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JOHN HUSTON'S
THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING

by
JOHN HUSTON
and
GLADYS HILL

Adapted from a Short Story
by Rudyard Kipling

FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY

"THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING"

FADE IN

1 LAHORE

1

a city of beggars, prophets, untouchables, fakirs, tribespeople, British soldiers, starving dogs, holy cattle, camels and hovering kites. In her streets, marriage rites are performed over five-year-olds. Squatting barbers shave their squatting clients. Readers of Sanskrit sit, cross-legged, in the center of enchanted circles. Dentists draw teeth and surgeons take blood. Rouged corpses, tied to flimsy thrones, are carried by ecstatic mourners to pyres by the river.

As the sun goes down, life drains out of the City through her Gates. The quarreling, the crying of wares, the praying, the wailing subsides. The City puts her finger to her lips at nightfall. Silence takes over - such a silence as no Western City, where beasts and men go shod, can ever know. Listen to the SOUND of a single heavy raindrop falling on a leaf. Listen to the YELPING of the pariah dogs outside the City walls. Her streets are empty - except for derelicts, and they hide themselves in shadows. Whatever moves - animal or human - predator or prey - moves furtively, in secret.

2 A CITY SQUARE - NIGHT

2

bounded by two story wooden buildings in the gimcrack style of Victorian India. The Square is deserted, the houses dark and shuttered, except for one corner building, from the top floor of which issues a gleam of light. It is the office of "The Northern Star".

Out of the darkness, a Shadow detaches itself, scuttles like a hermit crab without his shell, towards the newspaper office, the greater claw clutching a sack.

3 INT. KIPLING OFFICE - THE NORTHERN STAR - NIGHT

3

He is alone at a flat-topped desk, writing with pen and ink by lamplight. Moths circle the chimney of the lamp on his desk.

His jacket, waistcoat, high collar and tie, topee, walking stick, hang on a rack behind the desk.

A moth drops on Kipling's writing. He bends forward and blows gently.

4 INSERT OF A POEM:

4

"Boh Da Thon was a warrior bold,
His sword and rifle were bossed with gold,
And the peacock banner his henchmen bore,
Was stiff with bullion, stiffer with gore".

The moth flies away. A drop of sweat blurs the fresh ink.

5 BACK TO SCENE

5

Kipling sits back in his chair. He wears thick-lensed glasses, has a wide moustache and heavy eyebrows. He is still in his twenties, though not to be described as youthful. Perhaps, like Lao-Tzu, he was born white-headed. A profound observer of the extravagant doings of his fellow men and fellow beasts, between which he makes no strong distinction.

A short story he will write some years later begins with, in fact, this line: "Brother to a prince and fellow to a beggar, if he be found worthy." He will call it, "The Man Who Would Be King".

He wipes his forehead, gives the poem a name, puts it in a desk drawer and is turning down the lamp when CARNEHAN - or what is left of Carnehan - appears at the door.

CARNEHAN

I've come back!

He creeps forward, a rag-wrapped, whining cripple, dragging one leg and carrying a sack.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Give me a drink, Brother Kipling!

But Kipling only stares at the apparition.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Don't you know me?

KIPLING

No, I don't know you. -- What can I do for you?

Continued

CARNEHAN

I told you. Give me a drink.

Kipling scowls: there's something remotely familiar about the man. He gets the bottle out of his desk, pours a drink.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

It was all settled right here in this office - remember? Danny and I signed the contract and you witnessed it. You eat there behind your desk and I stood here and Danny here. Remember? Look at me, Brother Kipling!

KIPLING

(realizing at last who stands before him)

Yes. I remember.

CARNEHAN

Keep looking in my eyes. It helps to keep my soul from flying off.

KIPLING

You're Carnehan!

CARNEHAN

Peachy Taliaferro Carnehan.

KIPLING

Of course.

CARNEHAN

The same and not the same - who eat beside you in a Third class carriage on the train to Marwar Junction three summers and a thousand years ago ...

6 EXT. LAHORE RAILWAY STATION - DAY - FULL SHOT (MATTE) 6

SHOOTING ACROSS the vast open forecourt crowded with gharris, camel and bullock carts.

Continued

6 Continued

6

Behind them looms the station building; a monstrous pile of red-brick Scottish-Baronial, turretted and crenellated: itself an impressive symbol of the Might and Majesty of Victoria's Empire. SOUND of train whistles OVER.

7 INT. LAHORE RAILWAY STATION - FULL SHOT - DAY

7

A swarm of travellers: Sedate Brahmins, shrill Vishnamites, Shivites with caste marks on their palms, Sikhs with daggers in their hair. Crouching Moslem women, in purdah, are like a cluster of little tents.

Two Laden Orderlies shout to clear a passage for a brace of young English Subalterns in the brilliant turbans, sashes and coats of a Horse Regiment. An English family, women and children, wait beside an enormous bastion of trunks and hatboxes. CAMERA PANS to the MOVING CUE before a ticket window, MOVES to:

8 CLOSE SHOT - KIPLING

8

KIPLING

(to Clerk)

Jodhpore ...

As he unbuttons his coat and reaches into a trouser pocket, a HAND comes into SCENE and deftly removes a watch and chain from his waistcoat. Kipling pays for his ticket, picks up his telescope traveling case and turns away from the window. His place is taken by the thief, a sharp-faced man in soiled whites: Carnehan. He pushes a small coin forward onto the counter.

CARNEHAN

Platform ticket.

The roar of a train entering the station SOUNDS over scene as he, in turn, leaves the window. He watches Kipling climb the ramp to the station platform and continue out of sight - then takes the stolen watch out of his pocket and examines it. He frowns and starts slightly.

9 INSERT - WATCH-CHAIN AND EMBLEM

9

The Emblem resting in the palm of his hand: it is the insignia of a Grand Master Freemason - the rayed, all-seeing Eye of God above a pendant square, within the spread arms of a compass.

CARNEHAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Blast!

10 MEDIUM SHOT - CARNEHAN 10

Pocketing the watch, he begins to push his way through the crowd toward the ramp.

11 EXT. PLATFORM - MEDIUM TRUCKING SHOT - CARNEHAN 11

Emerging onto the platform, he looks both ways, then starts forward along the line of carriages, peering into compartments. The guard's whistle and warning gong SOUND. Increasing his pace, Carnehan continues down the line of carriages, stopping at last at a third-class compartment. He opens the door and enters.

12 INT. CARRIAGE - MEDIUM SHOT - CARNEHAN 12

He enters, slams the door, and sits, facing the engine which now starts with a rending jerk. Carnehan steals a shifty glance across the carriage. CAMERA PANS with his look, to Kipling. His hat and bag are on the over-head rack. The window blind by his head is drawn, and a half-folded copy of "The Northern Star" lies on the seat beside him. He gives the newcomer an incurious glance and settles himself to sleep, possibly to preclude conversation. Carnehan leans into SHOT, his hand on the newspaper.

CARNEHAN

May I . . . ?

Kipling opens an eye, nods. Carnehan withdraws to his corner and opens the paper.

13 EXT. TRAIN - FULL SHOT 13

Puffing through the sun-baked countryside.

14 INT. CARRIAGE - CLOSE SHOT - KIPLING (FROM CARNEHAN'S 14
ANGLE)

He has sunk lower into his seat. His crossed arms have fallen to his lap, revealing the empty waistcoat pockets.

15 MEDIUM SHOT - CARNEHAN 15

Carnehan, with the watch and extended chain between his hands, is estimating his chances of returning them to the owner. He rises

Continued

15 Continued

15

quietly and moves cautiously toward Kipling, but at the crucial moment the engineer clamps on the brakes and a dozen cars telescope in all hell and commotion. Carnehan scarcely has time to steady himself and get the watch out of sight before Kipling comes to.

CARNEHAN

I was just letting down the window.

(stalling)

Riding in this bloody ashcart is like getting kicked in the rear by a battery mule every ten minutes.

KIPLING

I imagine we're coming to a station...

He is evidently correct. As Carnehan resumes his seat, the train stops, the door opens, and a BABU enters, complete with portfolio, umbrella, and a watermelon under his arm. Unabashed by Carnehan's hostile stare, he sets his possessions on the empty bench and closes the door.

BABU

(to Carnehan)

Mr Clutterbury Das.

(bowing)

Failed entrance examination, Calcutta University 1863.

(bowing again)

Writer of correspondence for the illiterate general public.

CARNEHAN

Shut up.

BABU

(bowing)

Thank you, sir.

He sits down as the train starts on its way with the usual cacophony.

16 MEDIUM SHOT - THE BABU (FROM CARNEHAN'S ANGLE)

16

Mr Das commences to attack his watermelon by cutting a twelve-inch crescent, replete with large black seeds. He submerges into same noisily, spits the seeds onto the floor, extracts a huge handkerchief, wipes his face daintily from ear to ear, and proceeds to the next chukker.

asleep, a handkerchief over his head. PAN ACROSS to the other two, favoring Carnehan who watches Mr Das speculatively as the Babu continues to spit out seeds and attend to his ablutions rhythmically: he is about to drop the rind onto the carriage floor among the other offal. Then:

CARNEHAN

Out the window, Babu.

BABU

Thank you, sir.

He rises, runs to the window and begins to open it. Carnehan comes up behind him, grabs him by the collar, opens the door, puts a foot against Mr Das's behind, and boots him overboard, shouting:

CARNEHAN

Outside, you inky-fingered thief!

He proceeds to throw the portfolio, umbrella, and watermelon after the Babu.

CARNEHAN

(continuing; leaning
out, shouting)

I hope you break your dirty neck!

The commotion brings Kipling to his feet.

KIPLING

Good God, man, what's this ... ? You've probably killed the chap.

CARNEHAN

Serve him right if I had ... but we're not making five miles on this grade.

KIPLING

But why?

CARNEHAN

(producing it)

I woke up and caught him stealing your watch.

Continued

KIPLING

(startled)

My watch ... ?

(taking it)

I say, it is my watch!

Carnehan sits down opposite him in the seat vacated by the Babu.

KIPLING

Well, I'm certainly obliged to you, Mr ... ?

CARNEHAN

Carnehan. Former Gunnery Sergeant
in Her Majesty's Forces.

KIPLING

Mine's Kipling. May I offer you a drink?

CARNEHAN

Don't mind if I do.

Kipling produces a leather-covered traveling flask, and passes it to Carnehan.

KIPLING

(sizing him up)

You've knocked about India a bit, I take it.

CARNEHAN

You can say that twice! - On foot, on
horseback, and on camel ... But you
don't look like a greenhorn either.

KIPLING

I was born in India.

CARNEHAN

A great Country - or was - till the
bureaucrats took over and spoiled
everything ... I hope you're not one of
them.

KIPLING

No, I'm not a bureaucrat.

Continued

CARNEHAN

Didn't think so - they're usually narrow-chested chaps - with long noses they look down at you -- and I've yet to have one offer me a drink ...

(regards flask in
his hand)

Glen Levitt, twelve years old.

KIPLING

You've an educated taste in whiskey.

CARNEHAN

I've an educated taste in whiskey and women and waistcoats and bill o'fares -- though I've had few chances to exercise it lately.

(with growing anger)

Because they that govern spend all their time making up new laws to keep men like you and me from getting anywhere.

(now quite beside
himself)

And whose loss is it, in the long run?
Why, England's, of course. If such as we was given our heads, it's not seventy millions she'd be making in revenues, but seven hundred millions!

KIPLING

I quite agree.

CARNEHAN

Where're you heading for?

KIPLING

Jodhpore.

CARNEHAN

Precious few pickings there.

KIPLING

You don't say!

CARNEHAN

What's your game?

Continued

KIPLING

I'm a correspondent for 'The Northern Star'.

CARNEHAN

Forget it! They're on to that one in Jodhpore. I ought to know. I've still got some lumps to show for it ... it seems there's an honest to God correspondent knocking about the Central States.

KIPLING

Well ... thanks for the advice.

CARNEHAN

Will you be traveling back along this line?

KIPLING

In about ten days.

CARNEHAN

Could you make it eight? I must get a message to a man who'll be passing through Marwar Junction on the Bombay Mail on the night of the 24th. He expects me to join him there but I can't - I got urgent business in the South.

KIPLING

Sorry. I can't help you.

CARNEHAN

Supposing I was to ask you ... as a stranger going to the West ... What would you say then?

KIPLING

(nodding)

I should answer: where do you come from?

CARNEHAN

From the East.

(he pauses)

And I'm hoping you will give my message on the square ... for the sake of the Widow's Son.

Continued

KIPLING

(looks at him with
some suspicion)

What lodge do you hail from?

CARNEHAN

Traveling lodge. The Fore and Fit Queen's
own Royal Loyal Light Infantry. Regimental
District 329-A

KIPLING

(satisfied)

To whom shall I give the message?

CARNEHAN

A big man with a red beard. A great
swell, he is. You'll find him, with all
his luggage around him, in a second class
compartment. But don't you be afraid.
Slip down the window and say, 'Peachy's
gone South for the week' - and he'll tumble.

The train begins to slow.

CARNEHAN

(continuing; rising)

I'll be getting off now before we reach the
station.

He picks up Kipling's flask and helps himself to another drink.

KIPLING

By the way, Brother Carnehan, I missed
my watch in the station at Lahore before
boarding the train.'

CARNEHAN

(replacing flask)

How was I to know you were a Mason?

Opening the door, he swings out of the slowing train and vanishes.

DISSOLVE TO

18 STATION BOARD OF MARWAR JUNCTION - NIGHT

18

PULL DOWN from it to a second class carriage on the track below. At its window, a great, red-bearded man is sleeping among his luggage. Kipling enters the SHOT along the platform, recognizes his quarry, and lets the windowpane drop with a bang.

DRAVOT

(waking)

What's this?

(snorting)

Tickets again, blast you?

KIPLING

No. I am to say that Peachy has gone South for the week.

Dravot blinks.

KIPLING

(continuing)

He has gone South for the week!

DRAVOT

(balefully)

Did he say I was to give you anything for telling me? Because I won't!

KIPLING

No, he didn't.

DRAVOT

(suspiciously)

Then why did you do it?

KIPLING

For the sake of the Widow's Son.

DRAVOT

Oh ...

(pulling his beard)

He said 'South', did he?

KIPLING

Yes.

Continued

DRAVOT

Then, that will be Degumber. And since you're a pal of Peachy's, I don't mind telling you we're going to put the screw on the Rajah for what he did to his stepmother ...

(laughs wolfishly)

... filled her up with red pepper and flogged her to death as she hung from a beam!

KIPLING

(shocked)

And you intend to blackmail him?

(warningly)

Man, you'd never get out of Degumber alive. If you don't have your throats cut, they'll certainly poison you.

The train begins to pant in the process of starting up. Dravot leans forward to be heard.

DRAVOT

Both has been tried more'n once - but Peachy'n me don't kill easy.

KIPLING

The Rajah's an independent ruler. He answers to nobody! How do you hope to put the screw on him?

The train starts to move.

DRAVOT

(shouting)

By saying we're correspondents for the Northern Star.

The train is gathering speed, and the appalled Kipling has to run beside it to keep level with the window. But the NOISE of the wheels drowns out his words.

KIPLING

(shouting)

You can't do that ... You can't! Because I'm the correspondent of the Northern Star.

Continued

18 Continued (2)

18

DRAVOT

(shouting)

What did you say, Brother ... ?

(cupping his ear)

What did you say ... ?

HOLD as Kipling gives up and the train swishes past him off SCENE.

DISSOLVE TO

19 INT. A RESIDENCY BUILDING - MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT -
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER, KIPLING - DAY

19

The Arms of the Queen Empress of India are displayed on a white-washed wall. The COMMISSIONER, fiftyish, with pale blue eyes and high arched nose that is a mark of his class, is seated at a long table, with an inkstand, folders and a bell before him; while Kipling occupies a chair at the end of the polished board to his left. A punkah swings slowly overhead, propelled by the great toe of a native, seated on the floor.

D. C.

As you know, Kipling, we took them at the Degumber border; so there's a question of jurisdiction involved. But a charge of conspiracy to blackmail might be brought.

KIPLING

I didn't lay the information before you for a criminal prosecution, sir; only to save their lives.

D. C.

Then may I ask what particular interest you have in these scoundrels?

KIPLING

They happen to be Freemasons - like myself.

D. C.

Freemasons? Those chaps? I should think you'd strike them off your rolls.

Continued

KIPLING

Once a Mason, always a Mason.

D. C.

You don't say! Humph! ... Had one here three weeks ago - a Bengali merchant - black as my boot. Demanded that we notify his mother; and when we tried to, damn if she hadn't been dead for thirty years.

KIPLING

(smiling)

He didn't mean his natural mother, sir, but his mother lodge.

D. C.

Never could understand how perfectly proper chaps - like yourself - can go about on public occasions wearing aprons and sashes, shaking hands with total strangers.

(gestures)

Just what is Masonry, Kipling?

KIPLING

An ancient order dedicated to the brotherhood of man under the all-seeing eye of God.

D. C.

We should have done well to leave that sort of thing behind us in England, my friend. It can never work here.

KIPLING

There are tales that it did work here - before we ever came. Some audacious scholars even trace it back to the builders of Solomon's Temple.

D. C.

Old wives' tales, I suspect.

(striking bell)

Well, let's have a look at your lodge brothers.

Continued

19 Continued (2)

19

A door is opened on Dravot and Carnehan, who are in file between two Sikhs and bayoneted rifles. The door closes behind them as they enter and advance at the regulation step to the centre of the table, when they halt and turn smartly with clicking heels.

CARNEHAN .

(barking)

Hats off!

Both remove their hats in unison.

20 GROUP SHOT - REVERSE ANGLE

20

D. C.

(frowning)

You men are not under arrest ...

(gestures)

... Thanks to Mr Kipling here ...

who happens to be a genuine correspondent
for the Northern Star.

Shoulders back, chins in, Carnehan and Dravot indicate no loss of assurance.

D. C.

(continuing)

But both of you richly deserve to be
in gaol. I've your records before me.

(exhibiting files)

There's everything in them from
smuggling, to swindling, to receiving
stolen goods to barefaced blackmail!

CARNEHAN

(indignantly)

Sir, I resent the accusation of blackmail.
It's blackmail to obtain money by threats
of publishing information in a newspaper;
but what blackmail is there in accepting
a small retainer to keep it out of a newspaper?

D. C.

(dipping a quill into
the inkwell)And how did you propose to keep it out?

Continued

20 Continued

20

CARNEHAN

By telling the editor what I know about
his sister and a certain government official
in these parts.

21 THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

21

drops the ink-laden quill on the papers before him.

DRAVOT

Let him put that in his paper if he has
need of news!

The District Commissioner busies himself considerably in blotting ink
before answering.

D. C.

(looking up grimly)

It would have been wiser if both of you
had gone home at the end of your Army
Service ...

