An adaptation of the ‘Epic of Gilgamesh’ for the screen

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The Game of Uruk

a screen adaptation of The Epic of Gilgamesh.
An adaptation of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* for the screen

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Honours Masters of Arts

from

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by

Loretta Judd

Department of Communication and Cultural Studies,

2000.
Characters

Ancient

Adapa, king of Uruk
Agga of Kish
Annanuki ten judges of the Underworld
Anu, Lord of the Skies
Alitum survivor of the Deluge
Ea, god of magic
Enkidu, wild man of the plains
Enheduanna priestess
Enlil, keeper of destiny
Ereshkigal goddess of the Under world

First Hunter

Gilgamesh, Sumerian king
Horse Sumerian speaker
Imdugud south wind
Inanna goddess of Uruk
Nisaba goddess of the harvest
Ninsun goddess, mother of Gilgamesh
Ox Sumerian speaker

Second Hunter

Shamash sun god
Sin-Lequi-Uninni lion griffin, vizier
Tammuz shepherd god, husband to Inanna
Humbaba monster-ogre
Urshanabi crocodile man, boatman for the dead,
Yarrim Adu griffin
Ziusudra immortal, survivor of the Deluge
Victorian

Albert (Toby) Rawlinson child of Henry and Louisa
Arthur Munby secret love of Hannah Cullwick
Austin Layard archaeologist, diplomat
Benjamin Disraeli politician, Prime Minister
Croquet Teacher society lady
Dante Gabriel Rossetti painter
Edwin Arnold newspaper owner
Effie Millais artist and model, wife of Millais
George Smith Assyriologist
Hannah Cullwick servant, secret love of Arthur Munby
Henry Creswicke Rawlinson Assyriologist, Major-general
Henry (Sennacherib) Rawlinson child of Henry and Louisa
Hormuzd Rassam consul and archaeologist
Louisa Rawlinson wife of Henry
Leighton Pre-Raphaelite painter
McFarren school friend of Henry
Magician in Victorian theatre
Mother of society lady
Millais Pre-Raphaelite painter
Ruskin poet and reformer
Mrs Disraeli wife of Benjamin
Shah of Persia
Subhi Bey Ottoman Pasha
Syrian Official
Victoria Queen
William Gladstone politician, Prime Minister
George Rawlinson Oxford academic, brother of Henry
William Wright Irish archaeologist
THE GAME of URUK

Fade in

(Credits over to p19)

1872

1 EXT MARKET PLACE, HAMATH, SYRIA — LATE AFTERNOON

WE ARE INSIDE EDGES OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT.

THE CAMERA MOVES BACK TO SHOW AN EXTREME CLOSEUP OF A PART OF A SINGLE ANCIENT SYMBOL, CARVED ON ROCK

Silence.

A European hand caresses the symbol. It withdraws from the shot.

THE CAMERA SLOWLY REVEALS THAT THE SYMBOL IS IN A WORD, IN A LINE OF WRITING. WE BEGIN TO READ THE LINE FROM RIGHT TO LEFT.

THE CAMERA READS THE LINE BELOW, BUT THIS TIME FROM LEFT TO RIGHT.

WE SEE HITTITE PICTOGRAPHS OF MEN, ANIMALS, VEGETATION ... WE REACH A FACE. THE CAMERA STOPS. IT IS THE FACE OF A GAZELLE ...

Before we can make it out a pickaxe held by the same hand smashes into the shot.

And a volume switch is turned up: Angry VOICES shouting.

THE CAMERA NOW REVEALS THE FULL SIZE OF THE VAST STONE BLOCK.

VOICES of an enraged crowd move to CRESCENDO.

THE CAMERA DRAWS BACK FURTHER: THE BLOCK IS ONE OF THE SIDES OF A HOUSE.

BUT THE HUGE STONES ARE BEING TORN OUT.

A crowd surges through all the adjacent narrow crooked streets.

Soldiers keep back the crowd and attack those who interfere with the work.
WE SEE FIFTY MEN REMOVING STONES FROM OTHER HOUSES. 
AND LOADING STONES ALREADY HACKED OUT, ONTO BULLOCK WAGONS. 
The sun begins to set and the VOICE of the muezzin SINGS 
the last block through the crowd, and out of the streets.

2 INT PASHA'S SUMMER HOUSE -- EARLY EVENING
Servants are dismembering the stones for transportation.

The REVEREND WILLIAM WRIGHT, Irish archaeologist, 
possessor of the hand, moves among the Pasha's servants 
taking imprints of the writing.

WRIGHT
That's gypsum not plaster of Paris
...

The Pasha's local official enters and watches.
Wright crumbles the previous effort irritably
An angry crowd begins to gather outside.

3 EXT STEPS OF THE SUMMER HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS
Wright is small on the steps. We see the crowd watching him.

WRIGHT
Men of science will study the 
stones for the good of all mankind!

Crowd indicates a lack of enthusiasm for science.

WRIGHT (CONT'D)
The Pasha will pay ample 
compensation ...

They have heard it all before. Wright changes his tone.

WRIGHT (CONT'D)
Disperse. Go about your business 
or the Pasha will mete out dreadful 
punishments!

CUT TO LONDON
SIR HENRY CRESWICKE RAWLINSON alone in his carriage reading correspondence from a heap beside him.

Henry is 62. Adventurer, horseman, Assyriologist, fluent in Eastern languages ancient and modern, sportsman, geographer, major general, politician ... A colourful life mostly outside England but with an element of unreality. Confidant of rulers in India, Afghanistan and Persia, especially those who depended on Britain for their power.

At 52 he returned to England and married LOUISA.

Henry has always been blessed with luck.

He opens a letter.

WRIGHT (V.O.)
I saw now that a crisis was reached. It was to be an anxious and sleepless night. Such a night you might have known Rawlinson in the Afghan wars ...

Henry puts down the letter.

4 INT THE COSMOPOLITAN CLUB — EARLY AFTERNOON

The room features discrete references to recent geographical discoveries.

Henry joins two men drinking in the sitting room.

One is BENJAMIN DISRAELI, eccentric Leader of the Opposition who favours an old-fashioned dandyism. The other is Lord NORTHCOTE, his keenest supporter.

DISRAELI
Rawlinson! We were about to give you up. Henry I don't think you've met Lord Northcote.

HENRY
Disraeli. My apologies. A shipment of ant ...

NORTHCOTE
Call me Halicanassis. Everyone does.

They shake hands.

DISRAELI
Henry Rawlinson.
5 INT. DINING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The three are at lunch.

DISRAELI
So the Germans want a railway from Berlin to the Persian Gulf? What do your contacts say Henry?

HENRY
The idea's come to nothing.

DISRAELI
It doesn't do to be too complaisant. The public expects us to win the Game in the East.

HENRY
Speaking of games, how is our esteemed Prime Minister?

DISRAELI
Gladstone's at odds with the queen as usual.

HENRY
I hear Her Majesty sends you flowers?

DISRAELI
Primroses. Picked by her own fair hands. I call her the Faery - Spenser's spelling of course ...

NORTHCOTE
The Queen needs a new Prime Minister.

DISRAELI
A more sensitive ... a more moral man. I could perhaps ... oblige her.

HENRY
What would the Faery say to a visit from the Shah of Persia?

DISRAELI
Go on ...
HENRY
To remind the public that Gladstone lacks any grasp of foreign policy.

DISRAELI
Or of religious toleration.

HENRY
If we are to prevent Russia from ...

DISRAELI
Would the Shah come?

HENRY
Of course ...

DISRAELI
You've discussed it?

HENRY
We're old friends. He asks only that I accompany him for the tour ...

DISRAELI
Capital. Capital ...

HENRY
... which will include Germany and Russia.

DISRAELI
Keep it to yourself for the moment Rawlinson. When Gladstone is in full flight with another diatribe about the heathens I'll announce the visit.

HENRY
There are times I regret giving up my seat.

DISRAELI
The best club in England.

NORTHCOTE
The India Council couldn't do without men like yourself.

DISRAELI
But you must find London dull Henry, after the mysterious Orient? Fighting wars. Dining with kings.

NORTHCOTE
I've been to afternoon tea parties almost as barbaric.
HENRY
I was seventeen when I left England ...

DISRAELI
And when you returned ...

NORTHCOTE
Quite the lion of the season.

DISRAELI
Why did you return Henry? You must know there are all sorts of rumours.

HENRY
The Foreign Office changed the rules.

DISRAELI
How do you mean?

HENRY
Gladstone's friends decided an Englishman should not give in to local customs.

DISRAELI
Which local customs were these?

HENRY
The matter of giving gifts in negotiations. Gifts are expected. Protocol demands it. I had no choice other than to resign.

DISRAELI
Is that all? Not even a scandal over one of the Shah's wives?

HENRY
One is a long way from London. Protocol is ...

DISRAELI
As soon as I'm re-elected I'm sending you back.

HENRY
Louisa might not ...

DISRAELI
The East is a career! I'm sure you'll be tempted. When the time comes.
6 EXT THE DAMAGED DWELLINGS -- MIDNIGHT

WE SEE THE NIGHT SKY, FRAMED BY JAGGED GAPS IN THE ANCIENT WALLS.

GAPS SHAPED LIKE AN ANCIENT GAMING BOARD. A FRAME THAT SUDDENLY FILLS WITH A BRILLIANT SHOWER OF COMETS.

7 EXT THE STREETS OF HAMATH. -- CONTINUOUS

Panic as those still in the streets rush into the safety of doorways.

OR GATHER AT WINDOWS TO LOOK AT THE SKY.

