

*A m a Z o n i a*

*by*

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*The play AmaZonia opened at the Bridewell Theatre, London on 15th April 2004.*

*This is the original script based on the newly uncovered " Secret Papers."*

*The historically detailed thirty-page preface gives the basis for this factual play which throws a totally new light on the Fawcett Mystery.*

## **Preface**

The play consists of real conversations, extraordinary events and dramatic confrontations that have taken place over the last eighty years concerning the mystery of Colonel Percy Harrison Fawcett, the explorer lost in Amazonia in 1925.

I was privileged to be handed a trunk of astonishing documents that have been hidden from the media throughout the subsequent years. Fawcett's daughter Joan and grand-daughter, Rolette, have entrusted me with telling the true facts behind this amazing saga. I hope I have not let them down. I shall refer to this wealth of newly released documents as the Secret Papers in order to distinguish what they contain from the generally misleading information about this story that has been available to the general public since 1925.

Today, the worldwide fascination expressed on the Internet shows that Fawcett has become a cult figure. His objective in 1925, trumpeted in the world press, was to find in South America evidence of a lost civilization, probably the earliest on Earth and visit the remains of one of its cities that he called "Z", still possibly inhabited by the descendents of this ancient race.

But, according to the Secret Papers, this was not the main objective at all. There were two extraordinary secret agendas. Because of the mystery of Fawcett's disappearance, myths have grown up round his name. A lot of nonsense has and is being written and, after eighty years of reporting this story, the media are still getting it wrong. So, here are the facts at last. Why were they ever hidden from the public and press in the first place?

What does the world know about Colonel Percy Harrison Fawcett? Many have never heard of him. However, as the Internet testifies, there are thousands all over the world who not only know his name but are obsessed by the mystery of his life and death. In the last seventy-five years, for various strange reasons, Fawcett has been elevated to almost religious status. Today, in a part of rural Brazil, he is worshipped in religious rituals. In the cave of Ibez in the Roncador Mountains worshippers claim he reached an inhabited underground city where he

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now resides. UFOs have been seen coming and going from the mouth of the cave. In the Secret Papers, I have found evidence that Fawcett was never in this area in the first place and that in fact he travelled in the opposite direction.

Theatre may seem an odd medium for an epic saga of exploration until you realise that Fawcett's real story has nothing to do with poisonous snakes, sweaty armpits and swinging machetes in mosquito jungle-hell. It is all about the mind, the emotions and an inner quest. Words can best tell this story and words are just the thing that get cut in film and TV where action, sex and violence and star names are essential to getting finance. Who could bear to see this utterly true and agonizingly poignant story exploited by the media money-men? One of the themes of the play makes just that very point.

### **Who was he?**

Fawcett was born on 31st August 1867. He was the son of a Regency rake-style father who was a pal of the Prince of Wales and who died of drink at forty-five. Fawcett's mother was of highborn Scottish ancestry, artistically creative and in tune with Celtic mysticism but, according to an unpublished family biography, "not disposed to remain faithful to her unfaithful husband" Fawcett, (who never liked his names and preferred to be known as "P.H.F"), was an outsider within his own family. He rejected his parents "racy" life style and became (according to his niece Margarita Stapleton) a serious, academic loner. His frothy elder brother Douglas and his three sisters were on quite another wavelength. But as young children, Evie, one of the sisters, went exploring through the Devon wilderness with him and they found a "treasure" of Roman ceramics, including what Evie described as 'hoofed gods'.

From the start, Fawcett was snubbed and maltreated by his parents. They thrust him into the Army, (the Artillery); only because his mother "adored the lovely uniform". Fawcett hated the Army and it looked as if life in various British outposts of the Empire would destroy him. But no, his posting to Fort Frederick, Trincomalee in Ceylon (now Sri-Lanka) set his whole future on a unique and devastating course.

While Fawcett's brother officers drank and gambled and had sex with the natives, he would religiously wander off into the interior to seek out

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strange and ancient ruins and record hieroglyphs. Fawcett soon recognized the many ancient writings in stone in Ceylon matched identically those he had discovered in other parts of the world: in North Africa, in Malta and in Western Ireland for example. Like several of our contemporary writers and alternative archaeologists, Fawcett concluded that similarities in these far-flung carvings indicated that early civilization stemmed from one source and was linked worldwide.

The following family details are important because they affected the way Fawcett was presented to the world after his disappearance. Despite the fierce disapproval by his family, Fawcett proposed to Nina Agnes Paterson, daughter of a district judge at Galle, Ceylon. Fawcett's brother Douglas and his sisters mischievously told him that Nina was far from being a virgin (a serious crime in those halcyon days). Fawcett wrote to her to say; "...you are not the pure young girl I thought you to be", and the engagement was immediately called off. Nina soon married a Captain Herbert Prichard, who took her to live in Alexandria where he died after of an embolism due to anthrax. In the style of high Victorian melodrama, his dying words were apparently "Go....and marry Fawcett! He is the real man for you" Fawcett, having discovered the nasty ploy of his family, begged Nina for forgiveness and they were married. They had three children who were to play a major role in the story. Jack, the eldest, was born on May 19th, 1903 (Buddha's anniversary and a crucial event as will be explained), and was to disappear with his father on the 1925 expedition to Amazonia. Brian was born in 1906, and was the "despised and overlooked" second son (very much a repeat of Fawcett's childhood experience). However Brian put his father's name on the world map through a book called Exploration Fawcett which was to cause a hell of a lot of trouble and misunderstanding in the following seventy-five years, but from Brian's point of view, all for a very good reason. Brian was a master manipulator and communicator. If he was still alive now he would never have disclosed the Fawcett Secret Papers to me or anyone. But his wit, intelligence and insight, leaping out of his writing, were the major factors that led me to write this play. Joan, born in 1910 and still alive, put her faith in me. She and her daughter Rolette have allowed me access to those incredible Secret Papers that overturn the official version of the Fawcett story.

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The rift between Nina's side of the family and Fawcett's own relatives lasted for over a hundred years and continues today amongst their descendents. This has had an unfortunate effect on the public perception of the real Fawcett story. One of Nina's descendents, Timothy Paterson, not being allowed access to Joan's papers, virtually invented his own myth about "Uncle Percy" which is now circulated on the Internet. The real facts of this mystery are dramatic dynamite beyond one's wildest dreams and need no further invention by Timothy Paterson or any one else. I have constructed 80 years worth of these real events into a two-hour play that I hope will encapsulate the truth at last.

### **"Exploration Fawcett"**

Ironically the very book that introduced a lot of the world in 1953 to the amazing travels of Col P.H. Fawcett, "edited by his son Brian Fawcett", is a sham, but a well-meaning sham. It is thought to be an autobiography and it is still in print. In fact, Fawcett's younger son Brian, credited as "the editor," ghost-wrote it. It was the "Book of the Month" and was translated into many languages. Fawcett's "story", in press reviews from Graham Greene and Harold Nicolson, was described as "reckless and inspired ...full of mystery, fortitude, and doom...a staggering book... compares with Conrad's Heart of Darkness" etc. But the book was a blind and not written by Fawcett at all. Fawcett's actual autobiography "Travel and Mystery in South America" was never published and the manuscript lost in the U.S. while doing the rounds of publishers in 1924. Fawcett wrote to his best friend , Harold Large, complaining that "publishers have turned down my book here and in the USA. They want thrills and embroidery; I'd rather not publish it at all". Brian was a much better writer than his father and had no qualms in giving the public what they wanted. Exploration Fawcett is an excellent read and has truly placed Fawcett back on the world map. But the book only reveals ten percent of the *real* story. And even the map in the book's front-piece of Fawcett's final and fatal route is *a false trail planted by Brian. In fact the expedition went in the opposite direction!* The real truth sat in a family trunk for fifty years, in the form of letters, diaries, notebooks, guarded from the public and media for most of that time by Brian Fawcett himself. WHY?

As early as 1928, a bitter rift had opened between the Fawcett family and the media. Fawcett and his expedition had been missing for three years and The North American Newspaper Alliance, his main sponsor, decided to send an expensive expedition to find out what had happened. Commander George Dyott was put in charge. It set off from Cuiaba, an old mining town at Brazil's centre and jumping off point for all expeditions (including Fawcett's) into the massive unexplored Mato Grosso, a million square miles of forest south of the Amazon. A naval man with no jungle experience, Dyott reported that the Fawcett party had gone *North-East* to the Rio Kuluene, a tributary of the great Xingu River and had been clubbed to death by Kalapalos tribesmen because they had offended tribal etiquette. The world press seized on this sensational story and have continued to repeat it up until today. Fawcett's wife Nina and the young Brian were appalled. Their reasons were:

- 1) Fawcett was fastidious in observing the ways of Amazonian forest people and always learned some vocabulary and protocol of a tribe before even setting foot in its territory.
- 2) Dyott *ignored the family's vital information* that the expedition had gone *North-West* and instead relied on Cuiaba tittle-tattle; false information planted by Fawcett who did not want to be followed. This led to Dyott searching the wrong area.
- 3) Dyott took no interpreters and got the 'clubbing to death' story entirely from sign language he had learned from American Western silent movies. The Dyott version, laden with American preconceptions about "imperialist British colonels and their disdain for the natives", has *damaged Fawcett's reputation and painted the very opposite to the truth.*

More "rescue missions" followed and in the 1930's. Young adventurers, some perhaps crossed in love, often rejected the time honoured idea of joining the Foreign Legion in preference to the far more dangerous "Looking for Fawcett". By 1950 they were still coming (to Dyott's fatally mistaken location). They should have gone *North-West* from Cuiaba, the actual route that is mentioned in the Secret Papers. Foolhardy expeditions, some very ill-equipped, disappeared. Hundreds died searching an area Fawcett had never visited!

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"Looking for Fawcett" was "just an excuse" claimed the Brazilian government who imagined many were foreign agents secretly looking for mineral deposits.

### **The Skeleton Hoax**

In 1952 the famed Vilas Boas brothers, agents representing the interests of forest Indians of the Kuluene area, wanted to stop the white incursions. They dug up the skeleton of an Indian elder and claimed it was Fawcett's. Brian was flown to Brazil, all expenses paid, by a newspaper magnate called Assis Chateaubriand and invited to shake hands with the Kalapalos, "his father's killers". What a press scoop!

Although Brian had with him his father's spare set of dentures to test on the skull, although the skull had its front teeth intact while the denture consisted of two front false teeth to replace those lost in a school rugger match, although the skeleton was examined later by experts at Claridges Hotel back in London and found to be of a five foot two Indian while the Fawcett party were all over six foot, Chateaubriand and the world press did not want facts to get in the way of a good story and so Dyott's myth and the Vilas Boas hoax endured. Currently, one young member of the Kalapalos tribe openly admits that the Vilas Boas brothers wrote the whole script for this hoax and had tried to pass off the skeleton of their elder as Fawcett's remains and claims his people now want the skeleton back from where it is stored today, in a medical school in Sao Paulo.

But all this remains mainly unknown to the public, and as recently as 1996 an expedition of credulous American Brazilians headed off North-East (Dyott's false trail again!) to the Kuluene region and got captured and stripped and threatened with death by the Kalapalos for their pains. In 1998 a BBC TV documentary starting off with good intentions but also going to Dyott's false location seems to have got hijacked by the BBC publicity department who brazenly suggested the film *solved* the Fawcett mystery. Thereby history was confused even further.

One can imagine the anger and dismay experienced by Fawcett's wife Nina, not just over Dyott but over the Vilas Boas hoax. Brian, now the keeper of his father's papers, was determined that not a word of Fawcett's true objectives would ever be revealed. The world was "not ready" for them.

The Secret Papers reveal Fawcett was heading North-West from Cuiaba. This will stun most Fawcett enthusiasts but it must be faced to take the investigation further, if it is ever taken further.

*Fawcett intended to meet up with Nina, as well as his best friend Harold Large and others in Amazonia as I will explain and they certainly were aware of his precise route and its geographical destination.*

### **What Brian Concealed**

In Exploration Fawcett, Brian covered over his father's actual route and objectives. Brian's private writings reveal and surviving letters show that the quest for lost cities was a blind. By 1924 these were not on Fawcett's main agenda. He writes to his wife on 23rd May 1925 and now approaching sixty years old, "But for the Occult side - everything else is peripheral (!), I scarcely see how anyone could do these expeditions." There is a glaring contrast between the content of Exploration Fawcett and the Secret Papers.

1. Exploration Fawcett presents an Indiana Jones-style adventurer enduring hair-raising and violent experiences in dangerous jungle. (Some believe the Indiana Jones story is influenced by this book). The Secret Papers reveal a quiet, introverted academic. Fawcett comes across as dedicated and obstinate in his obsession; a pacifist, a vegetarian ascetic, a socialist with democratic convictions, anti-establishment and a visionary.

2. Amazonia in Exploration Fawcett is largely drawn by *Brian's* dramatic imagination. When I went there, following Fawcett's real route, I certainly did not recognize what I had read in the book and certainly not what was described as the local topography in the Secret Papers.

Amazonia in the Secret Papers is gruelling but according to Fawcett "preferable to so-called civilized life in Devon." The planned route to "Z" in the Secret Papers is an *allegory*, for he intends to search for elements that do not exist in this area; "a desert, some ice-capped mountain country and tunnels through the mountains."

Brian privately observes ; "Daddy's pictured objective was constructed upon personal imagination, romantic notion and psychic confirmation by self-styled 'seers'. Was Daddy's whole conception of 'Z', a spiritual objective, and the manner of reaching it a religious allegory?" Brian also reminds us that his father had a "vast interest in Ancient Egyptian esotericism" which itself emphasises the strived for union with god or gods as a difficult *journey* that must be made by each individual.

3. In Exploration Fawcett, the objective is given as looking for a lost city, "Z", which may hold the origins of civilization and may even be inhabited. In the Secret Papers it is obvious that by 1924 Fawcett had made this a secondary objective. His main aim was to deliver his elder son Jack , now in his early twenties, over to a lodge of "Earth Guardians" called The Great White Brotherhood (*white* meaning *purity* not race). They are also known as The Watchers or The Shining Ones. Jack had a "miraculous" birth that I will describe later and, incredibly, Fawcett turned down the possibility of T.E. Lawrence accompanying him on this gruelling expedition in preference for a totally inexperienced youth. The Secret Papers reveal that the intention was that Fawcett would set up a colony of spiritually inclined settlers in Amazonia while Jack (once trained by the brotherhood) would found a similar colony in his own birthplace Ceylon. These plans Fawcett codenamed "The Great Scheme."

I should say here that although the concept of earth guardians existing in Amazonia may seem improbable to most people, Alan Ereira, a BBC producer found a lost city in Colombia in 1998 with a population dressed in white robes called the Kogi. They told Ereira that they were earth guardians, mankind's responsible elder brother and that their task is to teach their younger brother how to treat the earth and how to advance mankind and civilization in the right spiritual and nature-friendly direction.

### ***THE GREAT SCHEME***

In The Secret Papers, Brian writes "The old cities were not his principle objective, but were necessary to provide the finance for his Great Scheme...A fantastically ambitious idea of creating colonies of super-people who would take over from existing governments and become the beginnings of a new race".

Harold Large's letter to Nina on 29th August 1926 tells her to expect delays: "Remember that the Work is guided by a group of Adepts so you may get startled at times over delays and the hugeness of The Work, where we little individuals are only pawns and moved about one point at a time, the knights and bishops are mighty intelligences; for a great civilization is to grow out of The Great Scheme."

Nina's letter of 1st November 1926 to Major Mein, one of the eager volunteers for the project, reveals "I think that before long we may call upon you - my husband and I - to help us in developing the new-found country, then, all the best types of men available will be wanted!" She goes on to say the moment that she receives the call she will communicate with him and with everyone else involved "to get to work". And finally finishes with "I hope before very long you may meet in person "The Fawcett Family."

And Mein also writes to Harold Large on the 21st November 1926, "Mrs Fawcett has been in touch and speaks of future development of the newly-found country, and promises to call on me to assist in the work as soon as they are ready to operate. Everything points to my going to Brazil and the prospect makes me glad as it must prove valuable work undertaken in the company of noble-minded people."

On 4th December 1926 Large writes to Nina : "There may be more than one party ready to organize...we can all strain at the leash , but the Great Scheme is huge , and the whole of civilization is wrapped up in the work that lies behind your husband, Jack and Raleigh. They will get the help they need. Delay is hope deferred and shows that the Divine Planners have all details in hand."

Fawcett's article in *The Occult Review* of November 1923, entitled "Links with the Planetary Control" had already declared publicly his strong belief in "The Watchers" or "Great White Brotherhood"; "Our world's evolution does not proceed in any sense upon haphazard lines.... No untrained individual could retain consciousness in the presence of one of these very advanced 'Adepts'.... They are located in lands which once belonged to great civilizations." It is clear that Fawcett wanted to create his colony near to one of these mystic centres and thereby gain maximum spiritual wisdom from these beings.

To Large, Fawcett had confided: " I go out quite ready to sacrifice my life if needs be. I have no desire for honours or for the means for personal indulgence. My ideas lie in pioneering and construction with perfectly unselfish motives. Meanwhile I lead a clean, pure and honest life."

Jack was a vital part of the Great Scheme. His birth in Ceylon in 1903 was considered miraculous by Fawcett who describes it in an article he wrote for the Occult Review in February 1913.

"One morning at breakfast on the verandah a deputation of soothsayers and Buddhists asked for an audience...I was told I was about to become the father of a son whose appearance was minutely described, the reincarnation of an advanced spirit, and my wife and I had been especially selected.....the child would have a mole on the instep of the right foot, and his toes in place of a sliding scale in size would run in pairs. He would be born on Buddha's anniversary, 19th May. This date was a month beyond the time anticipated. A remarkable feature about the boy, not shared by his brother or sister, is a slight obliquity of his eyes." All the above turned out as predicted and also, on returning to Trincomalee from the military hospital at Colombo, crowds lined the route venerating the newborn evolved being.

Throughout his life Jack was proud of this event and on October 2nd 1924, just before the fatal expedition he wrote to Harold Large:

"We now have Raleigh Rimell on board who is every bit as keen as I am. He is the only intimate friend I have ever had. I knew him before I was seven years old and we have been more or less together ever since. He is absolutely honest and decent in every sense of the word and we know each other inside out. He must be connected with this journey anyway as how else would he be able to come to Ceylon with me, and he does that in a few years. I begin to look upon Ceylon as almost my own private property now, and feel quite annoyed to think that there are strangers laying down the laws there."

A chilling fact that emerges from the Secret Papers is that not only was Jack to be handed over to the Earth Guardians as an initiate but also to be transformed mentally. *His physical body was to be "taken over" by one of the ancient brothers who would then be able to live even longer within*

*Jack's healthy young physical frame.* Nina writes to Harold Large on 17th May 1928 "Strange to think that Jack, or the Being who now operates Jack's physical body is now the one in command as it were. I get no intimations regarding Raleigh Rimell at all - he seems to be a non-entity rather."

One can see that what is contained in the Secret Papers is startlingly different to that which Brian reveals to the public in Exploration Fawcett.

### *Fawcett's actual route*

Let us establish this once and for all. Fawcett enthusiasts, not to mention the relatives of those lost while searching for Facet, will be surprised. The Secret Papers indicate without doubt that he *never* went towards the Xingu and the Kuluene but *North-West* from Cuiaba towards the Tapajos and its tributary the Juruena.

His wife Nina and closest friend Harold Large had been told this because they had every intention of joining him when the earth guardians had been located so that the colony could be started and The Great Scheme got underway. Major Mein, a South African white farmer, as I mentioned, was one of those prepared to enrol in the Great Scheme. Brian and Joan would also be invited once a base was established. Nina and Harold Large knew the real route. This knowledge was essential for the eventual rendezvous. They mention the area North-West of Cuiaba again and again in the letters kept among the Secret Papers.

When the signs started to look bad and no news came out, they began to contact those who might be able to help in a rescue mission. Large wrote to Admiral Byrd asking for Sea Plane searches setting off "from the Madeira River to fly over the Roosevelt and search the Tapajos and its tributary the Juruena". Large writes to a friend "It seems to me to be so useless, so many men trying to find Fawcett where he never intended to go." And to F.J.Roberts on 13th January 1935, "They would be far away from the Xingu making as they were for the River Tapajos direction and not East at all. The news published by North Atlantic Newspaper Alliance, Fawcett's sponsor's and repeated by The Royal Geographical Society was merely a blind for Fawcett told me he could not give his real

direction to the public for many reasons." And in later years in his final letter; "What I know of their plans they probably died near the Tapajos."

There were many hints in Fawcett's letters to Nina from Cuiaba. For example concerning his preparation to meet a dangerous tribe called the Apiaca (whose land was near the Tapajos). Those on the right track were Sir John Ure in his book *Trespassers on the Amazon* who cites Stefan Rattin's encounter with Fawcett, held captive by a tribe in this area. Albert de Winton's original planned route from the Madeira River towards the Tapajoz was correct but false information from the Royal Geographical Society put him on the wrong trail and he died in vain. Patrick and Gordon Ulliyatt in the early 1930's got the area right. It must also be mentioned that a bottle containing a message from the lost expedition was found in the Baltic Sea in 1930 giving Fawcett's position not far from the banks of the Tapajos.

In *Exploration Fawcett* Brian lists *all* the numerous sightings of his father as mistaken identity or hoaxes.

But in the *Secret Papers* Brian and his mother Nina embrace at least three as absolutely genuine, the ones North-West of Cuiaba;

1) Two reports of sightings of Fawcett are mentioned in private letters as being absolutely genuine. The Swiss trapper called Stefan Rattin said he met Fawcett in 1932 and that he was held captive by a tribe North-West of Cuiaba on the Rio Bonfin near the Tapajos River. Rattin writes; "I went to Barraca do Barreto on the River Juruena a tributary of the Tapajos and after crossing the Sao Tome I kept north of the Serra Morena then turned south and eventually came to the Iguassu Ximary River, its tributary and it was on the conflux of this river with an unnamed one several miles South West of the Teles Pires River that I came upon the camp. I think the name of the place was Bocaina."