CARNEHAN

Home to what? A Porter's uniform
outside some restaurant, and sixpenny
tips from belching civilians for closing
cab doors on them and their blowsy
women!

DRAVOT

(contemptuously)

Not for us, thank you. Not after watching
Afghans come howling down out of the hills
and taking battlefield command when all
the officers had bought it.

CARNEHAN

Well said, Brother Dravot!

D. C.

(angrily)

Enough of this insolence. There may be no
criminal charges against you ...

(more)

Continued

D. C. (Cont)

(picks up folders)

... but I'll see these files reach
Calcutta with a recommendation that
you be deported from India as
Political undesirables - detriments
to the dignity of the Empire and the
Izzat of the Raj.

CARNEHAN

'Detriments' you call us. 'Detriments'!
Well, I remind you that it was detriments
like us that made this bloody Empire and
the Izzat of the Raj!

(to Dravot)

Hats on!

They put on their hats in unison, turn and exit in file, their heavy
shoes pounding in unison. When they have gone:

D. C.

There's no need to let any of this get into
the Star, I take it, Kipling?

Behind the thick lenses of his glasses, Kipling's eyes are smiling.

DISSOLVE TO

22 EXT. A CITY SQUARE

22

A faint pre-dawn glow. The square is silent - empty. Lights are
showing in the top floor office of "The Northern Star".

23 INT. KIPLING OFFICE

23

The open door is in immediate f. g. Kipling, in shirt sleeves, hot
and weary, is at his desk, correcting proofs. He hands some copy
into the composing room. Then Kipling stretches wearily as Carnehan
and Dravot appear in the open doorway. They cross to stand before
him.

CARNEHAN

(beaming down)

It's him!

Continued

DRAVOT

So it is.

KIPLING

My god - you two! What do you want this time?

CARNEHAN

We're here to ask a favour.

KIPLING

Another favour!

DRAVOT

Calm yourself, Brother Kipling. We've never taken advantage of a fellow in the Craft.

CARNEHAN

We don't want money - just a few minutes of your time - and to look at a book or two and study some of those maps ...

(indicating them on walls)

We'll take a drink if one's offered but we won't be put out if it isn't.

DRAVOT

Peachy here is as sober as I am - It's important you have no doubts on that score - so we'll take one of your cigars apiece and you shall watch us light up.

They take cigars from a box on the desk, then each takes a lucifer match and, striking the matchheads together, each lights the other's cigar at full arm's length.

Kipling reaches into a drawer, produces a bottle and glasses. He pours, hands them drinks.

DRAVOT

And now, sir, let me introduce to you Brother Peachy Carnehan - that's him ---- and Brother Daniel Dravot - that's me. The less said about our professions, the better, for we have been most things in our time. We have been all over India

(More)

Continued

DRAVOT (Cont)

We know her cities and her jungles, her palaces and her jails - and we have decided that she isn't big enough for such as we.

KIPLING

That's what I understood the Commissioner to say.

CARNEHAN

Therefore we are going away to another place where a man isn't crowded and can come into his own. We are not little men - and there's nothing we're afraid of except drink and women and they're provided against in a contrack we've made with each other - so we're going away to make our fortunes in Kafiristan.

KIPLING

Kafiristan . . . !

DRAVOT

We hear they've two and thirty idols there. So we'll be the 33rd and 34th.

CARNEHAN

And gold and sapphires and rubies.

DRAVOT

And the women are supposed to be very beautiful.

(aside to Carnehan)

Not forgetting the contrack.

CARNEHAN

It's a place of warring tribes, which is to say - a land of opportunity for such as we who know how to train men and lead them into battle.

DRAVOT

We'll go there and say to any chief we can find, 'We'll vanquish all your foes and make you King - King of all Kafiristan - for half the booty!' . . . So we'll fight for him and loot the Country four ways from Sunday!

Continued

CARNEHAN

Millionaires we'll be when next you see us!

DRAVOT

How's that for a plan?

KIPLING

You're both out of your minds! To start with, the only way to get there is through Afghanistan.

DRAVOT

That we know. We was with Roberts on the march to Kabul.

KIPLING

Two white men on their own would be cut to pieces before they were five miles into the Khyber Pass.

DRAVOT

Suppose we manage that. Just suppose - and suppose we get across to Afghan Plains. Then what?

KIPLING

The Hindu Kush. A frozen sea of peaks and glaciers. A party of geographers - a mapping expedition - tried some years ago and disappeared into thin air. No white man has been there and come out again since Alexander.

CARNEHAN

Alexander who?

KIPLING

Alexander, the Great, King of Greece, three hundred years before Christ.

CARNEHAN

Well, if a Greek can do it, so can we!

Continued

KIPLING

I can only repeat you're a pair of lunatics.

CARNEHAN

Would two lunatics draw up a contract like this?

(produces a well-worn sheet of paper, reads:)

'This contract between me and you persuing witnesseth in the name of God, Amen and so forth...

(1) That you and me will settle this matter together; i. e., to be Kings of Kafiristan.

(2) That you and me will not, while this matter is being settled, look at any liquor, nor any woman, black, white, or brown, so as to get mixed up with one or the other harmful.

(3) That we conduct ourselves with Dignity and Discretion, and if one of us gets into trouble the other will stay by him. Signed by you and me this day ...'

DRAVOT

There was no need for the last article but it looks regular.

Carnehan dips pen, writes date, signs, hands pen to Dravot. He signs with a flourish, stands back to admire the effect.

CARNEHAN

(to Kipling)

Now you witness it - and it's legal.

Kipling signs where Carnehan indicates. Carnehan blots the contract, folds it, hands it to Dravot. He then crosses unhesitatingly to a row of encyclopedias and takes out Volume INF - KAN.

KIPLING

Well, gentlemen, it's four in the morning.

Continued

DRAVOT

Don't stand on politeness, Brother
Kipling. If you want to go to bed, we
won't steal anything.

(takes another cigar)

You can lock the bottle away if you want,
though...

(taps contract)

... it's safe enough - now.

Carnehan looks up from the book.

CARNEHAN

We'll send word when we're ready to
push off in case you'd like to bid us a
fond goodbye.

Kipling stands, takes his jacket, starts for the door.

KIPLING

Try not to burn the place down.

He leaves.

CARNEHAN

Here we are!

(reads)

'Kafiristan. Approximately 10,000
square miles.

Mountainous terrain. Pop. unknown.

Religion. Unknown. Conquered

by Alexander in 328 B.C. According
to Herodotus, he defeated King

Oxyartes whose daughter, Roxanne,

he subsequently took to wife ...'

DISSOLVE TO

24 EXT. THE KUMHARSEN SERAI - LONG SHOT - HIGH ANGLE - 24
DAY

CAMERA PANS with wheeling flights of doves past fret-work balconies
and down onto a vast open market place swarming with representatives
of every part of Asia: "Balkh and Bokhara there meet Bengal and
Bombay, and try to draw eye-teeth."

Continued

CENTER on a gharry passing below, spindle-wheeled, sparkling with yellow varnish and polished brasswork, pushing through the murmurous crowds; and followed by a small wake of jostling children, peddlers, beggars and pimps. Its occupant is hidden under the cantilevered canvas awning.

25 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - KIPLING - DOLLY SHOT

25

ANGLE across the back of the gharry, where he balances on the rearward-facing seat, trying to ignore the shouted solicitations of the group following.

One of these, even more persistent than the rest, an ill-favored fellow in a ragged robe, seems to be inviting him, in sing-song Urdu, to stop the carriage and go with him. Kipling orders him away with a gesture; whereupon the man darts forward to apply his persuasions on the Driver. A coin is produced and changes hands. The horse is reined in.

MOVE IN to HOLD the Driver and Kipling, who, under the pressure of renewed salesmanship from the retinue, turns irritably.

KIPLING

Come along, Ghulam. We're late ...
Jaldi!

GHULAM replies in a passionate flood of high-pitched oratory.

GHULAM

At once, Lord, and immediately! Now our forward continuance is at present impaired by this fellow, sir, who is begging myself to relate this message to the Sahib: in confidence that you will accompany with him; that he may show to you a rare and wonderful thing?

KIPLING

(impatiently)
Thing? -- What thing?

GHULAM

Indeed, the man would not say what thing. Therefore, Sahib, Sir, I suspect his bad intentions to entice the Sahib into a naughty house of disreputation ...

(More)

(Continued)

GHULAM (Cont)

(excitedly warming
to his subject)

... where he take you and kill you
and murder you and cut your throat
and rob the money from your pockets
also! Therefore, Sahib ...

KIPLING

Therefore, Ghulam, let us go to the office
where none of these exciting things are
liable to happen.

Ghulam salutes, proud to have saved the master from evil.

GHULAM

Instantly, Sahib! In the twinkling of the
eye!

But first he must give the rogue a piece of his mind: CAMERA PANS
to include the man, who breaks into the tirade with another proffered
coin, which Ghulam, looking puzzled, pockets before turning back
to Kipling.

GHULAM

He now says, Sir, that if you will come
with him, it will be of assistance to his
widowed mother's son.

(suspiciously)

... and he did also refer to the Sahib's
mother additionally ...

Kipling turns to peer at the man.

26 KIPLING'S VIEWPOINT - CARNEHAN

26

As, seeing his face, we recognize him. He moves to lean in over
the side of the gharry, winks, beckons with a jerk of his head, and
withdraws.

27 CLOSE SHOT - KIPLING

27

reacting in surprise - and amusement.

Continued

KIPLING

(to Ghulam)

Wait for me at the office.

He climbs down to follow Carnehan.

GHULAM

(calls after Kipling)

But Sir! Sir Kipling Sahib! Myself

I will take you to a loving-house

more better and respectable!

You will be verry happy and delightful...

CAMERA PANS to FOLLOW Kipling, walking fast to keep up with Carnehan, dodging and side-stepping his way through the crowd.

28 MOVING SHOT - CARNEHAN AND KIPLING

28

Carnehan leads Kipling through the rich kaleidoscope of the bazaar; past stalls displaying silverware, carpets, orange and yellow fruit; across open spaces where long strips of blue and black dyed cloth hang against the cerulean sky.

Carnehan stops, waiting for Kipling to catch up, and points off.

29 FULL SHOT - A CORNER OF THE MARKET - DRAVOT AND GROUP

29

In the shade of a great spreading banyan tree, Dravot is dancing. Dressed in a bizarre tangle of filthy rags and on his head the green turban of holiness, he whirls grotesquely before a small group of admiring and reverent spectators, waving a child's toy windmill over his head.

Carnehan leads Kipling in PAST CAMERA, officiously shooing away the spectators, that His Holiness may give Audience to the White Sahib. CAMERA FOLLOWS IN as Dravot, after a few more antic gestures, subsides, panting slightly, on his threadbare prayer-rug, motioning Kipling to be seated also, on a stool opposite. After a quick glance around to make sure they are alone:

DRAVOT

Morning to you, Brother. Glad you stopped by and caught the matinee performance...

(More)

(Continued)

DRAVOT (Cont)

(with an artist's
pride)

What d'you think of it?

KIPLING

(smiling)

Convincing enough - but what the devil
are you rascals up to now? Last week
it was kings you were to be, of
Kafiristan, as I remember ...

CARNEHAN

Right! But we got to get there first.

DRAVOT

Madness is the trick.

(rolling his eyes in
demonstration)

Who'd hurt a poor crazy priest and his
servant? Peachy worked out this
dodge; we've used it before. He's good
at the lingo so he does the talking while
I play dumb and barmy-like! I've got so
as I can do the clowning pretty good now...
I can twitch so as to put the fear of Allah
into any good Moslem. Why, I can even
froth at the mouth, something horrid -
want to see?

Kipling politely but firmly declines the offer with a gesture.

DRAVOT

(continuing; disappointed)

Oh, well - another time.

CARNEHAN

(grinning)

We'll be in Peshawar next week, and
hitch onto one of the regular caravans
going up through the Pass.

He indicates two kneeling camels tethered in an arched recess of the
Serai wall.

Continued

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

... with a load of toys and knick-knacks
which we'll sell as great charms along the
road to Kabul.

DRAVOT

Only at Jallallabad we'll break off North,
up the Kounar Valley as far as Chandak -
where, if your maps tell true, there's a
pass over the Hindu Kush - and behold!
The Promised Land! ...

CARNEHAN

(sharkish)

... with gold and sapphires and rubies
in a country that's all ready and waiting
to be opened up.

KIPLING

(shaking his head)

I'm afraid it's more likely you'll be
opened up yourselves - with long knives.

DRAVOT

We are not little men.

CARNEHAN

Come!

He leads Kipling between the camels.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Put your hand under the saddlebags.

KIPLING

(feeling)

Rifles!

CARNEHAN

Martinis - twenty of 'em. And ammunition.
Cost every sou we squeezed out of the Rajah
of Degumber.

Continued

KIPLING

Good heavens! You mean you went back
in there?

DRAVOT

What'd we have to lose?

KIPLING

Well, Heaven help you if you're caught
with those at the Border.

DRAVOT

(with a wink)

Gun-running isn't exactly new to us.
Well, sir ...

Looking around to make sure they are unobserved, he extends a hand.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

Goodbye to you, Brother Kipling, and
many thanks.

KIPLING

Man, don't do it! The odds are too great!

CARNEHAN

Wish us luck. We met upon the level ...

He puts out his hand. They exchange the Masonic grip.

KIPLING

... And we're parting on the square.
Good luck indeed ... Here, take this!

Impulsively he reaches for his watch-chain and CAMERA ZOOMS
IN AN INSERT as he detaches the Masonic emblem which he puts
into Dravot's hand.

30 CLOSE SHOT - CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

30

ANGLE over Kipling's shoulder. Dravot tosses the emblem in the
palm of his hand, then draws a heavy thread from his ragged garment,
runs it through the emblem and hangs it around his neck.

Continued

CARNEHAN
 (whacking his camel)
 Get up, you ugly beast!

CAMERA PANS to follow them from the banyan's shade and into the noise and dust of the market place. Already Dravot is capering and cavorting into his dervish role.

DISSOLVE TO

31 INT. KIPLING OFFICE - THE NORTHERN STAR - NIGHT

31

CARNEHAN
 Keep looking at me! I ain't mad - but
 I soon shall be. I've come back. I've
 been there and come back and all the
 time you've been sitting here while
 Daniel Dravot was crowned King - It's
 true, true as Gospel. A King he was with
 a crown on his head. Poor Dan! Oh,
 poor, poor Dan that wouldn't take advice
 even from me ----

KIPLING
 Drink the drink and take your time ...
 You got across the border ...

Carnehan drops one hand on the table. Kipling takes it by the wrist. It's twisted like a bird's claw and, up on the back, is a ragged, red, diamond-shaped scar.

CARNEHAN
 No, don't look there --- look at me...!

Kipling raises his eyes to Carnehan's face.

CARNEHAN
 (continuing)
 We got across the border ...

DISSOLVE TO

32 LONG SHOT - THE KHYBER PASS - DAY

32

SHOOTING UP to the forbidding bulk of Fort Ali-Masjid, straddled across a rocky peak in the center of the pass, the Union Jack at the flagstaff. A Bugle call echoes and re-echoes between the mountains. CAMERA PANS DOWN the harsh slopes to the road below, and a long caravan of perhaps three hundred camels, winding up it towards the last frontier of the British Raj, a barrier-pole, now raised; and, beside it, a small whitewashed guardhouse where a single sentry stands before the door.

33 MEDIUM SHOT - DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN - DOLLY SHOT

33

COMING into VIEW in the midst of the procession; Carnehan leading the camels in tandem, Dravot capering by his side. As they approach into CLOSE SHOT, CAMERA starts to DOLLY ahead of them.

CARNEHAN

(muttering sideways)

Here we are, Danny - keep your fingers crossed.

DRAVOT

(squinting ahead)

Right ... Blast! See who's on sentry!

CARNEHAN

Mulvaney!

DRAVOT

That loud-mouthed Mick from the Black Tyrone ...

CARNEHAN

Shh! Don't worry, he'll never recognize us.

DRAVOT

(a sudden evil grin)

No ... He won't ---

34 MEDIUM SHOT - THE SENTRY

34

The big rawboned Irishman of Kipling's "Soldiers Three", standing negligently at ease, chewing a quid of tobacco, idly watches the passing caravan. He spits, expertly and silently.

Continued

34 Continued

34

DRAVOT'S VOICE (O.S.)
(casting his
voice)
Terence Mulvaney!

MULVANEY starts guiltily; and cocks his head round to see who's calling.

35 MULVANEY'S VIEWPOINT

35

The passing caravan. Among them, Dravot and Carnehan crossing innocently with the rest. OVER THIS:

DRAVOT'S VOICE (O.S.)
(in officer's accents)
Private Mulvaney!

36 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - MULVANEY

36

jumping.

DRAVOT'S VOICE (O.S.)
Stand to attention when I'm addressing
you!

Mulvaney springs to attention.

DRAVOT'S VOICE (O.S.)
(continuing)
You horrible ugly Irishman!

Mulvaney's eyes bug, flicking from side to side in his rigidly immobile head.

DRAVOT'S VOICE (O.S.)
(continuing)
Pr-e--e-sent -- HAIP!

Mulvaney presents arms with a bang and a clatter.

37 FULL SHOT - THE CARAVAN

37

Among them, the Mad Mullah and his Servant are receding through the barrier.

Continued

37 Continued

37

DRAVOT'S VOICE (O.S.)
Private Mulvaney, at the double ---
M-a-a-a-rk --- TIME!

38 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT - MULVANEY

38

His knees pounding up and down at the double-mark-time: a sufficiently ridiculous exercise, especially with the rifle in "present arms" position.

An OFFICER appears in the doorway behind him, takes a startled look, and calls back inside.

OFFICER
Corporal! Take three men and put
Private Mulvaney in cells ...
(looking disgustedly
back at him)
The bloody man's drunk again ...

DISSOLVE TO

39 EXT. TRAILSIDE BIVOUAC IN AFGHANISTAN - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

39

Picketed camels. Many fires, people moving about.

40 GROUP SHOT

40

A score of tribesmen and women squatting around a fire, Dravot in their midst, telling fortunes by casting sticks upon the sand, drawing designs, looking at palms.

A woman throws more dried camel dung onto the fire. Little red sparks fly into Dravot's big red beard. He leaps up, begins to caper about ... People laugh at the sight, Carnehan joining them.

CARNEHAN (V.Q.)
We came through the Khyber with that
caravan - me and Dravot -- doing all
sorts of antics to amuse the people.
At night he told them their fortunes in a
tongue of his own devising and I translated --
and all concerned were happy because I
promised them that all their wishes would
come true ...

41 EXT. CARAVAN - LONG SHOT - DAWN

41

The caravan is on the move. As the long line of burdened camels moves forward, two, with men at their sides, turn away and take a different line. Faint laughter and some friendly shouts as the distance between them and the main body widens.

CARNEHAN (V.O.)