8 INT PASHA'S PALACE -- MORNING

Through a lattice Wright and the PASHA observe a deputation of local councillors, in green and white turbans, seated on the floor.

WRIGHT
They don't expect us to put them back?

PASHA
Be calm Reverend Wright.

9 INT RECEPTION ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

An Official serves coffee and cigarettes.

(Subtitled.)

There is silence as the Pasha enters.

PASHA
Does anyone wish to speak?

One man rises.

MAN
Allah has sent a sign. Stars have fallen in the night. The stones must be returned.

The Pasha slowly takes in the deputation before speaking.

PASHA
Have the falling stars damaged anything?
There is no answer.

PASHA (CONT'D)
Has anyone been killed?
An ox? A horse?

Further silence.

PASHA (CONT'D)
Then what better sign could there be of Heaven's consent than this splendid display in the sky?

Moves around the delegation.

PASHA (CONT'D)
For twelve hundred years we the true believers of the great Ottoman Empire have been settled here but could not read the words on the stones. Could not hear what our forebears say to us. Now, thanks be to Allah, there are scholars who can tell us what they say.

While he is speaking, servants begin distributing money.
The deputation begins to listen.
But some leave.

CUT TO DOCKS BASRA -- MORNING

Closeup of large crates marked: BRITISH MUSEUM LONDON.

10 EXT. BRITISH MUSEUM. -- DAY

With its Greek columns.

11 INT THE MUSEUM -- CONTINUOUS

A young man goes eagerly up the stairs two at a time. He nods to the caretaker.

GEORGE
Wilkins.

CARETAKER
Sir Henry's back.
12 INT BRITISH MUSEUM -- DAY

GEORGE SMITH, goes into the Mesopotamian room.

Smith is 27, with a bushranger beard. He is self taught. By trade engraver, now Assyriologist.

Married early to ANNE, with several small children, George struggles find a place in the affluent world of Victorian scholarship.

CLOSE UP OF A SMALL SCULPTURE, A WINGED GAZELLE.

POV SHOT: THE GAZELLE WATCHES THE ROOM WITH CURIOSITY AND SEESE GEORGE AS ONE OF THE EXHIBITS.

George goes to a case, moving the sculpture aside he brings out a clay tablet.

WE SEE A BROKEN PIECE WITH WEDGE SHAPED CUNEIFORM WRITING.

GEORGE PICKS UP A QUILL. HE WRITES: THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

CUT TO ANOTHER HAND. ONE WITH A STYLUS, WRITING QUICKLY ON A DAMP CLAY TABLET. BUT THIS HAND IS WEBBED.

GEORGE (V.O.)
Look about thee and see that all men are fools...

George puts down the tablet and opens a small tin of toffees.

13 INT. HOUSE IN HAMATH -- MORNING

Men who left the morning deputation are drinking coffee

(Subtitled)

COFFEE DRinker
The Turks have destroyed us.

MAN
Soon we must take back what is ours.
14 INT. EXT BRITISH MUSEUM — LATER

THE SUN CATCHES THE IMPOSING FACADE AS HENRY'S CARRIAGE STOPS.

15 INT MUSEUM — CONTINUOUS

Henry enters an office and checks further correspondence without sitting.

16 INT BRITISH MUSEUM --- CONTINUOUS

WE SEE THE EGYPTIAN ROOM: EGYPTIAN ELEGANCE AND VICTORIAN SOLIDITY.

Henry passes through still reading.

17 INT BRITISH MUSEUM -- CONTINUOUS

TO THE MESOPOTAMIAN ROOM. ATMOSPHERE IS NOTICABLY DARKER.

Henry looks in:

GEORGE WORKING, OVERSHADOWED BY THE POWERFUL BAS RELIEF OF CAPTIVES OF WAR.

HENRY

George!

George looks up.

Henry enters. They shake hands and speak together.

GEORGE

Sir Henry! When did you get back?

HENRY

You've created quite a stir since your appointment.

GEORGE

I haven't had a chance to ...ah ... thank you ...

Henry gestures dismissively.

HENRY

And how is Anne?

GEORGE

Doing well. We have another son. Henry ... that is ...after you.
HENRY
But that's wonderful! I look forward to meeting him. Is that three now?

GEORGE
Four.

HENRY
Quite an achievement. I was fifty four when I had my first. But tell me about your controversial lecture.

GEORGE
The tablets you ...

HENRY
Took from the French?

Henry picks up a tablet and casts an expert eye over it.

GEORGE
They're ...

HENRY
Yes?

GEORGE
From an ancient city in Sumeria. Called Uruk ...

HENRY
But what's this about an ark? Is it Noah?

GEORGE
No. They predate the Bible.

HENRY
Well go on.

GEORGE
A Sumerian. Called Ziusudra. It seems the gods told him to build an ark to save himself and his family from a great flood. A flood that came and totally destroyed the rest of mankind.

HENRY
And this definitely predates the bible?

GEORGE
By at least fifteen hundred years.
HENRY
I don't suppose there were animals on this ark?

George points out a section of his translation to Henry.

WE SEE THE CUNEIFORM WRITING ON THE TABLET.

HENRY (CONT'D)
'He took on board the seed of every living creature' ...

Henry puts down the tablets.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Where did the ark end up?

GEORGE
A mountain ... Nisir. Now called Pir Omar Gudrun ...

TOGETHER
Ararat!

HENRY
Every bishop in the country will be up in arms! This calls for a celebration.

George puts on his coat.

HENRY (CONT'D)
But unfortunately I have a prior engagement.

Henry is about to leave.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Oh by the way ... Wright's found the Hamath stones.

GEORGE
They'll be coming here?

Henry shakes his head.

HENRY
Constantinople.

EXT LONDON ZOO -- AFTERNOON
Animals from all over the world, pace in ornate barren cages.

Henry stands in front of the leopards.
He looks around surreptitiously and sees that the keepers are busy elsewhere.

HENRY
Fahad! Fahad!

A leopard comes over to the bars of the cage.

HENRY (CONT'D)
How are they treating you, old fellow?

Henry strokes Fahad's head thoughtfully. The leopard purrs.

19 INT LEIGHTON'S HOUSE -- EVENING

Leighton's Moorish hall is the incongruous setting for a private ball.

Henry is about to dance with his wife LOUISA RAWLINSON. Louisa is 39. Politically astute and progressive in her views.

Disraeli joins the Rawlinsons.

DISRAELI
Lady Rawlinson?

He offers his arm. Louisa accepts. They move away leaving Henry with Mrs Disraeli.

The elegant painter MILLAIS and his new wife EFFIE pass nearby.

MRS DISRAELI
You'd think her divorce might have made them more reticent about appearing in company. With poor Mr Ruskin here too.

WE FOLLOW HER GAZE TO THE ABANDONED HUSBAND IN CONVERSATION WITH MUNBY.

RUSKIN
A Working Man's college. Available to all. You'll take the Latin class Munby. I'll be responsible for ... for

He sees Effie with her new husband.

RUSKIN (CONT'D)
Art and Aesthetics.
20 INT. BRITISH MUSEUM. -- MORNING

Henry and George are working on tablets in the Mesopotamian room.

GEORGE
It's useless. What can we achieve with splinters?

HENRY
Patience.

Henry begins piecing a cylinder seal together, using a magnifying glass.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Once I spent three years hanging over a cliff on the end of a rope copying signs. That no one in the world could read then ...

He finds the piece that fits.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Now of course ...

GEORGE
(It's one of his favourite stories) The Behistun inscriptions! The key that unlocked the secrets of cuneiform writing!

HENRY
It took twelve months to clean them sufficiently to discover that they were in two languages. One we could already read. Once we had that ...

GEORGE
You could beat the Germans to it. I can't imagine Grotefend scaling cliffs. Did you know they've begun claiming ...

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, puts his head around the door. In his forties, he is jovial but shrewd, given to speaking in headlines.

ARNOLD
Rawlinson?

Henry turns.

HENRY
Arnold!
ARNOLD enters carrying various documents.

HENRY (CONT'D)
What brings a man of business to these dusty corridors? I don't think you've met George Smith, the new Assistant of Antiquities.

George and Arnold shake hands.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Sir Edwin Arnold, owner of the London Daily Telegraph, and (a beat) Poet.

They sit.

ARNOLD
I was at your lecture Mr Smith! Seven hundred and eighty nine in the hall Rawlinson. And a crowd in the street!

GEORGE
I ...

ARNOLD
Even Gladstone turned up! And why not? Proof for the bible!

GEORGE
The details ...

ARNOLD
The details aren't important. Let's not beat around the bush gentlemen. We're all busy men.

Brings out part of a newspaper with a flourish.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Tomorrow's London Telegraph!

Arnold thrusts the Telegraph under Henry's nose.

HENRY
"SCIENTIFIC PROOF FOR THE BIBLE. One thousand guineas for Sumerian tablets! This newspaper will provide the above sum for a British archaeologist to find the lost tablets of Gilgamesh! In a recent lecture, Mr George Smith ..."

(a beat)
A thousand guineas Arnold?
ARNOLD

Why not? The public loves anything to do with the Orient!

He walks around and examines the exhibits declaiming.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Last year's Assyrian exhibition was a sensation! Such chariots! Such horses ... "The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold ..."

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I have a wine cooler from my wife with this very design!

He looks at the gazelle blankly before returning to his theme.

He indicates another bas relief.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

And this ... a lioness downed with spears! Raising her head for one final roar! Wonderful!

HENRY

Are you telling us you'll fund an expedition to Syria?

ARNOLD

To find the Gilgamesh tablets!

HENRY

I hate to look a gift horse in the mouth Arnold, but ...

