeau Lanfranco) you do very fine work, Mark Telmer. Congratulations!

The pilot begins his descent onto the waters around Embley Island.

The Cold Case Investigation continues ...

Return to Ed, Bruce, Mark, Lloyd & Tinkerman

On Embley Island May 2015

We return to Embley Island, to the home of the Tirritana family. Inside the house, Dr Dignam and Lloyd have already arrived before the seaplane party. Dr Dignam and Lloyd sit on either side of the elderly lady. Dr Dignam has her notebook on her knee.

Nadine adopts a loud, clear voice: that used for a child or invalid.

Nadine *over-cheerful* Gran, do you remember the vet who used to work on Cholwich, at Glamis? Do you remember Torrens Winter: the Tor-man?

Well, this is his son Lloyd. He came to visit you not long ago? Do you remember?

And Doc is here too. They want to ... To make sure that ... That you are doing okay.

Nadine backs away. Over the next few speeches, she will place cups of tea on tiny coffee tables near the visitors. Phillip sits on a stool in the background.

Brenda fidgets. Lloyd takes her hands. Brenda immediately settles back, relaxed.

Brenda *voice-over* Mum came back wearing a trophy (by that I mean jewellery) around her neck.

Apart from the trophy, she was different in other ways. Her eyes were scared. There wasn't the same sparkle about her as there used to be.

How she and the other woman escaped when no-one else had been able to do that I never found out until much later. And Mum with the loot. And not torn apart by sharks like that poor pilot boy was.

She told me about it out of the blue one day, unexpected like. I was 10 years old when she sat me down and explained it all. The

Nadine *sotto voce* Gran has totally never said anything. Not for years. She just sits there all day lost in her own thoughts. We never, ever got this sort of bustle.

Her name is Brenda, by the way. Brenda Tirritana.

Then she sees Lloyd and she is alive again. Praise the Lord!

But only for you Lloyd.

Nadine makes a face: "Well, I've done my best here".

There is a suspenseful silence during which Brenda collects herself. Brenda finds Lloyd's hand and grips it between both of hers. There is a sharp dramatic burst of music as Brenda stares at Lloyd. Brenda desperately tries to speak. Out of this desperation, Nadine breaks the silence.

Nadine *hopeful* Can I get you a cuppa, Gran?

Lloyd is lost. He gives Nadine a helpless look.

Nadine *talking very quickly* Gran's Mum was snatched ... Abducted and carried off, eh. Somehow she managed to get herself back home. Her and a companion. Lulu had snagged a most gorgeous necklace (apparently) but that got stolen later, eh.

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

*Outside, Tinkerman is standing (fully dressed) in the shade, under an outside camp shower (which is running). Nadine brings out an old electric fan which is attached to a long extension lead. She places this on an external shelf. She looks as if she is awestruck by Tinkerman. Nodding politely, she turns on the fan.*

Tinkerman Glorious Queen Mab! Come to my rescue. Heap thanks upon thee, Beauteous maiden.

*As Ed approaches, Tinkerman turns off the flow of water before stepping in front of the fan.*

Ed *smiling* Bit of relief there?

Tinkerman I am in Elysium, Detective Inspector Swan. Hope this is not too much of an inconvenience questioning me as I stand before an appliance.

Ed *amused* Not at all.

Tinkerman Then let me be the interlocutor. Have you found the painting? The Gauguin.

Ed *puzzled* What painting?

Tinkerman You'd recognize it if you saw it ...

I have a most exquisite feeling in my waters that everything will be explained. Everything!

Just let me dry off a bit ... Then we shall see what we shall see!

*Ed reveals by his facial expression that he does not know what to make of Tinkerman.*

## The Cold Case Investigation continues ...

*On either side of Brenda's chair another chair has been placed. Dr Dignam sits to Brenda's right and Lloyd to her left. There is a great deal of muttering and cross talk going on. Snatch conversation. Brenda is ignoring the chatter. Dr Dignam dives into her notebook. She speaks to Ed who has now entered the house.*

Dr Dignam My only notes are "youth" and "the other woman". Otherwise she might say "Yes" or "No". Once she said (clear as a bell) "banana".

Not much to go on I'm afraid.

*Tinkerman appears in the doorway, on the other side of the flywire door. He peers through the wire.*

Tinkerman *calls* Who is it that would leave a poor miserable dog outside in such weather? May one beg to be allowed to enter? Shall I curl up on the hearth rug out of everyone's way?

Mark *jovial* Yes come in and make yourself useful.

Tinkerman *entering* Not sure I can be "useful", Old Darling. Maybe just stay out of kicking distance, eh?