Then at Jagdallak - we turned off towards Kafiristan. They was sad to see us leave the caravan - we'd brought it good luck ... Two she-camels had been foaled and there was no sniping at us from the hills. They waved goodbye to the mad priest and his servant and Dravot danced them out of sight.

42 CUT OF DRAVOT

42

whirling like one of his toy windmills atop a dune as the caravan passes.

43 DESERT LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

43

Two figures of Dravot and Carnehan, leading their camels across a sandy desert waste.

44 EXT. AFGHAN COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

44

Dravot and Carnehan, leading the camels across rock-strewn hills like brown slag heaps, bare of vegetation. They are picking their way across the stony slopes.

A layer of tattered robes alters their appearance. Both they and the camels are footsore.

A mastiff-like dog charges furiously out of the blackness to stand, hackles up and teeth bared, in their path. They have happened on a flock of goats bedded down for the night. The Shepherd, a fierce Afghan boy, sights at them over a rifle twice his length. They make a sign of peace and move off.

45 EXT. OASIS AND TOWN - NIGHT

45

Carnehan, Dravot and camels skirting a small town near an oasis.

Continued

CARNEHAN (V.O.)

The country was deserty. The inhabitants was dispersed and solitary. We traveled by night and kept away from villages as we didn't want to waste ammunition in idle fighting with the Afghans.

46 EXT. AFGHAN COUNTRYSIDE - HIGH ANGLE SHOT - DAY 46

Dravot and Carnehan are minute figures in a vast stony landscape as they trudge forward towards CAMERA. Their heads are sunk low to protect their faces from the biting winds that howl down from the hills.

47 EXT. AFGHAN COUNTRYSIDE - RAVINE AND TORRENT - DAY 47

CAMERA TILTS DOWN to immediate foreground to show that Dravot and Carnehan are approaching a wide ravine through which a raging torrent courses, full of whirlpools and eddies.

Dravot and Carnehan reach the far edge of the ravine and stand there.

The exhausted camels take advantage of the halt to sink to their knees, their breathing laboured.

CARNEHAN (V.O.)

The Pushtukan -- must have been. A little wavy blue line on the map - but we couldn't hope to get the camels across. So Peachy says to Dravot, 'We'll trade 'em for goats - It don't matter what they cost us in the Lahore bazaar - We're playing for very high stakes' ...

48 EXT. CAMPSITE NEAR RAVINE - DAY 48

SOUND of river o. s. Carnehan and Dravot are sitting on the ground, blowing into goatskins. Both are blowing like grampuses with puffing cheeks. Dravot pinches the skin he's working on, seals it.

Continued

48 Continued

48

DRAVOT

First time I saw this was in Kashmir when Pipe Major McCrimmon had ten shillings off me that he could blow up a whole skin without stopping -- and he did -- though he'd sat down on an ant hill in his kilt, unknowing like. Ten shillings was ten shillings, to him!

Carnehan yelps with laughter. His skin collapses.

49 RAFT - MIDSTREAM

49

Twelve goatskins lashed together: rifles, ammo, stores, stowed thereon. The legs of the goats offer slippery handholds for Carnehan and Dravot. They are at the mercy of the torrent which submerges them one moment and stands the craft on end the next. It whirls - it plunges - it hogs and sags. It hangs eternally over the crest of a waterfall, then shoots headlong into the spray. Both men are thrown as from a bucking horse but Carnehan keeps his grip on a goat's leg and gets Dravot by the whiskers.

50 EXT. AFGHAN COUNTRYSIDE - CARNEHAN, DRAVOT - DAY

50

Carnehan and Dravot are pulling the guns, ammo and stores on crude sleds made of branches lashed together. A rough uphill climb, the sleds a dead weight behind them. They haul and stop, haul and stop. Carnehan, sweating, points ahead.

51 EXT. CAVERN OPENING IN HILLSIDE - (THEIR P.O.V.)

51

A cathedral-like opening in the hillside. The track they are following disappears within.

52 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

52

They haul the sleds up to the Cave Entrance, stop.

CARNEHAN

(panting)

You wait here, Danny. I'll reconnoiter. If it's the end of the track, we've got to go up and over.

Continued

52 Continued

52

Dravot groans, drops down on the boxes while Carnehan goes cautiously forward, rifle in hand.

53 INT. CAVERN - CARNEHAN - TRACKING SHOT

53

The rather narrow entrance opens out into a large vaulted room. Long spikes of stalactites hang from the roof. The walls are wet. There is the sound of water trickling across the floor into small channels.

Carnehan goes forward cautiously. After a few yards of blackness, he sees faint light ahead.

54 CARNEHAN AND THREE AFGHANS AND MULES

54

Carnehan moves towards the light. In a few moments, he sees that this is a natural tunnel under the hill - the wide outer exit a bright frame against the interior darkness.

COMING THROUGH THIS FRAME are THREE AFGHANS. Two are riding mules; a Third walks beside them.

55 CARNEHAN

55

reacting as the sound of the mules' hooves reverberates in the hollow vault. He turns and hurries back to:

56 EXT. CAVERN - CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

56

CARNEHAN

(pulling his rifle off)

Danny, there's three Afghans and two mules coming through ... You do your 'turn' and I'll buy the mules. It'll be like with the caravan ... Mad Monk under Allah's protection - both of us harmless and peaceful.

(sound of Hooves
constantly nearer)

Wouldn't do for them to see the Martinis ...
or find the boxes.

Continued

56 Continued

56

Dravot unslings his rifle. He and Carnehan take off the goatskins they have hanging from their shoulders and any loose garment that can be spared to cover the sleds.

From some inner pocket, Dravot takes out a bent, unworkable whirligig and, placing himself at the entrance to the Cavern, begins to spin and to speak his mumbo-jumbo.

Carnehan assumes an obsequious attitude as the THREE MEN AND MULES ARRIVE.

The Three Afghans, hands to the knives at their belts, survey the Mad Man and his Servant.

57 DRAVOT

57

spinning, chanting.

58 THE GROUP

58

Carnehan (in Afghan) invites the Two Men on Mules to dismount, saying that they might like to watch his Master and, perhaps, have their fortunes told.

The Two Afghans dismount. This encouraging sign elicits all Dravot's artistry. He is now, as he boasted to Kipling, "foaming at the mouth".

Dravot executes one last spin, and sinks into a heap on the ground, twitching something fearful. He then does a slow roll onto his back, his eyes roll up into his head, and he goes "into a trance".

A moment of reverent silence for the afflicted one's state. Then Carnehan resumes talking in Afghan, pointing to the mules. He drags a pouch from beneath his rags and, opening it, begins to take out one coin after another, counting. One of the Afghans snarls a reply.

CARNEHAN

(translating in English:

a shout)

If we're rich enough to pay, we're rich enough
to rob!

Knives drawn, the Three Afghans start for Carnehan. He darts behind the mules, into the Cavern.

59 INT. CAVERN

59

(There is light enough from outside for us to follow the action.)

One Afghan guards the entrance, lest Carnehan escape. DRAVOT ENTERS SHOT. He leaps at the Man from behind, downs him. As he pounds his head against the stone floor:

60 CARNEHAN AND TWO AFGHANS

60

Carnehan, whirling and dodging, forces one Afghan to the wall. He leaps for the Man's knife arm. As they wrestle for the knife, the Third Native rushes Carnehan's back. Carnehan, hearing and sensing him, twists the man round. The knife is thrust into the enemy. Carnehan lets the body drop.

61 GROUP SHOT

61

As Carnehan weaves, advancing on his opponent, Dravot rises. He has broken his man's skull. Blood and brains attest to the demise.

Now, arms spread, foam flecking his beard, he stalks towards the remaining Native.

It is too much. The Afghan looks from one to the other, turns and runs for his life, dodging past Dravot with a long-drawn yell of terror as he rushes out and down the hillside.

DISSOLVE TO

62 HIGH COUNTRY - FOG

62

Carnehan, Dravot, Mules - barely discernible.

CARNEHAN (O.S.)

So we starts forward into those bitter
cold mountainous parts and never a path
broader than the back of your hand.

63 THE HIGH PEAKS - DAY

63

Only racing grey mist; the demonic HOWL of high winds. A ragged hole is torn in the cloud, revealing for one dazzling glimpse, high jagged peaks trailing long plumes of blown snow, gloriously, against a blue-black sky. More clouds racing, then the SCREEN IS SWEEP COMPLETELY CLEAR and we see: The Top of the World:

Continued

63 Continued

63

range upon range of the highest peaks on earth, the Pamirs to the North; and to the East, the distant ramparts of the Himalaya.
 PAN SLOWLY AROUND and DOWN over peaks and pinnacles, cliffs and escarpments.

CARNEHAN (O.S.)

The mountains was tall and white -
 like wild rams ... They was always
 fighting so you couldn't sleep at
 night for the din of their fighting.

64 LONG SHOT - A MOUNTAIN FACE

64

as a huge mass of snow detaches itself and plunges in majestic slow-motion down the side of the mountain.

65 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE

65

Dravot, Carnehan, and the two laden mules are crossing a scree. Above them rears the face of the mountain, menacing with hanging glaciers and snow-cornices.

The frozen silence is unexpectedly broken as Dravot begins to sing:

DRAVOT

'When the half-made recruity
 goes out to the East,
 He acts like a babe and he
 drinks like a beast ...'

CARNEHAN

For god's sake, Danny, pipe down!

DRAVOT

Why? Who's to hear us up here?

CARNEHAN

These mountains, that's who! --
 Do you want to start an avalanche?

DRAVOT

(laughs)

Lor', Peachy, you don't believe that
 foolishness, I hope -- If a king can't
 sing, it isn't worth being king...

Continued

65 Continued

65

He whacks one of the mules, picks up where he left off:

DRAVOT

(continuing)

'And he wonders because he is
frequent deceased,
'Ere he's fit to serve as a
soldier,
Serve, serve, serve, as a
soldier -- '

Surprisingly, there is no avalanche.

66 FLAT WHITE TABLELAND OF SNOW

66

A dead mule lies in immediate f.g. Carnehan, leading the surviving mule, and Dravot are struggling in the drifts.

Dravot goes off Carnehan's tracks at an angle. He wades away doggedly, head bent. Carnehan looks back.

CARNEHAN

Hey, Danny! Look where you're going!

Dravot, arrested by Carnehan's voice, stands, stops and waits. Carnehan returns to him.

DRAVOT

I can't Peachy. My eyes ... I'm
snowblind.

Carnehan leads him to the mule.

CARNEHAN

Here -- take hold of Jenny's tail.

67 DEEP VALLEY

67

Carnehan, Dravot and Jenny slipping and sliding cautiously down an incline, Dravot's right hand held across his eyes, his left hand firmly grasping the root of the mule's tail.

68 THE HIGHER SLOPES - DEEP VALLEYS ON ALL SIDES -
EVENING

68

Carnehan is leading the mule. Dravot, his eyes bandaged, still holding onto the animal's tail.

Heavy clouds engulf them. They have made it to the crest, moving with a mechanical, awful tiredness.

They stand for a moment, straining against the wind, then Carnehan jumps back, unslings his rifle.

Immediately before them stand TWO GIANT SHAPES and, above a cleft in the rock face of the cliff are FOUR MORE MENACING SENTINELS of equal size.

Swirls of wind-swept snow obscure their faces in the dusk.

69 BACK TO SCENE - CARNEHAN

69

in same posture of defense.

DRAVOT

What's the matter, Peachy?

CARNEHAN

God's holy trousers!

DRAVOT

Tell me!

CARNEHAN

(moving to him)

Blokes twice our size standing guard-like in the snow. Six of 'em.

DRAVOT

Give 'em a round or two.

Carnehan fires a couple of shots. Nothing happens.

DRAVOT

Well?

CARNEHAN

Not a move out of 'em. Stay put, while I reconnoiter.

He goes forward.

70 CARNEHAN AND TWO FIGURES DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF HIM 70

Grotesque effigies. Stone eyes stare out of great wooden slabs of hawks' faces. Each has one arm raised as if to forbid intruders. The tatters of ancient banners, streaming from their shoulders, stand out stiffly in the gale.

CARNEHAN

(shaken)

Not real - thank god ... They're
horrible - horrible - put up by the
Kafirs to frighten off the neighbors,
no doubt.

He returns to Dravot and the mule, leads them towards effigies.

DRAVOT

Peachy?

CARNEHAN

Yes?

DRAVOT

That means we're in Kafiristan -- or
almost.

CARNEHAN

So it does.

Over the wind noise, we HEAR a deep rumbling. The mountain quivers and, now, there is a sharp crack, as though the weight of the eternal snows had at last broken its backbone. Then all is still except for the wind as it tries to tear them away from the crest.

Carnehan looks back. Dravot's bandaged head also turns.

A CHASM has opened behind them, leaving no trace of their floundering tracks.

DRAVOT

What happened, Peachy?

CARNEHAN

Our bridges have been burnt, so to
speak.

DRAVOT

How's that?

Continued

CARNEHAN

The one we just crossed isn't there
no longer -- Lor' - did you hear?
That little tinkle was it hitting bottom.

DRAVOT

(echoes)

Lor' --

They start on.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

How's Jenny?

CARNEHAN

Holding her own.

DRAVOT

Bloody good mule.

(addressing her)

Jenny, ol' girl, in token of my gratitude
for your good offices on this mountain,
I promise not to eat of your flesh like I
did the others -- Now what?

Carnehan and the mule have stopped dead in their tracks.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

Now what?

CARNEHAN

A crevasse --

PAN to a crevasse just beyond and below the two effigies.

DRAVOT (O.S.)

Wide?

PAN BACK to Carnehan and Dravot.

CARNEHAN

Wider'n Regent Street -- not so wide
as Piccadilly -- And it drops into nothing
below, straight as a beggar can spit!

DISSOLVE TO

71 CLOSE UP - BURNING EFFIGY

71

lying on his back, pointing accusingly at CAMERA. CAMERA PULLS BACK to:

72 CLEFT IN ROCK FACE

72

a few days later. Dim grey light.

The dead mule lies on her side, feet sticking out into the elements. Stacked upon her body are the boxes of ammo, the few remaining stores and, piled upon these is heavily packed snow: a little wind-break to help ward off the ever-howling winds and searching blasts.

The precious rifles are stacked against the rock face and, next to them, sit Dravot and Carnehan. Dravot, his sight recovered, speaks with quiet deliberation.

DRAVOT

That's the last of 'em, Peachy. No more gods to burn.

CARNEHAN

It looks like Last Post, Danny.

DRAVOT

Peachy -- I don't fancy dying by inches -- feeling the cold creep up my arms and legs ... getting all numb.

CARNEHAN

I'll see to the necessary when the time comes.

DRAVOT

Thanks. I'll do the same for you - and I will, if you'd prefer.

CARNEHAN

We'll flip a coin, when the fire goes out.

DRAVOT

Fair enough.

Continued

CARNEHAN

Ain't it a bloody shame - our getting this close and not making it!

Dravot is in a pensive mood.

DRAVOT

(presently)

Peachy, in your opinion, have our lives been misspent ?

CARNEHAN

Depends on how you look at it - I wouldn't say the world's a better place for our having lived in it.

DRAVOT

No, hardly that ...

CARNEHAN

Nobody's going to weep their eyes out, at our demise.

DRAVOT

And who'd want 'em to, anyway?

CARNEHAN

We haven't made many good deeds to our credit.

DRAVOT

None to brag about.

CARNEHAN

(playing his trump)

But how many men have been where we've been and seen what we've seen ... ?

DRAVOT

Bloody few and that's a fact!

CARNEHAN

Why, even now, I wouldn't trade places with the Viceroy himself if it meant giving up my memories ...

Continued

DRAVOT

Me neither.

CARNEHAN

Like the time the Highlanders were retreating down the hill at Ali Masjit and Pipe Major McCrimmon got his money bag shot off ...

He begins to laugh.

DRAVOT

(laughing, taking it up)

... Seventeen and six he had in it -- so back he goes after it without looking to see if that was all he'd lost ...

CARNEHAN

(choking)

-- and then gets the bloody Victoria Cross because the Highlanders turned about and followed him ...

DRAVOT

-- Good thing for the Afghans it wasn't a quid or he'd have run 'em back all the way to Kabul! ...

The two rock with laughter. They can't stop. Each time one looks at the other, they start all over again.

73 LONG SHOT - THE MOUNTAINSIDE

73

Snowcapped peaks and valleys. Dravot's and Carnehan's LAUGHTER OVER. HOLD the icy stillness with the SOUND of ringing laughter.

74 INT. ROCK SHELTER - DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

74

laughing. Tears roll down Carnehan's face; he wipes them away, has a fresh seizure. O.S. a growing roar of SOUND. As the SOUND INCREASES, their laughter breaks off.

75 LONG SHOT - THE MOUNTAINSIDE

75

A great mass of snow comes hurtling down from the peaks, filling the crevasse.

76 EXT. ROCK SHELTER - DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

76

appearing through the settling snow -- and looking wonderingly at the miracle Nature has provided.

CARNEHAN

Danny! Danny! We can get on!

DISSOLVE TO

77 EXT. HILLSIDE IN KAFIRISTAN - CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

77

going down through a pine forest. Dravot is pulling a crude travois fashioned of goatskins; on it, wrapped in other goatskins, their rifles and boxes. Carnehan walks behind, acting as a brake on the downslope.

Dravot points to an opening. They drop the travois, go to the edge of a cliff, look over.

78 A SUNLIT VALLEY BELOW THEM

78

A Pastoral landscape; terraced fields alternating with pasture and clumps of shade trees. In the MIDDLE DISTANCE, astride a bump of projecting rocks, are the walls and watchtowers of a village. A river winds across the valley floor.

Dravot and Carnehan enter foreground.

DRAVOT

Milk and honey.

CARNEHAN

What?

DRAVOT

The promised land, that's what. A bloomin' Eden.

CARNEHAN

Very pretty. But we didn't come through those ferocious mountains to gather posies.

They continue to take in the scene below.

79 EXT. SUNLIT VALLEY

79

A party of Kafiris, men, women, children, a small herd of cattle on a SANDSPIT that juts out into a curve of the river. The scene is bucolic, peaceful.

Suddenly from behind a hillock above the sandspit, six Kafari Horsemen appear. They wear grotesquely painted masks and feather head-dresses. Spears glitter in the sunlight as they pick their way stealthily down, unobserved by the people at the Water's Edge.

80 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

80

CARNEHAN

Looks like we're in business, Brother Dravot.

They cut down the Hillside.

81 FULL SHOT - RAIDERS AND VILLAGERS - CARNEHAN'S AND DRAVOT'S POV

81

Horsemen yelling, streaming down the hillock. With cries of dismay the tribes people fly every which way in fear and confusion, women dropping their washing to snatch up children, cattle stampeding, etc. As the leading riders reach the sandspit, each reaches down to grab a fleeing woman - and each goes down to the O.S. report of a rifle.

HOLD, as the horsemen check, milling around in the water. Two more shots send another pair crashing from their saddles. The survivors turn to flee, spurring back up the hillock, out of range.