Fawcett's surviving daughter Joan remembers that Brian accepted Rattin's story as completely truthful at the time because Rattin mentioned to the authorities certain details that proved the man was Fawcett, e.g. the name of Fawcett's close friend Sir Ralph Paget (ex-Ambassador in Rio), and rings, a snake-eyed ring especially. "My father never wore rings," wrote Brian in *Exploration Fawcett*. But the bank manager in Cuiaba remembers he *did* and especially the snake-eyed one.

*Most importantly, the man showed Rattin his dental plate, with two front false teeth, for identification. Paget was convinced and urged a rescue party to be set up. Though in his secret diary Brian writes "I come to the conclusion that Rattin was telling the truth", in Exploration Fawcett Brian lists Rattin's sighting along with several others as being completely unreliable. He seems to want to put the public off the trail. In the case of another sighting by a Frenchman called Courteville, Brian also totally accepts it in private but rejects it in Exploration Fawcett.*

2) Journalist/explorers Patrick and Gordon Ulliyatt were lent a Fawcett logbook by Nina who gave full backing for their proposed search area The Rivers Roosevelt and Tapajos, North-West of Cuiaba.

3) Brian writes that the Courteville sighting near Diamantino, North West of Cuiaba, of an elderly English colonel suffering from fever and delusion *was* his father, though in Exploration Fawcett he says he is sceptical about the report. In private he says the very opposite; " That sounds exactly like Daddy."

So what is going on here? *Obviously, Brian wanted to cover up all trace of his father and brother. He does not want them to be found, nor their objective discovered or posterity to know anything whatever.*

### ***"M" decides what should be revealed***

When you read the Secret Papers, Brian's behaviour becomes crystal clear. It emerges from his diaries that for most of his life Brian was influenced by a female earth spirit that he called "M". The psychologist Carl Jung had a similar relationship with "Philemon" an elderly bearded sage. These earth spirits or elementals have been known in all cultures throughout history but have only recently in our "rational" climate been dismissed as a delusion. The psychologist Stan Gooch has written a study of these creatures and concludes that they represent a shut-off section of an individual's brain that develops independently of its owner and creates its own "personality" and then starts to communicate with the main personality. Although I remain an agnostic when it comes to the supernatural, I have to say that I have concluded through evidence that

"M" *does* have an objective reality and should be treated as a personality totally independent of Brian's subjective consciousness. Whatever the truth, the fact is that "M" guided Brian in all major things throughout his life and particularly in the amount that he was "allowed" to reveal about his father. He writes in his secret diary quoting his mentor "M";

"This morning "M" said 'You did a splendid job with Exploration Fawcett. You gave out the *superficial* story of your father which was just right for the masses, and I promoted it so the work has become the *textbook* about him. That's just as I wanted it. Ordinary people may know *that* much. What I don't want is a revelation of his *mystic side*. The story as now published is a *red herring* to obscure the *other* life."

Brian continues with an account of taking his wife Ruth to a concert:

"At 7.15 we left for the Market Hall for the concert by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. It was an electrifying evening right through, starting with Elgar. "M" came with us and in her usual way cleared a whole row for our exclusive use while elsewhere people were looking for seats! Not only did she clear our row but the row in front as well, where she herself sat close in front of me. When she comes to a concert she won't have people around her...(in the following day's entry) BBC TV in the form of one Warren, rang up to say that they contemplated putting on a show about "Fawcett, the Man" and would I be willing to furnish information? When I mentioned it to "M" she said she knew the BBC call was coming and that she'd work with me in "handling it" and furthering the "*conventional*" Fawcett story".

Unfortunately Brian's reluctance to come out with the facts led to fabricated and unfounded "Histories" emerging. Myths sprang up out of mere rumours and began to be accepted as fact. Ironically I have found that what Brian conceals in the Secret Papers is far more extraordinary than any of the wild theories that can be read on the Internet or can possibly be invented in a fictionalised dramatization.

Brian had composed Exploration Fawcett for a 1950's public who were conditioned by "The Modern Movement" and "Rationalism" and wanted just a good adventure yarn. The *real* Fawcett that Brian concealed was influenced by the famous Helena Blavatski, a Russian aristocrat, who founded the Theosophical Movement. She set out to reawaken our relationship to Nature and to our ancient instinctive qualities including

the psychic awareness of other dimensions parallel to our own. Hinduism and Buddhism influenced her. She condemned Man's materialism and wanted Humanity to stay connected to its soul. By the 1890's, during Fawcett's formative years, much of the intelligentsia of Europe and the United States became ardent followers. For some reason Blavatski liked to be known to close friends as "Jack". I believe Fawcett called his son after her and not as an abbreviation of John. Fawcett's brother Douglas while very young, was close to Blavatski, acting as her sort of 'house boy' in India and Tibet where she was in communication, she claims, with the earth guardians, The Great White Brotherhood. The Secret Papers include hundreds of pages of her works copied out by Fawcett using red typewriter ribbon.

"Exploration Fawcett" omits the mention of Fawcett's closest friend, Harold Large. In the Secret Papers, Large is mentioned a lot. According to Fawcett's daughter Joan, he was a member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. Joan told me that she believed her father had met him through that organization, though I do not believe Fawcett was actually a member of it. Later Joan recalls having tea with Aleister Crowley (the Golden Dawn's most infamous representative) with her mother in Cannes, after the disappearance of the expedition. Joan was about eighteen and looking for an eligible husband and found Crowley rather frightening.

Large was a major influence on Fawcett's view of reality. It was an unconventional one but not out of keeping with thousands of Europeans and Americans who had joined Madame Blavatski's Theosophical Society. They all rebelled against growing capitalism, materialism and nationalistic world governments. The Art Nouveau Movement of the time reflected the yearning for something ancient and forgotten to be restored and demanded that humanity retains and cultivates a soul. Seances and the paranormal experienced a huge revival (in reaction and defiance to the mind-numbing capitalist industrialization that was spreading everywhere). Joan showed me a few folders crammed with letters from mediums advising her father on everything from what route to take in the Mato Grosso, to the location of the Earth Guardians and even whether Humans can have sexual relations with Elementals. One of these mediums was Helen Bary or Bari, from California who ran the Order of the Unknown. She had read articles by Fawcett in the Occult Review and opened a correspondence with him on the very eve of his final and fatal expedition.

I found in the Secret Papers that Large and Fawcett seemed to contact scores if not hundreds of mediums between 1908 and 1924; some by post, some were invited to the Fawcett home for séances (which the quite young and impressionable Joan, Jack and Brian apparently attended) and some Large and Fawcett met by appointment in hotel rooms in London. (1st May 1919. Large to Fawcett) "On receipt of your telegram I rang up the Park View Hotel. The room is a double one and may be a little more expensive. Meanwhile Mrs Elliot has rung up to ask what we want her to do." These psychic threesomes have an almost sexual frisson about them. Though Brian writes that some of the female mediums would have readily surrendered to Daddy, "He obviously did exert some fascination on women, but in our time he was obviously immune to their charms himself. I know Mrs Andrew was potty on him and so was Mrs Hubbard (two young mediums whose letters remain among the Secret Papers). He could have had them both for the taking had he been unscrupulous enough but he was fully master of himself."

Did Large bring about Fawcett's death? Large certainly convinced Fawcett of the existence of the Great White Brotherhood and the certainty that a council of them could be found in Amazonia. He claimed to be in touch with them personally (as some people do today, incredible as that may seem). Large referred to them as "GHQ" and only did in life what "They" dictated. Fawcett was the risk taker, the pioneer of their Great Scheme, while Large sat in an armchair in New Zealand giving instructions. It was Large who sent a copy of a certain vital document to Fawcett in 1919. It was a copy of the vividly written description in Sao Paulo archives of an Amazonian lost city found by early explorers in 1753 and then lost again. Fawcett replies in a letter of 15 May 1919, " Oh Mysterious Man. Where did you gather your information of the enclosed from? Of course it is *the city*, or one of them. The curiously Greek letters described ought to be sufficient hint of its Atlantian origins". Fawcett seems to have been under Large's spell and so grateful that someone should give help and encouragement in this hostile world of cynics, materialists and dreary rationalists at the RGS.

All those who have written about Fawcett from Peter Fleming, Colin Wilson and many other quite big names have assumed that his aim in 1925 was to find an undiscovered civilization. The media have assumed that the party were killed by the Kalapalos North-East of Cuiaba and

Internet theosophists have speculated (without any proof) that Fawcett descended a cave into an underground city, millions of years old called Ibez where UFOs abound .

**In the Secret Papers it is evident that by 1924 archaeology was no longer his primary objective and may have been a ploy to get some sponsorship.**

**He had two secret objectives that have never been revealed to the public until now:**

**1. To found a colony in Amazonia for people wanting to escape materialism and develop mystic consciousness; The Great Scheme.**

**2. To deliver his son Jack to the Earth Guardians in Amazonia as an initiate and, after his training and transformation into another soul, to install him as the founder and leader of a similar mystic colony in Ceylon (Jack's birthplace).**

### *The Cast of Characters*

#### *NINA*

Nina was born in 1870 at Kalutara, sixty miles South of Colombo, Ceylon. Her father was Judge George Watson Paterson. The Judge's house was on the shores of the Indian Ocean. Brian writes that "through babyhood, the breaking waves sang their nocturne to her, till as a young child she went to her father's native Scotland to be educated."

An aunt looked after her with traditional Victorian severity. After her education, she returned to Ceylon and a life of privilege; the sort accorded to the families of high standing civil servants.

It seems she met Fawcett at a tennis party at the British fort at Galle. She nicknamed him "Puggy", he called her "Cheeky". I asked Joan "Why Cheeky? Joan said, "Because mother always had to have the last word." I then said to Joan, "Brian describes your mother as 'bumptious'" Joan laughed out loud "Oh yes! Did he really? Well, that is *so* right! Yes she was *bumptious!*" Brian thought "Cheeky" an appropriate nickname because he says that "She was not entirely free of conceit. She was not only attractive but distinctly spoilt by local society in consequence."

After Ceylon (and Jack's birth there) life was less easy. Fawcett was stationed at Spike Island, Ireland, working for the War Department. Brian was born in the bungalow there in 1906. Then, while Fawcett was away in Bolivia on and off for the next eight years, Nina did a wonderful job of running the family; renting various houses, existing on not much money. They never owned their own house. They lived next in Weston-Super-Mare and then at Whiterigg Bank, Dawlish Warren, after that at Marrick in Seaton and Waterside House in Uplyme. It was at Waterside where Joan was born in 1910 and where Brian, while still a young child, was first contacted by "M."

Nina was not just a good housewife. She must have been one of the first women to drive a car, if photographs of the early 1900's with her at the wheel are anything to go by. They rented one when necessary. She also taught Fawcett how to use the theodolite.

I spoke to an elderly lady at Stoke Canon where the Fawcetts had lived in 1924, just before the fatal expedition. She told me how she used to play with Joan and how Nina would "answer the door herself", often in a headscarf and apron. It seems then that the formal society image of a judge's daughter had changed to a more bohemian and laid back personality.

Nina was very interested in séances and astrology. When Fawcett was home, they organized them at their house with the children involved also.

Jack, Brain and Joan had a very early education in the ancient wisdom and the psychic. Documents survive that show these séances were very frequent and made an impression on Nina who would make detailed notes from the messages of the mediums. During Fawcett's penultimate expedition in 1921, Nina and the children went to live in Jamaica, because life was rather too expensive for them in England.

At the house that they rented there had once been some sort of massacre involving priests. The three children were terrified out of their minds by the nightly haunting.

Nina's life was energetic, busy and active up to 1928. After that Joan got married, Nina was alone waiting for the message to come out of Amazonia that "The Great Scheme" was underway. Until 1936 she was in correspondence with Harold Large. They were certain that Fawcett was alive and being held a captive by some tribe and devised all sorts of ways at a rescue attempt.

Nina then went to live in Lima, Peru where she would be near Brian (who was working as an engineer constructing the Peruvian railways) and also to await the call when it came from Puggy in the Mato Grosso. Here she shared a house with Everild Larson, a female explorer. Everild became a close companion and the two of them had séances and speculated about the encounter between Fawcett, Jack and Raleigh and the Great White Brotherhood.

Everild wrote a book that was published about their Atlantian life in another dimension which I have read. I would describe it as fiction, though Everild herself said that she compiled it from information from various mediums and the spirit world.

I met Everild through Rolette's husband Patrick in the early 1990's when she was a very elderly invalid. She was a deep voiced practical person with a no nonsense outlook (quite the opposite to what I had expected). Kindly she told me about the Fawcett family in later years (1948 onwards). She said they had become dysfunctional, always at odds, Nina pushed back and forth between Brian in England and Joan in Switzerland, always causing domestic turmoil, never having much money and never a permanent place to live. Everild described Brian as having a chip on his shoulder and as being very jealous of Jack." He never forgave his father for taking Jack to Amazonia and not him". When I asked about Brian's air

search for Jack in the jungles Everild replied, "He was terrified of finding Jack! He did not *want* to find him. He probably went through the motions for the sake of his mother's memory but that's all."

Despite Brian's preference for his mother as a good parent rather than his father, in later life he found her very difficult. When she stayed with him, she removed things secretly that she considered were rightly hers (such as the Buddha given to Fawcett by the three Buddhist prophets at Jack's birth).

At times he found her presence distasteful. As some elderly people do, she "sometimes smells of urine, is reckless with money which she does not have, she talks to complete strangers in the street, in fact she talks people into a stupor" confides Brian in his diary, adding "Hoping only that Mother's visit will leave us with some dregs of sanity." Then she would be pushed off to stay with Joan's family in Switzerland. The peace there did not last long either. Apparently Joan hit Nina twice for being rude about her family and Nina called the police declaiming, "My daughter is trying to kill me!!" There was no restful haven for Nina now and her last years were spent in reduced circumstances and loneliness. Brian at this time felt his mother was even more self-centred than his father had been, "She has no other conversation other than herself. Today she talked herself silly and us into a stupor, boasting and bragging intolerably... And she gets people's attention and sympathy by feigning physical infirmity."

In the Secret Papers Brian writes that his mother's karma was seriously damaged by her "blurting out Daddy's secret story to such people as Everild and others". Brian was convinced that she brought her sad end upon herself. After World War II, in the grey climate of austere Britain, Nina moved from one dismal guest house to another. She annoyed the other elderly ladies of reduced means and would be asked to leave. Finally she ended up at a dingy boarding house in Brighton where she died of food poisoning. Brian and the family suspected murder. The landlady had had several old ladies die on her premises and the police *did* investigate.

Nina was Fawcett's most loyal supporter and one could say her life was sacrificed to him and his memory.

### ***RUTH***

Brian's wife Ruth was also loyal and a fantastic support to her husband and his highly unconventional existence. I heard that it was rumoured Ruth was an illegitimate close relation to Elizabeth, the late Queen Mother. Brian met Ruth at the British embassy in Lima, Peru and found her well educated and somewhat of a linguist.

Brian had lost his first wife Charlotte quite suddenly and needed a partner in life who would be staunchly domestic to give himself a feeling of security and a semblance of normal family life, probably to balance out the strain of his intense *secret* life.

Ruth did not know a thing about Brian's inner life. She found a man who looked after her kindly, took her for trips in the car; days out visiting interesting places. Brian even took her to Brazil when he went to pick up the fake skeleton, though Ruth stayed in Rio while Brian went into the jungles. Ruth undoubtedly suffered from insecurity. She was awed by Nina and Joan. Ruth was awed by most people and did not like visitors and was at her happiest when she and Brian were playing chess together by the oil stove. There was virtually no money but there was the pride of being married to Fawcett's son.

Ruth had started out in the rather privileged world of embassy life in Peru. She seemed to have had a wealthy upbringing, but after arriving in England as Brian's wife in post war Britain all that went and she appears in photographs in rather drab clothes. As with Nina, the strain of the Fawcett legacy took its toll on Ruth. For years Ruth could pretend there was nothing wrong. Brian would disappear on many evenings into his "studio". When you see the bungalow in Durdar Road Carlisle, you realise "the studio" must have been quite small. Ruth never entered this room. Brian spent hours and hours in communicating with his other realities. Ruth never questioned (I suppose she imagined he was writing or painting). Brian confides in his diary "It seems amazing that Ruthie should continue in blissful ignorance of what goes on in this house."

Finally Ruth did have some sort of breakdown which included hallucinations. Perhaps she was more aware than Brian supposed and the attack came out of her years of suppressed anxiety about the nature of her relationship to such an unusual man. Another victim of the Fawcett Saga,

Ruth survived Brian which meant she not only lost her one close friend but also her home in Carlisle and spent her remaining life first kindly looked after by Rolette and her husband Patrick and then in a home. No doubt she was polite about it all but one feels she must have spent her final days in fear and insecurity.

### ***RALEIGH RIMELL***

A most unlikely person to be caught up with the Fawcett Saga but one of its primary victims was Raleigh. He was the son of a Seaton doctor and was at school with Jack and Brian at the college in Newton Abbot, Devon. Raleigh was an excellent shot with the catapult and loved practical jokes. He and Jack raced through the Devon lanes on their motorbikes. They planned to go to Hollywood and become movie stars. Jack, always under the watchful eye of his devoted father, needed a pal to have a good laugh with. Raleigh was light relief.

On the liner to Rio, Raleigh fell for one of the passengers, a Duke's daughter, and proposed, threatening to jeopardise the integrity of the expedition. Fawcett soon put a stop to that. When they reached Cuiaba and spent weeks waiting for provisions to be assembled, Fawcett was off alone attending séances and Macumba rituals, while Raleigh encouraged Jack to go out for wild evenings learning the latest South American dances and drinking. Fawcett writes to Nina that he is not surprised Raleigh was sick for eight days because of his excessive life style.

Fawcett's asceticism was now at its height and he was intolerant of weaknesses in others. "Fully able to control his own corporal desires by an effort of will, he regarded those who could not do so as moral degenerates," comments Brian. In the last letters Jack writes to his mother that Raleigh does not seem to take the mystical side seriously and keeps mumbling "It's all beyond me".

Perhaps with the years of subtle preparation for Jack's role in "The Great Scheme" Raleigh should have been briefed more to match the others. It seems that he believed he was going along for an extended adventure holiday, having no inkling of the dangers that lay ahead. What with that and the foot rot he developed a few days into the final journey, Raleigh has always been considered a let down. The foot rot may

have been caused by the leather boots Fawcett insisted were worn by the three and not from anything Raleigh did wrong.

However, Raleigh comes out of the Fawcett expedition as the weakest link who impeded progress. The subsequent writers on the subject (nearly all lacking the appropriate research and relying on tittle-tattle), some of them mediums, such as the well known Geraldine Cummins, make Raleigh out as the villain of the piece; a materialist who never had his heart in the expedition and messed things up by being a liability.

On 26th September 1961 a German, Dr Wilhelm Gall sent an extraordinary letter to Brian via the British Consul in Brazil stating that Raleigh was still alive and had become a gold prospector existing in the wilds, happy with his life. If Raleigh was so materialistic, then perhaps he should not have been urged to go along in the first place.

### *JACK*

On the liner back from Ceylon, as the family were returning to England, Jack was lying on deck still a babe in swaddling clothes and astonished passengers when he picked up a nearby dumb bell and pointing uttered his first words, "Dat's Stromboli!" as the ship sailed by the famous volcano. Brian writes that as an evolved being Jack should not have been given the traditional British public school education which would surely normalize him into a conformist.

Certainly Jack was unhappy at Wellington. The headmaster asked Nina to take him away from the school because he was not following the rules. Nina drove up in her hired limousine and gave the headmaster a piece of her mind. "I dislike your regime so much that I am going to take away my younger son as well. Jump in Brian!" and she drove off with them both. Jack spent time walking along the beach at Seaton with a volume of Max Rhoemer and bag of toffees in his pocket. He liked to be alone. He felt special and he enjoyed the attention of Harold Large and corresponded with him about his own future role in The Great Scheme.

Joan told me that "Jack was incredibly bossy"; he was touchy about his dignity and if he caught her or Brian laughing at him over any trifle he

would give them a good biff. Brian says that at the home in Stoke Canon, near Exeter, just before the final expedition, Jack was conscious of his physical fitness for the trials ahead and offered to get water from the well and do other heavy work to increase his muscle power rather than wanting to be helpful.

Brian writes in the unpublished "Fawcett Logs"; "It is only to be expected in view of the unusual circumstances surrounding his birth that Jack should have had all his father's attention...that Jack's mission in life was tied up intimately with his own. For his part, Jack was the reflection of his father, and at the same time Jack was the 'superior one'. They shared the same talents, enjoyed the same pastimes, there was the same ability at games, especially cricket. But Daddy was never demonstrative with him. The only living creatures to get his demonstrative attention were our two fox terriers. My sister and I would watch these love fests with a certain wistfulness, for we two were given no sign that he felt any real love for *us*. We were never jealous. Our affection for him was scarcely strong enough. My feeling in his presence was one of uncomfortable apprehension, like being in the company of a well-disposed but uncertain schoolmaster. I felt relieved when he was out of the way." Joan echoes this when she told me how she and Brian were *relieved* when Fawcett and Jack had gone. Now they could become people in their own right without being in the shadow of the two giants.

Jack's forgetfulness was a byword in the family. He was put in charge of packing certain things for the final expedition and forget to do his crucial task. Brian describes him as "gauche" and hopes that he will conduct himself in the proper way once they reach Rio and are being entertained by the local worthies.

After their sea voyage to Rio, the three began to use their adopted names recommended by Zahr Pritchard (a fellow passenger aboard the liner SS Vauban) and sign them on their letters home, exactly as described in the play. Fawcett was Zahas, Jack Sajaz and Raleigh Roxor. Jack's final letters to his mother from Mato Grosso (taken back by the two mule handlers Simao and Gardenia who left at Dead Horse Camp) show that Sajaz was in good spirits and when one day Zahaz went keenly ahead of the others and they got lost, Jack took command and restored the situation until Fawcett returned to find them. Jack would be the first to swim the rivers with a rope to aid the party across these dangerous obstacles.