ARNOLD

We live in extraordinary times Rawlinson! Everything we believe is being challenged! Darwin says we're descended from apes! Now at last proof for the Bible!

HENRY

Few Assyriologists would ... 

ARNOLD

The public doesn't stew over your books Rawlinson, the public reads the newspapers! The Times won't be able to touch us!

HENRY

I see. Well George?
George is stunned.

GEORGE
I'm not an archaeologist.

ARNOLD
Nonsense. The French have already started excavating.

HENRY
Incompetants.

THEY EXAMINE ARNOLD'S MAP TOGETHER.

We see Henry and Arnold seated beneath a huge bas relief of an Assyrian king offering sacrifice.

THE KING STANDS ON ONE SIDE OF THE TREE OF LIFE. ON THE OTHER, IS AN EAGLE GRIFFIN.

WE SEE THEM FROM ABOVE. THE FLOOR IS A MOSAIC OF SQUARES. THE GRIFFIN'S POV: THEY APPEAR TO BE ON A GAMING BOARD. GEORGE IN SHADOW.

ARNOLD
I take it you accept the challenge?

HENRY
Of course.

ARNOLD
Then let me know when you're ready to begin Rawlinson.

Arnold prepares to leave.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Delighted to meet you Mr Smith.

Arnold exits.

HENRY
George?

GEORGE
Yes?

HENRY
Who is Gilgamesh?

21 INT. ENGLISH MUSIC HALL STAGE. -- CONTINUOUS

A magician in evening dress.
MAGICIAN
This ladies and gentlemen, is the famous ark.

Opens a lid.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
That same ark that Noah built, that was found in the desert and brought to the theatre by special arrangement.

He pulls back a curtain.

WE SEE AN ORNATE BOX-LIKE CREATION.

He opens the front and back panels.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
As you can see it is completely empty. Now, observe closely...

The magician and an assistant also in evening dress, close first the back panel, then the front.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
Let's see what happens when we add water.

He begins pouring water through a funnel in the lid then stops.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
Forty days and forty nights, the good book says.

There is a drum roll. The Magician waves his wand.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
Now! Let's see!

The Magician opens the front panel. Ducks, chickens, pigeons, cats, rabbits, dogs and lastly a pig emerge. None are wet. An impossible number for such a container.

Animals run about the stage and are caught and removed by the assistant.

MAGICIAN (CONT'D)
But is that all the secrets of the ark? Let's look again.

The magician now lets down the front of the box, to reveal a beautiful woman in Eastern costume reclining Cleopatra style on an elbow.

The Magician takes her hand and assists her to emerge. She strikes a quick pose and then exits.
MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

Thank you ladies and gentlemen.

He bows to enthusiastic applause.

In the audience is ARTHUR MUNBY, a gentleman, and his long-time secret love HANNAH CULLWICK, maid servant enjoying a rare public entertainment together.

22 EXT STEAMSHIP -- MORNING

George is on deck.

He looks out at the coastline of the Persian Gulf.

He watches a group of Arabic seamen looking towards the shore.

He takes a step toward them but is interrupted by a noisy English party coming on deck.

23 INT A TENT AT AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG SIX WEEKS LATER -- LATE AFTERNOON.

CLOSE UP OF GEORGE'S METICULOUS DRAWINGS. AND A MAP OF THE SITE.

George is cataloguing discoveries. He reaches for the next object - a Sumerian gaming board.

He opens it. Triangula Die and ten circular pieces fall out.

HE LOOKS OUT THROUGH THE FLAPS TO THE RIVER AND SEES A SOLITARY GAZELLE AT THE WATER'S EDGE.

24 EXT RIVERSIDE -- CONTINUOUS

George goes outside. The gazelle is gone.

George walks closer to the site of the uncovered palace.

His colleague HORMUZZD RASAM is supervising the team.

George observes the excavated outline of a room. He visualises the room as it once was.

DISSOLVE TO A ROOM IN A PALACE IN URUK. SUMERIAN TIME - 3,500 BC.
THE BOARD IS ON A TABLE

But the room is empty.

George goes back to his tent.

25 INT GEORGE'S TENT -- CONTINUOUS

And picks up the next piece.

26 EXT A LAKE AT HENRY'S COUNTRY ESTATE -- EARLY MORNING

Henry is alone on a punt on the lake.

He pushes it through the water with a pole. He pauses and stands still as the mist rises.

Out of reach a child's ball floats on the water.

27 INT GEORGE'S TENT AFTERNOON -- LATER

George is writing. His colleague RASSAM, Syrian archaeologist and British Consul at Mosul, appears in the doorway.

RASSAM

Smith!

George stands.

RASSAM (CONT'D)

Quickly!

28 EXT THE EXCAVATED LIBRARY IN THE PALACE -- CONTINUOUS

George is on his knees among tablets, once arranged on shelves.

George picks up several at a time and compares them.

GEORGE

Hundreds of tablets!

Rassam cleans a tablet.

RASSAM

A name -
George works it out.

RASSAM (CONT'D)
It's Gilgamesh!

He seizes tablets at random.

Rassam digs others out.

RASSAM (CONT'D)
We've found the needle in the haystack!

GEORGE CHOOSES A TABLET..

GEORGE (V.O.)
I Sin Lequi Uninni...

DISOLVE TO THE ASSYRIAN PAST: WORDS WRITTEN QUICKLY IN CLAY. A HAND WITH CLAWS.

GEORGE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
.. I, Sin Lequi Uninni, Exorcist priest, tell the story of Gilgamesh ruler of Uruk ...

PULL BACK TO A WINGED LIONESS - SIN LEQUI UNINNI

She is writing hurriedly in a temple, SOUNDS of a BATTLE outside ...  

DISSOLVE TO SUMERIAN PALACE,

EVEN FURTHER BACK IN TIME.

A small games room. Mosaic floor. Paintings depicting a lion hunt.

GILGAMESH, is playing the Sumerian game.

He is unshaven and unwashed, and seems quite crazy. The room is disordered.

We see his opponent from behind.

Beside Gilgamesh are his pieces. Seven white circles with five dots. None are on the board. Gilgamesh is playing with his opponent's black pieces.

He shakes the pyradmid dice but does not like the result so shakes them again. He places a piece on the board but then with a furtive look at his opponent takes it back.
A morose musician leans on his lion-headed harp, exhausted but wary. Someone is POUNDING on the door and CALLING ... 

CUT TO OUTSIDE THE DOOR

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
Gilgamesh ... it's Sin Lequi
Uninni ... You must open the doors!

Sin Lequi is distraught. She can barely control the flapping of her wings.

She reluctantly nods to YARRIM who resembles the Assyrian griffin in the Museum.

Yarrim gives the order to break down the heavy carved doors.

THE DOORS WILL NOT YIELD.

CUT TO INSIDE

Gilgamesh does not seem to hear the NOISE, but the musician PLAYS a few bars wearily.

Gilgamesh pours a cup of wine and passes it to his opponent, whom we now see:

IT IS A DEAD, AND DECOMPOSING, ENKIDU.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The one who saw the abyss.

FADE TO BLACK. THEN WE SEE CUNEIFORM LETTERS WHICH FORM WORDS. THEY TURN TO BECOME THEIR ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS:

THE GAME of URUK (Main title)

29 INT RAWLINSON'S BREAKFAST ROOM -- MORNING

A pleasant English room with sun streaming in, and Indian cushions on the window seat.

Henry is having breakfast with his wife.

He bends down to give something food from his plate. We see that it is a mongoose.

His Persian servant brings the newspapers. Henry speaks to him in Persian.

To Louisa.
HENRY
Let's see.

SHOT OF PAGE: GILGAMESH EXPEDITION SUCCESSFUL!

Henry scans it quickly.

HENRY (CONT'D)
There's some mistake ..

Louisa looks up.

LOUISA
What is it?

HENRY
'The expedition has achieved its goal. I will be returning to England as the season for excavation is closing'.

Henry throws down the newspaper.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Arnold wants something new to enchant the public.

30 EXT THE DIG -- MORNING.

TWO HUGE STONE WINGED BULLS ARE WAITING WHILE THE DIG PACKS UP. THEY ARE FACING EACHOTHER, MAKING EYE CONTACT WITH SOME INTENSITY.

George and Rassam are loading boxes of tablets and artefacts onto bullock wagons.

The team begins to drag the bulls onto the wagons.

SHOT OF THE ABANDONED THOROUGHFARE OF NIMRUD.

WE SEE THE ANCIENT STREET WHERE THE BULLS HAVE BEEN RIPPED FROM A LINE OF SIMILAR ON EACH SIDE OF THE STREET. THE LINE IS NOW RAGGED AND UNSYMETRICAL.

31 EXT. THE TIGRIS RIVER -- AFTERNOON

Several large rafts are being loaded.

The bulls are already aboard the same large raft.

George and Rassam board a different raft.
GEORGE
We'll eclipse the Egyptian exhibition! When I get back ...

Rassam is watching the current.

RASSAM
We must reach Basra first.

GEORGE
How far is that Rassam?

RASSAM
Only about 250 miles. But the Tigris is very shallow above Baghdad. The rafts are heavy, we'd better ...

Sees the raft becoming unbalanced. Calls in Arabic:

RASSAM (CONT'D)
You there - be careful ...

Two rafts collide. One tips over.

THE WINGED GODS SINK INTO THE WATERS. AS THE WATERS CHURN, SEVERAL OF THE TEAM SINK WITH THEM.

Rassam drags one man aboard. Others swim for the bank.

GEORGE
Don't let ...

The second raft swings free of the other, but a box of artefacts falls open.

Tablets fall out and crack straight across.