*Brenda's face lights up. She turns to look at Tinkerman. There is a world of recognition there.*

|                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|
| After all this time Brenda finally speaks |
|-------------------------------------------|

Brenda *smiling, speaks softly* You were in the one about the boarding house. "Miles From Reason". You played Jonty Miles. You were my favourite. I wish they would bring it back. I loved that show.

*There is a brittle pause. Everyone seems shell-shocked. Nadine crashes back to earth first. She nods encouragingly at Tinkerman. He takes the hint but has no idea what to say. Dr Dignam leaps to her feet, motioning to Tinkerman to take over her chair.*

Tinkerman Er ... Yes! Yes! That was my favourite role too.

Brenda Come and sit on my other side. Thanks Doctor Cassie. I can hold your hand any old time.

No don't move off Lloyd. My two favourite boys. Hold my hands. That's right!

*Tinkerman sits as instructed. He takes Brenda's hand.*

Tinkerman *encouraging* I can get hold of some DVDs of "MFR". Then you can watch it whenever you like.

*Tinkerman whips his head around, hoping that he has replied appropriately. Everyone nods and waits for Brenda's next utterance. She touches Tinkerman's arms.*

Brenda Oh! You're all wet!

Tinkerman Er ... Um ... Would you like me to change out of these wet things? I can drag something dry out of my valise, if you wish?

*Brenda ignores Nadine. She focuses on Lloyd and with a supreme effort of will, she speaks.*

Brenda                                    My mum came back.  
She was christened as Lulu.  
She escaped from the nasty men and swam from the ship back to the island. Not afraid of sharks, her. Not afraid! You'd likely say she had balls, eh.

*Mark, Bruce and Lloyd share a grin. There is no reaction from Ed. Lloyd looks down at his hands. The old woman is gripping his hands tightly and forces him to wince. We notice in Ed's hand a small voice recorder.*

*Brenda has switched off again and stares straight ahead, kneading her lips. As Brenda thinks (the following speech) everyone is restless and unsure what to do.*

Brenda *voice-over*                    My mum got taken by slave-traders. She was a beauty with skin the colour of dark gold and she had long, long black hair.  
  
Torres Strait was like a licence to print money in them days when Monsieur Allé ran the illegal human cargoes up to the Straits of Malacca. There was Roy Bentong, Wally Snout and the French pirate ...  
  
That's right. Lots of young women just like my Mum were shipped-off into a life of misery working on plantations up North. Nobody knew what happened to them girls. You got bumped-off if you asked too many questions about your missing girls. And if anyone spoke out against the slavers, they disappeared, too.  
  
"Monsieur Allé" meant "Mr Gone". That's what they told me, anyway.

*The others are busy with cups of tea, biscuits and muttered background noises. Lloyd and Tinkerman stare at each other over Brenda's lap. They have no idea what to say or do.*

*Then (suddenly) the virtual silence is broken as if a piece of china were dropped onto a stone floor.*

*Without warning, Brenda turns towards Tinkerman. Her face is very close to his. She looks him directly in the eye as she tightly squeezes his arm. Tinkerman is completely befuddled.*

Brenda *baleful* Monsire Allé was really a Madame. Did you know that? Did you?

*Once again there is a brittle pause. Everyone once again seems shell-shocked and frozen in time.*

*Brenda still grips Tinkerman's forearm. He appears to be totally aghast.*

Brenda *forceful* They called him "Monsire Allé" and wobbled like blackcurrant jelly whenever his name was mentioned. But they got it wrong.

He was a she.

*With that, Brenda flops back to rest her head on the back of the chair. She breathes heavily and closes her eyes. Tinkerman winces in real pain.*

Tinkerman *harsh whisper* Christ! She dug her pointy fingers into my arm. Squeezed like a pair of pliers. Christ! I didn't think she had that much strength.

Nadine *concerned* Oh dear! I'm so sorry! Would you like -- ?

Tinkerman *self-absorbed* That's going to turn into one helluva big bruise, I can assure you.

*Phillip shakes head ruefully.*

Phillip Hasn't spoken for I dunno-how-many-years and then out of the blue she looks you right in the eye and --

Ed *frowning* What was that all about? Is there any way that we can find out what she meant? Lloyd ... Tink ... Is it possible that this woman (the "he" that was really a "she") is the "other" woman? Can you get that across?

*Lloyd gives Tinkerman a look which says: "I'd rather you did this than me". Tinkerman nods.*

Tinkerman *gently* Brenda ... May I call you Brenda?

Brenda *dreamy* Jonty Miles can call me anything.

Tinkerman Good! Then Brenda: are you able to tell us who exactly Monsieur Allé was?

Brenda *scornful* She was a real lady and welcome everywhere. They would show her their beautiful possessions. And she'd steal them. When she

wasn't busy carting boat-loads of helpless girls about, that is.  
Bloody disgrace!