82 DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

82

DRAVOT

(lowers his rifle)

Let us now go forward and accept the grateful thanks of those females we saved from worse'n death.

83 THE VILLAGERS

83

The men have disappeared. The women huddle together, staring at the fallen men with masks. Now they see Carnehan and Dravot approaching, scream in terror, and run for their lives.

84 DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

84

as they stop, stare after the women.

DRAVOT

Now what are they frightened of?

CARNEHAN

Have you had a look at yourself lately?

Blimey, you're ugly! Hello! Not so fast!

One of the raiders has rolled over and is on his knees. Dravot jerks him to his feet and the mask falls from his face. He stammers a few unintelligible words.

CARNEHAN

(taking mask)

Must be their Halloween.

He strips the masks from the other fallen men as we

DISSOLVE TO

85 THE VILLAGE OF ER-HEB

85

Like most villages in Kafiristan, it is strongly fortified, the houses built in tiers, outer walls mostly blank, rooftops forming a continuous parapet. There is only one entrance: a Gate flanked by a Watchtower. There is no sign of life.

Carnehan and Dravot, leading their prisoner, enter f.g. with military step. The devil masks dangle from Carnehan's hands.

CAMERA MOVES FORWARD with them as, suddenly, the ramparts are thronged and there is a tremendous din: shouting, horns being blown, drums being beaten.

DRAVOT

More like it. Hail the conquering heroes!

Brass band and all.

They continue on a few paces and then a shower of arrows is loosed from the ramparts. They stop.

86 CLOSE ON DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

86

Dravot, enraged, unslings his rifle.

Continued

DRAVOT

Bloody heathens! Where's their gratitude?

He raises his rifle but freezes as he hears:

VOICE (O.S.)

(very precise)

I say ... I say there!

They stare at each other.

VOICE (O.S.)

(continuing)

I say ... are you Englishmen, please?

DRAVOT

Stone the bleedin' crows!

(shouts back)

Yes, mate ... and who might you be?

VOICE (O.S.)

You wait just one jiffy, please.

The two men stare at each other again, then their eyes go back to:

87 THE VILLAGE GATE

87

The Gate opens and a figure trots towards them. They start forward, stop to face a sturdy little fellow with a merry face and Mongolian cheekbones. He wears Kafiri clothes but, on his head, is a battered dark green pillbox cap and, at his side hangs a curved Nepalese Kukri.

DRAVOT

Peachy! ... It's a Gurkha!

The GURKHA salutes.

GURKHA

Rifleman Ram Hare Krishna Narayan
Bahadur Chhetri ... Known to my regiment
as Billy Fish.

CARNEHAN

(very military)

That right? Well, report, Rifleman.

(More)

Continued

CARNEHAN (Cont)

What are you doing here ... wherever here is.

BILLY FISH

Oh, I am come with Colonel Robertson.

CARNEHAN

The geographer's party! ...

BILLY FISH

Oh dear me, alas, they did not reach Er-Heb for very misfortunate reason. Large mountain is falling on heads of Colonel Robertson and others. All buried alive, except your servant.

CARNEHAN

(smiling)

Billy Fish!

BILLY FISH

No getting back so am descending to this city.

CARNEHAN

What about them up there ... beating drums and blowing horns and then shooting arrows at us?

BILLY FISH

Big noise intended scare devils away. Many devils around here these days.

DRAVOT

They thought we were devils?

BILLY FISH

Kafiristan peoples ignorant. I say to Headman Ootah, 'Oh, no, by Jove, not devils at all ... British soldiers.'

DRAVOT

Good man, Billy Fish.

CARNEHAN

And now - if you'll take us to this Ootah bloke, we'll begin his education.

Billy salutes, about-faces, heads towards Gate, others following.

88 EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE BEFORE HEADMAN'S HOUSE

88

Headman OOTAH, is backed up by his Elders. Ootah is a wily-looking bird, long of fang and nail. His eyes glitter alternately with cruelty and avarice.

The Square is filled with tribesmen. As Dravot, Carnehan, Billy, and the Prisoner advance upon them, Ootah moves back apprehensively.

DRAVOT

(to Billy Fish)

Tell him to come forward. There's nothing to be afraid of.

(repeats, reassuringly)

Nothing to be afraid of.

Now Ootah puts a question.

BILLY FISH

Him asking where you from?

DRAVOT

Tell him we tumbled from the skies.

Billy Fish translates; Ootah responds.

BILLY FISH

Him want to know - are you gods?

CARNEHAN

Not gods - Englishmen, which is the next best thing.

Billy Fish flings out the translation, then:

BILLY FISH

I oftentimes tell Ootah about Englishmans ...
How they shave chins each morning ... and
give names to dogs. And take off hat to
womans ... and how they march, left right,
left right into battle with firesticks on
shoulders ...

DRAVOT

... Bringing enlightenment to the darker
regions of the earth - like Kafiristan.

BILLY FISH

How does firestick work him want to know?

Continued

88 Continued

88

DRAVOT

Show him, Peachy.

He points upward.

89 A KITE

89

circling overhead.

90 CLOSE SHOT - CARNEHAN

90

Carnehan raises his rifle.

91 KITE

91

O.S. SOUND of shot. The Kite plummets down, strikes the ground almost at Ootah's feet.

92 BACK TO SCENE

92

A cry of shock and fear from the onlookers. Ootah's eyes widen. He picks up the bird, stares from it to the rifle.

CARNEHAN

(as though there'd been
no interruption)

No, we aren't gods, exactly, but we are
Heaven-sent ... to deliver you from your
enemies.

Ootah, holding the bird, responds.

BILLY FISH

Enemies all around. The Bashkai are
worst. All town come out and pisses
downstream when we go bathing.

CARNEHAN

Shocking!

Ootah continues to air his woes.

Continued

BILLY FISH

And them always stealing our womans -
putting on masks - so Er-Heb chappies
thinking them devils and running like bloody
hell away.

CARNEHAN

(simulating outrage)

War - red war we'll give 'em!

Ootah seems to have an inspiration.

BILLY FISH

Ootah say he pay two goats for each Bashkai
mans you killing, one goat for womans and
childs.

CARNEHAN

A handsome offer - but rather than knocking
them over one at a time, we'd prefer to do
the job in one fell swoop - serve him up a
proper victory - storm Bashkai - take the
city!

Ootah frowns, murmurs suspiciously.

BILLY FISH

How much for that?

CARNEHAN

Only the joyful prospect of leading the brave
men of Er-Heb into battle -- plus whatever
we may fancy in the way of souvenirs ...

DRAVOT

A bauble here -- a bangle there.

CARNEHAN

Bashkai is only a beginning. We hopes to
go on from victory to victory until you run
out of enemies ...

DRAVOT

... and are monarch of all you survey.

Continued

92 Continued (2)

92

Ootah's mouth parts, his eyes stare fixedly into space as a dream is born. Saliva fills his mouth; he articulates through the spittle.

BILLY FISH

All he surveys?

CARNEHAN

From the highest place in this valley.

DRAVOT

The mountains will echo his name.

CARNEHAN

Ootah, the Great.

Ootah, listening avidly, makes a comment to Billy Fish.

BILLY FISH

Him preferring Ootah, the Terrible.

CARNEHAN

Ootah, the Terrible, it shall be.

He pushes the Prisoner forward.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Take him as a token of our earnest.

Ootah, all grins, hands the bird to the man next to him, grabs the Prisoner, hurls him to the bystanders, shouting imprecations.

DISSOLVE TO

93 EXT. GROMMA (DANCING HOUSE) IN ER-HEB -

93

ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

In the upper part of the village, overlooking the valley, is an open flat space, formed in part by the interconnecting roofs of the taller houses. CAMERA MOVES IN to:

94 FULL SHOT - THE GROMMA

94

A large, open building with wooden columns, outside which spectators are gathered. From the interior comes the urgent clamor of barbaric music. CAMERA DOLLIES FORWARD towards the elaborately carved open portico.

95 INT. GROMMA - THE ORCHESTRA

95

Drums, stringed instruments resembling lyres, and reed-toned pipes. All the musicians are girls - long blonde hair streaming down their backs. They posture as they play, each pose formal and graceful as that of a Tang figurine. CAMERA PANS OVER TO:

96 GROUP SHOT - CARNEHAN, DRAVOT, BILLY FISH,
CHIEF OOTAH, ELDERS.

96

reclining on benches and stools. Before them, low tripod tables, Greek in character.

Carnehan and Dravot appear a little self conscious -- an effect intensified by the wreaths of bay leaves draped over their shoulders.

At the moment, TWO LOVELIES stand before them. One holds a brass basin; the other, an ewer and a towel. Hot scented water is poured over Dravot's hands. When they have been ritually dried, the Lovelies move on to Carnehan.

A feast is in progress. Empty bowls are placed before them to be filled by a MAIDEN with an amphora. They raise the bowls to their lips, but, instead of drinking, sniff. They exchange glances.

DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN
(together)

Contrack!

Ootah, himself, drinks deeply, then queries Billy Fish.

BILLY FISH
Ootah says - no like?

DRAVOT
Tell his Highness we have given up strong
drink - till we've - er - conquered all his
enemies.

FOUR DANCERS appear. Gaudy dresses fall to their knees over soft, red leather shoes. In addition, they wear a silver headdress with four silver horns, two curving upward and two down; silver earrings, and silver blinkers which frame their faces.

They begin to whirl and stamp their booted feet. The musicians begin an atonal Chant.

Continued

DRAVOT

Blonde - blue eyes ... Boil 'em once or twice in hot water and they'll come out chicken and ham ... You wouldn't know 'em from the Gaiety chorus.

Ootah whispers in Billy Fish's ear.

BILLY FISH

Ootah says take your pick.

DRAVOT

He does ... ?

He looks sideways at Carnehan, sighs audibly.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

Tell His Highness one's prettier than another. I couldn't choose.

Billy conveys this to Ootah and Ootah responds.

BILLY FISH

If can't decide on one, take two - take three - take many as you like. Are more where they came from. He has twenty-seven daughters.

CARNEHAN

They're his daughters? His own daughters? Why, the dirty old brute !

DRAVOT

Different countries, different customs. Mustn't be prejudiced, Peachy.

(to Billy)

Thank His Highness but tell him we've also took a vow not to dally with females till all his foes are vanquished.

A murmur beside them.

BILLY FISH

He has thirty-two sons if you prefer boys.

Continued

96 Continued (2)

96

CARNEHAN

(outraged)

Tell him he makes my gorge to rise ...

Tell him ...

DRAVOT

Hold on, Peachy. He's only being hospitable,
according to his lights.

Carnehan's retort is lost in a shrill whistle O.S., which brings Ootah and the Elders to their feet. Carnehan and Dravot follow their host out onto:

97 THE PORTICO - THEIR VIEWPOINT - POLO GROUND

97

An open flat space between the village walls and the river. Two teams, of FOUR MEN each side, are lined up ready to start, mallets in hand. One team has white sheepskin saddle blankets; the other, brown.

DRAVOT (O.S.)

Polo! Fancy! In this heathen place!

An UMPIRE runs onto the field carrying a skin-covered ball, roughly the size and shape of a rugby football. He sets the ball midway on the ground between goal posts. The Two Captains cross mallets, heads up.

98 QUICK CUT - CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

98

DRAVOT

Starts the same.

CARNEHAN

Lineups the same - Lor' - 'look at 'em go!

99 GAME

99

The Whites' back and halfback are tearing down the field. Just as they are within reach of the ball, the Browns' Captain leans forward with a loose rein and cuts it off to the left almost under a pony's foot. The ball hops and skips towards the boundaries as horses and riders collide.

100 CARNEHAN, DRAVOT, BILLY FISH

100

DRAVOT

Good hit!

CARNEHAN

Damn good ponies. Know the game.

DRAVOT

Everything's the same except the ball -
it's bigger than ours.

CARNEHAN

(to Billy)

Do they always use that big a ball?

BILLY FISH

Depending on size of man's head.

(explaining)

Big man -- big head.

(pointing)

This -- your Bashkai man. Big damn
head.

They stare from him down onto the field, in time to see:

101 FULL SHOT - THE GAME

101

As play recommences, Whites' Captain takes a thudding swing at the
"ball", which bounces obscenely down the field.

102 CLOSE SHOT - DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

102

Both look rather sick.

DRAVOT

(groaning under his
breath)

Oh, the bloody heathens!

CARNEHAN

(sardonically)

Different countries, different customs.
Mustn't be prejudiced, Danny.

He winces at the O. S. THUD of a mallet.

103 POLO FIELD (CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT FOREGROUND) 103

A sudden YELL goes up from the onlookers. People and ponies begin to run pell-mell for the Gates.

Carnehan and Dravot look off:

104 LARGE BAND OF WARRIORS 104

rushing towards Er-Heb. 10 horses and riders and about 150 men, armed with spears, bows and arrows.

105 BACK TO SCENE 105

BILLY FISH

Bashkais. Not all. Just some.
Punitive expedition. Revenge men you
killed.

Carnehan and Dravot waste no breath. They run for the stairs.

106 GATES OF ER-HEB 106

Townspeople rushing through the wide-open gates. Screaming women and children hurry for cover. Men run to find their weapons.

The Polc Players add to the confusion as the terrified mass pours into the shelter of the town walls.

107 CARNEHAN, DRAVOT AND BILLY FISH 107

Carnehan and Dravot, rifles over their shoulders, break open the ammunition boxes, Billy Fish has his kukri at the ready.

CARNEHAN

(unslinging rifle, shouts)

CLOSE THE GATES!

The three run towards the Gates, as Billy echoes the orders.

108 ER-HEB GATES 108

Men of Er-Heb, behind the Gates, shoving against the weight of the enemy.

109 OUTSIDE ER-HEB GATES - BASHKAIS

109

A solid mass against the still partially open gates.

110 ER-HEB GATES - CARNEHAN, DRAVOT, BILLY FISH

110

Carnehan and Dravot wade into the wedge of attackers. They hold their fire till one bullet can drive through five or six men. The front of the Bashkai force gives as they fire.

So tightly packed together are the enemy, being forced forward in a howling mob, they are virtually helpless.

Billy Fish wields the terrible half-moon blade.

The rifles fire - Men fall. Billy is at his butcher's work. The Gates are slowly closing - some of the dead and wounded inside and others being shoved, rolling over one another into a fearful heap outside.

The Gates are closed and barred.

111 EXT. WALLS OF ER-HEB

111

The flat roofs of the village with a scattering of Er-Heb men loosing arrows at the enemy.

Bashkai horsemen ride straight at the walls, fire their arrows, wheel as they fit new ones to their bows. The assailants on foot have scurried from before the gates to resume fighting dispiritedly.

Dravot and Carnehan appear on the roof. Two shots and two horses are riderless. Two more and the lesson is learned. The remaining riders kick their mounts and race away from Er-Heb up the valley. The rest of the Bashkais waver and run after them in full rout.

DISSOLVE TO

112 EXT. THE SQUARE - MORNING

112

CAMERA is SHOOTING UP towards the flat roof on which Ootah and the Elders stand staring down PAST CAMERA.

DRAVOT (O.S.)
SILENCE IN THE RANKS!

where Dravot is addressing all the male population of Er-Heb fit for duty after yesterday's skirmish. As he talks, Carnehan and Billy Fish push the recruits into columns of five, Billy shouting his translation of Dravot's speech.

DRAVOT

Now listen to me, you benighted muckers!
We're going to teach you soldiering, the
world's noblest profession. When we've
done with you, you'll be able to stand up
and slaughter your enemies like civilised
men. But first, you'll have to learn to
march ... in step and do the manual of arms
without having to think! Good soldiers don't
ever think - they just obey! ... Do you
suppose if a man thought twice he'd give
his life for King and Country? Not bloody
likely. He wouldn't go near a battlefield! ...

(pauses)

One look at your foolish faces tells me
you're going to be crack troops. Him, there -
(pointing)

-- with the five and a half hat size has the
makings of a bloody hero!

Faces stare at him, grinning and uncomprehending.

DRAVOT

(surveying the line)

So, let's move out. Companee ...
Quick ... MARCH! Heip ... hipe ...
haip ...

He and Carnehan and Billy quick-march down the field, the recruits doing their awkward best to imitate them. The three turn, mark time; the recruits go towards them, a few beginning to catch the rhythm of the steady cadence of Dravot's ... "Haip ... hipe... Pick ... 'em... up..."

114 A SERIES OF SHOTS OF THE NEW ARMY IN TRAINING

114

115

115

116 It consists of Two Infantry Companies (spears and bows and arrows); 116
a Troop of Cavalry; and an elite corps of 20 Riflemen.

117 INT. DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN'S QUARTERS - LATE
AFTERNOON

117

ANGLE is CLOSE on Carnehan sitting relaxed in a chair, a cloth round his neck. A woman's hands are busy combing his hair, fluffing it. PULL BACK to show that the girl is one of the Four Dancers. She is evidently enjoying the task.

O.S. Dravot's voice shouting commands: "Column right - wheel ... In cadence ... March ... Company ... Halt ... Order Arms ..."

The Girl Barber steps back to pick up a pair of shears from the table.

ANGLE WIDENS to show Two other Dancers. One crouches before Carnehan, bathing his feet in a basin; the second, on a low stool, is giving him a manicure - or its Kafari equivalent.

The Girl Barber begins to trim his hair, caressing his head tenderly after each minute snip. The two others suspend operations to watch. They grin at their sister who motions them to leave. They are reluctant. She menaces them with the shears. They look at one another, rise, shrug and depart with sly backward glances.

The Girl approaches Carnehan who is still leaning back with his eyes closed. She raises her shift to her navel, waves it, blowing her scent at him.

118 CLOSE-UP - CARNEHAN

118

His nostrils quiver. He opens his eyes.

119 CLOSE-UP GIRL

119

The shift goes over her head, falls to the floor.

120 CLOSE-UP - CARNEHAN

120

CARNEHAN

Now wait a minute, ducks ... You're a fine,
handsome piece, I don't deny ...

121 CLOSE-UP - GIRL

121

She stands nude before him gazing with apparent rapture at her own right breast. CAMERA MOVES IN to:

122 INSERT

122

The aureole slowly unfolds and the nipple reveals itself, hard and rosy-hued.

CARNEHAN (V.O.)

... but the contract says that the party of
the first part - that's Danny ... and the
party of the second part - that's me ...

123 CLOSE-UP - GIRL

123

She glances at Carnehan for approval.

124 CLOSE-UP - CARNEHAN

124

CARNEHAN

(protests getting weaker
and weaker)

... shall nowise compromise ourselves
with parties of the third part -- that's you...

125 CLOSE-UP - GIRL

125

She gives her attention to the other breast. The phenomenon is repeated.

126 CLOSE-UP - CARNEHAN

126

CARNEHAN

All binding and properly witnessed ...
sworn to ... attested ...

His voice trails off.