George seizes a broken piece

FADE TO THE SAME RIVER CUTTING THROUGH GRASSLAND. FIVE THOUSAND YEARS BEFORE.

ADAPA, a king is alone, fishing in a boat without a sail.

32 INT BRITISH MUSEUM -- A FOGGY AFTERNOON

Henry and George are working. Henry is holding the same broken piece of the tablet.

HENRY
Adapa ... Where are the kinglists?
GEORGE
I have them here.

Henry reaches across to take book.

HENRY
Adapa ... third king of Uruk.
Four thousand years ago.

Henry begins reading aloud.

HENRY (CONT'D)
When on high the heavens had not
yet separated .......

THE CHOICE. (On screen)

33 EXT THE EUPHRATES AFTERNOON -- SUMERIAN TIME
The same small boat. Adapa is fishing. No land is visible.

WE SEE THE BOAT FROM ABOVE AT THE CENTRE OF A CIRCLE OF
WATER. POV IMDUGUD'S: THE SOUTH WIND.

Adapa catches a fish and places it in a large basket.

HENRY (V.O.)
Firm ground below had not been
called by name ...

NOW WE SEE THE SOUTH WIND PASSING OVERHEAD: BIRD WITH THE
HEAD OF A HORSE.

Adapa watches him pass.

The seas rise.

Adappa struggles as the boat is almost swamped by a large
wave.

34 INT BRITISH MUSEUM -- CONTINUOUS
CLOSEUP OF TABLET.

The VOICE of Sin-Lequi-Uninni takes over ...
... A king decided to challenge fate ...

35 EXT THE EUPHRATES -- CONTINUOUS

Adapa waits for the return of the South Wind.

When the South Wind is overhead Adappa seizes him and drags him into the boat.

They fight. Adapa breaks the South Wind's wing.

The South Wind frees himself and vanishes.

The seas become calm.

CUT TO

THE TOWER OF BABEL - ZIGGURAT NIGHT

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)
Much afraid of what the gods might do, Adapa went to Ea, his father.
The magic one. Ea told him in secret

Adapa is among clouds, climbing the tower.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (CONT'D)
How to gain entry to the realm of the gods.

He finally reaches gates guarded by the gods TAMMUZ and NINGIZZIDA.

36 EXT THE GATES OF THE HEAVENS

NINGIZZIDA
What do you want mortal?

Adapa speaks to the sentinels.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)
How to beguile the sentinels of the heavens ...

Tammuz and Ningizzida open the gates.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Adapa found himself in the presence of Great Anu, Lord of the Skies;
And Enlil his son, who holds the Game ... of Destiny.
37 INT THE GAMES ROOM OF THE HEAVENS.

ENLIL AND ANU ARE WINGED BULLS WITH HUMAN FACES.

They are about to play THE GAME. EA is with the South Wind.

Enlil places a new piece on the board without looking up.

ENLIL

Adapa ...

EA

My son ...

ANU

How did he pass our sentinels?

EA

He ...

ANU

Consider the consequences of meddling.

Adapa comes forward and throws himself down.

ADAPA

Lord of the Winds, I was fishing for the table of the gods when Imdugud brought the storm. The boat was sinking. When he passed overhead I seized him. We fought ... I have come to beg his forgiveness ...

ANU

You deserve to be destroyed, but instead ...

ENLIL

You will decide your own destiny - and the destiny of the people of the earth. Forever. Choose. Here are the gifts.

ANU

Bread and water, or ... a garment and a crown.

ENLIL

Choose carefully.

Adapa sees gifts laid out in front of him. Bread and water, a crown and red garment.
Now Ea had told Adappa that Anu would offer the bread of death and the water of death. That Adapa must...

Adapa chooses the garment and crown.

ANU
So be it

Enlil takes the piece off the board.

ENLIL
With bread and water of life, you and your people would have become immortal.

ANU
You have chosen Death.

IN THE LAND

A. We see Yarrim the eagle griffin, holding an ear of grain in his hands. It has whithered.

B. We see a dead baby at the edge of the river.

C. We see a woman who sits beside an old woman who has died.

D. We see two men are fighting, one falls. The other does not know what to do.

E. Then we see Gilgamesh beside the dead body of Enkidu.

ANU AND ENLIL (V.O.)
Go. Join those in darkness, in despair, in the kingdom of Ereshkigal...

ADAPA
Father you betrayed me! Father save me. Ea...

Adapa is gone.

ANU
Imdugud bring storms, rain without ceasing! Wash the earth clean! Destroy them all! We will start again!
38 INT MAIN CHAMBER OF THE UNDERWORLD —NIGHT

Adapa now with wings, faces the ANNANUKI, twenty judges of the Underworld who carry flaming torches.

ANNANUKI
Adapa, of Uruk, you will dwell in the kingdom of darkness for all time.

ADAPA SINKS IN DISPAIR.

39 INT BRITISH MUSEUM —EVENING

George and Henry are still working on the tablets. Henry is uneasy.

HENRY
These aetiological myths are always ...

GEORGE
It's getting dark. I'll light the lamp.

The lamp adds a warmer light. Henry looks at his watch.

HENRY
Good heavens! It's nine o'clock. Why no one in England can eat dinner without the company of forty other people is a mystery to me. Are you coming George?

GEORGE
Thankyou. I'll stay a little longer ...

Henry begins putting on his coat.

HENRY
Louisa says she has captured William Gilbert.

Henry whistles one of the hits from HMS Pinafore.

George is lost in translation

THE GAZELLE CATCHES THE LIGHT AND WINKS.

Henry sighs and sits. He picks up a tablet.
He reads aloud as before

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)
But one has heard Adapa: Inanna, daughter of Anu. She hears the cries of the people and begs her father to help them.

40 INT THE HEAVENS — CONTINUOUS

The camera zooms in very fast on the GAME. We see it from multiple angles. The colours of the design glow brighter.

Several black pieces are already on the board.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
But Anu refuses.

Inanna seizes a handful of white pieces.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)
So Inanna journeys into darkness, to the Kingdom of death ...

41 EXT GATES OF THE UNDERWORLD — NIGHT AS ALWAYS.

INANNA IS AT THE GATES.

We see the labyrinthine tunnels that descend into darkness.

Misshapen creatures crowd around Inanna. They tear the crown from her hair.

THE GATES SWING OPEN.

42 INT THE UNDERWORLD

Inanna in a dark tunnel.

A SECOND GATE.

Other creatures tear away another item of clothing.

She proceeds down a narrow dark path.

43 EXT A DIFFERENT DOORWAY: THE ENTRANCE TO HENRY'S HOME, BARCLAY SQUARE. VERY LATE

A few guests, the last to leave, are getting into carriages.
Disraeli is with ROSSETI.

They meet at the door as Henry arrives.

DISRAELI
Rawlinson! It has been a most charming evening, you would have enjoyed it.

HENRY
Forgive me. I...

LOUISA
Everyone says I am to scold you soundly.

ROSSETTI
We hear you've made a discovery.

HENRY
Quite a significant one. It seems ...

Disraeli's carriage appears.

DISRAELI
Capital.

He gets into the carriage.

DISRAELI (CONT'D)
You must tell us all about it.

And heads into the night.

44 INT MAIN CHAMBER OF THE UNDERWORLD -- NIGHT

Inanna is naked before her sister ERESHKIGAL, whom she resembles.

Behind her are the twelve ANNANUKI. Beside her is BELETSERI, the scribe.

ERESHKIGAL
Why have you come to my kingdom Inanna?

INANNA
Our father has condemned the children of the earth.

ERESHKIGAL
What is it you expect from me?

She knows.
INANNA
Ki made them. Our mother. When we were sisters above.

ERESHKIGAL
Let the Annanuki judge.

THE ANNANUKI TURN AWAY.

INANNA
Ereshkigal! Listen to me ...

Creatures surround Inanna.

45 INT. THE TEMPLE -- ASSYRIAN TIME, AFTERNOON

Sin Lequí writing. CRIES of battle in the distance.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)
Three days passed, Inanna did not return. Tammuz, her husband and I, her vizier, went in search of her

46 EXT GATES OF THE UNDERWORLD

TAMMUZ AND A YOUNGER SIN LEQUI ARE KNOCKING.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
They must admit us. I have read the tablets.

The gate opens.

47 INT THE TUNNEL -- NIGHT

They make their way past the horrors of the Underworld.

48 INT THE UNDERWORLD

Tammuz before Ereshkigal.

ERESHKIGAL
Inanna has forfeited her life.

TAMMUZ
She is the daughter of Anu.
ERESHKIGAL
But she chose to come here. And she must stay.

The Annanuki gather around Ereshkigal.

ANNANUKI
Unless one will take her place. One from above

ERESHKIGAL
Go back Tammuz, your beauty saves you ...

TAMMUZ
Let her return. I will stay.

ERESHKIGAL
You?

TAMMUZ
I will take her place.

Sin Lequi places a hand on his arm.

49 INT A STAKE -- CONTINUOUS

Inanna's body is hanging on a stake.

Tammuz and Sin Lequi lift Inanna down. Tammuz takes her in his arms.

Sin Lequi sprinkles the body with water.

Inanna comes back to life.

INANNA
Tammuz ...

TAMMUZ
She has released you. You must leave here quickly ...

INANNA
One of the children of the earth will survive ... She has promised ...

TAMMUZ
(To Sin Lequi) Take her away from here before ...

INANNA
Tammuz ...
TAMMUZ
Go with Sin Lequi.

INANNA

Tammuz ...

TAMMUZ
Don't look back.

50 INT THE FIRST OF THE SEVEN GATES -- MOMENTS LATER

Sin Lequi drags Inanna back through the gates.