But what happened then? Evidence in the Secret Papers shows they were all separated. One account claims Fawcett backtracked to civilization to get help because Jack and Raleigh had been captured by Indians. Numerous accounts tell of a worn out Fawcett wandering alone. The Frenchman Courtville said he met him North-West of Cuiaba, insect-eaten and mentally confused. Harold Gordon Graham claims he found Fawcett "but that his reason was so far gone that we couldn't bring him out." Brian wrote at the time that the descriptions certainly fitted (as he also initially accepted Rattin's sighting), only to reject all of them in *Exploration Fawcett* for the reasons given earlier- to put the public right off the trail. Intriguingly, Brian himself claims he might have met his father when he encountered an ancient vagrant in the streets of Sao Paolo in 1955.

Jack too was sighted apparently (from an airplane "A tall white man amongst the Indians"). There was even a claim that Jack had fathered an Indian child, but the boy was found to be an albino. Nina certainly believed Jack to be alive in 1948 and persuaded Brian to do his eventual air search. There are many stories of white men becoming hermits and living alone in Mato Grosso. I came across at least two in the jungles; very elderly, educated Germans, probably ex-Nazi refugees if local rumours were anything to go by.

There is no reason why Jack should not have decided to stay outside civilization especially if the expected climax to the Great Scheme had not materialized. Of course there are quite a few who disagree with that scenario and claim Jack and his father live to this day in the underground city of Ibez in the Roncador mountains and deserve the annual ritual worship from the local modern day theosophists.

### ***BRIAN***

Brian explains his own character a great deal in the text of this play. There is not much more that I can say here. His role has been absolutely crucial in the Fawcett Saga. Not only did he revive world interest in the Fawcett mystery with his best seller *Exploration Fawcett*, but had the gift of communication that put his father back on the map as a distinguished explorer. With "M" he devised the "textbook" which was to entertain the public but totally mislead the so-called experts on the subject who will

now have to go back to square one. Brian's Secret Papers will shake a lot of people who had made their minds up about the mystery.

Over nearly fifty years Brian created the confusion by his secrecy but produced a unique archive which when examined reveals a huge amount never dreamed of by those who have tried to unravel the mystery. Brian thought of himself as more spiritually and psychically evolved than his father and brother and modelled his own "Amazonia" in the grounds of Corby Castle near Carlisle. There he could explore other dimensions with "M" and encounter a river and rapids similar to the topography in Mato Grosso and even discover pagan statues and temple ruins created by some Gothick Regency landscape designer of bygone days. Corby was a focus for Brian's meditation and a most useful one. He felt that whenever he mixed with ordinary people it diminished him and that "modern life" was the agreement of the smug to keep up pretences.

### "M"

According to Joan, "M" influenced Brian for most of his life and may have been responsible for his death. As a child Brian was confronted by "M" in the garden at Waterside, the family house at Uplyme. For many years there was no contact and then in Peru, after Brian experienced a serious railway accident when a steam engine exploded, and after his first wife Charlotte's sudden death, his psychic powers came flowing back and "M" began to deeply influence his life. It was she who urged him to give up a well-paid job on the Bolivian railways and return to Carlisle, near the Fawcett ancestral home, Scaleby Castle.

Like Carl Jung's own elemental or sith (the Celtic term) "Philemon", she explained to Brian the ancient wisdom and much of it matched the concepts of Madame Blavatski's Theosophy which Blavatski herself had learned from "higher forces."

Brian's portrait of "M" done in 1937 shows a young Celtic looking girl with vibrant blue eyes and black hair. Another portrait of 1971 shows a woman in her early forties, strong faced, beautiful and timeless. She appeared to Brian in different guises; varied dress according to the

occasion and even in the shape of animals. She lived in his bungalow but would go off mysteriously to meetings with other siths on particular days and of the year (dates which tally with Celtic Irish sith legends).

She was a guru to Brian, encouraging him to achieve a high level of mysticism, and was the crucial influence in what he released about the Fawcett story to the public and media. "She latched on to Brian" as Joan says. Apparently a relationship with a human opens up another dimension for a sith and this is why throughout history there are reports of them doing just this. Inevitably she and Brian must have fallen out during Brian's last years and she went off to find other humans to influence and relate to. Her emotions were closer to that of an animal and were a part of Nature itself. She could be affectionate but her feelings had the moral detachment of Nature that can be viewed by humans at times as heartless.

Brian, thoroughly disgusted with a conditioned sterile society of clones created by governments to keep people stupid and in ignorance, was everlasting grateful to "M". "Each year becomes more important to me and 'M' bears me along with growing impetus and herself becomes more influential in my everyday normal activities. International affairs seem of little importance beside my personal life. A lot of what she teaches me may be passed on to descendents or close relatives and thus need not be lost since it may be a long time before another member of the family is given the faculties I enjoy."

### *ALBERT de WINTON and JESS*

These two are not entirely historical as the others are. Every drama needs antagonists to create the conflict essential in a play. The main antagonists in the Fawcett saga were undoubtedly the media and the press and they still are. Only recently Joan in Switzerland had yet another TV crew uninvited on her doorstep demanding the facts about her father. Albert and Jess represent to Brian the rude and crude assaults on his father's story and the attempts to commercialise it over a fifty-year period.

However both are based on real people who I have transplanted to the 1980's to emphasise the story's ongoing drama into our own times. The original Albert de Winton died in 1933. He was of British origin but had gone to Hollywood to become an actor and impresario. He gave up everything to go and look for Fawcett. His close friend Aida de Milt (who I have renamed Jess and saved the original name for her American producer friend) circulated the news of his death to various authorities. By the sound of her letters she was dismayed by Albert's obsession and felt he had wasted his life.

Albert de Winton wrote to the Royal Geographical Society on 24th August 1932 stating his planned route, "I intend to ascend the Madeira River, then along the Guapore when I shall cross overland into the Mato Grosso. Please accept my thanks for any information you can give me relative to Col P.H. Fawcett" Albert was completely on the right track. He would have reached the River of Doubt (The Roosevelt) and then the Tapajos headwaters (exactly the route of Rattin and the Ulliyatt brothers), but the RGS in their wisdom seem to have passed on the false Dyott coordinates to him. It seems Albert took this advice and went to his death in an area that Fawcett had never visited. Aida de Milt wrote that he had been poisoned by a tribe who resented his presence and set him afloat very ill in a canoe.

I have given to Albert some of Hugh MCarthy's story. In 1949, Hugh, a New Zealand schoolteacher, set off from a Mato Grosso church mission at Peixoto in a canoe with six carrier pigeons given to him by Rev. Jonathan Wells. Some came back with the message that he had found "Z", the lost city and then a final message that he was dying. The authorities concluded that Hugh must have lost his mind before his death.

In the play nobody escapes from the whirlpool that eventually sucks every one in. Albert and Jess start out as typical stressed out media people, almost banally stereotyped, and then they gradually evolve as events take hold. Even Jess, the staunchest antagonist of all, finally succumbs.

## FAWCETT

Enough biography has appeared in the preface and the play but there are a few extra points to make briefly:

In the Secret Papers we get a description by Brian certainly not found in Exploration Fawcett: "Concerning his South American work...let anyone question his cherished theories on the pre-Colombian history of the continent and a shattering condemnation of the critic's knowledge was immediately forthcoming. Let anyone voice a preference for expedition methods different from his own and his scorn was immediate. Himself in his later years a pronounced ascetic, his expedition parties set out with equipment so rigorously pared down to the barest minimum that any member thereof who voiced apprehension was at once condemned as useless. This of course made it very difficult to find anyone willing to accompany him - or in his eyes - fit to do so."

Brian writes in his journal that the short autobiographical story his father wrote in 1905 "The Hot Wells of Konniar" is the key to his future life and destiny. It also explains Fawcett's outlook that "Reality is a state of mind; it is totally subjective." The essay describes how Fawcett was given some white powder by a fakir in Ceylon and spent the night in a grove by the sacred wells and had a vision that instructed him about the course that he must take in his life.

"But why did Daddy destroy one particular sheet of his manuscript?" writes Brian. "The clues add up to overwhelming evidence. I asked Mother if she had any idea and she said 'it had something to do with some woman, but he destroyed the sheet because he thought it might be offensive to me.' "

Brian notes his father wrote on another occasion "I once met a messenger of the gods...an angel" and concludes that he might have met "M" at the sacred wells. To Mrs Bari, the medium Fawcett was in touch with right up to the end, he wrote asking if she knew anything about unions between humans and elementals and she replied on 23rd October 1923;

"I was so glad you mentioned the possibility of unions between human beings and 'faeries' as I have thought a good deal about that. Elementals have a desire to mate with humans so as to acquire immortality."

Brian goes on to write, "The Jewish legends about Lilith say that she was the first wife of Adam before Eve was given to him. By this means she became the mother of all uncanny things who share this planet invisibly with mortals and are known in many cultures as the fairy races or the Djinn."

Brian proudly concludes that he is far more evolved than his father who he feels was "polluted" by the traditional British public school education. "It was because he realized the higher perception was not his that he so eagerly resorted to those whom he believed possessed it and could aid him by seeing that which to his own eyes was obscure."

Concerning Fawcett's daring and "recklessness", Joan told me how he once took her on his motor bike at great speed round the Devon lanes. It skidded on a corner and both went sailing through the air and landed in a nearby field. "Daddy gave us a tremendous amount of fun, because he didn't realize the danger. But he should have realized. He was always encouraging us to climb across roofs and up trees while Mother was beside herself with worry. Once I fell on the cervical vertebrae of my neck and that cost me a fortnight in bed with high delirium and unconscious. Since I had that accident my neck has always been slightly stooped." She added "Daddy also liked playing tricks. Mother had more of a gentler sense of humour. Though he could be cold and biting, he never lost his temper."

As I write this, I hear that another expedition will be setting off soon - this time in the right direction. Using details from me from this play and from the Secret Papers, they intend to solve the mystery. If they find the location of the village where Rattin met Fawcett, being held as a captive in 1932, the chances are that the tribe (probably Apiacas, a branch of the Nambiquara) are now extinct but some of their elders may still be around, possibly living in the shanty slums of Sao Paolo. If one of them could be tracked down, he or she might remember the white captive and we may get closer to discovering his fate.

After researching all this for 20 years (friends say it has been far too long) and sifting through the Secret Papers for eight of those years, the play and this preface merely state what I have found.

# ***"AMAZONIA"***

***a dark comedy***

by

Misha Williams

***Moorwood Productions. Tel: 01749 679459***

Literary agent: Peters, Fraser & Dunlop  
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The play is a dark comedy. It is based entirely on real events. In 1925, the Fawcett expedition to unexplored Amazonia disappeared without trace. Recently, a trunk of archives belonging to Brian Fawcett, the explorer's younger son, was opened for the first time. They reveal the full impact that the tragedy had on the family over a period of seventy years. They uncover unusual realities and extraordinary notions. Through Brian's memory and stream of consciousness, the play discloses the amazing secrets behind the greatest exploration mystery of the 20th century.

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*"There is every reason to believe that there is a certain point within the mind from which life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the high and the low are no longer perceived contradictorily"...*

*"The only images capable of conveying a lofty idea are those which create in one's consciousness a state of surprise and insecurity calculated to raise the consciousness to the idea in question, where it can be grasped in all its freshness and strength. Magic rites and genuine poetry serve no other purpose".*

from **"The Morning of the Magicians"**  
by Louis Pauwels and Jaques Bergier

*"A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth looking at"*

Oscar Wilde

### Elementals:

*"Carl Jung regularly evoked a person he called Philemon who became a kind of guide and teacher to him".*

*"An individual who harbours strong desires creates an elemental which can be regarded as a living entity. In certain cases elementals may have been invested with so much energy that they achieve a certain degree of independence of their creator".*

from **"The Dictionary of Mind and Spirit"**  
by Donald Watson

**THE CAST:**

BRIAN, in his fifties.

RUTH, his wife.

"M," an exotic female elemental.

NINA FAWCETT, Brian's mother.

ALBERT DE WINTON, in his forties.

JESS, forty.

FAWCETT, Brian's father.

JACK, Brian's brother.

RALEIGH, Jack's friend.

**THE SET:**

On the left of the stage, a black space with two or three contemporary pieces of furniture. This is "the present." On the right, a grey space represents "the past" and the world of thoughts and memories. However, the two realities (and areas) gradually merge together.

**ACT ONE**

## SCENE ONE. AMAZONIA.

*Darkness. Jungle sounds; a gentle morning chorus. Grey, misty light slightly illuminates an empty stage. The noise of a single engine plane intrudes from the distance. It comes closer. We hear flocks of parrots screeching and taking off. The plane swoops low with an ugly invasive sound and white leaflets drop down. The engine drone diminishes for a moment but then the plane returns to make another dive. A tall savage figure emerges, moving in a dreamy, almost zombie-like slow motion. The figure picks up a leaflet with indifference. From the passing plane we hear a shrill voice through a megaphone.*

## BRIAN'S VOICE

Jack!! Are you down there, Jack?! It's your brother! It's Brian !

*The figure examines the leaflet. It **is** JACK who has not seen writing for years. He looks at it as if the message was in hieroglyphics.*

## BRIAN'S VOICE

If you're down there, come out and wave!! I've come to take you home, Jack!!!

*JACK is convulsed with a burst of savage, almost insane, laughter. Then with conviction (and in a public school accent which contrasts crazily with his Indian appearance) he speaks quietly.*

## JACK

No thanks, Brian, old chap. I'd rather not.

*The plane roars off. JACK disappears into the darkness.*

## SCENE TWO. CARLISLE.

*Outside Brian's bungalow ALBERT DE WINTON tests his portable recording gear. He is about to do an interview for radio. JESS carries his bag and briefcase.*

ALBERT

Testing...one, two, three. (*Earnestly*) We present "The Fawcett Catastrophe." The greatest exploration mystery of the 20th century by...*Albert de Winton*...Testing.

*As he plays the recording back JESS puts down his gear.*

JESS

All... Extra batteries! You better take some.

*She starts to go.*

ALBERT

Jess! Aren't you coming in?... After five hours driving here!!

JESS

No. I'm just going over to Tesco. I need some Tampax.

ALBERT

Oh, typical ! Your priorities! Christ!

JESS

(*Leaving breezily*) I'll pick you up in an hour.

ALBERT

Oh, fuck! Thanks a *lot!* I thought you might be *interested!*

*Inside Brian's bungalow. BRIAN enters. He wears khaki shorts, open sandals with grey socks, a green eyeshade and metal framed National Health glasses. RUTH scrambles across the stage. She looks not unlike the Queen Mother. Half really afraid, half exaggerated joking.*

RUTH

Aiiiiyeee! Darling!! I think there's that mouse again in the kitchen!

BRIAN

The BBC chappie's just arriving. I'll sort *him* out first and *then* I'll sort out "Mickey Mouse". Gosh, they're attacking on all fronts this morning.

RUTH *hurries off and a beautiful dark-haired woman comes from the direction of the kitchen. She is "M," an "elemental," who embraces all times and all cultures in her face and can only be seen by BRIAN. She looks a bit sheepish about frightening RUTH.*

BRIAN

You! Honestly! Will you *behave!*

*With an impish shrug to BRIAN she goes off...*

MUSIC. *The scene breaks as BRIAN and ALBERT arrange themselves at the table for the next scene.*

SCENE THREE. CARLISLE BUNGALOW

BRIAN and ALBERT *seated, engaged in a standard radio interview for a Radio Four feature.*

ALBERT

So your father had a really audacious agenda for his final expedition...to find in the heart of South America the origins of world civilization. A breathtaking challenge to orthodox science! Sweeping Egypt and Sumeria aside like that!

BRIAN

Oh yes. He was convinced that south of the mighty Amazon, in the Mato Grosso, a still largely unexplored area, was a *hidden city* containing the remnants of the world's very first civilization. He called this place "Z".

ALBERT

And he took along your elder brother Jack? Still in his early twenties. And actually turned down Lawrence of Arabia who was *desperate* to go with him on the expedition.

BRIAN

It *is* extraordinary that he should turn down the famous Lawrence...

ALBERT

And take a young inexperienced lad instead...

BRIAN

Well, there were reasons which I won't go into here. Yes, Jack went. He was on the same wavelength as my father. But not me.

ALBERT

And Jack's very close friend, Raleigh?

BRIAN

Yes.

ALBERT

And they never returned... How *distressed* did your mother and the rest of the family feel?

BRIAN

*(Sarcastic and impatient about the typical cliché media question)* "Vaguely" to "Medium" distressed. If we're applying the Richter scale; "Five" perhaps.

ALBERT

A secret city still with its original population hidden away from the modern world? A whole ancient undiscovered culture...What did you think as they were setting off? You were twenty then.

BRIAN

I wasn't too impressed. I wasn't a dreamer like my father and Jack. I was a practical lad and so I left for Peru to work as an apprentice railway engineer building railways over the Andes. I had a wonderful, exciting career.

ALBERT

But when the years went by and the three had not returned...You and your mother and sister Joan...You weren't terribly distressed, then?

BRIAN

*(Impatiently)* There was a probability that my father and the others had *chosen* to stay *in there!*

ALBERT

Extraordinary.

BRIAN

Several years perhaps. There was no point in returning before he found "Z" and solid proof of his theory. His last letter to my mother from a place called Dead Horse Camp, because it was where one of his horses died, said; "Don't worry if we are gone several years and for God's sake don't let rescue parties come looking for us".

ALBERT

But the rescue parties got underway didn't they? Many people lost their lives "Looking for Fawcett."

BRIAN

Over the next twenty years probably a hundred adventurers lost their lives looking for my father. It was a fashionable alternative to joining the foreign legion. If you were tired of life or crossed in love...well then, "Go and look for Fawcett in the swamps of Amazonia!"

ALBERT

The world began to forget your father until you published your best seller "Exploration Fawcett" outlining his previous adventures.

BRIAN

My book put my father firmly on the world map. I was even invited by the Brazilian government to look at some skeleton purported to be his. Of course it proved to be a hoax. The Brazilian government wanted to stop these Fawcett seekers coming in, fearing they were really foreign agents and so produced a body to finally close the case. It turned out to be the skeleton of a five foot two Indian found in an area the Fawcett party had never visited, besides which my father and the others were over six feet tall.

ALBERT

And you thought Jack might still be alive?...

BRIAN

Yes. I hired a plane and flew over thousands of square miles and whenever the pilot and I spotted a clearing with smoke from Indian fires we'd swoop down and drop leaflets. It was terrifying. Especially when the single engine occasionally started sputtering and stalling. Well, I never found Jack.

ALBERT

...So let's talk a little now about your father's personal background. His inner beliefs and so on.

BRIAN

No. Let's *not* talk about them.

ALBERT

Why?

BRIAN

You damn well know *why!!* Because I asked you not to when we negotiated this interview. So just let's unplug this...

*BRIAN dives forward in a rage and rips the microphone cord from the tape recorder.*

ALBERT

No, please! That's BBC property!

BRIAN

Good! I shall enjoy stamping on it then if you don't get out of my house right now!

ALBERT

Is this really necessary?

*BRIAN lunges menacingly at ALBERT till they are face to face.*

BRIAN

*(With quiet venom)* I requested and you agreed you would avoid questions about my father's personal life.

ALBERT

But couldn't we talk? I mean without recording. I have a special interest. 'Always have. I feel there's something unspoken, about this story...Unfinished.

BRIAN

It's finished where *you're* concerned! So... *Good-bye, Mr. de Winton!!*

*Loud sound effect of music like a giant door slam. The scene shatters. BRIAN moving into the darkness of his bungalow and into the arms of "M", as ALBERT paces the street outside. JESS arrives.*

SCENE FOUR. CARLISLE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE BUNGALOW

*We see and hear both sets of dialogue; ALBERT and JESS and BRIAN and "M,"*

BRIAN

Phew! That was a close one!

"M"

You did very well, darling. I almost felt sorry for him.

*Outside. JESS returning.*

ALBERT

Oh my God, what a disaster.

JESS

What happened?

ALBERT

If you'd shown the slightest interest, Jess, you'd have seen what happened. He threw me out! I just wanted to get to the *core* of the story, and he went ballistic.

JESS

(Laughing) I told you! The Fawcetts are *mad!* I was right. You're not going to get anywhere with this project.

*They start to go.*

ALBERT

Right, I'm not giving up. If he presents a barrier, we've got to go and meet his mother. Fawcett's wife will know *everything...!*

JESS

Oh, she's not still *alive*, is she? Oh, my God!

*They exit.*

BRIAN

There's a curse, isn't there? You said so. On people who delve into Daddy's secret background?

"M"

Yes. Anyone who violates it... Especially for money...Suffers! And in *some* cases that means *death!*

*Music. Light change.*

SCENE FIVE. BRIAN'S LIVING ROOM.

BRIAN *sits on the sofa.* "M" *massages his neck.* RUTH *comes in with a cup of tea and some cakes. She lays them out on the table.*

RUTH

Oh, it's such a relief to be alone, darling. I just find visitors such a disturbance.

BRIAN

Ooh! Cupcakes!

RUTH

I'm not even going to bother going into town to see the Queen Mother's visit. Not after watching that programme which said she's just an old cow. And greedier for clothes than Princess Di!

BRIAN

I can't stand any of the Windsors or the Gluckstein-Battenbergs as they are really called. How they got our address to ask us to their garden party I cannot imagine. I wouldn't be seen dead inside Buckingham Palace. All that patriotic pomp and boasting. What have we got to boast about, for God's sake? This country's in the process of dying. No great music, no great works of art. Everything's cheap. Imported, worthless American culture that makes people dangerously puerile. The only hopeful aspect is that there are individuals like myself who see through it all and deplore it.