Tinkerman *pressing* Who? Who was the "real lady"?

Brenda *petulant* I don' wanna talk no more.

*Brenda closes her eyes. She leans back. Lloyd and Tinkerman (still holding her hands) are helpless.*

Lloyd *whispers* So ... Gertie was this French pirate bloke? Is that what she means?  
How did that work?

Brenda *awake again* Gertie had them all fooled. Stitching altar cloths, giving the Vicar morning tea, speaking genteel because that's what her schooling had been. Happy families: singing and laughter.

Huh! She played them all on a string.

Phillip *awe-struck* Gertie? Gran ... Gran are you sure?

Brenda The poor pilot smashed into the sea. Old Glasgow was a "waste-not-want-not" sort of cove. He salvaged that wreckage. Left it on a pile of rubbish down the end of Cholwich beach. Gertie thought that it might come in handy.

Are you still there, Lloyd?

Lloyd Yes, yes darling. I'm still here.

Brenda *worried* You're not going home yet?

Lloyd No! No I'm staying with everyone else. Your grandson Phillip is going to light the barbeque and we're planning a huge nosh-up.

Brenda *grim* That was never old Gertie that wrote all those letters to your Mum, Lloyd. She was long dead by then, was Gertie.

Youtha was watching her. Watching and planning. When she saw Gertie fiddling about with the plane wreckage, Youtha murdered her. She intended to go back in the dark of night to get rid of that tell-tale body. Usual way I suppose: food for the sharks. That

don't leave no remains.

But Snout took Youth off the island ... Never returned ... Never ever returned ... They say she ended her days in Sydney ... I dunno ...

*[Slow laugh]*

You know what's really funny, Lloyd? That Gertie was all dolled-up as Monsire Allé when Youth knifed her. They call that poetic justice, don't they?

*Ed and Bruce gesture to Lloyd and Tinkerman to indicate that they want Brenda to keep talking while she is on a roll.*

Tinkerman & Lloyd  
*together* Go on, Brenda.

Brenda Youtha lived in Sydney for a couple of years ... Living off Gertie's ill-gotten gains and pretending to be her.

Ed *worried* Who is Youtha? Where does she come into all this?

Brenda *frowns* I **told** Cassie I dunno how many millions of times to look for the "other woman". I said "Youtha" but Cassie didn't get it.

Dr Dignam *confused* The "other woman"? What other woman? Was that Glasgow's lady love?

Brenda No. My Mum escaped from Bentong and Snout ... With another woman ... That was Youtha.

*Everyone looks about at each other. They cannot take all this detail in – they cannot process these facts.*

Brenda Listen! I gotta tell ya before I run outta steam ...  
Bill Grundy was a tea-leaf. He nicked the Radnor Trove in the first place and got it copied. He nicked the painting that I got now in my bedroom.

Monsire Alley stole the fake Radnor Trove. Old Bill was so proud of having covered his tracks that he skited to Gertie (not knowing that she was the sea-rover). So then she goes back to steal the real one **and** the painting for good measure.

Huh! So now Bill Grundy is missing the Gauguin, the fake necklace **and** the real one.

*[Laughs heartily]*

He is furious – threatening all kinds of revenge. Yet still he does not see the link: that Gertie is the sea-rover and vice-versa.

Bentong begs Gertie to let him borrow the real diamonds to use in order to entice my Mum. Then when he's finished with her she can have the fake ones as a farewell gift --

Tinkerman *ever helpful* What the Frenchies call her *congé*.

Brenda *nods* My Mum Lulu escapes with the real Radnor. But then Youth took that ...

Oh God!

I don't want to talk about my Mother any more. Or Youth. Or Gertie. Gertie was a nasty piece of work and a complete scumbag. There! That's all you'll get from me.

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

Ed whips around.

Ed *hollow voice* "The painting in my bedroom" ...