Inanna’s garments are returned to her at each of the seven gates.

51 INT THE LAST GATE OF THE UNDERWORLD. -- CONTINUOUS

INANNA PUTS ON HER CROWN.

CUT TO TAMMUZ' FACE AS HE MAKES THE FINAL DECISION.

CUT BACK TO TAMMUZ AND ERESHKIGAL.

Ereshkigal takes Tammuz’ hand.

CUT TO THE FACE OF JANE MORRI MODELLING FOR ROSSETTI'S PROSERPINE IN HIS STUDIO.

Jane holds a pomegranite.

CUT TO THE SUMERIAN PLAINS:

A HUNTER CUTS A GAZELLE'S THROAT.

52 INT A TEMPLE - LATE AFTERNOON.

A very old Sin Lequi is writing.

She refers to a waxed board before writing on clay.

SOUNDS of a BATTLE now closer.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)

Tammuz, shepherd of the people,
became husband to Ereshkigal.

(MORE)
SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)(CONT'D)
And I was sent by Inanna to protect
the children of the earth ... But
... what can I say? It is not
easy watching over mortals ...

53 INT RAWLINSON'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Louisa is pacing angrily.

LOUISA
These were your guests Henry.
Disraeli was most put out. And
Gilbert didn't come. He's as rude
as the host. The evening was a
shambles. Morris has begun to
suspect that Rossetti is in love
with Jane - which anyone could
have told him four years ago. He
spent the whole evening ...

HENRY
Louisa I'm ...

LOUISA
Henry you're not in charge of a
regiment now. This isn't the East.
Though Disraeli was hinting that
that's where you would prefer to
be. Since you care so little for
public opinion perhaps you are
contemplating divorce like ...

HENRY
Louisa my dear, marriage ...

LOUISA
Is just a different kind of
campaign. Once the battle is over ...

HENRY
The hardest part is keeping what
you have won. Ask Morris.

54 EXT THE EUPHRATES AFTERNOON -- ADAPA'S TIME

ZIUSUDRA is on a raft.

He is tired and bad tempered. He catches an otter in a
net but it escapes.
HE HAS ANOTHER IN A WICKER CAGE.

He curses. Then springs again, getting soaked in the process.

He looks up at the sky. Rain drops are beginning to fall on the river.

He pushes the otter into the cage with the other and scrambles to his feet.

55 EXT THE PLAINS -- CONTINUOUS

Children are laughing, gathering insects, and small animals, putting them in containers or on each other.

56 INT HENRY'S BEDROOM -- LATER

Henry's is sleeping.

Louisa is in his arms, awake.

57 EXT THE ARK -- AFTERNOON, LIGHT RAIN.

Sin Lequi is loading lions. The lions are respectful. ALITUM, Ziusudra's wife is leading a gazelle.

When they are all aboard, a worker, PUZUR AMARU closes the door.

AND SEALS IT WITH PITCH FROM A HUGE BARREL.

Rain begins.

58 EXT A LONDON STREET -- AFTERNOON, HEAVY RAIN.

Henry is about to get into his carriage.

RAWLINSON

Henry! Henry!

WILLIAM RAWLINSON, academic, Henry's brother catches up with him.

HENRY

William! Good to see you. How are things at Oxford? Have you seen mother lately?
They are oblivious to the twelve year old girl who sweeps
the road under the feet of the horses.

RAWLINSON
Yes she's well.

HENRY
Where are you headed?

RAWLINSON
The Cosmopolitan.

HENRY
I'll take you there.

They get into the carriage.

RAWLINSON
Why don't you and Louisa ever come
up to Oxford and let me give you
dinner?

THE CHILD SWEEPING THE ROAD MOVES ASIDE FOR THE CARRIAGE.

Others less fortunate struggle against the rain.

59 INT THE CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS

RAWLINSON
That's better. Most fortuitous.
But what do you say about Gladstone
now Henry?

HENRY
Hmmm?

RAWLINSON
The Education Bill!

THE GIRL WATCHES THE CARRIAGE MOVE AWAY.

RAWLINSON (CONT'D)
All children no matter how poor,
taught to read and write!

HENRY
What difference will that make?
The poor will enter Oxford?

RAWLINSON
The civil service and the army are
now open to anyone of ability.

(MORE)
RAWLINSON (CONT'D)
I know you're not a particular admirer of Gladstone, but he's the kind of leader the country needs.

HENRY
What kind is that William?

RAWLINSON
Well, a family man who wants a just society. With all his other duties he still reads the bible for half an hour every day!

HENRY
Does he have a poor memory?
(a beat)
I have nothing against the man William, but his endless attempts to provide the greatest good for the greatest number at home, may result in us being seriously disadvantaged abroad!

RAWLINSON
Nonsense! Gladstone is a patron of the Royal Geographic Society as you well know!

Henry smiles.

RAWLINSON (CONT'D)
And the Royal Asiatic Society!

HENRY
After hearing George Smith.

RAWLINSON
A case in point - A man of humble origens who has revolutionised the field of Assyriology!

HENRY
So when will you offer him a post at Oxford?

RAWLINSON
Oxford! I know he's like a son to you but ...

Rawlinson realising, is crestfallen.

HENRY
Never mind let's not lose faith. The optimists may prove in the right after all.

Rawlinson remains silent.
HENRY (CONT'D)
I wish they'd been right about the weather!

60 EXT ZIUSUDRA'S PALACE -- AFTERNOON

Puzar shows the others a tablet that gives him ownership of Ziusudra's possessions.

CLOSEUP OF AN INSCRIBED NAIL BEING DRIVEN TO INDICATE A CHANGE OF OWNER.

The workers slap Puzur on the back and crowd inside his new dwelling laughing as rain increases.

61 INT ZIUSUDRA'S PALACE -- LATER AFTERNOON

Puzar entertains his friends in his new banquet room.

The storm is growing outside.

WITH PUZUR WE SEE THAT THE ARK IS FLOATING.

62 EXT SKY AND SEA. -- PERHAPS AFTERNOON

A STORM OVER WATER. LITTLE LIGHT IN THE SKY. LAND NO LONGER EXISTS.

THUNDER and HEAVY RAIN.

63 INT A TEMPLE LONG AFTER -- EVENING

SOUNDS of the STORM become SOUNDS of a mighty BATTLE.

Urshanabi, a crocodile man, old and out of breath bursts in.

URSHANABI
So this is where you're hiding. Don't you realise that Sennacherib is almost ...

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
A madman will succeed where even the gods could not.
URSHANABI
He'll kill us both and you're here writing ... It's Gilgamesh isn't it? After all this time.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
He wanted to keep Uruk safe for ever ..

URSHANABI
Gilgamesh is gone! We must save ourselves!

URUK'S WALLS ARE BREACHED. A GREAT CRACK ZIGZAGS THROUGH THE EYE OF KNOWLEDGE.

64 INT BRITISH MUSEUM NIGHT
George is drinking a cup of tea and has his work beside him. He stretches and goes to a cabinet.

THE GAME IS BESIDE A SMALL CARVING OF A FAWN CURLED UP.

George brings the gaming board to his desk. And tries the ten pieces in different combinations.
He returns to his work but leaves a piece on the board.
He takes out a sketch of a young woman and adds a few touches. Then quickly crumples the paper and throws it away. Then retrieves it and puts it in his notebook. He blows out the lamp.

65 INT HENRY'S STABLES -- MORNING
LOUISA is standing by a mare with a new foal talking with the groom.

Henry joins them.

LOUISA
What do you think? Isn't he ...

Henry examines the foal.

HENRY
We might have another Derby winner!

They close the stable and walk towards the house.
LOUISA
Gladstone is out of favour with Her Majesty.

HENRY
What is it this time?

LOUISA
His efforts to reform ladies of the night. He engages them in conversation about their wicked ways.

HENRY
A strange interest. Does the Queen imagine ...

LOUISA
Someone seems to have suggested as much.

HENRY
Disraeli.

LOUISA
Do either of them ever wonder why women are reduced to such extremity?

HENRY
You'll find the same thing happens wherever ...

LOUISA
Gladstone's sister has fled to Germany. He tried to place her in an asylum for the insane.

HENRY
A family that takes religious differences seriously.

LOUISA
It's not a joke that a woman has no power over her own life. Gladstone prevented a bill for women's suffrage. Twenty years ago. He stands in the ...

HENRY
He'll lose the next election.

LOUISA
What difference will that make to women?
HENRY
Well Disraeli ... 

LOUISA
Will look after himself.

HENRY
These things must take their course. It's probably best if you don't discuss the matter with General Nott this evening ...

67 INT THE THEATRE  GILBERT AND SULLIVAN'S TRIAL BY JURY -- NIGHT

Strains of end of Act I. Interval. Henry and Louisa come into the foyer with the crowd.

Sir Edwin Arnold spots him.

ARNOLD
Rawlinson!

Henry waits until Arnold catches up.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
What's this I hear about ...

Louisa escapes.

HENRY
Arnold! What's on the public's menu now? Australian flora and fauna, Eclipses of the sun in Tahiti, ...

Arnold is momentarily hurt.

ARNOLD
I can't see what there is to ...

HENRY
They were making discoveries the like of which you can't ...

ARNOLD
But they found what they were looking for! In only six weeks too. Very satisfactory all round. I would have thought.

They proceed to purchase drinks.
ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Come let me get you a glass of this ...what ever it is. But what's the news from Scotland? About Her Majesty and ...

68 EXT BALMORAL CASTLE -- MORNING
The castle looking inhabited.

69 INT QUEEN VICTORIA'S PALACE -- MORNING
The Queen is sitting at a large desk. She is unhappily reading a large heap of parliamentary documents.