*"M" has finished massaging and looks slightly bored. RUTH comes over and hands BRIAN a cup of tea but "M" reaches forward and takes it and puts it down on the coffee table. RUTH watches horrified and then lets out a howl.*

RUTH

*(Quite calmly, trying to accept what has happened as normal)* Oh! I'm so sorry. I just. I don't know what is going on with my mind. I imagine things. Floating around on their own. I'll just go and lie down for a moment. Ooh.

BRIAN

I'm sorry dear. *(Calling after her)* Are you alright, Ruth?

*RUTH has left without hearing him. He turns to "M,"*

BRIAN

Don't do that to poor Ruth! That was nasty, scaring her unnecessarily.

"M"

Sorry. I got bored. We *get* bored, we *siths*. Just like you humans get bored, *siths* also get bored, you know! I like playing tricks. So don't be so stuffy!

*She goes away from him like a spoiled, restless child despite her agelessness.*

"M"

And I *don't* like you telling me off. So I'm *not* giving you a lesson today. (*She gives him a frightening glare*) I'm going out! I don't like the way your farmer next door treats his cows, so I think I'll go and zap him.

BRIAN

(*Humouring her*) Quite right. If he lived in India he would be stoned for treating cows like that. Give him a good heart attack!

"M" *leaves*

Rid the Earth of some dross!

*He turns to audience and speaks to them.*

BRIAN

After I'm dead, someone's going to find my private diaries and think I'm completely dotty! Life for me has turned out in a completely unique way...

*He unlocks his secret cupboard and takes out one of many volumes of his journals*

But what is "Reality"? There *is* no *one* reality. What is real to *you* may be something quite different to what is real to me. So when the call came, I, a successful railway engineer, answered it. St. Paul got it on the road to Damascus. I got it at the Macumba Café in Lima. When "the call" comes, that's it. You're in someone else's hands. I had been aware of her unseen presence, but it was one June 11th when she actually appeared in all her glory and gave me that one look and said...

"M"

(*Offstage*) I think...I've *got* you.

BRIAN

She *had* got me. My whole life was suddenly clear. I had to give up my job and Peru my adopted country, and return to England. She said it was essential to live in the land of my ancestors and told me to settle in Cumberland. It's a bit remote but the business of raising a barrier to keep other people out is one of the prices to be paid for instruction in the "Higher Wisdom." I had to sacrifice everything that is normally considered desirable. Social friendships, professional success, having children...My beautiful first wife Charlotte (*He is on the verge of tears*)... was taken away from me very suddenly.....with our unborn child still in her womb (*He recovers himself and resumes a matter of fact determination*). So, coming back to England I had to start here afresh with a new wife, an un-exotic soul yes, but who would keep me untrammelled to proceed on my quest. And Ruth is perfect for the job. Was it all worth the price exacted? I answer an unhesitating "Yes."

*Strange low music. BRIAN locks his diary away and opposite him, on the grey side of the stage, three ragged figures appear through the darkness. They are FAWCETT, JACK and RALEIGH, doomed to wander in purgatory; murky, half-remembered figures in the minds of their surviving relatives. They move in a slow hesitant motion like Bruegel's "The parable of the blind." "M" appears behind them and taking FAWCETT by the arm leads him playfully towards BRIAN.*

"M"

Brian.

BRIAN

(To "M") No. Not now. I'm not up to confronting...

FAWCETT

What did you want to ask me?

BRIAN (*sheepishly*)

Er...How long will you be away this time?

FAWCETT

Two years or more even. Don't let your mother worry if it's more than two years.

BRIAN

Why are you taking Jack? I thought he was going to become a film star. Jungles are too sweaty for him surely?

FAWCETT

Jack has shown an interest in my work.

BRIAN

And why Raleigh in heavens name? He's damn lazy. He'll be a liability.

FAWCETT

Raleigh is a first rate photographer and will be *indispensable!*

BRIAN

I don't see why...I can't...

FAWCETT

*("Sympathetically" and quietly)* You can't see why I won't take *you*. It's because you've never shown an interest in my work. Or have much imagination for that matter. It's hard for a father to see so little progress in a younger son who seems so un-evolved. Well, you get your job in your grimy little foundry and your apprenticeship *on the railways* if that's your life's aim...

NINA'S *voice is heard calling gaily.*

NINA

Jack! Jack darling! I'm packing you some toffees. I know you love these ones. They'll be just the thing when the going gets tough *(She laughs)*.

BRIAN

*(Screams out)* Oh for CHRIST'S SAKE! LEAVE ME ALONE! *(To himself)* Anyway, why shouldn't I become the Joseph Conrad of Railways?

*Music. Light change. Memories flood back in BRIAN'S mind.  
FAWCETT and NINA together. BRIAN at a distance.*

FAWCETT

*(To NINA)* My weakness is hypersensitivity. Have you never felt, under my apparent calm, the volcano of nervousness that's always there? It's a foolish weakness that I've got to conquer. It's a sort of Fear...I've never been free of it. All my life. I had such a rotten childhood. The kicks. The snubs of my parents...

BRIAN

*(To the audience)* He can talk!

FAWCETT

They were always over critical. Sending me to Westminster School developed in me a profound loathing of the English system of education. It was a brutal place...

BRIAN

...Where individual thought was considered evil...

FAWCETT

Any questioning or creativity was sadistically punished. Army life was just as bad. It consisted of dominating and exploiting foreign races. That's why I refused to collect my DSO. Daily life in England was class snobbery, dishonesty, greed, hypocrisy. To get on in my career, I had to hide my feelings. But that didn't banish my hate. It increased it. This vile reality they imprison us in!..... That's why I escape into exotic ancient cultures, a golden past.... a pure Arcadia. Am I strange? Am I extreme?

*NINA hugs her husband.*

NINA

Oh, Puggy.

BRIAN

I eavesdropped on that last conversation of theirs and for the first time in my life, I felt great warmth for Daddy. He certainly had a point. Explorers have two faces; one that the world sees and admires, and a secret one... seldom revealed.

SCENE SIX. GUEST HOUSE

ALBERT, JESS and NINA enter down stage. NINA is pushed in a wheelchair by ALBERT.

NINA

My husband's nickname for me was "Cheeky." He said it was because I always had to have the last word...

*They settle at the table.*

ALBERT

You think it possible he could still be alive?

JESS starts a huge yawn.

NINA

Oh yes.

JESS

Aged over a hundred?

NINA

Definitely. He was extremely fit when he left.

JESS sniggers quietly at ALBERT who tries to ignore her boredom and rudeness.

NINA

And Jack. Without doubt he's still alive. It's just that they made a choice, you see.

ALBERT

Not to return?

NINA

I get messages. I'm psychic you know. He contacts me now and then with reassuring comments.

JESS

In that case, why don't you just *ask* him what happened? And clear up the mystery.

ALBERT *looks furiously at JESS.*

JESS

Over a hundred people have lost their lives in Amazonia. Rescue parties! "Looking for Fawcett"! It's pathetic, this mania.

NINA

And they all, except *one*, went in the wrong direction. They searched eastward from Cuiaba. My husband went west. Only the Swiss trapper Stefan Rattin got it right travelling westward and said he made contact with my husband. Though I don't know if that's true. He said Fawcett was wearing a snake-eyed ring, and as Brian says, my husband *never* wore rings. So perhaps it was mistaken identity. Even Mr Rattin died trying to return to rescue the man he thought was my husband.

JESS

Can't your husband send a telepathic message stating "I don't wish to be rescued, thank you," 'Could save a lot of hassle.

ALBERT *looks at JESS wearily.*

NINA

He may have lost his mind by now.

JESS

I know the feeling.

ALBERT

It's an incredible story. We just want to help you get it told as it should be.

NINA

Exactly. Brian's book, "Exploration Fawcett", sold a few copies but really it hid the true story. Because Brian is jealous of his father and brother. Brian's life has been a failure, you know. It's such a shame because he has *some* talent. But he resists success as if it were poison. I'm so glad you've come to *me* about your project, because Brian won't help you one jot.

ALBERT

Our film would get your husband's name back on the world stage, where it deserves to be.

NINA

Yes. An epic. Hollywood has beckoned so many times and Brian always puts them off. We never hear again after the first enquiry. Why *shouldn't* money be made out of this? I helped Brian with "Exploration Fawcett." He paid me not a penny. I have a right surely of *some* humble remuneration for the years...the years of...just managing in "genteel poverty" in boarding houses all over Britain, craving the recognition, the acknowledgement of a loyal wife. Dreaming of the wealth of lost cities that was always just beyond his reach. Don't I deserve something for all my patience? Something better than existence in a boarding house, among potty old people all waiting for death. But I won't be dragged down. I know my husband will return to me. And in the meantime I want to keep his memory in the public mind and make some money out of it. What is so wrong with that?

JESS

Albert's going to need access to the "secret archive."  
How do we get it if Brian's so protective?

NINA

Leave it to me. I'll just say I want to borrow some of the crucial documents. They are actually my property after all. I'll phone him right now...

*She starts to wheel herself out and then pauses.*

NINA

You don't think my husband was a failure do you?

ALBERT

Oh God, no!

NINA

Oh good. I won't be long.

*She leaves.*

JESS

A failure. Yes, Al. She hit the nail on the head. He never found one shred of evidence and The Royal Geographical Society just think he was a nutter.

ALBERT

Keep your voice down.

*They continue talking in a hushed intensity.*

JESS

...like it seems several other members of his family.

ALBERT

You *cannot* deny it's a fantastic story! Looking for lost cities, still inhabited by ancient unknown races!

JESS

People don't want films about failure. He failed.

ALBERT

You don't know whether he failed!

JESS

Haven't you learned anything, Al? After all your time in this business? You could really make your name with something more commercial. This is a *dead* end!

ALBERT

You really are the kiss of death.

JESS

Thanks very much.

ALBERT

To anything with fire and excitement. You're passionless.

JESS

Thanks very much.

ALBERT

Sorry. I didn't mean...

*He tries to touch her affectionately. She moves away abruptly.*

ALBERT

*(Fiercely)* OK. I wouldn't dream of touching you... You did say we'd take this to your friend Ida de Milt in L.A. as a final shot!

JESS

Did I? Ida is now producing musicals and adventure movies packed with sex and violence.

ALBERT

If I re-thought it so it fell in with your and her concept of entertainment. And yet somehow protected the story's fragile priceless quality.

JESS

Oh, yeah.

ALBERT

If I made her a version that fitted her formula...

JESS

So suddenly you're throwing away your precious integrity and going all commercial.

ALBERT

*(Smiling)* Yes.

JESS

*(Laughing at him)* You're lying! *(Suddenly going serious)* I've lived with you and the Fawcett project for too long. It's got nowhere. *We've* got nowhere. It's fucked your life up. It's not going to fuck up mine.

ALBERT

*(Exaggerating to make her laugh more)* Ida de Milt is going to have a script *crammed* with sex, violence and fucking musical song and dance numbers...

JESS

As if !!

ALBERT

She can have anything she fucking wants to make this into a fucking HOLLYWOOD EPIC!

JESS

'Can't believe what I'm hearing.....Alright. I'll do one last thing for Fawcett. I'll ring Ida. But then that's it.

ALBERT

*(Calmed down)* Thank you....Suddenly I feel great. Let's go for a drink.

*They start to leave as the light fades on them and comes up on BRIAN.*

SCENE SEVEN. CARLISLE. BRIAN'S BUNGALOW.

BRIAN *is on the phone..*

BRIAN

Joan!... Mother has gone stark raving mad. She's just phoned trying to wheedle some of Daddy's secret papers out of me. Pretending they were for her to read, but I know she wants to lend them to a certain slimy TV director! You know what TV has tried to do with Daddy's story? Mother knows only too well how Hollywood has tried to turn Daddy into Indiana Jones! I'm not having it. Daddy's real story is top secret and

therefore dynamite karmically. Don't imagine Daddy wasted his life in chasing rainbows, Joan. He had a *supreme mission*, which he fulfilled! To bring up Jack, unsullied and deliver him to the intended destination. It is important that the published material is accepted as complete. We must keep what we know entirely to ourselves. My task is to give the media people information that is already known while making them think they are getting something new. This was difficult with Albert de Winton because he wasn't a fool. Anyway he's prowling around trying to get at Daddy's "background" as he puts it and may well contact you. I need hardly say Joan.... (*He becomes more relaxed and chirpy*) Oh, good girl. I know you wouldn't dream of it... Because you're evolved and so am I. But Mother! Christ, her Karma is due for destruction if she carries on in her insane, reckless manner... I just had a call from Mrs Orr, Mother's landlady. And she is of the opinion that Mother's a mental case. The other ladies in the guest house can't stand her because she talks, talks, talks endlessly about herself and even stops strangers in the street to tell them about her life and she's careering through her last £105 pounds like there was no tomorrow...Are you feeling better, Joan? I was sorry to hear about your fallen arches. Getting old is a nuisance. And Jean?... Thank you. And send my love to him. Oh good. Yes, she still thinks you made a bad mistake marrying a "Swiss worm" as she calls him. Pots of love... Oh, Ruth's feeling a bit tender. I cooked a strong curry for supper and she was up half the night. (*He chuckles*) Alright, Joan. I think we can keep them at bay.

RUTH *enters*.

BRIAN

Just stay vigilant and don't even open the door to media people! 'Bye.

RUTH

Brian! What is going on? I always get left out of everything. There are always these dramas with your family and you never tell me a thing. It's just not fair.

BRIAN

Ruthie. I couldn't live without you. You are the anchor on my sanity. So I'm taking you into Carlisle for a cream tea, darling.

RUTH

Oh, Brian! You certainly know how to satisfy a woman.

BRIAN

I don't know what I'd do if you ever went first.

RUTH

What do you mean?

BRIAN

I mean *died* first. Before me.

RUTH

Oh, how could you? From cream teas to death! You're always full of surprises.

BRIAN

There's a bus at quarter to. Come on!

*They start to go. On the other side of the stage JACK and RALEIGH enter and crouch down looking like two ragged fugitives. "M" enters and stops BRIAN leaving. She takes him by the hand to watch the following.*

SCENE EIGHT. AMAZONIA.

RALEIGH

I'd hoped it would be more picturesque. When I agreed to be the expedition photographer. I thought there would be more...there would be less green. Less flat. More mystery and drama in the landscape . It's just boiling hot. Aren't you sorry you didn't go to Hollywood instead? That actress on the voyage . She could have got you straight into flicks. Your father could have gone without us.

JACK

Don't be daft.

RALEIGH

I would've joined you. Now we're stuck going round in circles. What's happening to us for God's sake? I don't understand this mystic stuff of your father's. It's all beyond me and I'm worried.

JACK

Why don't you just go back? Father has asked you to go back several times. He doesn't believe you're up to this.... journey. I wouldn't think any less of you, old chap.

RALEIGH

I'm not bloody going back. On my own. It's extremely dangerous. Indians. Bandits... I promised my mother I wouldn't take any risks. She wants me back alive. (*almost in tears*) I just want to get back to my motor-bike. It *was* great Jack, you must admit, tearing round the Devon lanes on our bikes. Don't you miss your Harley-Davidson?

JACK

Raleigh. We *were* close at school. And then "debs delights" together and parties. But life moves on...It's very sad. People develop at different speeds. I feel I've outgrown you, old chap.

RALEIGH

You pompous arse!

JACK

It was fun. But those days are over. I have a special task. And I must proceed with it. Part of Daddy's doctrine is the idea that every person in their life has a task that they must accomplish otherwise their soul will not develop. And I follow that.

RALEIGH

Well I've got a special task that I must accomplish...

*He starts to go.*

RALEIGH

This journey's obviously giving you enlightenment but it's giving me nothing but the *shits!*

*He moves off uneasily, trying to control his bowels.  
Sudden blackout.*

SCENE NINE. CARLISLE. BRIAN'S BUNGALOW .

BRIAN

Was it like that?

M

Of course . You know Raleigh just wasn't up to roughing it. He would've made a good gigolo. Living off wealthy women.

BRIAN

I think he was homosexual and just wanted to follow Jack.

M

He wanted material wealth fast. He would have loved to have found lost treasure on that journey. That's why your father and Jack had to get rid of him. He was just all wrong for their "Great Scheme".

BRIAN

Poor Raleigh. We used to lark around at school. We saw a show together once with a strange banter we used to repeat. "You remind me of a man. What man? Man with a power. Power of what? Power of voodoo. Who do? You do!" He used to be incredible fun. God, it's all gone...And yet it's still vividly in here (*pointing to his brain*).

*Moving away from "M" and speaking to the audience.*

Last night I had a peculiar experience. Hearing with extended perception two chords...on a piano...several times...which evoked in me extraordinary emotion. I've heard them before.

*He looks back at "M" for an explanation. She just shrugs.*

In the light of day the occurrence tends to slip out of mind and mean nothing. But in the dark of night when I get up before dawn the significance is vivid. In the stillness, I am conscious of the tinkling of a piano. Like the one in the drawing room of "Waterside", the big family house at Up Lyme, when Jack was learning his piano lessons. Those weird chords. They tinkled as if coming from that same piano. The feeling they leave is of something old...and gone... Something as it were... *Victorian*. They leave a feeling of loss. The pain of bereavement...Deep sentimentality, yet at the same time...profound mystery.

RUTH *rushes in.*

RUTH

Darling! Your mother's outside, being unloaded from a taxi.

BRIAN

Oh, drat!

*She rushes out to the front door. "M" gives BRIAN a reassuring smile.*

"M"

Just keep your cool. I'll make sure she doesn't stay long.

*She goes. NINA enters with JESS.*

NINA

I'm sorry dearest, but I had a tiff with the landlady and can't move into my new digs for a few days. This lovely young lady has helped me with all my baggage. I

thought you'd like to see your old mother while she's still alive. Or is it all too much of a shock?

BRIAN

Of course not! Mother, it's fantastic to see you!  
Welcome.

RUTH

*(Dismayed)* What a lovely surprise. I'll put the kettle on.

*She rushes off.*

BRIAN

*(To JESS)* Thank you so much. Do stay for a cup of tea...er.

JESS

Hullo. I'm Jess.

BRIAN

Hello.

JESS

But I won't stay thank you. This is a family get-together. So I'll just take my leave.

NINA

Oh, must you?

JESS

We're staying at the Cumberland for a few days for a short break, should you want to call me at our hotel.

NINA

Oh, I will. But just stay a few minutes and have some tea with us. *(Coaxing JESS to settle down next to her on the sofa)* Come on dear, relax. You've worked so hard with all my packing and everything.

JESS

Oh, OK. Thanks. I will then.

NINA

*(Performing to JESS)* Well, so this is Carlisle! Whenever I'm near Scotland I get nostalgic. I was born at Helensburgh you know. *(Singing in Scottish dialect)* "Wee bonny boat like a bird on the wing...".

BRIAN *grits his teeth at the audience and bustles round the room picking threads off furniture.*

NINA

My father was a Judge and we moved to Ceylon and that's where I met my "Puggy". He so hated his names Percy Harrison Fawcett, so he liked to be known as "PHF"...

BRIAN

*(Trying to change the subject)* Had to pop into Boots today. Our electric blanket was at the end of its life and had become too costly to service. So I bought a Boots Concorde model. In the sale actually.

NINA

*(Oblivious)* Ceylon was such a dream of a life. He was stationed with the Army at the fort at Trincomalee. Lovely name isn't it "Trincomalee" He proposed to me during a tennis party *(Chuckling)* in the middle of playing me. Jack was born in Ceylon.

BRIAN *sighs audibly.*

NINA

It was a strange and actually *miraculous* birth...

BRIAN

...Then last night we were puzzled by a peculiar smell of fish in the house. Well, I was down on my hands and knees sniffing round like a dachshund. I was imagining everything from rats to dry rot. Then Eureka. It turned out to be the new electric blanket had been fitted with the wrong fuse, would you believe.

NINA

Three wise men, Buddhists arrived...

BRIAN

Mother. Jess has had enough family history.

JESS

Not at all! I'm fascinated!

NINA

*(Dramatically)* Three wise men, Buddhists arrived at the fort and told me the birth would be a month late and on Buddha's anniversary and that, astonishingly, Jack would be a specially reincarnated avatar. That's a highly evolved being. And that he'd have the sacred birthmark on the sole of his right foot. Of course we were very sceptical but it *all* came true! He was born a month late with the mark there on the foot.

BRIAN

And a charming little squint.

NINA

... and what was extraordinary...*(She gets a frog in her throat and starts coughing)*

BRIAN

*(To audience)* Oh God. Her big mouth! I can't believe it. "M," are you there? Stop her somehow!!

"M" *enters*.

NINA *weakened from her choking fit struggles to continue desperate for JESS to know. BRIAN moves behind the sofa madly gesticulating and mouthing "Do something" to "M".*

NINA

Along the road back from the military hospital...would you believe...Hundreds of worshippers kneeling as I and Jack travelled by...The three wise men returned with gifts of Frankincense and Myrrh and a Buddha statue which was to bring protection on the Fawcett's for our blood connection with such a divine being...Jack, my son. We thanked them, I wept, Puggy was overcome and from that day on decided we had to help fulfil Jack's high destiny...

It wasn't easy bringing up a messiah...

JESS

This is amazing.

NINA

His training was to be with a group of Earth Guardians who have a secret temple in the Amazon jungle.

BRIAN *puts his face in his hands.* "M" *limbers up like an athlete.*  
RUTH *enters with tray just as "M" stands ominously over JESS.*

RUTH

Here we are.

JESS

*(Trying not to sound too prying)* So let's get this right. On that last and fatal expedition your husband was actually taking Jack for his initiation to this strange...

NINA

Great White Brotherhood, it is called...

JESS

...In Amazonia, who would turn him into a *messiah*?

"M" *hurtles towards JESS like an owl swooping on its prey.*

RUTH

Do you like cup-cakes, Jess?