May we investigate that?

~~~~~

~~~~~

~~~~~

*Phillip leads the way as they traipse through the house. Brenda's bedroom is shabby but as comfortable as possible. Nadine and Phillip have done the best that they could – given that they were left with Brenda on their hands. The room is dingy. Mark opens the curtains. Above the bed is a very fine painting from the Post-Impressionist school. It is "Idle Time": the lost Gauguin.*

*Ed stands in the doorway staring at the painting. Tinkerman squeezes past him. Tinkerman stands by the bed then climbs onto it such that he can kneels before the painting.*

Tinkerman *awe-struck* A week before Jack S-B's life was snatched from him, a painting of two Tahitian girls by the French artist Paul Gauguin fetched nearly £200 million at auction. Wrap that up in crinkly paper, tie a bow around it and place it reverently under your Christmas tree. £200 million! That's the most expensive work of art ever known. A week prior to JP's death.

*[Points up to the wall]*

I am actually in the same room as Gauguin's lost painting: "Idle Time". Imagine *its* worth given what the other sold for. Just imagine ...

Ed *shrugs* It's stolen. That one on the wall belonged to ... er ...

*[Refers to his notes]*

Bill Grundy.

Phillip He was a real crim. A robber. If anything in his house was paid for with his own cash then I'll go "he".

Mark *shrugs* There'll be a reward. Brenda will be entitled to a ginormous reward. I'm positive. If not, I'll stump for it m'self.



## TORRES STRAIT SEVENTH INTERLUDE

~~ 1976 to 1978 ~~

**London: backstage at the Night Owl Theatre**

For the first time the subject matter covered in an interlude becomes public knowledge: we know the facts as do many of our characters. In fact, the cold case is cracked wide open.

Glasgow Stafford-Bright corresponded with his one-time daughter-in-law (Liberty Lanfranco). These letters were found by Tinkerman. The intention is to pass the letters on to Bayeau. Instead, Tinkerman hands them over to Ed.

*Liberty is found in a cramped dressing room applying make-up before an illuminated mirror. Tears stream down her painted face as she holds the single page of a letter in her trembling fingers.*

*Glasgow voice-over*      Some poet will write about the lonely, bitter old man on Cholwich Island who once built a Scottish castle and surrounded himself with lovely folk. I never wanted to leave that place. Me! A well-to-

do grazier with a mob of first-class cattle and a happy little family.

But it all came unstuck. It all came unstuck.

*Liberty dabs at her face with a hanky. She sniffs.*

*Glasgow voice-over* Your mother-in-law vanished. There she was organizing a cold buffet lunch. Then never seen more. It was the greatest puzzle known to man. For no ship nor boat nor proa nor outrigger ventured anywhere near our island for days. No seaplane. None of us could understand how she managed the disappearing act.

And that left me in charge of a little lad. Not my son – not by a long chalk. He did not have my eyes.

But I will not divulge his real father's name. Let that fact plummet to the depths. Your son will no doubt curse me one day for not telling him who his grandfather really was.

*There is a knock at the door. Liberty gives a guilty start.*

*Male voice-off* Five minutes, Miss Spintler.

*Libby distracted* Er ... yes ... yes ... Coming!

*Liberty is in a panic to mop up her tears and apply her make-up.*

*Glasgow voice-over* I'm sending you a valuable gift for being the only good thing in my life.



*On Embley Island Ed sits on the steps outside the Tirritana home along with Bruce and Mark.*

*Tinkerman is back under the camp shower with Nadine working the electric fan for him. Ed has the Liberty letters in his hands.*

Ed *wistful* Percentage-wise, I'd say I'm now 85% closed on this case. 85%. I don't suppose I'll get any closer than that.

Bruce You owe even that success to Brenda and Tink, eh.

Ed *nods* And to Bayeau's Mum. We were bloody lucky that she kept all these letters *and* that Tink knew where to find them.

Bruce *grins* Good old Montesquieu! Man among men. And with his unique wealth of knowledge about the Post-Impressionists. They made Monty then broke the mould.

Ed *grimaces* Thank the Lord for that.

*[Sighs]*

More DNA tests I guess ...

*[To Mark]*

You'll have to pen a follow-up yarn Markie about JP to put the record straight.

*Mark nods.*

Mark *thoughtful* Guess so.

Bruce We'd better get on the blower and update Simon.

Ed Yeah. And contact that seaplane pilot to get us back to Weipa.

*Ed and Bruce stand. They are just about to enter the Tirritana house. Mark stands also.*

Ed We'll keep in touch, Mark. It was good to work with you.

Mark Likewise.

*Mark and Bruce shake hands and then Mark and Ed. Torres Strait gleams in the background. The men gaze out over it one last time.*

Mark Safe trip ...

*[Chuckles]*

Though I must say before we fade off into the sunset ... Ya did

look the goods in that necklace, Swannie.

*The fly-wire door slams shut as the three men enter the house. The Tirritana children are seen riding about on their pony Clyde.*

JP *voice-over, bitter* Dad wanted that plane wreck.

He could salvage it.

The miserable bastard didn't give a rat's about the pilot or how he died, eaten alive by sharks.

I can tell you this (it isn't to go in your story, by the way) but Dad was no beef cattle farmer. He didn't give a rat's about them cows. That was a front I reckon for some other business.

*[Deep and abiding malice]*

He **had** to be in Torres Strait for some reason. He couldn't leave. Died there ...

*Our camera does a long scan of the beauty of Torres Strait.*

JP *voice-over, petulant* I don't want to talk about my Father any more. He was a bastard and a complete scumbag. There! That's all you'll get from me.

Credits roll through to the backdrop of Torres Strait.