Dravot enters, stops, looks from Girl to Carnehan.

DRAVOT

So!

CARNEHAN

(weakly)

Danny, let's go seek safety in battle!

DRAVOT

Right, we'll take Bashkai!

DISSOLVE TO

127 THE GATE OF ER-HEB

127

The Army marches out, banners flying, a drum and pipe band playing a passable version of "The British Grenadier". Ootah and Dravot, both mounted, are in the lead. Carnehan and Billy, also on horseback, bring up the rear. Behind it a band of women, wives, and sweethearts. The walls are lined with old men and children - all cheering.

128 THE CITY OF BASHKAI

128

Twice the size of Er-Heb. Through its Gates stream a horde of WARRIORS. Out they come - roaring - trumpeting - squealing. Clamor, it seems is a weapon in itself.

The Bashkais are a motley and bizarre assortment. Horses, Archers, Spearmen, and Swordsmen mix indiscriminately. The latter are naked but for loin cloths and they do not wear turbans but let their long hennaed hair go streaming. They carry long knives in either hand and, sometimes, a dagger between their teeth. A number of Warriors have chosen to paint their faces blue. Evidently there are no designated leaders. It's every hero for himself.

129 CARNEHAN, DRAVOT, BILLY FISH

129

observe the enemy form a battle line. They outnumber the Er-Heb forces by at least six to one. But if there is reason for apprehension on this score, neither Englishman betrays any sign. They have assumed the customary air of weary indolence reserved for such occasions.

Carnehan has one leg crossed over the withers of his pony, his knee supporting an elbow, chin cupped in hand. Dravot has chosen this moment to comb out his beard. Billy Fish, on the other hand, is quivering with anticipation - waiting like a terrier for a ball to be thrown. Fighting is the Gurkha's raison d'etre. Siva so bred him. His breath quickens at the imminence of combat as other men's do when womankind opens its rosy flesh.

BILLY FISH

Ulu - lu - lu - lu!

130 THE ER-HEB FORCES

130

stand as posted, according to the plan of battle. Dravot's Cavalry and, behind them, Riflemen in the center equal numbers of Bowmen and Spear-men to their right and left.

131 BASHKAIS

131

begin their advance. Single warriors dash out, shout awful curses -- leap, gyrate, slap their bellies, turn and spread their backsides. Each fierce performance is received according to its merits from the ranks of their comrades. The advance begins to roll.

132 CARNEHAN, DRAVOT, BILLY FISH

132

CARNEHAN

All right, Billy. Tell your men once again they ain't to throw a spear or let fly an arrow till after the Cavalry has charged right through the enemy and come back. Tell 'em that - and keep telling 'em!

BILLY FISH

(riding off)

Ulu - lu - lu - lu!

133 DRAVOT

133

in turn, wheels his horse and rides to where his Cavalry is waiting.

134 CARNEHAN

134

CARNEHAN

(to his Riflemen)

Get ready ... aim ...

But, suddenly, the racket of the attack ceases. For a long moment, there is an unaccountable stillness - then comes the silver tinkling of a little bell.

135 FULL SHOT

135

The front ranks of the opposing forces prostrate themselves.

136 CARNEHAN

136

CARNEHAN

Here -- what's going on?

Carnehan's eyes widen as he sees:

137 A STRANGE PROCESSION

137

It is led by a SMALL BOY, wearing a helmet of Grecian design and carrying a wooden rod in one hand and a bell in the other.

He is followed by SIX MEN in long Grecian robes and sandals. They walk with their eyes firmly closed, right hands resting on the shoulders of the man in front of them, following only the SOUND of the bell.

138 THE ER-HEB LINES

138

All the Warriors bow as the Boy with his melodious bell leads the Priests towards them.

139 CARNEHAN, BILLY FISH, RIFLEMEN

139

The Riflemen shift positions in order to bow properly. Billy Fish rides up.

CARNEHAN

Who are they? What's happening?

BILLY FISH

Very holy men. They make walk through all Kafiristan, collecting offerings for Holy City. Battle is postponed until Priests have passed.

CARNEHAN

What they got their eyes closed for?

BILLY FISH

They do not wish to see any badness so keep eyes closed until they return to beauties of Sikandergul.

140 FULL SHOT

140

The Holy Men pass along the entire length of the corridor between the rival armies.

And the engagement resumes where it left off.

141 BASHKAIS 141
 come on again.

142 CARNEHAN 142

CARNEHAN
 (to Riflemen)
 Ready - Aim - Fire!

143 BASHKAIS 143

The Bashkai vanguard falters, only a few of their number have heard this sound before - like the cracking of whips, only much louder. Some of their comrades suddenly sit down and others fall on their faces. The demonstrations of ferocity cease - feet lag and the attack slows to a halt.

Then comes a SECOND VOLLEY.

More Bashkais are down - some are looking at small red holes in their arms or legs or bellies. Bewilderment takes over.

144 DRAVOT AND CAVALRY 144

DRAVOT
 Charge!

The Cavalry sweeps toward the ranks of Bashkais.

145 BASHKAIS 145

stunned by the effects of the volleys - ears deafened - dead and wounded sprawled on the ground, they have momentarily lost the power to either run or fight. They only stand - weapons lowered -- easy prey.

146 DRAVOT AND CAVALRY 146

Dravot, his horse in full gallop, at the head of his Troop. For a hundred yards they ride close behind him but, presently, they are yanking at their reins. Riding a dozen horses into an enemy of hundreds is not perhaps the greater part of wisdom. They prefer to live forever.

147 DRAVOT

147

seeing he is alone in the charge, circles his mount, roaring obscenities at his reluctant Troop. Rage overcomes him.

He hardly knows whether to go for his own horsemen or the Bashkai. Unreason prevails. Beard flaming in the sunlight, he turns his horse towards the enemy, unlimbers his sword and digs in with his heels.

CAMERA FOLLOWS him doing figure-eights through the enemy ranks, sword flashing.

148 CARNEHAN

148

CARNEHAN

Oh, the bloody fool! -- The great wonderful
bloody show-off!

149 BILLY FISH

149

already in a gallop to join Dravot.

BILLY FISH

(kukri in hand)

Ulu - lu - lu - lu!

150 DRAVOT

150

having put on his one man show, returns, sword dripping, to confront his Troop.

DRAVOT

Cowards ... Sons of bastards. Sons
of cowards ...

Billy Fish gallops into scene, starts applying the flat of his kukri to man and beast alike.

Suddenly a rain of arrows. The Bashkai have had time to get over the initial impact of the rifles, regain their wits, and fire up their spirits.

An arrow hits Dravot solidly in the chest - imbeds itself over his heart. He falls backwards in the saddle then, grabbing a handful of mane, slowly straightens himself.

Continued

DRAVOT

After me you sons of cowardly bastards!

He jerks the arrow free - holds it aloft. It might be Ahab's harpoon, or Excaliber, or a splinter from the True Cross. His Troop follows him. He leads them where the enemy stands thickest, cuts through them back and fourth - crisscrossing - dividing them into fleeing segments.

At which point the Er-Heb Spearmen and Bowmen move in.

DISSOLVE TO

151 THE GATES OF BASHKAI - DAY

151

Groups of cowed Bashkai prisoners. Wounded are being carried in on litters. Dravot and Carnehan strut towards CAMERA, well pleased at the adulation of their soldiers. An occasional shouted "Sikander" means nothing to them. Dravot acknowledges the plaudits with his arrow.

CARNEHAN

And what, may I ask, did you think you were doing - charging the enemy single-handed!

DRAVOT

(sheepishly)

Got carried away ... blood was up ...
Heat of the moment.

CARNEHAN

Acting like some green lieutenant who hopes to be mentioned in dispatches. A man of your age. You ought to be ashamed!

DRAVOT

Sorry, Peachy.

CARNEHAN

Supposing you'd got killed - supposing that?
Where would I be at?

DRAVOT

It won't happen again.

Continued

CARNEHAN

Well - see it don't!

(points to arrow)

What're you carrying that around for?

DRAVOT

(hiding it under his arm)

No particular reason.

They have arrived at:

152 THE SQUARE

152

It is similar to, but larger than the one at Er-Heb. The Bashkai Chiefs have been gathered into a group. Ootah is in front of them, shouting wildly, his sword drawn. In response to his commands, the Bashkai go down on their knees, heads bowed for the stroke of his sword.

Dravot and Carnehan stride past CAMERA and enter scene. Billy Fish is with them.

DRAVOT

Hold on, laddy buck!

(to Billy)

What's he up to?

Ootah brandishes his sword. Billy Fish translates.

BILLY FISH

Him say him great warrior - win this big battle - according to custom, him now lop off heads.

CARNEHAN

Great warrior, eh? Well, I didn't see him in the thick of the fray.

DRAVOT

There'll be no execution of prisoners in this Army - tell him to put that sword away!

BILLY FISH

Ootah say once sword unsheathed must taste blood.

Continued

CARNEHAN

Just as I thought! He hasn't had it out
till now!

BILLY FISH

Him say watch out or him get angry and
lop your heads off.

Dravot raps Ootah sharply over the knuckles with his arrow; the sword drops. He grabs Ootah, shakes him till his teeth rattle, cuffs him once or twice, sends him sprawling.

DRAVOT

(to Bashkai Chiefs)

Up with you - off your hunkers - no
grovelling allowed! We ain't goin' to
put your city to the torch or rape your
daughters or hang chains on you ...!

CARNEHAN

You fought good and we doffs our hats to
you - So we'll go easy on you and only
take half your worldly goods in the way
of spoils. You divide 'em up, we'll decide
which half ...

DRAVOT

Henceforth let the men of Er-Heb and the
men of Bashkai be as brothers ... brothers
in arms. Let 'em march together under
one banner and share and share alike in
the spoils of the victories to come!

CARNEHAN

Have the Bashkais any enemies to speak
of?

One of their Chiefs answers.

BILLY FISH

Oh, yes, enemies all around. The Bhar-
doks, the Shus, the Ghandaras, the Khawaks ...

He points to some fortress-like walls in the distance.

Continued

BILLY FISH

Bhar-doks people all coming out and
pissing downstream on Bashkai people
when go to bathe ...

DRAVOT

Shocking!

CARNEHAN

We'll smite 'em down and grind 'em
into the earth!

153 INT. ROOM - BASHKAI

153

Tables, chairs, and low Grecian-like stools.

Dravot eating, ravenous and silent. Carnehan investigating the contents
of a large basket of primitive objects. Billy Fish looks on.

Carnehan lifts out a bracelet, hefts it.

CARNEHAN

A siller bracelet ... ten shillings ...

He lifts another article out.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Good heavy necklace of the same with
turquises -- fiver, at least ... uh-huh...
Earrings with bangles ...

(another)

Pig sticker with fancy handle ...

(stirs and pokes
into interior of basket)

One gold coin worn pretty thin ... a opal
ring and some other ones plain ...

(looks up)

The whole lot would bring us Ten or Fifteen
Quid in an Uncle's shop in Nottinghill Road ...
Not too bad for a one-horse town.

O.S. shouts: "Sik-ander...Sik-ander..."

Billy is looking at Dravot with some awe.

BILLY FISH

Calling for you.

Dravot goes out onto the balcony.

154 BELOW HIM - CROWD OF SOLDIERS AND TOWNSPEOPLE

154

Tumultuous shouts of joy and wild plaudits when Dravot appears. Some continue to chant: "Sik-ander... Sik-ander..." Dravot waves the arrow, smiles, withdraws.

155 INT. ROOM

155

as Dravot walks back to Billy Fish and Carnehan.

CARNEHAN

Sik-ander. Sik-ander. What does
Sik-ander mean, Billy?

BILLY FISH

Sikander a god. Come here long ago
from the West.

DRAVOT

The Greek bloke Brother Kipling told us
about! ... Alexander!

BILLY FISH

Him builded great city - Sikandergul -
high in mountains and sit on throne.
All peoples worship him. But time come
he say he must go to East. People pull
their hairs out, tear clothes. Sikander
promise to send back son.

DRAVOT

Blimey! That was before the year One!

CARNEHAN

Three hundred twenty-eight B.C., the
'cyclopedia said.

BILLY FISH

(to Dravot)

But why I telling you who knowing all this?

Dravot and Carnehan exchange a puzzled look.

BILLY FISH

(continuing, to Carnehan)

Soldiers saw arrow go into his chest and
him pluck it out and not bleeding.

Continued

CARNEHAN

So?

BILLY FISH

Son of Sikander.

DRAVOT

They think I'm a god?

He pokes himself with his thumb, begins to laugh. Carnehan joins in.

CARNEHAN

A god!

He capers up to Dravot.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Put your foot out that I may kiss your
big toe ...

DRAVOT

You can kiss my royal ass!

CARNEHAN

Not royal - holy - you're a deity,
remember.

Billy Fish was first puzzled, then dismayed, now forlorn.

BILLY FISH

Him not Son of Sikander?

CARNEHAN

No, Billy. He's a man like you and me.
He can break wind at both ends simultaneous
which I'm willing to bet is more than any
god can do.

BILLY FISH

But the arrow --?

DRAVOT

We wears bandoliers under our tunics -
see, Billy ...?

(opens tunic)

It wasn't a miracle ... So you better break
(More)

Continued

DRAVOT (Cont)

the news to them there that my Da's name
was Herbert Dravot, Esquire, and he
kept a pub in Pimlico.

CARNEHAN

Hold on, Danny! Maybe we're missing
a bet ...

DRAVOT

What do you mean?

CARNEHAN

If you was an ignorant Kafiri, who'd you
rather follow - a god or a man?

DRAVOT

I see your point but --

CARNEHAN

But what?

DRAVOT

Who wants to be a god?

CARNEHAN

We're out to conquer this country, ain't
we? With you as a god it'll take half
the time and trouble.

DRAVOT

The idea needs some getting used to.

(uncomfortably)

It's blasphemous-like ...

CARNEHAN

No, Danny -- blaspheming's when some-
body takes His name in vain - God Almighty's.

DRAVOT

And what if they found out we was having
'em on?

CARNEHAN

Why should they? We won't tell 'em.

(to Billy)

And you won't, will you, Billy?

Continued

155 Continued (3)

155

BILLY FISH

Oh indeed no!

More shouts: this time of a different quality and completely unintelligible.

Dravot and Carnehan go to see what's happening.

156 THE SQUARE BELOW

156

A Polo game is in progress between Bashkai and Er-Hebs. The field is surrounded by tribesmen, shouting and yelling at the players.

157 THE BALCONY

157

BILLY FISH

Er-Heb and Bashkai celebrate new brotherhood.

CARNEHAN

With whose head?

BILLY FISH

Ootah's.

158 SHOT OF THE BALL

158

as polo ponies mill round it and a mallet sends it careening down the field.

MONTAGE OF BATTLES

159 DRAVOT'S ARMY - DAY

159

Dravot's men scaling the walls of a City. They are using wooden pegs which they tamp into crevices in the baked earth sides and, quivers on their backs, bows slung over their shoulders, clamber up like monkeys. PULL BACK to show the rest of the troops attacking, fighting as though inspired, yelling "Sik-ander".

160 EXT. LOOKING DOWN INTO STREETS OF CITY - DAY 160

Flat rooftops, rooms, narrow alleys. Men swarm over the flat roofs, drop into narrow streets, leap through doorways. Fierce hand to hand fighting. And always the battle cry: "Sik-ander".

161 EXT. - DRAVOT'S ARMY ON THE MARCH - DAY 161

A river valley with four or five villages in the near distance.

We see Dravot's whole Army, now of truly impressive size, on the march with all its panoply: banners, drums, women camp followers, herds of goats, a supply train of donkeys. The sound of laughter.

Men and women from the nearby villages stream out towards the Army, bearing gifts, carrying wreaths of flowers -- all chanting: "Sik-ander-- Sik-ander".

CARNEHAN (V.O.)

We marched and fought and took more villages. Our ranks swelled. They were troops to be proud of - well trained and disciplined. But with Danny at their head - Sikander the Second - they were also inspired. After half a dozen victories his fame was such there was no more fighting. We was being met with gifts and bebies of maidens who danced and threw flowers ...

162 EXT. FIELD AT RIVER'S EDGE WITH WALLS AND GATES OF KHAWAK OPPOSITE ACROSS THE SHALLOW STREAM - DAY 162

The Army in bivouac. Clusters of goatskin tents, stacked lances, banners. A large semi-circle of women, dressed in barbaric splendor, chants, clapping their hands, to the sound of drums played by white-robed men.

Wading across the river are the people of Khawak, carrying their offerings.

163 CLOSER SHOT - DRAVOT, CARNEHAN, BILLY FISH, TOWNSPEOPLE, SOLDIERS, ROXANNE. 163

A small wooden stage has been set up; four poles support a canopy overhead decorated with bay leaves and flowers. Sheepskins are piled on the floor. Dravot is seated in a chair on the platform. Thus elevated, he may be seen by all.

Continued

A procession of worshippers files past. Each bears a gift. Carnehan is directing traffic: A MAN with a cow is told to take her to a herdsman; he indicates that small gifts of chickens, eggs, a baby kid, may be placed before the platform. Nods towards the basket into which are tossed baubles and an occasional coin.

As each worshipper kneels before him, Dravot waves his arrow with benign condescension.

A GIRL, holding a single flower, genuflects before him, lays the flower at his feet. She looks like a figure from an Attic vase. Forehead and nose are a straight line; arched brows over lapis blue eyes; full small mouth, parabolic cheeks, a deep full throat. Her auburn hair is in ringlets, with a chignon at the back.

Dravot stares at her, stunned by her beauty, his arrow arrested in mid-gesture. Carnehan senses the break in rhythm, glances at Dravot who is sitting with his mouth open, as the Girl now kneels before him.

CARNEHAN

What's the matter, Danny?

DRAVOT

Venus de Milo, in the flesh - if flesh
it is - and not cream and honey and pink
champagne.

CARNEHAN

Contrack!

DRAVOT

Billy, tell her to stand up and turn around.

Billy Fish speaks to the Girl. She rises. Her long flowing chiton with crisscrossed bands from shoulder to waist reveals full resilient breasts, and a little platter of a belly.

Her proportions, curves and features are in the noblest Classic tradition: the high arched foot with its long second toe; the sweep from knee to hipbone; the exquisite modeling of her abundant buttocks. Taller by a head than any man present, she is, pound by beautiful pound, an exceeding armful.

DRAVOT

(to Carnehan)

Just gazing, Peachy. Just gazing. There's
such a thing as enjoying beauty for its own
sake.

Continued

CARNEHAN

Only, being human, one thing leads to another.

DRAVOT

Give her a hat with an ostrich feather in it and there'd be no girl in Brighton on Bank Holiday could hold a candle to her.

CARNEHAN

No two girls -- I've got to admit she's an eye-ful. You got to stand back to take her all in.

DRAVOT

Glad you said that, Peachy my lad, or I'd think you had a chicken gizzard for a heart.
(to her)

What's your name?