*The wail of a banshee and loud thunder and sudden blackout going to strobe lights pulsating. JESS sinks backwards on the sofa, moaning, with "M" attached to her like a vampire. RUTH freezes into a waxwork statue, and NINA keels over and starts to snore heavily. Silence.*

BRIAN *comes over to "M" and puts his arms round her.*

BRIAN

You took your time. Will they remember anything?

"M"

Nothing.

BRIAN

You clever angel.

"M"

Now let's go to *our* jungle. I want to *really* show you what I can do.

"M" *draws a black drape across the others.*

BRIAN

I can't wait, you tantalizing little darling.

"M"

I'll just go and dress up in something.....suitable.

BRIAN

Siths are always ready to dress up to conform with one's secret desires. Phew!

*Music and the sound of an eerie wind.  
The grey side of the stage takes on a life.*

SCENE TEN. LIMBO.

BRIAN *speaks to the audience.*

BRIAN

It was our anniversary, 11th June. So "M" took me to Corby castle grounds. A tangled wilderness of Palladian ruins and pagan statues. We had the place to ourselves. At first the sun was veiled by haze, but later it came through and thunder growled in the distance. "M" reverted. Going completely impish. Naked, hair loose and flying. Dancing over the river surface.

"M"

*(Offstage)* Throw off all your clothes Brian! And come and dance with me!...Oh Brian, so silly and solid.

BRIAN

In the dark glade she uttered a strange high call and announced us to the siths there. Their answer came

like the hush of a breeze in the treetops expressing welcome and a passage for her and "The Man." She instructed them to *protect* me. And then led me to St Catherine's Well and there danced round and around and commanded me to dance with her. Had anybody seen my antics, they'd have considered me quite crazy. I was so happy to have had this afternoon in fairyland. When we got back, how humdrum everything seemed. I felt deeply nostalgic and at teatime on BBC radio the election campaign rubbish nearly made me ill. Even Ruth's matter of fact worldliness grated harshly.

*He unlocks his cupboard and opens the door.*

As I left "M" in the garden, she said "Go into your studio, and take out the portrait you did of me and read the message in my eyes."

*He looks at her picture.*

Truly, the face in the portrait was a living face and the eyes looking right into my own eyes *said something*. But I didn't get their meaning. I admit that tears flowed in the gloaming. Tears of agony for being so..."Silly and solid."

BRIAN *turns to go as "M" enters.*

"M"

Don't worry about being silly and solid. We have it in one way. You have it in another. *We* may not be silly and solid, but then we don't possess the highly developed brains that humans have. Our imaginations are rudimentary and we aren't as creative as you are.

BRIAN

But you've an idyllic existence.

"M"

It gets us nowhere. We don't evolve. It's boring. That's why I attached myself to you. It's fun.

*She starts to climb into his cupboard as he closes the door.  
Blackout. Music.*

SCENE ELEVEN. HOTEL ROOM. CARLISLE.

JESS *clicks on a small tape recorder. She and ALBERT listen.*

NINA'S TAPED VOICE

"It wasn't easy bringing up a messiah."

JESS'S VOICE

"This is amazing."

NINA'S VOICE

"His training was to be with a group of Earth Guardians who had a secret temple in the Amazon jungle...."  
*(electronic interference on the tape drowns out the speech).*

JESS

I just remember feeling ill. I must've got out to my car and then passed out. I felt odd . I didn't dare go back into that house. Brian and his wife are frankly *weird*. Anyway, Nina Fawcett... She just can't wait to help us. But you've got to make it commercial or Ida just won't want the project.

ALBERT

Don't worry. I know just what those American producer's want.

JESS

She'll want us to go over. I can't wait to see Ida again. She's fantastically successful.

ALBERT

She's a dyke. I bet that's got something to do with it.

JESS

Why do you have to be so mean spirited? I'm helping you...

ALBERT

She's a dyke. You're a dyke. That's what I can't stand...

JESS

*(In her light banter)* Don't be so dramatic. Anyway. You're not interested in me any more. So what do you care?

ALBERT

I care terribly.

JESS

*(Laughing)* You liar! How can you care when you sleep with other women?

ALBERT

That's the perfect excuse for you to dump me for good and have a dyke relationship with Ida.

JESS

It's not an excuse, it's the *reason!* And despite that betrayal, I'm actually *helping* you. I can't stand Fawcett. I'm trying to help you get your obsession behind you. So don't be so *ungrateful!*

ALBERT

I *am* grateful. What you're doing is fantastic. I wish I could do something for *you*.

JESS

Just give me my freedom, Al.

ALBERT

....Alright then. *(he is on the verge of tears and starts to leave)*. Alright.

JESS

*(Laughing)* You are so dramatic!

*They go.*

*Strange music. The sounds of East End "Edwardian London."*

SCENE TWELVE. A HOTEL ROOM IN THE EAST END, 1918.

*The light reveals "M" sitting on a straight chair with her back to the audience. Two men in long black coats and bowler hats approach. At the other side of the stage, BRIAN in a spotlight.*

BRIAN

As a boy, when we were staying in London, I followed my father one evening. He met his best friend, a sinister character called Harold Large, who was a member of the Golden Dawn and a friend of Aleister Crowley.

FAWCETT

Oh, mysterious man! "I, like a child go by thy direction"...

BRIAN

In Shoreditch, they braved the lines of prostitutes and drunks to check into a cheap hotel room with a "Mrs Letheran". For a private session.

*LARGE holds a candle above her. She is already in a trance. Her moans in the séance are ambiguously sexual.*

"M"

Yes...Yes... Oh mighty one!

BRIAN

*(To audience)* Daddy loved that form of address.

"M"

Oh...Oooh. I see your elder son...Your elder son. Yes. He'll walk with the Gods. He'll be a type of messiah. But your younger son...He was trouble to you in a previous incarnation. He has to atone for it. Beware.

BRIAN

Ah. That's why Daddy didn't like me.

*FAWCETT holds up a small idol.*

FAWCETT

Tell me about this statuette?

"M"

It is you in a past life. You were an Atlantean priest from Hi-Brazil and it is your destiny to take it back there to your city.

FAWCETT

What do the letters on it mean?

"M"

"He who knows does not speak. He who speaks does not know".

FAWCETT

Can human beings.... have sex with fairies?

"M"

Providing the fairy materializes into solid form before the event.

*Lights fade except on BRIAN.*

BRIAN

*(To audience) Credulity!* You see, Daddy couldn't achieve the power of clairvoyance himself and had to rely on distorted messages from mediums. And this brought him to a state of that credulity...which, I'm convinced, took him to his doom.

*Blackout.*

SCENE THIRTEEN. WILDERNESS.

RALEIGH *lies on the ground, weak from heat and hunger.*

RALEIGH

*(To audience)* Dear Mother...er. How are you? We are by a river as wide as the Thames from our view in Chelsea. But this river has no name. I don't think I shall see you again, mother. It's my own fault for following Jack. He and his father are heading for

disaster and I've got stupidly drawn in. I don't know the way back. But it's strangely exhilarating to be so out of touch with the world. Anyway, I've been limping with a bad foot.

*JACK enters in a full-length priestly robe, looking self-conscious. He also looks weak from hunger and exhaustion.*

RALEIGH

That looks good.

JACK

Are you sure?

RALEIGH

Yes. It's rather super.

JACK

Thank you. I *am* a bit worried.

RALEIGH

You can't back out. He'd go mad.

JACK

I know. But to be quite honest, I'm really *scared*.

RALEIGH

We're never going to get out of here again, are we? What's going to happen? This colony that's going to be founded *here* for the enlightened? Who the hell's going to find this place?

JACK

Do you know what's in store for me? These "Earth Guardians" are going to transfer my soul..er my personality into the body of one of *their* elders and *his* personality into *my* body.

RALEIGH

How utterly revolting. You haven't agreed to *that*, have you?

JACK

I was very young when it all started. At home it was partly a joke. So I thought. Till one day the time came and I was told to get ready for this journey.

RALEIGH

He's condemning you to death. God knows what's going to happen to you.

JACK

I even thought of killing him actually. A mercy killing, very quick, so he wouldn't have to suffer the disappointment of *me!* Feeling as I do.

RALEIGH

Come on. Get that stupid dress off. Let's make a run for it.

JACK

No, no. Not just now. I can see him. He's coming back.

RALEIGH

Whatever happens. I want to say... I love you Jack.

JACK

Steady on, old chap. You'll be wanting a kiss next.

RALEIGH

I came along for your sake. For no other reason.

FAWCETT

*(Offstage. Jauntily)* I've found them at last!  
*(Entering)* The Guardians await you Sajaz! All hail to the young God! My dear son! They are ready to receive you. I'm so proud. You couldn't look more worthy to ascend the golden path of a messiah.

*"M" draws a veil over them. BRIAN comes into his living room where RUTH and NINA sit on the sofa lit by a low light from the television. They seem frozen in time. "M" wanders in the shadows.*

SCENE FOURTEEN. BRIAN'S LIVING ROOM.

BRIAN *takes off his grey raincoat. He wears a dinner jacket.*

BRIAN

*(To audience)* I got back from my duties, playing my bassoon for the Carlisle Amateur Symphony Orchestra. We were accompanying the local amateurs in "Pirates of Penzance," while Mother and Ruth were mesmerized by television. *(To "M")* Did *you* watch anything?

"M"

No. *TV's* so puerile. It just highlights the despicable characteristics of humans. And it's always about ordinary people. Ugh.

BRIAN

Yes. Ordinary people are of no interest to *me* whatsoever. *Mother!*

NINA

*(Waking up)*. Oh, you're back. How did it go, dear?

BRIAN

My bassoon playing was pretty good but it was one of those hoodoo performances...*(He laughs)*.

RUTH

Oh no. *(Gleefully anticipating one of Brian's funny disaster stories)* What on *earth* happened?

BRIAN

It began well enough. *(To Nina)* Every now and then there's a "hoodoo night" when everything seems to go wrong. Well this evening a chum of mine, the second clarinettist, Alistair Goldie, came up to a rather energetic section...*(Brian chuckles helplessly)* His huge black bow tie which is automated and clips to the wings of his collar...Well it's rather weak with age! And during one of these typical Sullivan two-two's in fast sixth eighths time when we in "The Wind" are producing bar after bar of staccato quavers...*(He chuckles again)* His Adam's apple worked so violently...

RUTH *shrieks and is nearly on the floor. NINA starts to laugh and choke at the same time.*

BRIAN

...the spring snapped and the bow tie took off ... like a malevolent black butterfly it flew right over the startled heads of the second violinists... causing them to *take swipes at it with their instruments!*

*They finish laughing.*

NINA

You can be such fun Brian. I don't know why you don't get a job on television as a comedian, you'd be much better than the ones they have on. You could earn some money for a change.

BRIAN

Thank you mother. I'll drop the BBC a line in the morning.

NINA

Our family had such fun in the old days, Ruth, before Puggy and Jack disappeared. As an outsider you can't imagine how close knit we were. I was thinking and laughing this morning over that ludicrous incident in Stoke Canon and the piano chords. Do you remember, Brian?

BRIAN

It was on a bleak winter's night wasn't it?

NINA

Brian was still a schoolboy. We were all in the dining room, round the pressure lamp which was our only illumination, when we heard ... several chords struck on the piano in the drawing room.

RUTH

Oh, my God.

NINA

Well, we all looked at each other with a wild surmise.

BRIAN

Daddy formed an investigatory procession...

NINA

Oh, yes!

BRIAN

...With himself in the lead, distinctly nervous.

NINA

Jack behind him . Then Brian, second. Then me with little Joan *clinging* to me in terror. We all crept down the dark corridor...Your father in the lead with a candle...

BRIAN

...in *great* trepidation...

NINA

Nothing could we see or hear of course.

RUTH

Gosh. I don't find that funny. It's sounds terrifying.

"M"

*(Casually)* The funny part of it was that I had struck those chords on the piano and then crept into the room at the end of the crocodile.

BRIAN *sighs and tut-tuts.* "M" *leaves with a mischievous look.*

RUTH

Would you like a cup of Horlicks, Nina?

NINA

Nina? You're supposed to call me Rulor. You always used to call me Rulor.

RUTH

I don't remember...

NINA

Why don't you any more?

BRIAN

Oh, that ridiculous astrological name. Really, Mother!

NINA

My friends still call me Rulor!

BRIAN

(*To RUTH*) I should explain, darling, that when the three were on their way to Amazonia, aboard the liner to Rio, they shared a dinner table with an American poseur called Zarh Pritchard. He explained that vibrations of names had a lifelong effect. And he convinced Daddy that the names "Percy Harrison Fawcett" had been a serious obstacle to him all his life. Well Daddy, who hated his names, immediately agreed and fell for it all hook line and sinker. After calculations, this parlour occultist worked out that if Daddy changed his name to "Zahaz" his future success was assured. Jack was also asking for trouble if he persisted keeping his present name and only by replacing it with "Sajas" would he have an easy path. As for Raleigh Rimell...Well he could really expect the worst with a name like that. But change it to "Roxor" and all would be well. The three credulous explorers seriously adopted these new names. It was a foolish mistake. For a long tiring walk in rough country, one sensibly wears shoes that have shaped themselves comfortably to the feet - *not* new ones. I and Joan were posted new names which we rejected absolutely ...but mother of course...

NINA

What a shame you didn't have more respect for your father. Or your elder brother for that matter. You could have *gone* on that final expedition. They would have taken you, had you shown an iota of interest. You were obsessed with steam trains. It's astonishing how little intellect or creative ability you've acquired despite all the schooling we've given you.

RUTH

I'll just see to the washing up.

*She retreats to the kitchen.*

NINA

I'm only saying this out of a mother's love, dear. Your best friends won't tell you the truth, but a devoted mother will. Perhaps you don't have any friends here, being so far away from civilization. Where are we? Cumberland? You do live like *monks* here, the two of you. Well I'm not used to living a monastic life. It is very frugal here. I had a cucumber sandwich for supper. That's all Ruth offered me. How *do* you survive? Well I shall be returning to boarding house life next week. It is not that bad. The food can be quite good and this place is in Brighton which is full of fascinating people to talk to. I may find someone interested in another rescue attempt.... I know they're both still alive... despite what most people say. I *know*. And there are yet more, willing to lay down their lives to search for Puggy. The Royal Geographical Society forwards their letters weekly! Why don't *you* have another go? That air search of yours the Daily Mail financed was not thorough. A really devoted son would try again. I'm sure you could find them. If you *wanted* to. But you're not that interested are you? You have too much to do here. Gardening. Growing your sprouts etc. Oh, well. I don't want to nag. I think I'll go to bed. There's an interesting talk on the wireless. I won't have it on loud. Sleep well dear. Ruth may be unattractive but at least she's better than that last wife. Charlotte, was it? God, she was a bitch. Never did a stroke around the house. Oh well. You're slightly better off now. Goodnight.

BRIAN

Goodnight, mother.

NINA *leaves.*

BRIAN

Charlotte. Charlotte. I'm sorry I *ever* introduced you to Mother. And I'm sorry you had to be sacrificed.

*BRIAN goes to his precious cupboard and gets out a certain volume of his journal. He finds a particular page.*

BRIAN

"Charlotte had said she was going to try and have a baby if it killed her". I was outside the operating room. Afterwards I said to the doctor "I heard her pitiful moaning". "But she never made a sound the whole time" he replied. "She was unconscious from the start and never recovered consciousness".

I couldn't accept the end. I was determined to celebrate her birthday the following week. I put on Charlotte's little gramophone and played the old dance records. They just *tore* my heart. So vividly did it bring back memories of parties long forgotten. I almost heard the swish of my Charlotte's long dress. I could almost breathe her perfume and feel her warm body as I danced with her in my arms. No, I had nothing in my arms as I danced. But I held her three beloved rings and her silver bracelet. I saw the imaginary guests off at the front gate and said to my beloved shade "Well it was a darned good party, my sweetheart. I think everybody enjoyed it". We sat a while staring at the embers of the dead fire and then went up to bed. Did I love her in sleep? Maybe...

*He puts back the journal and slams the cupboard door.*

BRIAN

Charlotte's departure was one of the divine arrangements that *had* to be made so that my quest could proceed. Mother would never understand my life's dedication to the Fawcett saga or my unique protection of Daddy and his secret fate. I have important work to do for the powers that be. The distractions of doing it while married to a woman I deeply loved would not have permitted me to do it properly. So I lost the only thing I ever loved. But also, I had to understand what I must transmit. The "lesson" of death had to be learnt from personal experience. Now the work *will* be done. And if I am to be the "mouthpiece" of the Gods, then the honour is indeed great.

*The lights dim except for a spotlight on BRIAN'S face.*

BRIAN

And so to bed. Mother in her room. Still up, listening to the loathsome voice of the BBC. I only hope her visit will leave us with some dregs of sanity.

In the bathroom, the sight of Mother's false teeth on the basin, terrified me. The teeth were not content at just grinning. They actually snapped at me. Luckily I was able to jump out of the way in time. But I'm terrified the teeth may find their way into my room at night and bite me to death in my sleep.

*Blackout.*

SCENE FIFTEEN. THE STAGE.

*An audition in progress. "FAWCETT" comes in, hands full, holding a polystyrene cup of tea, a script and a full plastic carrier bag with a baguette sticking out of it. He puts some of it down and shields his eyes trying to see into the auditorium. He looks like the real Fawcett but has a camp, Larry Grayson northern accent.*

"FAWCETT"

Anybody there?... Oh, yeah. There you are. Where do you want me, Mr. Director?

ALBERT *replies from the back of the auditorium.*

ALBERT

Hullo. Just come "down-centre", would you.

*He does so, opening his script.*

ALBERT

Thanks. OK. Ready when you are.

"FAWCETT"

Eee! Hold you horses, Chuck. My agent Effingham Associates told me nothing about this. Well, they're

based in Salford and never get anything right. They said it was a commercial for "odour eaters", set on the Amazon. But I see here it's an exploration adventure. Am I entitled to know what it's about, treasure? Whoops, pardon the pun. I mean "Treasure" as in "Duck" Was he after treasure, by the way? This here explorer, fella? Could you bear to divulge a little about the character? Not everything, mind you. I don't need to know what he had for breakfast.

ALBERT

We're very short of time. The American backers just want to see you on tape. 'Camera's there.

*He indicates a video camera out in the auditorium.*

ALBERT

Just say anything. Your name and agent's details if you like and a little about you. It's the time factor I'm afraid.

"FAWCETT"

You *never* have flippin' time for us actors! It's always the time factor at these film interviews. They never tell you what it's about. They rush you in. Rush you out. In seconds! Before you've finished your cuppa even, let alone had a chance to demonstrate any *talent*. I've never known it so bad. Why d'you call me here anyroad?

JESS

Our American producer saw your photo in Spotlight. You *looked* right...

"FAWCETT"

But?...

ALBERT

But, where're you from exactly?

"FAWCETT"

Formby. As in George. Anything wrong with that?

ALBERT

Only that Fawcett went to Westminster School and...

"FAWCETT"

Does that matter, really? I thought in post-modern films you could transcend these little details.

ALBERT

It's all up to the American backers. / don't cast. Just say your name. Recite your address, for God's sake. They'd probably want to dub you anyway.

"FAWCETT"

Oh, thanks a lot.

JESS

We're behind schedule. I've thirty more people to see this afternoon.

*JESS, to ALBERT in a hushed voice.*

JESS

Al, just let him do the speech. He's prepared it. And he *looks* right.

ALBERT

*(To the actor)* I'm sorry. OK. Let's. Let's do the speech. Fawcett is a serious, dedicated man.

"FAWCETT"

Aaah. Right. Gotcha.

*The actor tries to change his outward shape to suite ALBERT'S description..*

JESS

He's sexually attractive as well...

*The actor subtly draws in his stomach and tries to make his cheeks look thinner.*

ALBERT

...He has to be sexy for the US market. So he is academic and studious, but with sex appeal...

"FAWCETT"

*(Trying to combine the two) ...Yeah-yeah-yeah. It's coming. It's coming.*

ALBERT

So just do two little bits for me. The first one on page thirty-six... Fawcett is attacking the establishment at a world press conference just before his departure to find the lost civilization.

"FAWCETT"

Right... *(He dives into character)* "I have no respect for the scientific hacks that dismiss the Mexican pyramids or Inca palaces as primitive toffle when we now know that they are as complex as anything devised in Ancient Egypt and may even be *older!* I know that South America is the cradle of a world civilization that has now vanished and I intend to produce proof. I shall go "in there", *without* the backing of official science. I shall suffer opposition and even hatred. But despite that, I shall bring out the astounding truth!"

ALBERT

Excellent. Thank you very much.

JESS

That was really good!

ALBERT

And now the bit on page forty-nine where he is chatting up a native girl.

"FAWCETT"

I was less happy preparing this scene.

ALBERT

Sorry, but the American producer had this additional stuff sent over especially. For the sex storyline.

"FAWCETT"

Right. OK. "I want to help your people, Kee-atora". (*To ALBERT*) 'Hope I pronounced her name right....Er. "You are so wild and...and really cute, like a koala-bear. I can save your tribe from extinction. I can save you... honey. Kee-atora. Trust me, my Native American (*pause*).....queen? Together we can make it happen. Come with me tonight into the forest and we can make it happen"...

*Reading stage direction;*

"FAWCETT"

"He takes *her breast*... in his hand"

BRIAN

*(Shouting) OH, NO HE DOESN'T!!*

*His roar comes from the back of the auditorium. He now charges down the aisle and leaps onto the stage like a mad bull. ALBERT and JESS protest indignantly. They also come down and mount the stage. BRIAN confronts ALBERT.*

BRIAN

*(To ALBERT)* Are you raving mad? Do you think I'm going to let you get away with this?

ALBERT

What?

BRIAN

What? WHAT? You have the gall? To *ask*? You think you're going to film *this*?

JESS

What's wrong with it?

BRIAN

It's drivell!! That's what's wrong with it.

JESS

Would you mind leaving! NOW! Please.