ATTENDANT
The Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone!

Victoria is annoyed as Gladstone enters. They look strangely alike.

VICTORIA
Mr Gladstone? How good of you to come.

GLADSTONE
The mountain must ... that is ... have you considered the Bills Ma'am?

VICTORIA
Which do you mean Mr Gladstone? The Trade Unions Bill? The bill establishing Secret Ballot? Or the one that proposes making it legal to strike? Perhaps you've a new one giving the suffrage to fishmongers and ...

GLADSTONE
That will come in time Ma'am. We must be patient. For the present it's the Elementary Education Bill. The State wishes to provide all children with a basic education.

VICTORIA
Well give it to me. I don't suppose that will open the floodgates.

Victoria takes up the document and begins to sign it.
GLADSTONE
Now about the matters raised in my letter Ma'am?

VICTORIA
Letter?

GLADSTONE
About Ireland Ma'am.

VICTORIA
Ireland Mr Gladstone?

GLADSTONE
And the Prince of Wales.

VICTORIA
The Prince of Wales, Mr Gladstone?

GLADSTONE
The Irish Question Ma'am.

They glare at each other.

GLADSTONE (CONT'D)
If Your Majesty were to reside in Ireland for six months of the Year, it would greatly assist the government in arriving at a solution to the Irish Question! Especially, if the Prince of Wales were to rule as your permanent viceroy.

Victoria is enraged.

VICTORIA
How strange Mr Gladstone, despite your concern for the woes of Ireland you have yet to visit her yourself! I understand that Italy is more to your taste!

Victoria signs quickly.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
The Queen will remain at Balmoral where life was so happy, before the Lord took dear Prince Albert to himself. And we will discuss the Prince of Wales no further. Since Prince Albert's death I am unable to even look at the Prince of Wales without a shudder.

She hands the document to Gladstone.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)
Good morning Mr Gladstone!
GLADSTONE
Good morning Ma'am.

Gladstone withdraws.

70 INT MUSEUM -- CONTINUOUS

George is looking at the game.

Henry comes in.

HENRY
I've seen something like it among Layard's Egyptian finds.

GEORGE
Do you think we could play?

HENRY
Perhaps we are already.

He turns the board over.

HENRY (CONT'D)
There are magical signs on the back.

GEORGE
If only we knew the rules ...

HENRY
I suspect the two sections represent heavens and earth.

GEORGE
With a bridge between.

HENRY
Of course. How else might a man reach the heavens?

Henry shakes the dice.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Until we discover the rules we must make up our own.

George opens his notebook.

WE SEE THE WORD: GILGAMESH WITH GEORGE'S SKETCH OF GILGAMESH HOLDING A LION CUB.

Henry reaches for the notebook. The drawing of the young woman falls out. George seizes it.
Henry regards the Gilgamesh drawing.

HENRY (CONT'D)
What a good likeness ...

71 EXT Uruk A ZIGGURAT -- PREDAWN

A young Gilgamesh is restlessly pacing the platform of the ziggurat like a caged lion. He waits for the day to begin.

He hears the HOOFBEATS of a herd of gazelle in the distance.

He pauses, looking past the city to the plains.

72 EXT LONDON -- DAWN

The city begins to wake.

A milkwoman delivers milk. She carries heavy buckets suspended from a yoke over her shoulders.

We see other tradesmen and servants beginning their long day.

73 INT. RAWLINSON'S STUDY -- MORNING

Henry is writing a paper. There is a tentative knock.

HENRY
Come in.

Nothing happens.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Louisa?

Still nothing. Henry still reading goes to open the door and sees his two young sons.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Sennacherib! And Toby! To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?

Toby nudges Sennacherib.

SENNACHERIB
Mother says that you had a lion.

TOBY
In Persia.
HENRY
Everyone has lions in Persia.

SENNACHERIB
But did you?

He brings them in.

HENRY
Certainly. I may even have a photograph somewhere.

He starts looking but is distracted when he finds something else.

TOBY
What was his name?

HENRY
Who?

SENNACHERIB
The lion.

HENRY
Tigris. Not because we thought he was a tigris but that's where we found him. Near the Tigris river. His mother had been shot.

Toby is upset.

SENNACHERIB
Did he live in your house?

HENRY
Oh yes. He used to follow me everywhere and would eat only out of my hand. None of the servants were allowed to feed him.

SENNACHERIB
What happened to him?

HENRY
Oh one night I was writing the despatches, the events of the day, and he was very restless. When the servants tried to take him outside he growled and showed his teeth.

The children growl and laugh.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I said 'let him bide' and he sat under my chair.

(MORE)
HENRY (CONT'D)
Just like the sphynx. Some hours later when I had finished writing I reached down to pat him, he was cold. I found he was dead.

Sennacherib is silent but Toby begins to cry.

HENRY (CONT'D)
He must have been sick you see.
And I didn't ...

A few tears begin to run down Sennacherib's cheek.

HENRY (CONT'D)
He wasn't ... that is ... Never mind. Did I tell you about the time in India I bet 100 pounds that I could ride from Poonah to Panwell in less than four hours?
...

Toby is still crying.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Louisa!

74 INT THE TEMPLE -- CONTINUOUS

The first rays of the sun enter the temple where small children are sleeping.

ENHEDUANNA the priestess comes to the window. Other priestesses sleep.

A small boy wakes and joins her.

She takes his hand. They go outside onto the steps of the temple.

75 EXT STEPS OF THE TEMPLE. -- CONTINUOUS

ENHEDUANNA
Look Elani, our friend Shamash, the sun is coming ...

Enheduana finds a baby abandoned on the steps.
76 EXT LONDON MARKETS -- DAWN

Orange girls are setting up their stalls. Flower sellers etc. It is cold but cheerful, though not *My Fair Lady*.

In a quiet corner Arthur Munby a wealthy gentleman meets Hannah.

Glances are exchanged by the women at the stalls. The men haven't noticed.

77 EXT THE CITY WALLS -- A LITTLE LATER

*THE SUN ILLUMINATES A BAS RELIEF OF A CONQUERED AFRICAN KING. HE IS CHAINED TO WHAT IS LEFT OF HIS ARMY.*

Yarrim approaches.

*AS THE SUN TOUCHES IT, THE BAS RELIEF COME TO LIFE.*

78 EXT THE COURTYARD -- LATER

Yarrim the eagle griffin, leads the captives in procession.

79 EXT ZIGGURAT -- CONTINUOUS

*GILGAMESH sits against the wall of the platform. Back to the city.*

80 INT DISRAELI'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Disraeli is having breakfast with houseguest MATHEW ARNOLD. The table is heaped with primroses.

*DISRAELI*

You have heard me called a flatterer, and it's true. Everyone likes flattery and when you come to royalty you should lay it on with a trowel.

81 INT THE GREAT HALL OF THE PALACE AFTERNOON

YARRIM addresses the captives.
Invaders from the land beyond the Nile, you came to conquer our city and make us slaves! Gilgamesh, son of the immortal Ninsun and the great Lugalbanda, unique among men, has shown you the terrible consequences of your actions. Your army is destroyed and your king captured. You deserve no pity. But Gilgamesh is merciful. You have been given one chance to escape your punishment. If you, Agga of Kish, son of Enmebaragessi, can defeat Gilgamesh hand to hand, all will be freed! You will keep your lives and take rich gifts back to your own lands.

Gilgamesh on cue comes down the steps to confront the African king.

The winner is he who first lifts his opponent's feet from the earth.

They wrestle. The African is defeated easily.

Gilgamesh holds him above his head and throws him down. The king is dead.

Gilgamesh son of the immortals, destroys all of Uruk's enemies. Take them away!

Captives are taken away.

They will be slaves to the city.

Gilgamesh leaves without greeting the court.

Anu and Enlil observe Gilgamesh's latest victory.

He is unassailable.

He turns against his own people. No son is left with his father.

Enlil picks up the Game.
ENLIL (CONT'D)
His lust leaves no virgin to her lover. Daily his people's cries grow louder.

ANU
Aruru, made him strong as a savage bull.

ENLIL
Shamash gave him a restless heart!

ANU
Aruru will create another. As like him as his own reflection!

ARURU picks up clay and begins to shape it.

ANU (CONT'D)
Stormy heart for stormy heart!

ANU (CONT'D)
Let Ninurta the spirit of war ...

NINURTA, lays his hands on the clay.

NINURTA
Like fire and storm I make you mine.

A body begins to form.

ANU
Let Nisaba of the harvest ...

NISABA, goddess of the harvest lays her hands on the clay.

NISABA
Like water and sunlight you belong to the earth.

Aruru fashions life into the clay form.

A whole body emerges. It is ENKIDU.

ANU
They will contend together and leave Uruk in quiet.

Aruru lets the body fall to the plain.

ANU (CONT'D)
Teach Gilgamesh what it means to meet his equal.
INT. EXT. THE PALACE - NIGHT

Gilgamesh is sleeping restlessly. Begins to dream

CUT TO THE PLAINS

Gilgamesh is walking alone. The sky meets the plain and is full of stars. So black it is almost a sound.

We see a star fall to earth and lie at the feet of Gilgamesh.

Gilgamesh reaches for it.

ANU (V.O.)

Enkidu ...

Anu's voice shakes the ground under Gilgamesh's feet.

Gilgamesh tries to lift the star. He cannot.

CUT TO PALACE

Gilgamesh wakes disturbed.

EXT. THE WILDERNESS - DAWN

The sun's rays stretch across the plain.

ENKIDU LIES CURLED UP LIKE A NEWBORN CALF. HE IS COVERED WITH HAIR.