Billy translates.

ROXANNE

(murmurs)

Roxanne.

DRAVOT

Hold your head up, Girl.

She does so briefly. He holds out his hand to her. She backs a step away.

BILLY FISH

Girl afraid.

DRAVOT

Afraid? What of ...?

BILLY FISH

If god touches girl they catches fire and go up in smoke.

DRAVOT

They do what?

Continued

BILLY FISH

God's heart a burning torch - his veins
run fire, not blood. If he lay hands on
girl she go whoosh in one flash -- not
even any ashes left.

DRAVOT

Now - who thought that one up?

CARNEHAN

Some jealous goddess, I wager.

DRAVOT

Roxanne ... Roxanne ...

CARNEHAN

Wasn't that the name of the princess
Alexander married?

DRAVOT

It was that.

O.S. the SOUND of a tinkling bell, accompanied by a high piping.

Dravot and Carnehan look up to see the crowd bowing and parting to make way for a procession. It is led by TWO BOYS - one with a bell, the other playing pipes. Behind them, in white robes of Grecian design march FIVE HOLY MEN, eyes tight shut, right arms outstretched to touch a guiding shoulder.

The Procession halts before the platform.
Instinctively, Dravot rises. The First Priest lets his right arm fall to his side - the men behind him repeat the action.

The First Priest steps forward, speaks.

BILLY FISH

They come from Holy City of Sikandergul
with message for the one who calls himself
Son of Sikander.

DRAVOT

Tell 'em they're looking at him - or would be,
if they opened their eyes.

Continued

BILLY FISH

The message is from Kafu-Selim.

DRAVOT

Who?

BILLY FISH

High Priest of all Kafiristan. Very old -
eight hundred years, maybe.

DRAVOT

What is the message?

BILLY FISH

Kafu Selim says 'come.'

Carnehan joins Dravot on the platform.

CARNEHAN

'Come' - is that all?

BILLY FISH

That's all - 'come'.

CARNEHAN

Don't waste words, does he? Well, tell
Kafoozalem we appreciate the invitation
and will be happy to avail ourselves of it
one of these days.

BILLY FISH

'Come' means come now - today.

CARNEHAN

What's he want to see us about - or didn't
he say?

BILLY FISH

He only say 'come'.

CARNEHAN

I see. All right. Tell 'im to stand by --
the army'll be ready to move at first light.

BILLY FISH

No. You come alone - him and you -- Army
not invited.

Continued

DRAVOT

No army! Well, they can tell Kafoozalem - or whatever his name is - Peachy and me don't go anywhere without our army goes with us.

CARNEHAN

Shut up, Danny! We got to go!

DRAVOT

Peachy! You gone starky!

CARNEHAN

Keep your voice down, Dan'l, and put a smile on your face -- we got an audience, remember.

He walks Dravot to back of platform.

DRAVOT

We'd be daft, Peachy, to walk into a strange city by our lonesomes.

CARNEHAN

Either we do what they say or we pull stumps and run - make a beeline for the mountains as soon as it's dark and never look back on Kafiristan!

DRAVOT

Run? Not bloody likely!
(points to Priests)
Run from the likes of them?

He grunts with disgust.

CARNEHAN

No. From our own blokes. We're over a barrel, Danny. If we back away from a meeting with old Kafoczalem we'll lose face -- and that's something a god can't afford.

DRAVOT

I say we march the ruddy army up there and storm the ruddy city -- show 'em who's boss - Kafoczalem or us!

Continued

CARNEHAN

It's one place the army won't follow
us -- be like Arabs storming Mecca.

DRAVOT

What to do?

CARNEHAN

Bluff it out! Polish our buttons and our
leather! Put ramrods up our arses and
look bold - like when we was up on
charges, for drunk and resisting the
guard!

DISSOLVE TO

QUICK CUTS:

164 THE PROCESSION

164

climbing a well-worn trail up the side of a mountain through a forest of
Deodars.

The delegation from the Holy City goes first, then Dravot and, behind
him, Carnehan and Billy Fish side by side.

165 PROCESSION

165

curving down through a wide, rocky gap.

166 PROCESSION

166

following a path around a sheer rock face.

167 HIGH PLATEAU

167

Flat, rock-strewn, eroded. As the Procession moves forward into
scene, Dravot and Carnehan exclaim in surprise, look up to:

168 EXT. SIKANDERGUL - VERY LONG SHOT - LATE DAY
(MATTE)

168

The City of Sikandergul is built at the top of a mountain at the confluence

Continued

168 Continued

168

of two deep valleys. Its walls and houses girdle the mountain in a symmetrical curve. At the summit, rising in stacks, is a separate group of temples with open porticos supported by massive columns. Here and there a gilded dome or pinnacle glows in the late sunlight.

169 BACK TO SCENE

169

as they walk.

CARNEHAN

Sikandergul!

Dravot glances ahead, a certain panic in his voice.

DRAVOT

God's holy trousers!

The Priests and Boys have slowed before a:

170 ROPE BRIDGE

170

It stretches across a wide abyss. Far below, a torrent foams over huge boulders.

The bridge sways in the high wind.

The Boys and Priests do not hesitate. They start across, in broken rhythm.

171 DRAVOT, CARNEHAN, BILLY FISH

171

DRAVOT

You next, Peachy. I got to catch my breath.

CARNEHAN

No, Danny. Gods before mortals - always.

DRAVOT

(angrily)

I don't fear man and I don't fear beast but walking over empty air gives me the rigors ...

CARNEHAN

(barking it out)

Forward Maarrrch!

Continued

The others have crossed and are waiting. Tinkling of bell and high piping.

Dravot curses, braces himself, walks out onto the bridge. Carnehan and Billy Fish follow.

172 DRAVOT, CARNEHAN, BILLY FISH

172

Dravot holds onto the ropes, forcing himself to walk forward - - first one leg, then the other, extended stiffly to descend flat-footed, in the slow pace of the Funeral March.

Carnehan marches out of step with him and Billy Fish out of step with them both.

At the middle of the bridge, Dravot looks down, closes his eyes, sways giddily.

CARNEHAN

Keep your eyes on that gilded dome, Danny -
the one straight ahead of you!

Dravot opens his eyes, bares his teeth with the grim determination of a brave man fighting a phobia - and goes forward.

173 BRIDGEHEAD ON SIKANDERGUL SIDE

173

The Three rejoin the Procession. Carnehan slaps Dravot fondly on the back.

The pace quickens at the nearness to the Holy City. They move swiftly across a large, open space, dip down abruptly into:

174 TRAIL

174

A broad track cut through solid rock, zig-zags down into a gentle saddle - beyond which terraced patches of cultivated land, on either side of a broad road, lead up to the Gates of Sikandergul.

As the Procession hurries down the Trail, we:

DISSOLVE TO

175 GATES OF SIKANDERGUL MATTE

175

A bell CLANGS as the Gates of the City swing wide and Priests and Acolytes of all ages come out to meet:

Continued

The Procession as it moves into SHOT.

Priests move forward, stop before Dravot and Carnehan, gesture towards their rifles, speaking softly.

Billy Fish hands his rifle and kukri over.

BILLY FISH

No weapons allowed in Holy City.

Dravot and Carnehan reluctantly let theirs be taken from them.

The Spokesman for Kafu-Selim, eyes open now, gestures for Dravot to follow him. They go through the Gates.

The Main Street is paved with wide, fitted stone blocks, leading sharply upwards. On either side are buildings with one small doorway after another - monks' cells.

Lining the streets of this monastic community are still more PRIESTS, ACOLYTES, LAY BROTHERS, SERVANTS wearing garments of different types and colors to denote their status. Their eyes are fixed on Dravot.

The Spokesman leads. Dravot follows, walking uphill regally alone, gravely acknowledging the people with a nod of his head, his arrow swagger-stick tucked under one arm. Side by side, Carnehan and Billy Fish come next. After them, the delegation.

The steep incline levels off. CAMERA PANS WITH the Procession to show a complex of buildings grouped around three sides of a shallow square, dominated by the Temple itself. An ornate wooden structure, some fifty feet long and twenty high. It has a square portico supported by wooden columns in the Doric style of Archaic Greece. A set of low steps rise to a tessellated black and white floor in the center of which stands a sacrificial altar.

A carved archway marks the entrance to the Temple precincts. On one side is a monumental figure of the great god, IMBRA. His single eye is an enormous fire opal. His hands and feet are of burnished gold. Facing him, on the other side of the archway are grotesque figures of lesser gods and devils.

Dravot and Company pass through the archway, come to a halt before some TWENTY TEMPLE PRIESTS gathered at the base of the portico steps

The Priests stand motionless. Not a move is made, not a word is spoken. Dravot looks at Carnehan over his shoulder, briefly shuts one eye.

Continued

DRAVOT

(voice booming)

All right! You got us here! Now
where's your High Panjandrum?

As if in answer, a HORN blasts out. The Priests part to show, coming from the temple doorway and out onto the portico, an ANCIENT dressed in plain white robes. He is barefoot and leans on a tall staff. The Priests bow low as the Old Man comes down the steps. From the crowd murmurs of "Kafu-Selim".

Dravot is a little embarrassed by the Old Man's acute stare.

DRAVOT

Afternoon, Your Reverence. You said
you wanted to see me.

The High Priest reaches out and very gently takes the arrow from under Dravot's arm, tentatively feels its point.

DRAVOT

(gesturing; to Billy)

Tell him he can keep it, Billy. Tell him
I'm making him a present of it.

Billy Fish and Carnehan step forward and Billy translates. The High Priest nods gravely, hands the arrow to a Priest with a murmured instruction. The Priest hurries out of scene. Then Kafu Selim bows to Dravot and motions to him to accompany him. Dravot follows him towards the steps. Carnehan and Billy Fish are blocked by a wall of Priests.

177 CLOSE ON DRAVOT

177

as he looks back at them.

DRAVOT

You mortals wait down there ...

He starts up the steps after the High Priest.

178 THE TOP OF THE STEPS

178

as Kafu Selim reaches it and Dravot comes to his side. Kafu Selim raises his voice to address the crowd. A ROAR greets his words.

CARNEHAN

Quick, Billy - what did the old goat say?

Continued

BILLY FISH

He say he prove now if Honorable Dravot is Sikander.

CARNEHAN

Prove it, will he? And how's he going to do that?

He sees something that fills him with terror.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Danny -look out!

179 CLOSE ON DRAVOT

179

as he whirls, looks down at:

180 THE SQUARE BELOW - HIS VIEWPOINT

180

At the foot of the steps, one of the Priests stands with drawn bow, Dravot's arrow aimed straight at CAMERA.

181 SECTION OF THE SQUARE

181

Carnehan hurls himself through the Priests to reach the Archer and knock him off balance. The arrow flies from the taut bow to imbed itself in a pillar.

Simultaneously, Dravot, roaring with rage, lunges for the steps. Kafu Selim stands like a graven image as the Priests close in.

182 CLOSE ON DRAVOT

182

struggling like a bull, he is overcome and held prisoner by a score of Priests at the top of the stairs.

183 CARNEHAN AND BILLY FISH

183

They, too, are overwhelmed by the Priests.

In the struggle, Dravot's tunic has been ripped open and it hangs loose from his shoulders. Kafu Selim gives a curt, sharp command. Dravot snarls at him.

DRAVOT

Don't bark at me - you snotty-nosed
old fraud ...

CARNEHAN

Shut up, Danny ... You'll only rile him
more...

BILLY FISH

(fatalistically)

Says now they kill us.

Dravot's reaction to impending death is to lose himself in a towering, superb passion of white-hot rage.

DRAVOT

Kill us? Kill US? Why, you old chancre...
You hairy wart ... you running sore! ...
Tell your filthy sods to take their paws off
me double-quick or by god I'll ...

CAMERA has MOVED in CLOSE on the two men. The giant Dravot, lurching between his captors, towers ferociously over the Old Priest who regards him steadily, gravely - unmoved by the obvious invective.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

... kick them and you into the next valley..!
I'll pluck out your livers and throw 'em to
the kites ...

185 CLOSE SHOT - KAFU SELIM

185

Behind him, a Priest comes forward carrying a long knife. He removes it from its scabbard, hands it to Kafu Selim.

DRAVOT

How DARE you lay hands on ME, DAN-iel
Dravot, ESQUIRE!!...

The weapon is poised ready to strike. Dravot manages to lunge backward; the men holding him drag him forward again, Dravot straining against them. His shirt rips asunder and his chest is bare for the knife. Kafu Selim strikes for the heart, only to arrest his arm in mid-motion.

His eyes are fixed in an incredulous stare on:

CAMERA ZOOMS IN to:

of Kipling's Masonic emblem.

DRAVOT

Full of tricks, ain't you? Think I'll
beg? ... Fall down on my knees before
you? ... Not bloody likely! ... So go on -
get it over with!

Kafu Selim prostrates himself before Dravot.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

Now what the bleedin' hell ... ?

The Old Man slowly raises both arms to Heaven, intoning a chant.

CARNEHAN

(dazed)

What stopped him? What's he saying?

BILLY FISH

(awed)

He says is mark of Sikander.

Suddenly they are free, their erstwhile captors falling to their knees.

The square is full of kneeling Priests. Carnehan races up the steps to
join:

CARNEHAN

You all right, Danny?

DRAVOT

(dazed)

One minute his bleedin' knife's about
to cut my bloody heart out - and the
next he's flat on his bleedin' face! ...
What happened? ... What stopped him?

CARNEHAN

(awed, taps the emblem)

He saw that and dropped like he was
pole-axed.

DRAVOT

(staring at him)

What do you make of it?

But Carnehan's eyes are on something Off Scene.

CARNEHAN

Got me!

Dravot and Billy Fish turn to see what Carnehan is looking at.

192 ALTAR STONE

192

Kafu Selim stands before the altar stone. Under his direction, a group
of Priests is struggling to raise it.

Dravot, Carnehan and Billy Fish cross to stand beside him. The
stone is slowly raised and they see:

193 BASE OF THE ALTAR STONE

193

Carved into it is a Masonic insignia.

194 DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

194

staring at the carving.

CARNEHAN

They're Masons! ... By the Square, by the Level, by the Plumb, by the Compass, by the All-Seeing Eye of God ... The Craft, Danny ... the Craft! That's what saved us.

DRAVOT

Blimey!

Kafu Selim turns to Dravot, speaks humbly, reverently.

BILLY FISH

(translating)

Only Highest High Priest knows about this sign - put in stone here long ago by Sikander. Now Kafu-Selim rejoicing at coming of his son.

QUICK CUTS OF CORONATION OF DRAVOT (without showing Principals)**195 THE ALL-SEEING EYE OF IMBRA**

195

changing colour as wisps of grey smoke spiral upwards across the great opal.

PAN DOWN TO**196 GROUP OF BOYS**

196

in knee-length chitons, swinging censers filled with incense.

197 THE SQUARE

197

before the Temple. Snow-laden trees. The square is filled with Chiefs from all Kafiristan, standing in formal rows.

198 SHOT THROUGH COLUMNS OF PORTICO

198

to show Young Priests in their places, holding rams' horns.

199 ON THE PORTICO - A GROUP OF PRIESTS

199

with shaven heads, following some action taking place o. s.

- 200 A GRAND MASTER'S APRON 200
gold tassels around its fraying edges, emblem in the center, is taken up in bony old hands. As it disappears from SCENE, CAMERA TRUCKS FORWARD at extremely slow pace, to STOP ON:
- 201 A GRAND MASTER'S CHAIN AND INSIGNIA 201
in bronze, green and brittle with age, is passed from one pair of hands to another.
- 202 CUTS OF TWO SIEGES 202
Priests beside them wearing aprons with Insignia of their Stations.
- 203 EMPTY CHAIR 203
by the altar. Carnehan and Billy Fish, in uniform, a little to one side of the Chair.
- 204 HIGH SHOT OF A SIEGE 204
against the black and white floor, another Aproned Priest beside it, bowing as though welcoming someone to his Station.
- 205 A CUSHION 205
held high by an Ancient Monk. Upon it rests a large, heavy gold crown set with chunks of raw turquoises.
- 206 THE CROWN 206
is lifted from the cushion, held high for a moment, then lowered.
- 207 DRAVOT AND KAFU SELIM 207
Dravot kneels before Kafu Selim, who places the crown upon his head. He indicates for Dravot to rise.
As Dravot stands, the rams' horns are SOUNDED, shouts and cheers o.s., which he acknowledges gravely;

Continued

207 Continued

207

He wears sandals and is robed in flowing white. About his waist is the Grand Master's Apron. The Grand Master's Chain and insignia hang from his neck.

With solemn pace he "travels to" those points of the Compass required by Masonic ritual before seating himself in the Siege by the Altar.

The arrow, now gilded, and Kipling's emblem are handed to him by Kafu Selim as though they were orb and sceptre.

As the Chiefs come up the steps, singly, to kneel before him, touch the emblem, and kiss the hem of his garment in pledge of fealty, we:

DISSOLVE TO

208 AN EMPTY CORRIDOR

208

HOLD on an Empty Corridor, lined with massive columns.

Priests, bearing unlighted torches, precede Kafu Selim, Dravot, Carnehan and Billy Fish. Dravot has been divested of his Apron and Chain. His gold crown reflects the pale winter light. All wear cloaks. They walk towards:

209 ELABORATELY CARVED STONE ARCHWAY - A ROOM BEYOND

209

On either side of the Archway are tripod braziers filled with glowing coals.

The Priests light their torches from the coals and walk through the Archway into:

210 INT. TREASURE ROOM

210

Priests take their places, torches held high, as the others enter.

Cuirasses, greaves, helmets in patinaed bronze - daggers and spears and shreds of silken standards piled loosely here and there.

And, on all sides, are the dusty remnants of wooden chests, their contents a random arrangement of gleaming heaps of precious stones; decayed leather bags, one after the other, spill forth gold and silver coins; and, through the split edges of corroded bronze coffers, gold cups and bowls, jewelry, and strings of pearls have slipped and fallen

Continued

to the floor. Only the beautifully painted ceramic Kylexes and other bowls still retain their light loads of surplus objects intact.

What lies before them is Alexander's plunder from Asia Minor, Egypt, Palestine, Persia and way points through the East.

Kafu Selim moves forward to a heap of silver and gold coins, takes one, holds it out to Dravot as though expecting recognition of the profile thereon.

Dravot takes the coin, looks at it.

DRAVOT

Sikander?

Kafu Selim nods, then indicates the contents of the room with a sweeping gesture.

BILLY FISH

Belong to Sikander. Now Son of Sikander's.

Dravot and Carnehan are stunned. ~~Flushed~~ Awed. There is no outward demonstration. They speak quietly in dull monotones.

DRAVOT

(mechanically)

God's holy trousers!

CARNEHAN

These here make the Jewels in the Tower look like cheap family heirlooms.

Dravot holds up an uncut stone large as his fist.

DRAVOT

An emerald! Look at the size of it!