BRIAN

I will not. (*To ALBERT*) You come cheating your way into my home under the pretext of a freelance radio interview and you (*attacking JESS*) ingratiate yourself to my mother! Who is *batty* by the way! She'll talk to *any* stranger for attention! She is not *compos mentis*. I got out of her this morning exactly what you're up to and caught the first train straight down from Carlisle. *I* have power of attorney and I shall see you in court unless you drop this slimy rendering, this comic strip, this Indiana Jones garbage version of my father!! Have you been in touch with my literary agent? No, you haven't! This is breach of copyright! I didn't trust you when you came to my house to do your wretched interview. I knew *then* that you were crooked!

JESS

Mr Fawcett! Hang on. We don't need copyright! This story is in the public domain!

"FAWCETT"

(*To BRIAN*) You're not going to do me out of a job, are you? I haven't worked since panto last year.

ALBERT

(*To BRIAN*) *Would* you mind just leaving? We are extremely busy.

"M"

Excuse me! Excuse me. Sorry to interrupt. I'm Brian's literary agent. Karen's the name. Darling, what are you so worried about? Hollywood doesn't want the truth. It wants adventure. So let these nice people make an adventure story.

BRIAN

...That has nothing...to do with the truth?

"M"

Exactly. So what have you got to lose?

JESS

You see. The voice of reason!

"M"

Hollywood's not interested in your father's *actual* story. So you're not giving away anything are you and the masses will be happy with the same old epic adventure crap.

JESS

(Curtly) I don't think it'll be that bad. But I see where you're coming from.

"M"

I don't know what Brian's so worried about. *(To BRIAN)* It could actually do your book sales some good. *(To ALBERT)* I'm sure I could strike a reasonable deal with your producer. I feel she would appreciate the seal of family approval that Brian could give your film.

BRIAN *looks at "M" incredulously. "FAWCETT" comes over to "M."*

"FAWCETT"

You've saved it all from disaster! Lass, I think you're champion. Though I've never seen samurai mascara like that in my life. Not even at the Grafton in Liverpool.

*Music. The scene evaporates. "M" and BRIAN alone.*

"M"

Stop worrying. It'll never get anywhere. How many times have Hollywood and the BBC tried and it never gets made! And if it does it's something really pitiful and so far off the mark that your father's real story is not even touched upon. So it's all safe. Trust me!

*Fade to black.*

SCENE SIXTEEN. A BRIGHTON GUEST HOUSE.

NINA *talks on the telephone, facing the audience..*

NINA

Joan...Darling. How's the weather in Switzerland? Are you well? And "the Worm"?... Oh, Good. I've moved

into the Brighton guest house now. It's lovely here with room service and anything one wants. I couldn't stand it at Brian's for another moment. He was just killing me by inches. His house is so spooky and not that clean. I am on the verge of doing a deal with an American film company, despite Brian's continual interference. He has no right. He wants Puggy's *real* story to remain a secret. Why? He's jealous because of his lack of talent compared to your father and Jack! Well, of course! You know, it's that little elemental. That *sith!* That's who's behind his behaviour. She attached herself to him when we were at Up Lyme and Brian was only five, and has manipulated him ever since. He's ruining his life and she's behind it.

*"M" leans round the 'doorway' behind NINA . Then comes in wearing a white apron and carrying a tray with a drink on it. She sets it down on the table.*

NINA

They are deceitful creatures these elementals. American Indians call them The Tricksters because they tell you a lot that could be true and gain your trust and then deceive you with a lot of lies.

*"M" unscrews a small bottle and pours a few drops into NINA's sherry.*

They ruin people's lives and drive them to lunacy. Or even a slow painful death.

*"M" puts the sherry next to NINA's elbow and goes.*

Thank you....

*NINA takes a sip.*

Anyway Joan. I'm winning and I believe our family will make some money out of our 'secret story' and don't we deserve to for goodness sake?

*Loud music. Thunder.*

SCENE SEVENTEEN. BRIAN'S BUNGALOW, CARLISLE.

BRIAN *in vest and pants doing Yoga asanas. He is in a shoulder stand.*

BRIAN

*(Cheerfully)* I have a premonition of the collapse of our civilization. Just as Daddy had. Our political leaders don't want an intelligent population. They *want* us to be naïve and moronic slaves. So I'm resigning from this society and becoming a hermit. I've set my foot upon the Path. *(Lowers himself)* Cuthbert Whiteside said in Tesco's yesterday, "Don't you have a job?" I said "I've just turned *down* a job. One of the best offers in rail engineering that South America has to offer. But it meant a choice between Art and Mammon. And to me there *is* no choice. Art is supreme". Cuthbert said scornfully "So what do you *do* all day?" In spirit, a great guffaw of laughter goes up within me. An average person such as Cuthbert is not to know, nor will *ever* know the true reason for our lives. His future looks black indeed. Cuthbert will live and die for no reason whatsoever. *(Breezily)* Ah, well.

*He goes into the cobra position.*

RUTH *comes in with a tray of hot drinks.*

RUTH

It's nice to have the house to ourselves again, Brian. Your mother is a bit of a handful. Anyhow. I've got you to myself again and that's all that really matters to me, dear. I do love our married life together. It's so nice and normal.

BRIAN *sits up. She starts to pass him a cup of tea that "M" takes and passes on.*

RUTH

Whoop. I've even got used to your floating teacup trick. You are clever, Brian. You can do things. You've cured Joan and her husband of illnesses and... sometimes I wish you could do magic for *us*...

BRIAN

Like what?

RUTH

Well...like making us some money.

BRIAN

Oh, I see. So you don't think your weekly house allowance is enough?

RUTH

Eight pounds, fifty? Well...

BRIAN

I'm *very* sorry. I just didn't think you were such a secret little materialist. Aren't there other things to life than spending money on useless products?

RUTH

Oh, Brian. I feel I've hurt you now. That's the last thing I wanted to do. Oh, Bri-bri!

"M"

This is getting too much for me!

"M" *gets up and starts to go.*

Yes. It's time you gave her a treat. Take her into town and buy her some underwear.

BRIAN

Shall we go into town? 'Buy you some... thermal underwear?

RUTH

Oh, lovely!

BRIAN

*(To "M" discreetly)* Let's be realistic. *(To RUTH)* And dearest, I noticed you had your eyes on that self adjusting leg rest in the orthopaedic shop.

RUTH

Oh, could we?...

BRIAN

I think we could even stretch to a cream tea at the Cumberland.

RUTH

You're trying to drive me to ecstasy.

BRIAN

And a film.

"M"

Something romantic and funny.

BRIAN

Something romantic and funny.

RUTH

Oh, Bri-bri, you do spoil me. I really am silly to complain about things.

*She snuggles up to him. "M" shrugs and leaves.*

BRIAN

Go and get ready, sweetheart.

RUTH

Alright.

*She starts to go and then stops.*

Darling....Last night I awoke about three o'clock...You were asleep and I saw a woman leaning over you.... I wonder if it was Charlotte. I know you loved her so much that perhaps you draw her back...in some form or other.

BRIAN

I don't think so.

RUTH

You loved her more than me. Of course I can understand why. She was special and I'm pretty ordinary.

BRIAN

You are the most special woman in the world, so don't talk nonsense. Nobody could surpass you in looks, intelligence, knowledge of German and Spanish, anything, and that's why I shall always love you, dearest, more than anybody else, past or present. Anyway, we'll go out and live it up. Why not?... I'll just have to phone the bank manager for a loan first.

*They both chuckle. As they fade into blackness, NINA gets into her bed as JESS hands her a letter out of a shabby opened suit- case. ALBERT sits in a chair.*

SCENE EIGHTEEN. BRIGHTON GUEST HOUSE.

*NINA is reading out a letter to ALBERT and JESS.*

NINA

"Darling Cheeky. I never dreamed...a love like this was possible...It is an elevating and"...*(To JESS)* Can you read that? Oh, Puggy's writing was unspeakable.

*FAWCETT enters slowly.*

FAWCETT

Immeasurably.

JESS

"Immeasurably".

NINA

"Immeasurably profound, utterly independent of the gross passion and robbing, I think, even death of much of its terror." So romantic. Oh, dear I'm feeling a little under the weather. But I'll try and persevere...  
"It brings to my mind... the beauty of the Eastern belief..."

FAWCETT

"...that we two have played out our parts together in another existence before this and will play them together still in ages to come".

NINA

"A loss?...not of body to body but of soul to soul"...No sorry, it's " *love*, not of body to body but of soul to soul". Erm. Oh, my godfathers. "The..." What's that? Oh, his handwriting! "The chastening joys of many phases of existence"... Dear Puggy, couldn't you ever learn to put a comma in the right place?

FAWCETT

"Will merge into a glorious eternal unity...That perfect love and happiness which is the fount of all existence."

NINA

"It would be unreasonable to believe we have finished with all sorrows, but whatsoever is in store, Cheeky, will only cement our love".

*She wipes away a tear and then carries on cheerfully.*  
FAWCETT *leaves.*

NINA

Oh, dear. I think the staff here are trying to poison me. I've never felt so unwell.

ALBERT

We'll go and let you have some rest.

NINA

No, no. I want to show you that cutting.

*She rummages through the yellowing bits of paper.*

NINA

A Mr Rattin, a Swiss trapper talked to my husband recently. He met him and says he was being held by savages as a sort of mascot. Mr Rattin wants to return with a rescue party...

*She passes the cutting to ALBERT.*

ALBERT

This is some years old. Many years.

NINA

I thought that was a recent report, that one. I thought it was last year. Oh well. Never mind.

ALBERT

It says Rattin did go back to rescue your husband but never returned. But that was over thirty...

NINA

Thirty years? That many? But they're still alive now. I'm sure of it. Albert... I believe your film can truly shake the world with the revelations I'm going to give you. In that case there...I managed to get some papers from my son's house. Take them now before he finds out.

*(Singing)* "Wee bonnie boat like a bird on the wing..."

*NINA starts to choke and fall back in pain.*

NINA

*(Dramatically quiet)* All who have experienced sorrow can understand how I feel.

*"M" draws a black veil across the scene. BRIAN appears in a spotlight.*

SCENE NINETEEN. BRIAN'S BUNGALOW IN CARLISLE/GREY AREA.

*BRIAN speaks to the audience. "M" officiates during the scene.*

BRIAN

I had a call at ten pm from the landlady of Mother's boarding house saying that Mother was asking for me and that it looked like the end. I immediately set off in the car. I drove through the night but found on arrival that Mother was dead and her body had already been taken to the undertaker's chapel.

BRIAN *crosses to the other side of the stage and draws back the black drape to reveal NINA'S blood soaked bed.*

BRIAN

Her room was in a mess. Her wee clockie still ticking merrily, with only the blood that had flowed from her ruptured bowels to remind me of her ever having been there. By the pillow, Daddy's last letter to Mother. *(Reading)* "You have no need to fear any failure." Huh! Not half....How pathetic; all her bits and odds and ends, familiar clothing, pictures, letters, trinkets. All eloquent of her, who's now only a memory. The young doctor was suspicious. Mother had died too quickly! Possible foul play! I fail to see what motive could have existed. An inquest was ordered and there'll be an autopsy.  
I went to see mother's body in the mortuary.

*He crosses the stage. A spotlight up on NINA, standing against a grey surface as if lying dead on a slab.*

Frankly it bowled me over. So pitiful, the expression, just as I've seen it many times. A sort of solemn dismay as if to say "Now where did I put my glasses?" She had an eventful life. Born in Ceylon. Daughter of a Supreme Court judge. Fussed and feted in fashionable Indian houses. Married PHF and at first voyaged around the world with him to wherever he was posted. But then, he took up exploring... and twenty years of a string of long separations followed. On my father's and Jack's departure, she and Joan moved to Madeira living *spaciously* on nothing. She'd been spoiled with adulation as a young woman. Now she was denied the sort of life that as wife and mother she had every right to expect. She'd married a man who'd just not accept the responsibility of family. Always there was her coterie of interesting friends. Always she waited for the return of PHF and Jack, which never materialized. But she *would* spend more than funds warranted, so her fascinating life, spread over four continents, ended in a string of seaside boarding houses for impoverished gentlewomen. This fact made her very difficult in later life and drove away her friends and relatives just when she needed them. So she resorted to talking to just

about any stranger who'd listen. Perhaps, if she hadn't blurted out a lot of secrets, (*Indicating the curse*) she wouldn't have left this world alone, in a murky Brighton boarding house.

*He goes to his secret cupboard for a favourite book.*

BRIAN

Ah well, an evening by myself, with Ruth out at her German evening classes. "M" keeping a low profile. I shall indulge in a bit of light reading. Madame Blavatsky's "The Secret Doctrine".

*He settles down on the sofa and then hears his name spoken.*

BRIAN

Ruth? You're back early.

*NINA singing quietly.*

NINA

"Wee bonnie boat like a bird on the wing..."

*She comes towards him.*

BRIAN

What can I do for you mother?

NINA

Brian. I do love you. Despite the little tiffs, we've had some laughs together. Can you do me just one last favour?

BRIAN

Well. What?

NINA

Would you go back to Brazil?

BRIAN

Never.

NINA

And try!!...again...Just one last time! Just in case!...

BRIAN

*(Irritated)* Alright...*(Then jokingly)* But if the one in a million happens and they are still around and just enjoying the sun and sangria. Either of them. I do not hold myself responsible for my actions.

*NINA smiles and fades away into the darkness. BRIAN alone in spotlight.*

I am well on my path and I have my great task ahead. From her point of view and the world's, I may be a failure. But from my point of view...I haven't started yet.

*Light fades. Short burst of music.*

**End of Act One**

**ACT TWO**

SCENE ONE. ALBERT'S FLAT.

*The stage is now a single void. The black and grey areas are now a Magritte style limbo of surreal colours and light..*

JESS *on the phone*. ALBERT *nearby*. *They grin broadly at each other.*

JESS

You liked the script, darling ? Fantastic. We're so pleased this end. So when do you want us in L.A.? I can't wait to see you, Ida. Oh, I've aged of course. No, you couldn't sweetie. Oh, we'll have to get facelifts before we arrive. I know how important looking young is over there. Oh, dear. Yes, here he is...Right here. 'Face beaming!

*Hands him the phone.*

ALBERT

Hi, Ida....Oh, I'm absolutely thrilled. Of course I don't mind script changes. Delighted to do any re-writes.

JESS *nods at ALBERT animatedly.*

ALBERT

Well, I can't wait to be there. It's all so exciting...Oh, the tapes *arrived*. You like that Northern guy? Really? It needs a name, though, doesn't it?... Oh you see *Jack* as the main character? (*Bemused, but trying to tow the line*) So you want that camp Northerner, and you want an American star as Jack? Oh...Well...Jack was very *pure*, you know. You see him as... *randy*? A womanizer? Well... I could change that a little. (*He gives JESS a small sigh.*) No problem. You want to cut the *early* scenes about Fawcett?... Well, how will the audience understand his...his quest? Don't we need exposition? Can we go straight to Amazonia without the Ceylon scenes?...Oh, Ida? Are you sure? Ok. Ok. I'll try. Give

me a couple of days.... Now? Straight away?....Alright.  
Yes, I'll email it.

ALBERT *gives JESS a disgusted look.*

ALBERT

Oh, right. There's more? The city? The stone city. Yes...  
Atlanteans? They should meet Atlanteans, you think?  
Oh, that's trendy again over there, now is it? Well...Oh,  
*fight* with Atlanteans!!...Special effects. Of course.  
Well...Oh, Ida. I..I..really think the whole thing could  
become ludicrous. Well...OK, here she is...

*He hands phone to JESS.*

JESS

Yes, sweetie. I'm here. Is he being stubborn? Well, I  
know. (*Looking straight at ALBERT as she is speaking  
to IDA*) Stubborn directors don't make it in Hollywood.  
It becomes a graveyard for them as they stay  
unemployed and drink themselves to death. Of course.  
(*Jokingly*) Albert be warned! Of course he'll do the re-  
writes, Hon. Here he is.

ALBERT

Hello. So you really want Jack as the main character?  
Well, he's nothing like as interesting as...But it was  
meant to be about the *father*. Fawcett. The script was  
about the explorer, Fawcett the Mystic. Oh God. No,  
I'm not happy about Atlantean special effect battles?  
What's that got to do...

JESS

For Christ's sake, Al ! Just do it!

ALBERT

(*To both IDA on the phone and to JESS*) NO!!! I'm not  
bloody doing *that*! No! I am *not* throwing a great story  
down the plug hole! Why on earth do you need my  
script, then? Get your special effects man to write it.  
You want a moronic...

JESS

Oh, Al, I just don't believe this.

ALBERT

You want a moronic story. OK. Forget about employing me!

JESS

You....*bloody*....fool!! You have fucked it up.

*She takes the phone from him.*

JESS

I can't tell you how sorry I am about his attitude. Well Ida, that's just him. Self-destructive...I know. Look, I'll come over any way... You've got another writer in mind? Oh great. No...He deserves it. No one is indispensable in our business. I can't wait to see you sweetheart . We'll sort it all out. Lot's of love.

*She turns to ALBERT.*

JESS

Well....No one could have made a better job of that than you. (*Laughing*) How can you destroy a chance of a life time in *seconds*? Of *idiocy*? What is the matter with you? You are very sad. We're finished now. Really finished. I'm going to pack my things. I've done everything I can for you...

ALBERT

Yeah, I know... I know....Jess, I'm sorry. I'm not surprised. You've had enough then. You're going. Fawcett's going. Life's going. I've ruined it. On every level. I'm finished. Washed up. Years of struggle in this business and nothing to show for it. Well, hardly nothing. I had one chance... But, I just can't...

JESS

Compromise.

ALBERT

Not *that* much! If it had been anything else...

JESS

...But Fawcett. Oh well. I'ts *your* life now. You just get on with destroying it then and I'll...

ALBERT

Jet off to Hollywood and join you dyke friend.

JESS

I think any *dyke*, as you put it, that I know, has far more ability of making some ,, thing of life than you, Al. Involvement with you has been a sad waste of my life. So I'm not doing it another moment longer. I can't wait to catch that plane for L.A.

*She goes.*

SCENE TWO. BRIAN'S BUNGALOW. CARLISLE.

*As he speaks to the audience, he changes from corduroys and pullover into khaki.*

BRIAN

'Wasn't feeling good yesterday. Bellyache. The cucumber that Ruth ruined by putting in the deep freeze, paralysed my normal bodily functions. So I took a dose of castor oil.....the effect of which was to turn me inside out. Also. We are with mouse again. A very bold little animal. I've seen him! But he is elusive. I've been wondering whether in a confrontation I would prove deficient in physical courage. I know my moral courage is alright. But I haven't really had a test of physical courage. The test will only come once. And if it does I must meet it successfully. Daddy had it and though scared stiff went through it well. I'll have to travel in a tiny single engine plane over endless jungle. I'm thrilled. The job *must* be done. I believe my fate is to do it. And that things have worked out to enable me to do it. All the same, the risk involved is not pleasant to think about. Flying over unexplored country, and a drop of water in the carburettor of that tiny aircraft engine will bring us down into the forest. If one survives the impact one is faced with a truly horrible fate - so horrible that

annihilation in the crash is doubtless to be preferred! My "Higher Self" drives however, and I have to face a little of what Daddy often faced - scared though he was - and dominated. I am less frightened for myself than for Ruth, for the bereavement would be a terrible blow for her - and I hate to think of her unprotected and helpless. Nevertheless, my remarkably accurate horoscope says nothing of a premature end in these circumstances. So I set forth with no other companion but my determination.

"M" *enters with a suitcase. She stops and opens her make-up mirror to adjust her mascara.*

BRIAN

Oh, are *you* coming? D'you need a ticket? Oh, no, you'll be travelling by teleportation. I'll see you later then.

*Music. Plane noise. Nina enters in a much younger version of herself.*

NINA

Brian. I'm so pleased with you. You're going to be successful for once.

BRIAN

You're not coming as well, Mother, are you?

NINA

Just in spirit, dear. I was laughing to myself earlier about that Royal Geographical Society lecture that time. Do you remember? When that stuffy Savage Landor was so insulting about your father's work...

BRIAN

Oh, yes, yes, yes. Sir Henry Savage Landor. He was like a puffed up pigeon. (*Imitating Savage Landor*) "Oh, Ladies and Gentlemen. The Mato Grosso!! I've just got back from there. *Lovely* little place. Perfect for tea planting!"

NINA

We went because Puggy had been invited to speak. We brought Conan Doyle with us. We were in the best seats and the house was full, clamouring to see the famous Fawcett. And then the RGS President, that little wretch Hinks, cancels your father's talk and puts on Savage Landor at the last moment. People can be so vile.

BRIAN

Ah yes! But did it backfire on Hinks and the RGS! Boy oh boy. (*Explaining to the audience as he banters on*) The audience in the gallery were a lot of students who were Fawcett worshippers and when confronted with this establishment puppet, Savage Landor, on the rostrum instead of their beloved hero, violent hostility began to pervade the air.

BRIAN *satirically mimics SAVAGE LANDOR and acts out the scene with exaggerated comedy.*

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

I can safely assure my audience that the Mato Grosso is as tranquil as my own back garden. And probably safer. (*BRIAN imitates the groan of disapproval and hissing of the audience*) Once the jungle has been cleared, the mining industry will bring an economic boom.

NINA

Then Conan Doyle, with extreme dignity, voiced everyone's annoyance.

BRIAN AS CONAN DOYLE

Er...Mr President. Forgive me for mentioning that a considerable portion of us present tonight came to hear Colonel Fawcett's talk, which seems to have been re-scheduled at the last moment, and we are somewhat *dumfounded* to hear an opinion at such variance to his. What about the ancient cities?

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

What ancient cities?

*Light change and voices become increasingly reverberated by concealed microphones to give an echo effect of a great hall.*

BRIAN IMITATING RUDE HECKLERS

The ruins!! You've heard about them! The *ancient cities!! Answer!*

*Sound of chants: "Answer!! Answer!! Answer!!"*

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

Sir Arthur...Science has no evidence that Brazil has ever supported more than the most primitive form of tribal life. Question there?