A gazelle finds him. She touches him with her nose. She licks him as she would her own new born.

ENKIDU SEES FIRST HER FEET, FIRMLY PART OF THE EARTH. THEN HER LEGS, HER GENTLE FACE AND LARGE EYES.

He stands using her to lean on.

HE TAKES IN THE WILDERNESS STRETCHING TO THE HORIZEN, AND THE HERD WHICH IS PART OF IT.

We see ENKIDU and the gazelle blend into the herd.

EXT. THE PLAIN - LATER

The herd is running on the plain.

Something perhaps human is now running with them.
86 EXT WATERHOLE -- EVENING

Enkidu drinks with the herd.
He sees his face reflected with theirs

87 EXT LONDON ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS. -- MORNING

George is with ANNE, his wife and several of the children. Anne is in her early twenties, tired and worried.

GEORGE
Come and see the animals, Henry.

George's youngest child is watching a sparrow sitting on a fence.

Anne is tense.

ANNE
What's going to happen to us?

GEORGE
It will be alright. Mr Delitzsch has offered to help with a publication of the Gilgamesh tablets in German. The proceeds will more than cover ...

Anne walks over to the leopard cage. The leopard is not in.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
I should have stayed where I was - a tradesman making a decent living.

ANNE
You mean that because of me and the children you should have wasted your talent?

GEORGE
If I'd had a proper education I could ...

ANNE
Sir Henry says that you're one of the greatest orientalists in Europe.

GEORGE
Sir Henry has never had to worry about money.
88 INT. THE PALACE -- DAWN

Gilgamesh listens to the sounds of the morning. A lion cub sleeps on his bed.

He throws water on his face and begins to dress. Then sits motionless.

He looks out and sees a funeral. A body is launched on the river near the city walls.

He smashes the water jug.

The pieces begin spinning.

89 EXT ELSEWHERE ON THE RIVER -- CONTINUOUS

A GAZELLE IS STRUGGLING IN A SNARE.

Enkidu releases him.

BOTH ARE STILL FOR A MOMENT, THEN BOTH HEADS TURN SHARPLY TOGETHER.

Enkidu picks up an injured fawn and places it on his shoulders.

Gazelle and man escape to the herd.

90 EXT SAME --LATER

A HUNTER ENRAGED, THROWS DOWN THE EMPTY TRAP.

91 EXT Uruk Courtyard --DAY

Sin Lequi watches the work of the captives building walls more than fifteen feet thick and garrisoned at regular intervals.

Sin Lequi observes the harshness of the overseers.

Gilgamesh joins her.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
They're tired.
GILGAMESH
I can't leave Uruk until the walls are finished.

Yarrim, the vizier joins them

YARRIM
Some trappers ask to speak to you.

GILGAMESH
Sin Lequi loves the people. She will speak to them.

YARRIM
The matter concerns the gods.

CUT TO ROOM IN THE PALACE

Two men come forward as Gilgamesh and Yarrim enter

FIRST HUNTER
Lord Gilgamesh, we ask for your help. We live by our hunting.

SECOND HUNTER
Now there is a stranger with the herd. When we set our snares they are empty. We are robbed.

FIRST HUNTER
We cannot catch him even on horseback. He runs as swiftly as ... He eats what they eat.

SECOND HUNTER
What should we do? We are desperate. We will be forced to come to the city. How will we survive?

Aside to Gilgamesh.

YARRIM
Some say that this being comes from the gods.

GILGAMESH
What does this ... look like?

FIRST HUNTER
As tall as you.

Gestures vaguely.

FIRST HUNTER (CONT'D)
He is covered with hair like ...
GILGAMESH
A man?

FIRST HUNTER
Perhaps.

GILGAMESH
Then it is a simple matter - leave a woman beside the waterhole. When he takes her the herd will abandon him.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
But what woman could ...

GILGAMESH
Enheduanna.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
Inanna's priestess?

YARRIM
Her duty is to the city.

GILGAMESH
Take her to the river.

91 INT ERESHKIGAL'S CHAMBER

Tammuz is in the bed of Ereshkigal. His eyes show despair; hers contentment.

Six candles, each one burning at a different level, surround the bed.

Ereshkigal lights another.

92 INT THE TEMPLE -- DAY

Enheduanna lights a candle.

She is completing a ritual helped by other young priestesses.

She turns to find Yarrim.

YARRIM
The city needs you Priestess!

THE PRIESTESS LOOKS THROUGH THE ARCHED DOORWAY AND SEES THE HUNTERS WAITING FOR HER.
93 EXT THE WATERHOLE — PRE DAWN

Trappers tether Enheduanna at the waterhole.

One kisses her. Others fearing trouble, restrain him. They leave.

94 INT PALACE — PRE DAWN

GILGAMESH IS SLEEPING

FADE IN:

Gilgamesh is walking on the plain alone as before. He sees a double headed axe at his feet.

He reaches for it and tries to lift it.

He cannot.

He wakes disturbed.

95 EXT THE WATERHOLE — DAWN

The priestess is afraid. She watches the herd come to drink.

Enkidu clears the way for the fawns.

SHE SEES ENKIDU.

The gazelle flee when they detect the presence of the priestess.

Enkidu is turning away when he realises that Enheduanna is trapped.

He releases her.

They stare at each other.

96 EXT PLATFORM OF THE ZIGGURAT — MORNING

Gilgamesh is looking out at the sky.

NINSUN (V.O.)

Your dreams show one who will change your destiny my son.
97 EXT THE WATERHOLE -- CONTINUOUS

Enheduanna holds out her hand to Enkidu. Enkidu sits some distance away.

The Priestess dances for him: his running with the herd, his releasing her. Her dance becomes sensual.

Enkidu comes closer.

They compare hands. He sees that his hands are like hers.

Enheduanna takes her red cloak, wraps it around him and leads him to the water to see his reflection. Enkidu sees his face beside hers.

Enkidu stares at his reflection and plays with the cloak, trying it different ways.

A wind comes up and he instinctively wraps it around himself like a trapper. Realising this he drops it and is about to go ...

ENHEDUANNA

Enkidu ...

Enkidu pauses. Enheduanna picks up the cloak.

ENHEDUANNA (CONT'D)

Enkidu.

She draws him to her and throws the cloak on the ground.

98 INT. RAWLINSON'S STUDY -- NIGHT

CLOSEUP OF HENRY WRITING. HE IS SURROUNDED BY HIS COLLECTION OF ASSYRIAN FINDS.

The room could be in Persia, except perhaps for the framed portrait of a horse: Coronation.

Something distracts him. He looks down and sees his mongoose looking up at him. It has pages of a book in its mouth.

Louisa runs in in hot pursuit.

LOUISA

It's cook's recipes!

HENRY

Excellent!
99 EXT THE WATERHOLE --DAWN

Enkidu sees the herd.

He follows but they vanish ahead of him.

He runs until he falls to the ground.

100 INT A ROOM IN THE PALACE

Sin Lequi Uninni is writing. A quiet knock at the door.

MAN

Sin Lequi!

SIN LEQUI UNINNI

Jantin?

MAN

You must help me Sin-Lequi. I don't know what to do. My son, is to be married tomorrow.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI

Yes I ...

Sin Lequi stands.

MAN

He's outside the bridehouse. He says he will die rather than let Gilgamesh enter ...

SIN LEQUI UNINNI

Gilgamesh will kill him.

MAN

He'll listen to you ...

Sin Lequi is already in the courtyard.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI

Hurry ... We'll hide her!

101 EXT THE PLAIN -- MORNING

Enheduanna and Enkidu sit close together near a fire. Enkidu is unhappy, and cold for the first time.

Enheduanna puts the cloak around his shoulders. She gives him bread and wine.
ENHEDUANNA

Enkidu. Eat. This is your food now.

She cuts and braids his hair. Enkidu is transformed.

ENHEDUANNA (CONT'D)

You are a man Enkidu, you must live as a man. Not as a beast.

102 EXT LONDON DOCKS -- MORNING

A dark building. We see men packed tightly enough to suffocate behind the iron bars of a cage.

They elbow and punch each other trying to get closer to the bars.

On the other side two men consult a list.

FIRST MAN
Twenty men for two hours!

SECOND MAN
Sixpence an hour! You and you and...

The frenzy increases. Men holding their tickets in their hands.

Young and old fight each other for the work. Some are crushed.

The strongest hurl themselves at the heads of those closest to the bars.

103 INT BALMORAL CASTLE. -- EVENING

As before Gladstone stands before Her Majesty.

GLADSTONE
The Labour Exchange Bill Ma'am!

Victoria signs while glaring at Gladstone.

104 EXT ASCOT -- AFTERNOON

A large crowd. Henry is momentarily alone. MACFARREN a well dressed drunkard of his own age suddenly sees him.

MACFARREN
Rawlinson! Henry Rawlinson!
Henry looks up.

MACFARREN (CONT'D)

Rawlinson! It is you isn't it?
Macfarren, Archie ...

They shake hands.

HENRY

Macfarren?

MACFARREN

Ealing. We were at school together. Don't say you don't remember the night we went to the opera?

HENRY

Didn't we try to sneak back in the morning and found the History master waiting. I seem to recall we had to learn all of Horace in a fortnight ...

MACFARREN

They threw me out. Never did like Latin.

WILLIAM RAWLINSON comes up.

MACFARREN (CONT'D)

The old man never recovered. From what I hear you're still lucky.

Wanders off.

RAWLINSON

Who was that unsavoury individual?

HENRY

Someone from forty years ago ...

Henry watches him go and sees BENJAMIN DISRAELI dressed eccentrically as ever working the crowd, moving slowly toward them.