CARNEHAN

(poking around)

Here's a bigger one!

(picks it up)

Why, Danny, we'd only have to fill our pockets and walk out of here to be millionaires ... And all of it - All would make us the two richest men in England ...

Continued

DRAVOT

... The Empire ...

CARNEHAN

... The world.

A silence, then:

CARNEHAN

But will they let us take it? Take it away,
I mean -- Ask him, Billy.

Billy Fish asks; Kafu Selim responds.

BILLY FISH

(pointing to Dravot)

Belong Son of Sikander. Can do with it
what he likes.

Kafu Selim continues.

BILLY FISH

... Keep here, take away -- no matter.
His will be done.

CARNEHAN

We've mules a-plenty, thank god, and
Riflemen to guard 'em -- when the time
comes.

DRAVOT

What month is it, Peachy?

CARNEHAN

January, I make it. February, maybe.

(mouthing silently:

'March', 'April', 'May')

June. Four months of the winter monsoon.

Then ...

DRAVOT

Four long months. What'll we do with 'em?

CARNEHAN

Add up our blessings here ... divide 'em
by two and multiply that by the years we got
left.

Continued

Dravot looks at Kafu Selmin and the Priests.

DRAVOT

Tell his reverence he has my thanks
for discharging his trust so correctly
and delivering to me what is mine --
and tell him I'm also grateful to all them
other Holy Men who waited for me from
one generation to another, down the
centuries to this present day and occasion ...

DISSOLVE TO

211 EXT. THE PORTICO - DAY

211

Dravot sits upon his throne, crown upon his head. He wears a short chiton, sandals, a purple cloak about his shoulders, the arrow in his right hand.

Carnehan stands to his right, a few paces back from the Throne and Billy Fish stands to his left. Priests in background.

A hearing is in session; Dravot presiding.

Facing him is a shifty-eyed NATIVE with a pretty YOUNG WIFE and, on the right, a covey of TWENTY-TWO WOMEN.

Billy Fish gestures to the couple.

BILLY FISH

These are people from village of Kamdesh.
This man owns sixty cows. All the cows in
village!

DRAVOT

Very enterprising of him.

BILLY FISH

Oh, enterprise is not his.
Enterprise is hers. She is his wife, you
see. And every time he catches her with
others mans, other mans pays forfeit of
six cows. Is Kafiri custom. Use other
man's wife, pay him six cows.

(gestures to other women)

These are wives of mens who had to pay forfeit.

Continued

Once this would have provoked a laugh and the exchange of a rude comment with Carnehan. But Dravot's face is grave.

DRAVOT

You mean he's piled up a fortune of sixty cows out of her infidelities?

BILLY FISH

And thirty-two goats and five yaks.

Carnehan leans forward to see Dravot's expression, relaxes, disappointed.

DRAVOT

She ain't a wife. She's a going concern.
(looks at them)

And these are the wives of the unfaithful husbands, you say?

Billy Fish counts them off.

BILLY FISH

These four - wives of one man!
These three, of another; these six ...

Carnehan chuckles.

DRAVOT

This ain't no laughing matter! Without cattle, there ain't no meat, nor hides, nor hoofs nor horns ... Without milk, there ain't no butter nor cheese and the children's bowls goes empty ...

Outrageous, it is!

(decision taken)

For encouragin' his wife to comport herself like Jezebel, one cow shall be paid each of the other wives ... For using a good law to a bad purpose - another ... For causing the young and innocent to go without - a third ... For thinking he can get away with all that - a fourth ... He shall pay twenty-two cases of compensation or four cows to each wife.

Continued

Carnehan would speak; a gesture from Dravot stops him.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

... Which means she's got four and two thirds more infidelities to commit to come out even ... Let her husband see how he likes it when she's earning cows for somebody else!

An imperious wave of the arrow is dismissal. The dismayed husband and his saucy wife are towed away by the covey of females.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

Next case!

Carnehan walks across in front of Dravot to whisper to Billy. Dravot looks at him, frowns deeply. As Carnehan returns to his place, again passing before the Throne, Dravot's eyes follow him, an expression of irritation on his face. CAMERA PULLS BACK.

TWO CHIEFTAINS, spitting and gesticulating, are brought forward.

DRAVOT

What's the charge?

BILLY FISH

Chief Nyah of Antol and Chief Villia of Khamsol. Bloody goddam nuisances!

DRAVOT

What's the charge?

BILLY FISH

Violation of Public Law Three which prohibits private wars between villages.

DRAVOT

They know the law, don't they?

Billy Fish puts the question; they answer.

BILLY FISH

They say when the moon is full they forget the law and start fighting.

Continued

DRAVOT

Well, just to help them remember the laws of this land. He --

(points to 1st Chief)

... shall become a slave in the service of ...

(points to 2nd Chief)

... his family --

The Second Chief grins broadly. Dravot points to him and his grin fades as:

DRAVOT

... And he shall likewise become a slave ...

(points to 1st Chief)

... in his family -- And that will keep 'em both out of mischief when the moon is full.

The Second Chieftain begins an oration:

DRAVOT

What's he sayin'?

BILLY FISH

He says instead he chooses death.

DRAVOT

I didn't give him a choice. I passed judgement. Take 'em away.

They are led away and another CHIEFTAIN stands before him.

DRAVOT

What's the charge?

BILLY FISH

No charge. This is Chief from Agatsi. Which village have big fire and winter supply of grains go up in smoke. Now Chief want permission to raid another village for steal grain.

DRAVOT

They don't have to raid and they won't starve neither. Take a proclamation, Billy ... What number is it?

Continued

BILLY FISH

Thirty-one, Sire.

DRAVOT

(nods, begins)

Each and every village shall bring
one-tenth of its crop here to my royal
city of Sikandergul where same will
be suitably stored. Henceforth any
village suffering from privation shall
have grain issued to it ... in accordance
with its needs. And I now declare this
law enacted. Selah.

The Chieftain bends to kiss Dravot's arrow, murmuring his thanks.
Dravot rises.

DRAVOT

I also pronounce a five minute recess
in this hearing.

Dravot turns his back on the waiting petitioners, takes Carnehan
by the arm. Carnehan looks at Dravot in surprise. Dravot doesn't
meet his eyes.

DRAVOT

Peachy, if we're goin' to make it stick
that I'm a god, you ought to bow when
you pass in front of me -- like everybody
else.

CARNEHAN

All right, Danny.

DRAVOT

You understand - for appearance's sake ...

CARNEHAN

(eyes lowered)

Sure.

DRAVOT

No offense.

CARNEHAN

'Course not, Danny.

DISSOLVE TO

212 A FLOCK OF GEESE

212

flying overhead.

213 INT. DRAVOT'S ROOMS - TEMPLE - DAY

213

An enormous room with a high vaulted ceiling. There is a writing table with a small marble nude; tables, chairs, animal skins on the floor. A smaller room through an archway is furnished with a dressing table on which are bronze mirrors, ewer, basin, beneath rows of tunics and cloaks.

Dravot is sitting on a couch, his expression thoughtful.

The door is flung open. Carnehan rushes over to him, slaps him on the back, lifts him to his feet, takes him to the door.

214 DOORWAY

214

CARNEHAN

(pointing)

Look, Danny - the geese -- Long skeins
of 'em flying North! Another fortnight
and the pass should be open!

Dravot turns.

215 BACK INTO THE ROOM

215

as they walk.

CARNEHAN

We ought to make a camp high up on the
mountain and wait on the weather ...

Dravot sits down on the couch.

DRAVOT

I'm not going, Peachy.

CARNEHAN

What?

He shakes his head.

Continued

DRAVOT

You heard me.

CARNEHAN

(echoes)

Not going?

DRAVOT

Correct.

CARNEHAN

You been drinking.

DRAVOT

No, Peachy, and I ain't crazy either.
I see things clear. It's like bandages
have been removed from my eyes ...

Carnehan is staring at him.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

Have you ever walked into a strange
room, Peachy, and it's as though you've
been there before? ...

CARNEHAN

(uneasily)

I know what you mean ...

DRAVOT

Well, let me tell you something - this
isn't the first time I've wore a crown.

(pauses)

Peachy, there's more to this than meets
the eye. It all adds up.

CARNEHAN

What does?

DRAVOT

Everything that's happened, from the time
we decided to come here ... No, before
that - beginning with your takin' Brother
Kipling's watch -- more'n chance has been at
(More)

Continued

DRAVOT (Cont)

work ... More'n mere chance. Why
his watch and not somebody else's? ...
 And what made him give me the emblem?
 ... One thing after another. The
 avalanche. The arrow. The mark in the
 stone ... not to mention - another Roxanne ...

CARNEHAN

Roxanne?
 (remembering)
 The Venus de Milo?

DRAVOT

The same ... one more thing is needful
 for my destiny to be fulfilled -- that I
 take her to wife.

CARNEHAN

For god's sake, leave the women alone!

DRAVOT

Who's talking of women? I said wife -
 a queen to breed a king's son for the king.

CARNEHAN

It's breakin' the contrack.

DRAVOT

The contrack only lasted till such time
 as we was kings - and king I've been these
 months past ... the first king here since
 Alexander ... the first to wear his crown
 in twenty two hundred and fourteen years.
 Him - and now me! They call me his son -
 and I am, in spirit anyway. It's a hugeous
 responsibility! ... For it's a nation I shall
 make of 'em with a flag and an anthem and
 a standing Army! ... I'll treat with the
 Viceroy on equal terms -- and other Kings
 and Princes ... And, when I've accomplished
 what I set out to do, I'll stand one day before
 the Queen - not kneel, mind you, but stand
 like a equal - and she'll say, 'T'd like you to
 accept the Order of the Garter as a mark of
 my esteem, Cousin' ... And she'll pin it on
 me herself. Oh, it's big. It's big, I tell you!

Continued

CARNEHAN

And I tell you - you need a physick!

DRAVOT

I'm fair disappointed in you, Peachy.
You of all men - who followed me and
helped to make me what I am.

CARNEHAN

Followed you? Me? Which one had ahold
of the mule's tail? ... Tell me that!

DRAVOT

(head in clouds)

The Jenny also done her bit.

CARNEHAN

Danny, Danny - we've had this rare streak
of luck. Let's quit winners for once!
Cut and run while the running's good!

DRAVOT

You call it luck - I call it Destiny.

CARNEHAN

Excuse me, while I fall down laughin'!

Which he proceeds to do. In past times, when one laughed the other
always joined in - but not on this occasion.

DRAVOT

Whatever you may think - and however
you may feel, I am a King and you're a
subjeck -- so don't provoke me, Peachy
Carnehan!

Carnehan's laughter ends abruptly and, all at once, he is white with
rage.

CARNEHAN

Or you'll do what? You got me tremblin'
in my boots! What'll you do?

Dravot raises his arm, as though to strike Carnehan.

DRAVOT

You have my permission to bugger off!

Continued

215 Continued (4)

215

He lets his arm fall to his side.

CARNEHAN

That I'll do, with or without your bleedin'
permission - and may you rot in hell,
Daniel Dravot!

They glare at one another. Carnehan stalks out.

216 EXT. PORTICO - TEMPLE OF IMBRA

216

A convocation of Priests, Chieftains. Dravot, dressed in court attire, sits on his Throne, Billy Fish translating.

DRAVOT

From Sikander One to Sikander Second
was a long time between Kings. A
country needs a King like a King needs
a crown -- one is the glory of the other.
Therefore, I shall leave a son behind me
who will, in his turn, beget other sons -
so the Royal succession will be unbroken
and kings will be guaranteed to you for-
ever - to which end I have chosen a wife --
Roxanne of Khawak.

Kafu Selim and the other Priests register shock.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

You will have her brought here attended
by members of her family - and I want
flowers strewed along her way... The
wedding ceremony will be surrounded by
pomp and circumstance. Let messengers
be sent forth and invite people from near
and far. Selah.

There is absolute silence for a moment and then there is a growing
murmur of consternation.

DRAVOT

What are they saying, Billy Fish?

Continued

BILLY FISH

How can daughters of men marry gods or devils?

DRAVOT

A god can do anything.

BILLY FISH

But it is not proper.

DRAVOT

Who says it isn't?

BILLY FISH

All the Priests.

DRAVOT

(shouts)

Would they put their word against that of a god?

Billy Fish points to Kafu Selim.

BILLY FISH

Him say let Imbra decide.

DRAVOT

It's been decided already. What's Imbra got to do with it anyway?

BILLY FISH

Imbra is highest god of all.

DRAVOT

And what if Imbra holds against me?
What'll they do about it?

He rises, angry.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

Am I a dog or a god? Haven't I put
the shadow of my hand over this country?
Do as I say and send for the girl! . . .
Tell them that's an order!

In the back of the room, neat stacks of coins and jewels. In the foreground, a brass scale beside a row of treasure divided into separate - but equal - parts. Several boxes have been filled, lids beside them.

Carnehan is packing, using cloth and dried grasses to protect the loot. Billy Fish enters.

CARNEHAN

Well, Billy? What's going on?

BILLY FISH

Signs very bad. Priests open birds up - all green inside and stinking most horrid. Imbra very angry.

CARNEHAN

Probably they cut the spleen - the green's only bile. Don't worry, Billy, the girl won't go up in smoke. I'll guarantee that.

BILLY FISH

Girl don't matter - many girls here ... No difference, a few girls more or less... But cows now, they dry up and goats throw babies too soon. And corn do not ripen - everybody hungry.

CARNEHAN

But, Billy, you know as well as me Dravot's no god. He himself showed you about the arrow.

BILLY FISH

If not a god, how he know the Master sign in the stone?

CARNEHAN

Every Mason alive knows that sign.

BILLY FISH

What's a Mason?

Continued

CARNEHAN

Somebody who belongs to a secret order -
a Brotherhood. There're Masons every-
where - have been for thousands of years.
From the looks of things, Alexander was
a Mason.

BILLY FISH

Was Sikander First a god?

CARNEHAN

No, Billy. No more a god than Dravot.

BILLY FISH

Then Priests must be mistaken about
Imbra. Him not angry because god
marrying a mortal - but because a son of
man make pretend to be a god ...

Rams horns and gongs o. s. Carnehan and Billy Fish go to a wide,
deep window embrasure, look down:

218 PROCESSION FROM KHAWAK - THEIR POINT OF VIEW

218

Kafu Selim and other High Priests walk slowly up the Main Street of
Sikandergul. Expressionless Acolytes and Boys dutifully strewing
flowers before:

Roxanne, riding a yak with silver knobs on his horns, a wreath of
flowers about his neck. She is surrounded by women attendants.

Solemn-faced monks watch them in complete silence.

From high points all around the walled city, the SOUND of horns
and gongs continues.

219 PORTICO - TEMPLE OF IMBRA

219

Priests at their sieges; others in small groups.

Dravot sits on his throne. Billy Fish hurries in, crosses behind
the Throne to Dravot's side.

The Procession moves through the archway into the little square,
stops.

Continued

Kafu Selim takes Roxanne's arm, escorts her up the steps to stand before Dravot, and then moves to his place.

Dravot rises. He and Roxanne are almost the same height.

He gestures to a BOY standing nearby. The Boy moves to him, carrying a gold diadem on a cushion.

Dravot takes the diadem. He reaches out to place it on her head; she flinches away. He ignores this and says gently as he fits the exquisite object over her hair:

DRAVOT

Roxanne ... don't be afraid. I wouldn't harm you ... When the time comes, you'll catch fire, I warrant -- the way all women should when their husbands hold 'em close. But you won't perish, girl. I promise you that.

He nods towards Kafi Selim to take her away.

220 A LITTLE TEMPLE

220

Roxanne, and her companions are led toward the Temple.

221 INT. DRAVOT'S ROOMS - NIGHT

221

Dravot is sitting alone in a chair, his expression withdrawn, inward.

Carnehan enters. He speaks with an assumed lightness, hoping to get this final parting over with as quickly and painlessly as possible -- but Dravot's monosyllabic words drop heavy as flat-irons. He avoids meeting Carnehan's eyes.

CARNEHAN

Well, Danny - the time has come, as the saying goes ...

DRAVOT

When do you leave?

CARNEHAN

At first light. Maybe you'd like to have a peek into the boxes before I nail 'em shut -- see what I'm taking.

Continued

DRAVOT

Take what you like.

CARNEHAN

I weighed the gold out pound for pound
and the gems ounce per ounce - shared
it out to every jot and tittle ...

DRAVOT

Right.

CARNEHAN

I only need half as many mules as was
first planned by I'd like all twenty rifle-
men to see me safe through the Khyber.

DRAVOT

Take 'em. Take 'em.

Over scene a high wild WAIL that trails off into broken sobs.
Other voices respond, like a conclave of jackals.

CARNEHAN

God's holy trousers! What's that?

He goes to the door, opens it. The SOUND fills the room.

222 ANOTHER ANGLE - LITTLE TEMPLE DOWN THE HILL

222

The Little Temple that Roxanne and her entourage entered. The
barbaric Chorus rises from within in.

223 BACK TO SCENE

223

Carnehan shuts the door.

CARNEHAN

Danny - They're savages here - one and
all - leave 'em to go back to slaughterin'
babes and playin' stick an' ball with their
neighbors' heads and pissin' on each other!
Please -- for the last time of asking --
Come back with me! Don't do what you're
plannin' to do!

Continued

Dravot's eyes light up briefly, as though tempted - then his brows contract, and his face sets with determination.

DRAVOT

For the last time of answerin' - I will!

CARNEHAN

(voice unsteady)

Well, then ... be seein' you ... In
London, maybe, when the Queen gives
you the Garter --

They shake hands. Carnehan turns to go out.

DRAVOT

Peachy - I'm to be married mid-morning.
Could you not wait and leave afterwards?
For old time's sake -- see me up the aisle!

CARNEHAN

(debates shortly, then)

If you like.

DISSOLVE TO

224 EXT. PORTICO - TEMPLE OF IMBRA - PRIESTS, CHIEFS,
POPULACE - DAY

224

A blare of horns and all bow. Dravot enters, wearing a short white chiton and a flowing cape of azure silk. He goes to the Throne, stands before it, arrow in hand.

225 KAFU SELIM, ROXANNE, WOMEN ATTENDANTS

225

Entering in Procession across the flower-strewn Square. They pass through an aisle of people. Kafu Selim leads the heavily-veiled girl slowly forward, followed by six women attendants.

They climb the steps to stop beside Dravot. Roxanne faces the crowd. As Kafu Selim glances at Dravot his harshly lined face sets in an expression of fanatic hostility.

226 CLOSE SHOT - ROXANNE

226

A woman Attendant raises her veil. Her bridal dress is of magnificent Tyrian purple, heavily embroidered. She wears the gold diadem Dravot gave her plus intricate gold earrings and necklace. She is shaking with fear from head to foot.

227 THE CROWD

227

A suppressed murmur, almost a moan, runs through the crowd and dies away.