BRIAN AS FEMALE HECKLER WITH LISP

Thir Henry, what about the Egyption hieroglyphs and Phoenician thtyle vessels found in Rio harbour by a Brathilian archaeologitht.

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

Young lady, have you ever trusted a Brazilian archaeologist? I sincerely hope not. Ha-ha-ha-ha.

BRIAN

A vegetable missile passes within inches of Sir Henry's head. The students are about to tear the building apart. But he continues like a robot.

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

Brazil's "Lost World" the Mato Grosso , Sir Arthur, is as ordinary as anywhere else on this earth. However disappointing that might sound to the child in us all...there are no mysteries whatsoever. Thank you.

BRIAN AS HINKS

Any more questions? Before we wind up?

*Light change. FAWCETT enters.*

FAWCETT

I have a question.

BRIAN

A shockwave rips through the hall. Hinks, voice high pitched with fear, blurts out; "Yes Colonel Fawcett. Please. Carry on. Carry on." Daddy...rises up...Calmly.

FAWCETT

I should like to congratulate Sir Henry...

BRIAN

A gasp of amazement from the audience.

FAWCETT

For making a journey through the most mystifying and awesome place on earth..... sound like a stroll through Kew Gardens.

*Echoing sound effect: Roars of laughter, cheering. Hinks' voice: "Order Order!"*

FAWCETT

You descended just *two* rivers...

BRIAN AS HECKLER'S VOICE

Sticking frantically close to the banks, just for safety!

*Laughter.*

FAWCETT

You next boldly followed the line of the transcontinental *telegraph poles!*

*More laughter.*

...And yet you come here claiming to have knowledge of a million square miles of unexplored jungle on either side of your route..... HOW?

*Roar of the pandemonium breaking out and the rhythmic roars from the gallery of "How? How? How? Answer! Answer! Answer!"*

BRIAN

A hundred accusing fingers point at Savage Landor, the representative of stifling convention. The

stablishments' agent for normalizing reality. But the villain strikes right back snarling.

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

Show me one iota of evidence for your crackpot theories!

BRIAN

A deathly hush. Daddy slowly takes something out of his pocket. A small statuette.

FAWCETT

As Sir Henry displays such a mastery of his subject, would he do us the honour of identifying this?

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

From Mesopotamia?

*Audience roar of "NO!"...*

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

From Antioch?

*Heckler; "Not on your Nellie!!" Laughter.*

BRIAN

Savage Landor starts to sweat.

BRIAN AS SAVAGE LANDOR

From.....*BRAZIL?*

*The audience howl "YEAH!!!!!!" FAWCETT nods to the cheers and applause.*

BRIAN

That public yearned for the words that next came from Daddy, the champion of free thought!

FAWCETT

I know those ancient cities exist. I shall go "in there." I shall go without the backing of this society. Rogue

explorers have never travelled under the auspices of scientific bodies...

*Sound effect. Heckler : "Here-here!!"*

FAWCETT

And I shall go despite a certain quantity of abuse, opposition and even hatred. I shall endure... and finally ....I shall..... unveil *the truth!*

*Sound: Havoc in the hall as the meeting breaks up. NINA moves to FAWCETT..*

NINA

*(Sobbing violently)* You were magnificent!...

BRIAN

Conan Doyle found it all screamingly funny and pinched the whole scene for his "Lost World" novel. So everyone was happy on our side. For a bit.

*BRIAN contemplates his parents who are now in an affectionate embrace. Blackout.*

SCENE THREE. MATO GROSSO. A VOID NEAR SOME HUTS.

*BRIAN with small rucksack is waiting for something. Nearby, a gold prospector sits daydreaming; a ragged clothed man with beard and straw hat. Tinny Brazilian music on a transistor radio in the distance. BRIAN opens a conversation.*

BRIAN

Boa tarde, senhor.

*The man grunts. Pause.*

BRIAN

*(Shouting in the man's ear)* Eu... viajo... para Rio Sangue!

MAN

Mmm.

BRIAN *starts to use extravagant sign language as he speaks.*

BRIAN

Ora rapaz....eu necessito transporte para *Rio Sanguê*...Oh, this language...

MAN

It *is* devilish tongue...

BRIAN

You speak some English? Good. I need transport to Blood River. River of Blood whatever it's called. Is there a canoe or something?

MAN

*(Sniggering ominously)* No one return from the River of Blood. Dangerous place.

BRIAN

I am determined to go.

MAN

Why you go?

BRIAN

That's my business, dear chap.

MAN

"Dear chap"? ...."Dear chap"?...You...You remind me...of a man.

BRIAN

What man?

MAN

*(Smiling inanely)* A man...*with a power!*

BRIAN

*(Awakening to amazement)*...."The power of what?"

MAN  
"The power of Voodoo"

BRIAN  
"Who do?"

MAN  
"You do!"

*BRIAN and RALEIGH have recognized each other and race the lines very fast getting very excited.*

BRIAN  
"I do what"

RALEIGH  
"Remind me of a man"

BRIAN  
"What man?"

RALEIGH  
"A man with a power!!"

BRIAN  
"Power of what?"

RALEIGH  
"The power of Voodoo!"

BRIAN  
"WHO DO???"

RALEIGH  
"YOU DO!!!"

BRIAN  
"*I DO WHAT???*"

RALEIGH  
'Remind me of Brian Fawcett. Dear chap....

BRIAN

Raleigh Rimell...in dago costume...

RALEIGH

I'm a garimpo! a gold prospector now. 'Have to wear the uniform.

*They shake hands very emotionally. BRIAN reacts slightly to RALEIGH'S hand.*

BRIAN

You're...

RALEIGH

It's wet. It's the malaria.

BRIAN

Raleigh, I'm so sorry. Your mother's still alive, you know. She's over a hundred and you haven't written to her for *forty* years, you naughty boy.

RALEIGH

I know what you're going to ask. And I don't know the answer. I don't know what happened to them. Your father was an unusual man. But I should never have gone with him. I was tricked. I never knew that he'd planned to stay here with Jack and...

BRIAN

No one ever found you?

RALEIGH

A Swiss trapper. We were held by Indians. He said he was going to get help but he never found us again. He said other rescue parties had all looked eastward. In the opposite direction. At least we got released by the tribe who thought he'd bring back trouble.

BRIAN

Did Daddy wear rings?

RALEIGH

Yes. He bought some magical Macumba rings in Cuiaba.

BRIAN

So unlike Daddy. Wearing rings.

RALEIGH

There was a coiled one with sapphire snake eyes.

BRIAN

Really.

RALEIGH

"Daddy" was very different here! Believe me Brian. Nature takes you over here. Brings out urges you never thought you had and ...But it's a cruel life. I made a fortune when I found a diamond. Spent the lot in Salvador. Came back here in a gambling frenzy determined to find more. But I just find bits of gold dust which keep me going. This is not the place for you, Brian. It's evil.

BRIAN

It certainly is. I actually saw an empty coca cola can discarded in the *virgin forest!*

RALEIGH

People kill each other here for a coca cola. The virgin forest's all owned' you know.

BRIAN

By Indians.

RALEIGH

Hah! By oil companies, international capital, hamburger magnates. It was divided into squares like a chess board in committee rooms a hundred years ago. We poor are the shock troops who are clearing the natives and the jungle and when that's completed, they'll just come in and its goodbye to us little men.

*Gunshots. Raucous laughter. Manic samba music on a transistor.*

BRIAN

Oh, Raleigh. It's surreal. A cocktail bar in the jungle. Those undulating blacks... Half naked transvestites... Babies of three crawling round begging. It's Dante's Inferno.

RALEIGH

Nobody blinks at it. We're outside the law. That's why there are old Germans, Hitler fugitives, in there. You can do any unsocial thing you want here, Brian. It's rather great.

BRIAN

I think I should help you get out.

RALEIGH

I don't want to, thanks. I like living in anarchy. Gun fights. Indian attacks. That sort of thing. Just look in the river. Scores of white corpses, full of arrows, half-eaten by Piranhas. Here. You'll need one of these, you gringo.

*He hands him a revolver.*

BRIAN

Thanks. I'll return it on my way out. Where are we, in God's name?

RALEIGH

Ap-yac-as. Or up-your-arse as I call it.

BRIAN

It's certainly not in the Fodor Guide.

RALEIGH

Brian. You're wasting your time. You know they must be dead.

BRIAN

How would you know? You deserted...

RALEIGH

They left me to die actually. Your noble father and brother...My foot went very lame and they were

determined to get to their rendezvous with the priesthood, come what may.

BRIAN

Raleigh. You're not such a bad sort. Here have my card. That's my phone number in Carlisle. Just in case you ever come back.

*Music. Light fades.*

SCENE FOUR. MATO GROSSO VOID.

ALBERT *in spotlight. Dressed up in a designer explorer's outfit. He is cheerful again. To audience.*

ALBERT

I wasn't finished with the Fawcett saga. Not by a long way. Without Jess's cynical presence I was able to let rip. Untrammelled, I set off for New York and found Fawcett's original manuscript in a New York archive and it bore no resemblance whatever to the huge best seller "autobiography" which Brian claims to have merely edited. In fact Brian wrote it *himself* from a few notes and essays claiming it was all his father's work and put a smoke screen over the real story. Brian very cleverly created a cosy imperial adventure tale to mislead the public for generations to come. Brian is the only one alive who knows the motives for that mysterious quest. Motives perhaps too shocking for the public to take in. Sacrificing your son like Abraham and Isaac...When I heard he had returned to Mato Grosso I had no option but to follow him.

*He checks his digital video camera and lines it up, hand-held for a close-up of himself.*

ALBERT

*(To camera)* Brian Fawcett is the last connection and only connection I have of getting to the facts. So here I am in Cuiaba. The jumping off point of all expeditions into the dangerous Mato Grosso.. I'm just going to enjoy a glass of Kachasa and then off to "Dead Horse Camp" .....

*Music.*

"M" *in black, full-length peasant clothes with a frightening grin has crept up on ALBERT and as he turns, confronts him, their faces inches apart.*

ALBERT

What? ...O que o disse, senhora?

"M" *gives him an overpowering stare.*

ALBERT

Who the hell are you? Christ, you're giving me the evil eye!...

"M" *continues for an excruciatingly long moment.*

ALBERT

Cruzieros?

*He reaches for money to give her. She ignores the gesture and continues staring, freezing him to the spot.*

ALBERT

Your eyes....are *inhuman!*

"M"

*(Quietly)* I've got you!

*Blackout.*

SCENE FIVE. RIO SANGUE.

*Night. BRIAN lies asleep on the ground. Voices come in and out of his mind as shadowy figures pass by. The voices are recorded with echo distortion and have a weird uneasy quality.*

VOICE OF STRAUSS

*(A Brazilian German accent)* My name is Colonel Paulo Strauss of the Brazil Theosophical Society. Your father reached his intended destination and descended into an underground city inhabited by Martians. He emerges from time to time aboard a flying saucer...

## VOICE OF PATERSON

*(Irritated Imperial English voice)* I'm disgusted by the way you continually ignore my researches. I'm Timothy Paterson, Fawcett's nephew and I know what I'm talking about! Uncle Percy actually found a sixteen million-year-old city and has since been involved in switching mankind from the fifth sub race to the sixth sub race of the Fifth Root race, if you follow me. The task is not easy, living as one does between the fourth and the ninth dimensions. Its time you accepted these facts.

## VOICE OF CHABBERT

*(Friendly American voice)*. Brian Hi! Rene Chabbert, here. I finally solved it. Your father's lost city does exist. I found it on Landstat Satellite X-ray photos. It's right there West of Cuiaba. I was planning to reach it in a hot air ballon, but unfortunately I've had a motor accident and don't walk anymore. But I know Fawcett freaks from all over the world will take up the challenge...Somebody will reach that lost city very soon.

## BARNES

*(An erudite cockney accent)* Mr Fawcett. Brian, if I may call you so. The statuette your father took with him was not from Atlantis or even Brazil. Sir Henry Rider Haggard picked it up from Zimbabwe. He was being shown round the old ruins and just popped the statuette into his pocket. As regards old artifacts he seems to have been a bit of a kleptomaniac. The words on it are Phoenician and translate:

"To invoke a happy future, just come along to my temple."

## BACON

*(Voice of mild English alternative academic)* Brian... I can honestly say that a day doesn't go by when I am not in touch with your father... He is with the Great White Brotherhood....and achieving supreme results in furthering the world's progress towards a new Golden Age... Should you not take a more compassionate

approach in understanding your father's truly cosmic destiny?

BRIAN

*(Waking suddenly with anger)* Will you shut up, all of you! You know nothing! Fawcett freaks! They flock to Daddy's story like pigeons to Trafalgar Square. You find them in the library of the Royal Geographical Society, in dark corners, practically masturbating over Daddy's surviving letters. Can't they get a life? You find them lumbering raucously into the jungle in yellow designer jeeps heading for Dead Horse Camp. *Terrifying* the Indians and the wildlife. We passed some a few days ago. Americans of course. Self-appointed experts on Fawcett who know nothing about Daddy and concoct insane fantasies. Jumping on Daddy's bandwagon like blood lusting leaches. Ugh. Well, there is a curse on those people...as "M" says and I believe her. I've run out of European standard bog paper. They were charging five pounds a roll in Cuiaba and I was foolish enough to only purchase one. I now have severe regrets about my frugality. "Bowel block" is the answer. "Bowel block" *(He takes a tablet)*. Now. To find the messiah with the squint. Strangely enough I can't shake off a kind of indifference about Jack. It shocks me, because I'd like to be so hot with enthusiasm in the quest of him, that risks and obstacles would be ignored. Unhappily, this is not the case. I feel in my secret heart that if Jack is still surviving, he'd have made his life in accordance with his environment, and that it is his business to live it so. After all these years, the call of blood to blood is dim. And besides...it's extremely hot...

*He starts to doze off.*

"M" leads JACK onto the stage by the wrist and places him near BRIAN and leaves. JACK speaks with a slow calm voice. Very different from the earlier scenes..

JACK

Brian....Brian...

BRIAN *looks up wearily not quite knowing where he is.*

JACK

D'you recognize me by any chance?

BRIAN

Jack? I know that squint. Is it really Jack?...

JACK

Yes.

BRIAN *breaks into sobs and sobs so violently that he can't stand up. At last JACK helps him to his feet. JACK, wears a dirty long Indian smock, has long grey hair and beard like a beachcomber.*

BRIAN

God, you look so young. Still a boy! Arcadia certainly agrees with you. Sorry...sorry to intrude on your idyllic existence. But we were getting rather anxious back home. We needed so badly to know what had happened. Don't tell me! You don't need to tell me right away. Let's just savour this for a moment...Your hands are wet. You've got malaria. Oh dear, I'm sorry. Is your health alright otherwise? I've got some medicines with me. Diarrhoea tablets, athletes' foot cream. If you need anything. Can you still speak English? Over forty years in the wilderness. You've beaten Moses' record. No one speaks English in this God forsaken country. Oh God, have you forgotten how to speak it?

JACK

*(Singing quietly)* "Fascinating rhythm,  
You've got me on the go.  
Fascinating rhythm  
The neighbours wanna know  
Why I'm always shaking..."

BRIAN

That's American, old boy. I think you've confused....

JACK

They never stopped playing it on the liner to Rio. It's the last tune I remember. Since then nothing but occasional Indian chant and the odd passing gold prospector portable wireless.

BRIAN

.....You heard about World War II?

JACK

I heard something about a world war. From defeated Germans who came here in submarines. They still live in the forest out there. They said some man called Hitler was going to join them and start a new colony.

BRIAN

Well. Talking of colonies, Jack. What happened? What *happened* to the colony Daddy was going to start? Full of evolved Europeans who couldn't stand the mad capitalism that was taking over The West?

JACK

Nobody arrived. Not one customer. Remember Major Mien, the South African landowner, who promised money for the foundation? Harold Large?

BRIAN

Daddy's best friend. Harold Large.

JACK

When it came to the crunch...We waited and waited.

BRIAN

Nobody knew where you were.

JACK

Large knew exactly where we were. Daddy had given him the co-ordinates for the rendezvous point.

BRIAN

Nobody believed Large. Rescue parties went careering east looking for you when in fact you had gone west to the Tapajos.

JACK

We didn't want rescuing.

BRIAN

A hundred people have died looking for you, Jack.

JACK

They just wanted to get away from their boring lives and used our "rescue" as an excuse. It was probably a fashionable alternative to joining the foreign legion. "Disappointed in love? Well then go and 'Look for Facet.'" I'm not sorry for any of them. Daddy left a distinct last message. "Don't come looking for us!" We had a perfect right to disappear without being sought out by amateur adventurers who know nothing of our aims.

BRIAN

There are no stone cities, either, are there?...And no sign of "Z"? So, another dream goes on the scrap heap. It makes me laugh really. Thinking back on Daddy's optimism. The big house he'd buy in Sylvestre, overlooking Rio. Where all of us would foregather each Xmas. Possibly from the ends of the earth. Together with children and grand children. Of course with the presumed millions in the Fawcett coffers, travelling expenses would be no obstacle. And there was a two hundred ton ocean going yacht in the background of his family dreams. But what he didn't evoke in those sweet pictures is the inevitable corollary to vast wealth, duodenal ulcers. Maybe they weren't invented back in those dreamy times. We've both been duped Jack and cheated of our lives...

JACK

No.

BRIAN

Yes. You more than anyone. The child messiah that Buddhist sages worshipped? The evolved being that was to be presented to the Earth Guardians as Daddy's own proof of his final and supreme communion with the gods? Well, just look at you now, Jack. You look like a vagrant.

JACK

Well, I'm happy.

BRIAN

You are happy? You are *happy*? That's just fine and dandy.

JACK

I'm at piece with Nature and its history. That's all Daddy wanted really. What better aim in life?

BRIAN

There's just a little matter of accepting that Daddy's Great Scheme was a gigantic flop. Mother and I having spent bloody years keeping his name on the map.

JACK

If you lived here you'd understand. I like the friendship and snakes and spiders. Crocodiles smile at me. I can converse with scorpions. It's Man who's made Nature an enemy. A big mistake.

BRIAN

My mistake was believing you'd reached the Fourth Dimension. I thought you'd actually made it into a mystical reality when all these years you've just been bumming around as a beachcomber.

JACK

I did enter the Fourth Dimension. I'm right in it now. You're outside it and don't see.

ALBERT *creeps near with a camcorder.*

BRIAN

Who the hell's that?

ALBERT *points the camcorder at his own face and does a "piece to camera", speaking intimately to "the viewer".*

ALBERT

I am here on the banks of the remote River of Blood. Brian Fawcett has now made contact with his long lost brother Jack. And I am about to approach...

BRIAN

*(Shouting at ALBERT)* Hey! What's going on?

ALBERT *points the camera at BRIAN and JACK and advances on them.*

ALBERT

Gentlemen. This is obviously a moving moment for you both. How do you both feel at this extraordinary...

BRIAN

Switch that off! How dare you!

ALBERT

How do you *feel* at this moment?

ALBERT *continues filming.* BRIAN *pulls out his revolver.*

BRIAN

I'm feel like blowing your brains out.

*He takes aim at ALBERT who points the camera now at himself.*

ALBERT

*(To camera)* I am about to get shot. Brian Fawcett is taking aim at me and these could be my last seconds of life...

BRIAN

It's you again. You BBC bugger! Hand that camera over!

ALBERT

No!

BRIAN

Right. Take this then!

BRIAN *cocks the trigger.*

ALBERT

No! Please! Alright! Here...

BRIAN *grabs the camera and starts to rush off with it.*

BRIAN

*(Calling back)* This is going in the river!!

*He exits. JACK walks briskly in the other direction and vanishes. BRIAN returns.*

BRIAN

Where's he gone? *(Shouting after him)* Jack! JACK!! Oh no! *Don't go!!*

ALBERT

He went that way.

BRIAN

*(To ALBERT)* You... Media...Jackal!.... Well... Perhaps it's just as well. He's obviously found his milieu right here and who am I to... anyway...

ALBERT

Have I messed things up?

BRIAN

Not really. Perhaps... everything was said. Where can one get a swig of Kachasa around here?

ALBERT

Right here.

*He gets some out of his bag. They take swigs.*

BRIAN

Perhaps I shouldn't have done that. Your tape was the only evidence of his existence. Nobody will believe my encounter now. Oh, who cares. It was just one of life's little incidents.

ALBERT

They found...the lost civilization?

BRIAN

No.

I think they did.

ALBERT

Don't be absurd.

BRIAN

I know.

ALBERT

How?

BRIAN

It says so on the Internet.

ALBERT

*(Chuckling)* Oh, I see.

BRIAN

It's been known on the Internet for ages. They discovered an underground city. "Z". *Inhabited!!* It's discussed on scores of websites worldwide and accepted...

ALBERT

Ahhha.

BRIAN

I'm determined to find it.

ALBERT

Would you let me know when you do?

BRIAN

Certainly. Can you give any advice?

ALBERT

Keep taking the diarrhoea tablets.

BRIAN

But as to direction?

ALBERT

BRIAN

The confluence of the Juruena and the Teles Pires rivers. Go forth then! Become casualty one hundred and one! I've had enough. I'm returning to Cumberland. It is more conducive to spirituality than this damn place.

ALBERT

Did you ask your brother if your father's still alive?

BRIAN

Damn. I didn't.

ALBERT

I'm sure he's alive. Mr Fawcett. Brian... Before I go. I'd like to say. I am not now what you think. I am not a BBC clone. I was once a sad hack, I admit. Although on a freelance basis. But now. Since my experience of meeting you. I've changed. I've broken off with the woman I loved.

BRIAN

I'm sorry.

ALBERT

I've radically changed gear. To a very different attitude.

BRIAN

Oh, good.

ALBERT

I reject my brainwashed past. It was a stupid reality I was caught in. Scientifically driven. Commercially driven. The things they ask you to do? The compromises! Its far better to kill a great idea and bury it for posterity than let Hollywood get its hands on it. Life need not be soulless. Thank God. I know what life's about now. Thanks to you.

BRIAN

I say.... That's rather touching. Well... thank you, Albert. I wish you the greatest of luck in your quest. I'm sure it won't be fruitless.

ALBERT

Goodbye, Brian.

ALBERT *walks off into the darkness. We catch a glimpse of "M".*

BRIAN *faces the audience.*

SCENE SIX. BELO HORIZONTE HOTEL. BACK YARD.

BRIAN

'The Fawcett Saga about to claim another victim? I flew back to Belo Horizonte. One of those wild frontier towns. I slept for days. Then I got up and went for a stroll round the back of the hotel.

FAWCETT *enters in rags and scavenges among dustbins. He looks and moves like a gnarled reptilian.*

It was there I saw an old beachcomber...  
There are so many of them in South America. Some look European and of a disturbingly cultured background. God knows how they get here into this frontier madhouse. I spoke to him.

BRIAN *approaches him.*

English? Or German?...

FAWCETT

*(Preoccupied searching for scraps)* English. I'm an English Colonel.

BRIAN

A lot of English Colonels come to South America to take up Beachcombing. Why is that?

FAWCETT

Freedom.

BRIAN

You're covered in mosquitoes. Don't you mind?

FAWCETT

The little creatures are hungry. They have to eat. Oh-hum-dy-dum-dum-dum.

*He carries on scavenging.*

BRIAN

May I ask your name, Sir?

FAWCETT

Zahaz.

BRIAN

Have you another name?

FAWCETT

No. Do-dum-dy-dy-dum-dum. The hotel haven't thrown out their leftovers yet. I'm slightly ahead of my schedule.

BRIAN

Can I offer you a thousand cruzeros for a meal.

FAWCETT

*(Singing the line as if in an opera)* Thank you, kind Sir.

*Brian gives him the note and notices a bright ring on the man's finger.*

BRAIN

Interesting ring.

FAWCETT

Just a nick-nack.

*FAWCETT holds it towards BRIAN like a magic weapon.*

FAWCETT

*(Hissing)* Snake-eyes.

BRIAN

Yes. Sapphire snake-eyes and coiled like a serpent.

FAWCETT

No. I haven't another name. The hotel haven't thrown out their leftovers yet. Can you spare some cash?

BRIAN

I think I've just given you some.

FAWCETT

Oh, thank you very much. What is your name if I may be so impudent as to ask?

BRIAN

Er. De Winton. Albert de Winton. Haven't you any family?

FAWCETT

Ditched them years ago. Don't like families. They interfere with life.

BRIAN

You are Fawcett. Aren't you?

FAWCETT

Yes! I'm "Fawcett". Certainly. If you say you are Fawcett around here, (*Singing his words*) you get an extra thousand cruzeros. Hint-hint-hint. Ha-ha-ha. Or sometimes a smack in the face.

FAWCETT *yells up at a window.*

FAWCETT

Hey! It's time to throw out the leftovers! I haven't got all day!

BRIAN

What happened to the ancient city? What happened to "Z"?

FAWCETT

Oh, it's there. But not everybody can see it.

BRIAN

Did you complete the journey?

FAWCETT

Unfinished journeys are the best.

BRIAN

Did you hand over Jack to the Great White Brotherhood?

FAWCETT

Jack? Now who do I know called Jack?

BRIAN

Let me tell you. Jack was your oldest child. You had a younger one named Brian.

FAWCETT

Brian! What a ghastly name.

BRIAN

And a daughter, Joan.

FAWCETT

No. It doesn't register.

BRIAN

At Trincomalee...

FAWCETT

*(Singing)* Trincomalee!! Hee-hee-hee!!!

BRIAN

At the army fort at Trincomalee. Jack, at his birth was hailed as a messiah by the Buddhist elders. You were told his destiny was to become an avatar among the hidden Earth Guardians of Amazonia. And that it was your life's task to deliver him there.

FAWCETT

You *do* surprise me.

BRIAN

Don't you *dare* dismiss it so nonchalantly! Brian and Joan suffered because of your damned obsession with

Jack! Taken from school at fifteen and eleven so you could spend the money and go gallivanting off, chasing your crazy theories. Your wife waited forty years for your return and died in poverty. You took her son into oblivion! Not to mention Raleigh Rimell who you left to die with an injured foot in order to complete your delirious quest! And you claim not to remember a thing!

FAWCETT

I am going on to the next hotel because I am feeling a little peckish....Brian. What a ghastly name...Hee-hee-hee...

BRIAN

Just a moment. What if I told you I was Brian?

FAWCETT

You?

BRIAN

I've spent my life upholding your reputation. I re-wrote your turgid manuscript and made it a best seller. I've looked after your deranged wife.

FAWCETT

Is she?

BRIAN

Mother became deranged because you made her so by vanishing so spectacularly. I've guarded your secrets against the vulgar prying media and to save you from ridicule.

FAWCETT

What's ridiculous about me?

BRIAN

The colony of evolved beings that you were planning to found in the jungle. An isolated community of chosen ones to be trained in the highest aspects of spiritual ambition. A Noah's Arc of super-beings to survive capitalism's impending end and start culture again from scratch! A Master-Race of chosen people headed

by you! Herrenfolk was subsequently Hitlers ideal and..... rather unfashionable now.

FAWCETT

*(Quite sanely)* The world's just not ready for it yet. But it will be. When the chaos comes.

BRIAN

The ones you left behind, your family, were robbed of happiness in life. Mourning. Grieving. Thinking you were dead, and all the while you cruised on and on into your fantasies. Well, your selfishness has killed you. To the outside world anyway. Your soul is mad.

FAWCETT

You're being a little harsh. Anyway. You've got the wrong man. Zahaz is my name. I don't recall any previous identity. *(Hisses and holds up the ring)* Snake-eyes!

FAWCETT *goes.* BRIAN *speaks to audience.*

BRIAN

That was Daddy, alright. No mistaking those steel grey eyes. What a tragedy is here. A life spent to no useful end. All of it a search for illusions. Is there anything of true virtue in Daddy's life's work? But how much virtue is there in *anyone's* life's work for that matter? The question is staggering in it's implication. Good...I've got it off my chest. Now back home to my little Ruthie who never did anyone a jot of harm. The first thing I'm going to do is hand those blasted secret archives to the *dustman!*

*Uneasy music. The set moves and light changes to reveal...*

SCENE SEVEN. "DEAD HORSE CAMP" CO-ORDINATES. JUNGLE.

*Night. Loud noises of nocturnal wildlife. ALBERT sits crouched and looks ragged. He swigs from a bottle. He is watched by "M."*

ALBERT

Here I am at "Dead Horse Camp", where Fawcett's horse died. Its bones are there, my co-ordinates are right. Before I left home, I had a last look round my garden. There was a little hazel tree that Jess gave me for my birthday. It was magical that little tree. But it didn't look well. Symbolizing the end of us. "Why should you live when all that's dead?" I took a spade and started to dig it up. I explained " I think it right that you should go. You only bring up painful memory!". I struggled with it for several minutes. It took me nearly half an hour to overcome that little tree. It really fought for its life. Branches sprung at my face and cut me ferociously. I finally managed to break its trunk but I just couldn't dig up those roots. I gave up. They're still there, alive under the ground....damn it.

SCENE EIGHT. BRIAN'S BUNGALOW, CARLISLE.

RUTH *on the phone to JOAN.*

RUTH

...He's sleeping. Utterly exhausted. I am so relieved Joan. If anything happened to Brian I don't know what I'd do... Well he's complaining of a bladder problem. He saw the doctor who can't find anything wrong...I don't think it's anything....No, he didn't.... Not a thing, Joan...No...no... He didn't find a *single* clue...I'm so sorry. He says in Brazil the Fawcett enigma is ancient history and time has moved on. It was a disappointment...yes... and he's so glad to be out of that terrible place.

BRIAN *appears in dressing gown and pyjamas. He mouths;*

BRIAN

I'll ring her later.

RUTH

He'll ring you later, of course...Alright then... Love to you both. Good-bye dear. Bye.  
(*To BRIAN*) How are you feeling, darling?

BRIAN

Different. Not surprising. What a country.

RUTH

I was so worried. Thank God you survived.

*She almost breaks down.*

BRIAN

*(Laughing)* Survived! Yes. I think I survived. I'm not sure though. Ah well. Back to the house chores. Has the mouse been around?

RUTH

No. I was totally lonely. Not even "Mickey" for company. *(She laughs)*. I'll make you some tea.

*She starts to go.*

BRIAN

Thank you. Ruthie! Could you put on that Tchaikovsky record on your way? Thanks.

*She goes out.*

BRIAN

*(To audience)* Well..."M" has been keeping a low profile. I'm not surprised. How wrong can you get "M"?

"M"

I am *not* wrong!

*Her head appears from behind the sofa and she gets up angrily. Waltz Music.*

"M"

And don't speak to *me* in that tone!

BRIAN

I've trusted you for a long time. You enchanted me in the garden at Up Lyme when I was just a child, rolling around in the daisies. You took over my being. You taught me everything I know about the universe. You explained Daddy and Jack's fate... which I now find out was *not* as you claim.

"M"

*(Wearily)* Well, my dear. It seems I haven't made such a good job of teaching you if you can't see the truth when it's in front of your face. Perhaps they found their metier in a way that you and the material world of modern civilization just can't recognize.

BRIAN

But they didn't find any cities. They didn't hand Jack over to the Guardians. My father didn't expire in a puff of smoke and rise to the heavens on a golden cloud... Its hard to accept that my father's extraordinary career was all to no purpose. A lifetime of sacrifice and suffering. For what?

"M"

You don't understand different dimensions. Some parallel to each other. You don't understand Time and vibrations! Your father and Jack both failed *and* succeeded. Quantum physics! Parallel dimensions giving opposing outcomes! And *that* is where we siths can wipe the floor with your stupid phoney logic!

BRIAN *is about to argue back when RUTH sweeps in with the tea.*

RUTH

I've got your favourite cup-cakes.

BRIAN

Marvellous.

"M"

I'm really thinking of leaving you. You fail to interest me. You've become pedestrian.

BRIAN

But...

RUTH

But, what darling? Do you prefer the lemon flavour.

BRIAN

No, chocolate is fine.

"M"

You didn't use your intuition to get to them on the right wavelength. If you had you would have found that their destiny was *exactly* how I said!

BRIAN

But they failed!

RUTH

I think they are more popular now than they ever were. Mmm.

*She takes a bite on one.*

"M"

You have to see it on a different level.

BRIAN

They've faded from the public memory.

RUTH

I don't agree. The Women's Institute just ordered three hundred of them.

*RUTH picks up the cup-cake dish to pass to BRIAN.*

RUTH

Well, try a raspberry one then.

"M"

Thank you.

*"M" takes the cup-cakes and instead of passing them straight onto BRIAN (RUTH'S favourite conjuring trick) She begins to waltz round the room with them to the music. RUTH stares in horror.*

BRIAN

*(Trying to make light of it) It's just a trick, darling.*

RUTH

Oh, Brian! Stop! Stop her! She's here! Stop her!!!!

*She runs out of the room screaming. BRIAN holds his head in his hands. Blackout. Later.*

SCENE NINE. BRIAN'S BUNGALOW.

*Next evening. BRIAN, again in dressing gown and pyjamas. He stands downstage in spotlight and speaks to audience. RUTH lies on the sofa in a trance.*

BRIAN

The Queen gave a zombie-like Xmas speech on TV. I'm sorry for the woman. When will people grow up and scrap the Monarchy? Ruth has spent a lot of time in bed. A lot of leg pain. I saw in the New Year with "M" but things weren't quite the same. Oh well, we're into another year. Yesterday I treated Ruth's rheumatic knee. Well, she *will* eat meat. She's been gorging on that Turkey for the last fortnight.... Strange happenings last night made me fear that she was breaking up... After tea she said she heard *singing* coming from next door.

RUTH

It sounds like hymns. And they are singing beautifully.

BRIAN

Not a sound was perceptible to me.

RUTH

Is there a church near here? The bells are so loud. Now! Can't you hear? They are singing Hallelujah ... (*Singing*) Halle-lu-jah...Halle-lu-jah...Halle-lu-jah...

BRIAN

She next joined the phantom voices in "Abide with me". Then later, in her bath, she heard the singing as if it was coming from the Braddock's next door. At bedtime she claimed it was still going on. At 1.15 in the morning, she raced out of bed to the window.

RUTH

It's outside. It's coming from over the road. It's a lovely singing too. There must have been a party. Children carrying lights are coming out of the houses and walking down the pavement. People are watching them from the windows.

BRIAN

I looked out. Not a soul to be seen, nor a sound to be heard.

RUTH

There's a policeman at the gate. Charles and Diana must have arrived and the children are there to welcome them.

BRIAN

Still *nothing* outside. Prince Philip is due in Carlisle soon and a few weeks ago Princess Diana *was* here on a visit but... *(To Ruth)* Back to bed now. There is nothing in the street.

RUTH

Of course there is!! You'll read about it tomorrow in the papers!

BRIAN

I persuaded her back to bed and eventually we got some sleep, but this morning....

RUTH

There it is again... It's very lovely music...But I wish they'd stop! One doesn't want it *all* the time.

BRIAN

Apart from this she is absolutely normal. Old people who've lived out their lives are known to become super-normally receptive. Is it indeed a sign that her end is imminent? ....This evening she started hearing Jazz. She thought it came from the Braddock's. To me no sound broke the stillness. Later we heard that Braddock next door had passed away during these phenomena but I wouldn't have thought his background was so special as to evoke such astral

recognition. These cosmic charges certainly take it out on you. Ruthie is fine now, but I'm utterly exhausted.

*He goes. JESS enters with phone. Light comes up on her.*

SCENE TEN. JESS'S FLAT.

JESS *on the phone to ALBERT.*

JESS

Pigeons? You're taking pigeons? As if! Oh, carrier pigeons. I see. What's wrong with a mobile phone?... Ah, you're broke. I'm not surprised. I heard Brian is very ill. He's having tests in hospital. I'm just on my way up to visit him.... Because he called and said he had a soft spot for you. That he regretted his brutal behaviour and would I keep him in touch with your progress. Oh, dear. Nothing changes in the Fawcett Saga...Yes. I had a great time in L.A. Ida *is* going ahead with the Fawcett movie as a *musical*. So the world can enjoy a facile yarn while the real secret story stays sacrosanct. That's good isn't it? Well, just chill out and *enjoy* yourself out there...Yeah, I stayed with her. She's fantastic.... I'm not callous and cold-hearted! Don't be so dramatic. You'll be alright. You just want re-assurance all the time....Oh, how can you *say* that after everything you've done to me?... (*exasperated*)  
O.K. *Good-bye!*

*She sighs, irritated.*

*Blackout.*

SCENE ELEVEN. HOSPITAL.

BRIAN *in bed. He speaks to audience. He is very weak.*

BRIAN

Thought my time had come last night and woke up Ruth who was deeply shocked. Got up feeling like death. Nose bleeds. I had to devise a method of holding up my enormously distended scrotum before I could dress this morning. But the doctor had fixed up

some tests. So I'm at least being monitored. But I feel worse than ever. My scrotum is almost down to my knees. There is something very wrong. Joan recommended some zinc tablets to open the urethra and these gave a little relief but...

*There is a knock and JESS enters.*

JESS

Hullo.

BRIAN

Ah. Come in dear.

JESS

Are you alright? What is it exactly?

BRIAN

Valdenstrom macroglobulen aenemia, merely.

JESS

*(Joking)* Oh, in that case you'll be out in no time.

*They both laugh. She opens her bag and hands him a bag of fruit.*

BRIAN

Fruit. How lovely of you.

JESS

Not really. I'm sure you'd have preferred a volume of Madame Blavatsky.

BRIAN

Anyway...To the point. If anything happened to me, thirty volumes of secret diaries, not to mention much of my father's highly confidential writing, would be left in my cupboard for anyone to gawp over. The Royal Geographical Society would have a field day. They accused him of being a mystic and dreamer and these papers certainly reveal *that* and very much more which the gross material world is just not ready for. Here's the key. *(He hands it to her)* Ruth knows you are coming on an errand. I said something to do with

publishing. You see, heaven knows who my family might show these papers to once I'm gone. I can't trust their discretion.

JESS

Sure. I'll get them. Then what?

BRIAN

I want you to burn the lot. Burn them thoroughly won't you. You've always thought the mystery was a load of bollocks, so I thought you were just the right person to consign it to the flames.

JESS

I'll happily do that. It's ruined enough lives. Not to mention Albert's. He's somewhere in Mato Grosso with six carrier pigeons in a canoe can you believe. Heading for lost cities! He's cut his own throat as far as a career is concerned. You men and your *childish* illusions! What a waste...Well, good luck with the tests. I'll visit again soon. Bye.

*She starts to go.*

BRIAN

Bye... Oh, ask the nurse to pop in, would you. I need some pain-killer.

JESS.

Certainly.

*She exits. A moment later "M" enters. A cold chill replaces their usual rapport.*

BRIAN

Ah. 'Wondered where you'd got to. The afterlife. Tirnan-og. Will I feel at home there?

"M"

It's what you make of it, dear. It's a subjective land of the imagination. It's peopled by the mind's own creatures and is entirely what you choose to make of it. Anyway. You're not there... yet.

*He lies back and she kisses him.  
Blackout. Music.*

SCENE TWELVE. HOSPITAL.

*JESS speaks to audience.*

JESS

I surprised myself. I hesitated in carrying out my promise to Brian. My curiosity got the better of me. I started reading. There was certainly a message in those papers...Their time will come. Or perhaps it won't.... Brian was in and out of hospital and after some weeks I heard the news about Albert so I went on another visit.

*She walks from the spotlight area into BRIAN'S hospital bed area.  
To BRIAN.*

JESS

He got these carrier pigeons from a missionary nun, would you believe. She agreed to pass on news to the consul in Sao Paolo who was given my address..... He set off alone in a canoe... down the Juruena River. Only one pigeon got back with its message. Pigeon number three.

*She gets the tiny scrap of paper out of her bag and hands it to BRIAN who reads it. JESS stares out of the window for a few frozen seconds.*

SCENE THIRTEEN. AMAZONIA

*ALBERT revealed in a spotlight, lying down on his stomach. He looks extremely feverish.*

ALBERT

I think...it's malaria. I'm so cold. It's very dark. But I saw the ruins!! There's no doubt about it. I saw Fawcett's city. Co-ordinates; 13 South, 60 West. 'Lost the camera, damn it...I can't move...I just can't...Jess, could you kindly do me a favour?...I ordered a book..."Mysteries of South America" by Harold

Wilkins...from the little book shop. Would you...pick it up for me...I'll pay you back... later...

*He dies.*

SCENE FOURTEEN. HOSPITAL.

JESS

*(Carrying on impassively)* He says that he'll be sending the exact co-ordinates and a sketch map of the location of the city on carrier pigeon "number four". Predictably "pigeon four" never arrived. His claim seems a bit crazy.

BRIAN

Why?

JESS

Because the consul writes to me that it sounds like an invented story and that there are absolutely no lost cities to be found there. And also that he's heard recent rumours that Albert's canoe was found by prospectors with him in it dead and discoloured.

*BRIAN is shocked as JESS continues unaffected.*

It's rumoured he was poisoned by Indians and set afloat, as this is their favourite way of dispatching unwelcome visitors into their lands. Ah well, rumours.

BRIAN

You seem so detached. I thought you and he...

JESS

Oh, that's *long* ago. Well, he had only himself to blame. He was *obsessed*. I did my best to wean him off Fawcett mania, but it was pointless. He had a chequered career. Never fulfilled his potential. Always wanting re-assurance. Always dramatising. Never learned to chill out. I got fed up with it.

*She starts to leave.*

I don't think he has a next of kin.

BRIAN

*(Grasping at a straw)*..But... do you think he found Daddy's city?

*The light fades on them but stays up on the face of the dead ALBERT for a moment and then fades.*

*Weird piano chords tinkling. Light fades up on BRIAN who sits on the edge of his bed.. JESS moves into a separate light on the other side of the stage as if arriving back at her flat.*

SCENE FIFTEEN. HOSPITAL.

BRIAN

Coming back to me like in a dream are those spacious days at Waterside. Mother so much on top of life. Daddy just arrived back from one of his expeditions and still charming to everybody even Joan. Jack tinkling on his piano - so happy - the treasured first born, destined to vanish in unknown Amazonia.

*He stands up in his pyjamas and bare feet. He is frail. "M" appears in the shadows behind him.*

Life begins with such an impetus...Then, slows up - perhaps even stops and slips back. Reminds me of a motorcycle doing a freak hill climb. There's the same tempestuous, confident, racing start - the same slowing as the steepness of the hill is felt. Waterside...the container of childhood memories. Will one of the last flashes of memory to pass through my dying brain be a recollection of *what exactly it was* that I so often searched for, or *dreamed* I searched for at Waterside? In the lumber-room, that butler's pantry off the hall, where the great safe is?... I wanted it so badly, but...I couldn't find it.

BRIAN *stands dead still in his pyjamas. "M" takes a white hospital pillow case and covers his face with it. She then walks slowly to arrive silently behind Jess who sits at her table with documents spread out.*

SCENE SIXTEEN. JESS'S FLAT.

JESS

Back home I faced the secret archives still all over my desk. I'm becoming very intrigued by their strange hold. I get a feeling that I'm just not going to be able to burn those damn papers.

*A strange eerie silence. She becomes aware that someone is in the room behind her. She turns and is terrified.*

JESS

Who are you? ...*(In a hoarse whisper)* WHO ARE YOU?

*"M" walks to JESS who is frozen to the spot, moves behind her slowly and puts her arms round JESS'S neck.*

"M"

It's alright....It's alright...

*A pause. JESS is terrified and then calmed by the woman's warm smile.*

"M"

*(Jauntily)* I think... I've got you....

*Blackout.*

**THE END**