228 MEDIUM SHOT - WOMEN IN CROWD

228

One of whom, unable to contain her anguish, lets out the same shrill wail of grief that was heard during the night.

229 MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT

229

Carnehan and Billy Fish look at each other with apprehension. Dravot frowns, watching Roxanne. Her trembling is even more evident.

DRAVOT

The ring, Peachy!

Carnehan comes to his side, hands him a ring.

DRAVOT

(continuing)

I, Sikander the Second, hereby take
you, Roxanne, to be my lawful wedded
wife and Queen of Kafiristan ... Selah.

He turns toward her, reaches for her head. She quivers, backs away from him. He seizes her left hand, forces the ring on as she vainly tries to release herself. Wails come from her women. It is the moment when they expect Roxanne to take flame and vanish before their eyes.

Dravot embraces Roxanne.

The wails continue over scene as she struggles in his arms, futilely, until his lips are almost upon hers. Then, in a last desperate effort - masked to CAMERA - she tears her face away and staggers back.

Dravot instantly raises a hand to his cheek and brings it away stained with blood.

DRAVOT

(incredulous)

She's bitten me! The slut's bitten me!

And indeed she has. Blood is pouring from a gash below his eye.

231 KAFU SELIM AND OTHER HIGH PRIESTS

231

KAFU SELIM (in Kafir)

Blood! ... Not God ... Not Devil ...!

But MAN!

Others behind him take up his cry.

232 CARNEHAN, BILLY FISH, DRAVOT

232

Carnehan on one side of Dravot, Billy Fish on the other.

BILLY FISH

Says not god, not devil - but man.

You bleeding - they know!

233 KAFU SELIM

233

Continues to shout.

KAFU SELIM (in Kafir)

Kill him!

234 ROXANNE'S ATTENDANTS

234

Roxanne in their midst.

PRIESTS (C.S. in Kafir)

Kill him.

235 EXT. THE SQUARE BELOW THE TEMPLE

235

Carnehan, Dravot and Billy Fish make their way through the uncomprehending throng.

DRAVOT

We'll get your riflemen, Peachy, and come back and slaughter the dogs!

236 EXT. STREET

236

The tribespeople between them and the Gates fall back in awe at the sight of their King and his Two Attendants. But, behind them, the ROAR grows ever louder as the word spreads that he is not a god, not a devil but a man.

237 EXT. GATES - SIKANDERGUL

237

Carnehan's mules, loaded with the boxes of treasure and the elite corps of Twenty Riflemen are stationed in the foreground.

Dravot, Carnehan, and Billy Fish move quickly through the Gates.

DRAVOT

A drenching in their own blood I'll give 'em ... Riflemen, follow me!

Arrow aloft, he starts back into the City but Carnehan seizes him by the arm.

CARNEHAN

They're too many for that, Danny!

DRAVOT

A king I am!

The Riflemen give sidelong looks at Dravot: his ominous presence, together with the growing tumult, presages calamity. Priests and Tribesmen come streaming out the Gates.

CARNEHAN

Retire in sections!

DRAVOT

(wrathfully)

Retire be damned! I'm the King!

Continued

CARNEHAN

We can't stand, Danny. We must make a run for it ... Billy Fish, get those mules started up the trail ... Jaldi!

Frightened by the hue and cry, the mules have become tangled in their trace lines. It takes a precious minute for the little Gurkha to get them straightened out and on their way.

238 ANOTHER ANGLE - GATES OF SIKANDERGUL

238

Screaming over and over in Kafiri, "Not God ... Not Devil ... Man", the Tribesmen pick up their weapons from where they've left them on entering the Holy City, and turn to the attack. There is a shower of arrows.

Carnehan orders the Riflemen to fire. Good soldiers that they are, thanks to his training, they let go with a volley, retire a few yards, and fire another.

239 EXT. TRAIL

239

The ascent to the bridge is steep and winding. Billy Fish runs among the mules, slapping their flanks with the flat of his kukri. Dravot follows, waving his golden arrow, and roaring maledictions. Carnehan and the Riflemen bring up the rear, firing steadily.

240 KAFIRIS

240

The vanguard of the pursuers fall and are trampled over in the mad press upwards. For every fallen Kafiri, two seem to take their place. They surge forward in waves as arrows fly, spears are thrown, and men advance with swords.

241 EXT. TRAIN - EXPOSED AREA

241

The mule train and its escort have come to an exposed area on the trail where broadsides of arrows and spears can be delivered from below.

242 ELITE CORPS AND BILLY FISH

242

Men and mules go down. Maddened by the smell of blood, the mules begin to plunge and pitch and the train comes to a halt. Billy Fish cuts their traces, freeing them from their loads and one another. Half their number goes bolting off.

243 DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

243

Fighting the rear action. Dravot, arrow dangling from the thong at his wrist, picks up a rifle from beside a dead man. The gun is empty. He rushes at the enemy, shouting imprecations. For a moment, they waver before him. He wields the rifle like a club in a wide swathe.

Kafiri skulls are broken. Men fall.

244 CARNEHAN

244

retreating, attempting to reload. A group of the enemy rushes forward in an attempt to surround him. Dravot LEAPS in with his rifle - a Samson in rage and power, whirling, smashing, jabbing. Carnehan wrenches a sword from a Kafiri, cutting and hacking until the enemy slackens off. He then falls back, reloads, fires.

245 EXT. TRAIN - BILLY FISH AND THE RIFLEMEN

245

The train - or what's left of it - is in motion again. Billy Fish begins to run forward, kukri at the ready.

246 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT (BILLY FISH IN B.G.)

246

CARNEHAN

(shouting)

No, Billy, no! The bridge. Get to the Bridge.
We'll join you!

We see Billy turn to obey his command.

247 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

247

Dravot has picked up a bandolier. They retreat, passing a dead mule. Carnehan looks ruefully at a glittering cascade across the trail and curses under his breath.

248 TOP OF THE TRAIL

248

The rear guard has thinned now to a handful of men and they are running out of ammunition. It's only another fifty yards to the trailhead but, before half the distance has been covered, the Elite Corpse has ceased to exist.

249 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

249

side by side, firing into the mob, laughing. There is no reason for their continuing unscathed. Perhaps sheer Luck and not-quite vanquished awe of them send spears and arrows wide of their mark ...

250 KAFIRIS

250

So withering is the fire that they have fallen back out of range. The bravest among them are re-grouping. Others are running away - there are too many dead heroes, and closing in on Carnehan and Dravot seems impossible.

251 TOP OF THE TRAIL

251

Carnehan and Dravot, taking advantage of the enemy's hesitation, run towards the top of the trail. They are alone behind the mules.

The last mule in the string squeals and starts whirling. A spear has gone through its heart. It falls heavily and two more boxes burst open in an avalanche of gold and gems.

252 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

252

Carnehan aims his martini, the chamber is empty. He throws the gun down.

One last round from Dravot and he hurls his useless gun into the enemy ranks.

Ignoring the tumult, oblivious of the arrows flicking past, Carnehan picks up a gold figurine, hefts it thoughtfully, as if considering what might be worth carrying away; then, on a sudden wild impulse, he hurls it in a great arc down at the enemy. Once started, he can't stop, starts throwing indiscriminately. Dravot stares at him.

CARNEHAN

(to Dravot)

Help yourself.

Continued

252 Continued

252

Carnehan hands him a heavy gold cup. After a moment's hesitation, Dravot throws. For a wild and ecstatic half-minute, the two men stand, like schoolboys snowballing, ridiculously enjoying themselves, bawling gleeful abuse at the Kafiris.

253 THE KAFIRIS

253

wilting under the hail of heavy metal objects and showers of gems. Bloody noses, broken teeth, bleeding foreheads and streaming eyes force them to cringe and cover their heads with their hands. In B.G. a Kafiri Chieftain rides up shouting an order, almost unheard over the wailing of his fellows.

254 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

254

Carnehan, a huge uncut ruby in his hand, starts to throw, reconsiders, and slips it into his pocket before stooping for yet another fabulous stone.

Finally Dravot, clapping Carnehan on the back, indicates "Enough".

DRAVOT

A king's ransom, Peachy.

CARNEHAN

I devoutly hopes.

They climb over the loot and the dead animals up to:

255 TOP OF THE TRAIL

255

where Billy Fish stands with the remaining mule. He nods towards the bridgehead, shrugs fatalistically.

256 LONG SHOT - PLATEAU LEADING TO THE BRIDGE - THEIR
VIEWPOINT

256

A solid phalanx of Kafiris line the gorge, blocking the bridgehead. A Chair is being borne swiftly toward them.

257 CLOSE SHOT - CARNEHAN, DRAVOT, BILLY FISH 257

Carnehan's eye sweeps round, seeking an alternative route.

258 LONG PANNING SHOT - PLATEAU AND HORIZON 258

as CAMERA PANS slowly to show warriors silhouetted against the surrounding hills, filling the Trail, bunched into the narrow valleys. They are surrounded. There is no exit.

259 MEDIUM SHOT - THE GROUP 259

Carnehan manages a wry grin.

CARNEHAN

Well, if you teach people how to fight for you, they learn how to fight for themselves ... It's some good lessons we're learning this day, Daniel Dravot.

He looks thoughtfully at Billy Fish and the Mule.

CARNEHAN

(continuing)

Billy, it's not you they want. Mount up this mule ... Ride that way ...

(points)

... where their ranks is thin.
Chances are you'll make it.

Billy Fish extends his hand to Dravot.

DRAVOT

(taking it)

Many thanks to you, Billy, for all you've done.

Billy grins expansively, then pumps Carnehan's hand.

BILLY FISH

Rifleman Ram Hare Krishna Nayaran
Bahadur Chhetri having most enjoyable
time. Wishing you many good lucks.

CARNEHAN

Thanks, Billy Fish. Same to you.
You better hurry!

Continued

259 Continued

259

He helps the little fellow into the saddle, turns the mule's head in the right direction, and slaps it on the rump. CAMERA PANS with Billy Fish who, after a few yards, wheels it towards the mass of Kafiris at the bridgehead, and spurs forward.

260 CLOSE SHOT - DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

260

Dravot shouts in horrified dismay.

DRAVOT

No, Billy Fish! Not that way ...!

Carnehan grasps his arm.

CARNEHAN

He knows which way he's going.

261 LONG SHOT - BILLY FISH AND KAFIRIS

261

Kukri held high over his head, shouting the Gurkha battle cry: "Ulu - lu - lu!" Billy Fish gallops head-long towards the thickest of the enemy. In their midst, his sword flashing, he is finally impaled.

262 MEDIUM SHOT - CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

262

A moment's pause - then, as one, they bring their heels together and, side by side, stride forward in the regulation step.

CAMERA EASES BACK and PANS to SHOW them headed for the silently-waiting Kafiris at the bridgehead. Kafu Selim and other Priests in the forefront.

263 FULL SHOT - DRAVOT, CARNEHAN, KAFIRIS

263

ANGLE from among the Kafiris. Kafu Selim and Priests, the bodies of Billy Fish and his mule in the foreground.

The two men approach, shoulders back, chins in, eyes straight ahead. Some way behind them the ring of Tribesmen closes in.

264 REVERSE ANGLE - KAFU SELIM

264

He looks at Dravot with the hatred of one betrayed and deceived. He snaps a command, the mass behind him parts, leaving a narrow passageway to the bridge.

265 MED. SHOT - DOLLY SHOT - DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

265

ANGLE past Kafu Selim, inviting them to continue with a quick gesture. DOLLY AHEAD OF THEM down the corridor of warriors who allow them to pass unmolested.

266 BRIDGE OVER GORGE

266

Kafiris watching from the other side.

267 DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN ON BRIDGE

267

Dravot and Carnehan move across it in exact rhythm. The bridge quivers and sways.

268 MEN ON FAR SIDE OF THE BRIDGE

268

begin to cut anchor ropes.

269 DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

269

turn towards Kafu Selim. Tribesmen have begun to hack at these anchor ropes as well.

DRAVOT

(to Kafu Selim, gesturing
to himself)

It's me you want ...

(pointing to Carnehan)

Let him go.

CARNEHAN

They don't know what you're saying and it wouldn't make any difference if they did. We've come together and we'll go together, one way or another ...

Continued

DRAVOT

(looking straight ahead
of them)

Peachy, I'm heartily ashamed for gettin'
you killed instead of goin' home rich like
you deserved to -- on account of me bein'
so bleedin' high and bloody mighty.

(his voice husky)

Do you forgive me?

CARNEHAN

That I do, Danny, free and full and without
let or hindrance.

Dravot takes the crown from his head, tosses it high into the air.

CARNEHAN

(continuing, to the world)

We are not little men! Do you think we
don't know how to die? Cut, you beggars,
cut!

(begins to sing)

Go, go, go like a soldier ...

Dravot joins in.

DRAVOT AND CARNEHAN

Go, go, go like a soldier ...

270 **DRAVOT**

270

turns to look towards the anchor ropes at the far side.

271 **FAR SIDE OF RIVER**

271

Anchor ropes are cut half through.

272 **PAN AS DRAVOT LOOKS TOWARDS KAFU SELIM AND OTHERS**
CLOSE ON MEN cutting anchor ropes. The bridge quivers. One
more blow and the now-raveling anchor ropes will part. Upraised
knives slash downwards.

272

DRAVOT

(lunges at Carnehan)

It's me they want, Peachy. Save yourself!

Continued

- 272 Continued 272
- Carnehan stumbles, instinctively seizes ropes.
- As BRIDGE BEGINS TO FALL, Dravot leaps out into space.
- 273 CARNEHAN 273
- clinging to bridge as it arcs down and across towards other side of river.
- 274 DRAVOT'S BODY 274
- turning, falling.
- 275 CARNEHAN 275
- as rope bridge crashes against the walls of the gorge. The impact fails to dislodge him. After a moment, he begins to let himself down towards the raveled ends of the quivering bridge.
- 276 KAFU SELIM AND OTHERS 276
- watching, puzzled. Kafu Selim makes a sign for the cutting operation on the far side to stop.
- 277 CARNEHAN 277
- going down, like a spider in a tangled web.
- 278 CARNEHAN 278
- swaying at the end of the bridge, searching the waters below him.
- 279 LONG SHOT - DRAVOT 279
- caught on a rock at the river's edge.

280 CARNEHAN

280

begins to propel himself out from the rocky wall. A last thrust out over the water and he lets go. He drops straight, feet together, arms at his sides, is spun, folds, and manages to straighten up again as he hits the surface.

281 THE RIVER

281

A long pause with only the sound of the rushing water. Carnehan surfaces, being swept along. The shock of the fall is apparent in his movements.

282 CARNEHAN AND DRAVOT

282

Carnehan striving to reach the rock. As he nears it, Dravot's body begins to slip slowly down into the current.

Carnehan pulls himself onto the rock, fighting for breath. As he pauses, Dravot's body slips away.

CARNEHAN

Danny!

He half crawls, half walks to the other side of the rock.

283 DRAVOT'S BODY

283

begin tumbled by current as it is swept downstream. We see Dravot's dead face for an instant.

284 ROCKY PATH AT BOTTOM OF GORGE

284

Carnehan running along, trying to keep up with Dravot's body which is suddenly swept under the surface.

Carnehan keeps running, searching the river, then stops.

285 LONG SHOT - DOWN THE RIVER

285

A deep, swiftly flowing channel. Nothing appears on the surface.

286 CARNEHAN

286

resumes walking, dazed. A glint of metal in a backwater. Carnehan retrieves the object. It is the crown, bent and misshapen.

CARNEHAN

(softly, an epitaph)

King of Kafiristan with his crown upon
his head was Daniel Dravot, Esquire.

He thrusts the crown under his jacket -- and gazes up, unseeingly, at the rim of the gorge.

287 ZOOM SHOT

287

Kafir is disbanding. Kafu Selim is being borne away in his sedan chair.

288 EXTREME LONG SHOT

288

Carnehan trudging along --

FADE OUT

FADE IN

289 INT. KIPLING'S OFFICE

289

CARNEHAN

(voice hoarse and whining)

... And old Danny he tried to save Peachy
and then he fell ... turning round and round
like a penny whirligig ... falling, falling ...
and Peachy he never let go the ropes ...

(a giggling shout)

-- I could see his body caught on a rock in the
river ...

Carnehan shivers uncontrollably. Kipling reaches for the whiskey bottle and pours him another drink. Carnehan reaches for the glass.

290 CLOSE SHOT - KIPLING

290

stares at the diamond-shaped scar again.

The glass rattles against his teeth.

CARNEHAN

But do you know what they did to Peachy? They were waiting when he climbed out of the gorge. They took him and they crucified him, sir, between two pine trees, as Peachy's hands will show ... Poor, poor Peachy who hadn't done them any harm ... He hung there and screamed but he didn't die ... They took him down next day and said it was a miracle he wasn't dead and let him go! ...

He rocks to and fro, weeping bitterly, wiping his eyes with the back of his scarred hand and moaning like a child. CAMERA PULLS BACK. Kipling rises to pour him another drink and puts a hand on his heaving shoulders.

CARNEHAN

(continuing; his
sobs cease)

And Peachy came home in about a year, begging along the roads, quite safe ... For Daniel Dravot walked before and said, 'Come along, Peachy. It's a big thing we're doin'! -- And the mountains they danced at night, and the mountains they tried to fall on Peachy's head, but Danny he held up his hand and laughed, and Peachy came along bent double ...

(pausing for a
drink)

He never let go of Danny's hand, and he never let go of Danny's crown.

KIPLING

His crown?

CARNEHAN

... And afterwards ...

Continued

He trails off, wandering hopelessly.

Kipling fixes him with his eyes.

KIPLING

(slowly, firmly)

Afterwards ... ?

CARNEHAN

(nodding)

They gave it to him as a present.

The crown of the King ...

(a look of sly cunning)

Peachy begged for it most piteously
as a reminder of what happened to such
as we. And though he was starving, never
would he sell it, though it was pure pure
gold.

(proudly)

You knew Danny, sir. You knew Right
Worshipful Daniel Dravot, Esquire ...

From the rags ~~about~~ his waist he brings out a black horsehair bag.
Placing it on the desk and fumbling at the drawstring, he reveals:
the arched misshapen circlet of gold studded with raw turquoises:
The Crown of Kafiristan.

CARNEHAN

King of Kafiristan, he was, with this
crown upon his head and his red beard
shining in the sunlight ...

(with a terrible weariness)

And that's all there is to tell ...

He slides from the chair and, half-walking half-crawling, makes for
the door.

CARNEHAN

... So I'll be on my way ... I've urgent
affairs in the South -- have to meet a man
at Marwar Junction ...

Shambling towards the door, he starts to sing:

Continued

CARNEHAN

(singing)

"And go to your God like a soldier,
Go, go, go like a soldier,
Go, go, go like a soldier,
Go, go, go like a soldier,
Soldier of the Queen!"

His quavering voice dies away as he exits. CAMERA MOVES IN
CLOSE, to center on the CROWN.

FADE OUT