RAWLINSON

Do you think he will win the election?

Henry sees Louisa in animated discussion with two members of parliament.

HENRY

I never like to predict outcomes.

RAWLINSON

If only Gladstone could manage
They are patronising.

RAWLINSON (CONT'D)
Her Majesty ... 

HENRY
(distracted)
Let her have the gun metal?

RAWLINSON
Gun metal?

HENRY
Another memorial to Prince Albert. Gladstone won't agree to the expense.

RAWLINSON
He never remembers that Her Majesty is not only the queen but also a woman!

Louisa's companions turn away to watch the horses.

105 EXT URUK THE BRIDEHOUSE.--THE SUN IS COMING UP.
A small crowd is outside the bridehouse.

OLD MAN
It's too late ...

Gilgamesh arrives.

OLDER WOMAN
Inanna, protect my daughter. Spare her for her husband.

Gilgamesh goes into the bridehouse. The young bridegroom is being held back by friends.

OLDER WOMAN (CONT'D)
Sin Lequi ...

Sin Lequi tries to calm her.

CUT TO CITY GATES

Enheduanna and Enkidu enter. The slaves stop work
CUT TO THE BRIDEHOUSE

WE SEE ENKIDU AT THE CITY GATES.

The crowd moves towards him.
WOMAN
His double.

OLD MAN
This one is taller.

The crowd gathers around Enkidu.

We see Gilgamesh come to the door of the bridehouse.

He sees Enkidu goes to meet him.

A savage battle begins.

At first Gilgamesh is too confident. Then finds himself fighting for his life.

They break down the door posts of the bridehouse.

A moment suddenly gives Gilgamesh the advantage.

GILGAMESH TAKES ENKIDU BY THE THROAT.

He has a choice.

His fury dies. He releases Enkidu and helps him to his feet.

They embrace.

CIVILIZATION (On screen)

1873

106 EXT STRAITS OF DOVER -- DAY

Clear weather.

A British man-of-war, the Vigilant approaches England, with the Shah of Persia, Rawlinson, and the Shah's suite on deck.

The Vigilant is flanked by two other warships.

The Vigilant is greeted by countless steamers, merchant ships, yachts, and pleasure boats. All ships are adorned with flags and bunting.

107 INT TOWN HALL -- MORNING

Shah steps on the royal train. His retinue is splendid.
The sides of the track are lined with waving crowds.

A BRASS BAND PLAYS AS THE TRAIN MOVES OFF.

108 INT THE REGALLY APPOINTED TRAIN -- MORNING
POV THE SHAH GLIMPSES WAVING CROWDS THROUGH THE CARRIAGE WINDOWS.
The Shah waves to the crowds throughout the journey.
HE LOOKS UP AT THE SKY AND SEES CROWS FLYING ABOVE THEN FALLING BEHIND AS THE TRAIN SPEEDS UP.

109 INT BUCKINGHAM PALACE PORTRAIT GALLERY -- AFTERNOON
Henry and the Shah observe a case containing a bloodstained naval uniform.

HENRY
Nelson wore this at the battle of Trafalga.

They lean closer towards a cannon ball.

HENRY (CONT'D)
This is what killed him.

SHAH
Most interesting.

110 EXT LONDON ZOO -- AFTERNOON
The Shah and his retinue inspect the cages.
We see the crowd throwing various things into the mouths of a hippopotamus.
The Shah's retinue moves to the next cage where a keeper is making a gorilla dance.
They move on to an aquatic enclosure where a sea-lion and sea-fox perform tricks.

KEEPER
One kiss!
The sea-lion obliges.

KEEPER (CONT'D)
Two kisses!
The sea-lion obliges again.

111 INT. BUCKINGHAM PALACE -- LATER

The Shah is alone. He looks out of the window onto the lawns below.

Peacocks stroll languidly nearby. Their CRIES mournful in the twilight.

POV SHOT AS THE SHAH SEES A HERRON ON THE LAWN ENERGETICALLY DEVOUR SOMETHING.

The Shah is thoughtful.

112 INT BUCKINGHAM PALACE -- MORNING

Queen Victoria comes down the stairs and shakes hands with the Shah.

They proceed together into one of the reception rooms.

113 INT. THRONE ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The court is multicultural. Sons of Maharajahs mingle with Japanese and Russian diplomats.

Victoria and the Shah exchange ornate and useless gifts of great value.

VICTORIA
I confer on you the Order of the Garter.

The Shah receives his order graciously.

The Shah turns to his vizier who hands him the decoration.

SHAH
May I in turn present to Your Majesty the Order of the Lion and the Sun.

The Shah's entourage splendid against the drabness of Victoria's. Henry is in military uniform beside the Shah.

The court is presented. Each comes foward and bows or courtsies to their Majesties.

Suddenly one of the younger ladies-in-waiting loses her balance as she courtsies. Before her partner can catch her she falls, her hooped skirt catches revealing all.
There is a silence as she recovers.

SHAH (CONT'D)
I am pleased to see that in this country the gates of paradise are never closed.

114 INT AT TELEGRAPH -- NIGHT
Arnold supervises the latest edition at the presses. He joins his supervisor beside the shining machinery.

ARNOLD
The new press is a great improvement Hopkins?

HOPKINS
A great improvement Sir. It can ...

115 INT RAWLINSON'S HOME -- MORNING
Louisa reads the newspapers to her sons.

LOUISA
Papa is taking the king to see the Lakes.

CHILD
When will he come home?

LOUISA
Just a few more days.

116 EXT THE GROUNDS OF ARNOLD'S COUNTRY HOUSE -- AFTERNOON.
AN ABSURDLY LAVISH GARDEN PARTY IS IN PROGRESS, WITH PAVILIONS, CROWDS, BOATING ETC.
Arnold is circulating.

George receives a lesson in croquet from an attractive young woman. It is the woman of the drawing.

CROQUET TEACHER
My husband says ...

Henry arrives with the Shah.

ARNOLD
Would Your Majesty care to play? Rawlinson?
SHAH
That would be most enjoyable.
Lareson?

HENRY
I haven't played since India!

Henry and the Shah play against George and the young woman.
The game gradually becomes faster and less civilized.
Henry is caught up in the atmosphere and it is his final shot that finishes George.
Game over, George leans against a bench to catch his breath.
A servant hands out ices.
Henry offers one to George as a peace offering. It is however the coup de grace.

CUT TO GILGAMESH'S PALACE

117 INT THE PALACE -- DAY
The games room of the palace.
Gilgamesh is teaching Enkidu to play the game of the gods. Enheduanna is by Enkidu's side and advises him.
Gilgamesh calls for music.
A player on a strange harp begins to PLAY.
Enkidu stops to listen to the music.
Gilgamesh uses his inattention to defeat him.

118 EXT DOVER -- MORNING
The Shah's vessel is farewelled by small craft.
Arnold and Northcote watch from the cliffs

ARNOLD
Well that should settle the election.
119 EXT SUMERIAN PLAINS -- MORNING

Gilgamesh and Enkidu on horseback are racing on the plains. They see the gazelle grazing ahead.

The herd is startled and flees.

Enkidu watches them go.

120 INT ENKIDU'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Enkidu approaches an ornate bed.

First he tries many different ways to sleep on it.

He gives up and lies on the floor. But the messages of the night distract him.

He seizes the red cloak.

CUT TO EXT GARDEN

ENKIDU ASLEEP UNDER A TREE.

121 INT THE ELECTION -- MORNING

A We see Disraeli shaking hands with supporters

B We see Gladstone waiting in his study, rigid with tension.

C We see Upperclass voters chatting at the poling booths

D We see Voters in the docks area, carefully reading their first ballot papers

122 INT GAMES ROOM -- MORNING

Enkidu is watching slaves working on the city walls.

123 INT CHAMBER AT PALACE -- AFTERNOON

An elegant crowd is assembled. Yarrim is seated to the side of a dias.

ATTENDANT

The contest is between the ox and the horse!

Two contestants in costume come forward.
Yarrim smooths his wax board.

YARRIM
Which speaks first?

ATTENDANT
The Ox.

YARRIM
Begin. I am ready.

The ox ascends the dias.

OX
Greetings, I am the ox - My strength comes from the gods themselves. Great Enlil, and great Anu are of my form! I serve you, people of Uruk. I plough the fields - harvest the grain and carry great loads to build our city. It was I who enabled the black headed people to build a mighty temple reaching to the heavens that can be seen far away on the plains. How could the city prosper without my loyal and mighty strength? You all know that it is so!

Ox bows and makes way for the horse.

HORSE
I am the horse. I come from the plains and the mountains. The gods have sent me as companion to all. I gallop as swift as lightning and light comes from my feet. I take the people of Uruk on journeys to the wonders of the world. The mountains at our back and the road to the Sun is opened before us.

The audience waits.

Enkidu rises but is restrained by Enheduanna.

HORSE (CONT'D)
I am friend to all.

Enkidu is mystified.

YARRIM
We thank both our speakers. (MORE)
YARRIM (CONT'D)
You have both done well. But as always there can be only one winner and I award the prize to ...

124 INT BRITISH PARLIAMENT -- MORNING

VICTORIA
... Mr Benjamin Disraeli, our new Prime Minister, and invite him to form a government.

125 INT HENRY'S HOME -- EVENING

An uncomfortable George is giving a magic lantern display.
The image projected onto a large screen is of a winged bull. Upside down. He corrects it.
Several fashionable young woman, including George's croquet partner sit towards the front of the gathering.

GEORGE
... the library of King Assurbarnipal and the very tablets that we came to find!
She gazes enthralled at George.

HER MOTHER
Travelling to these outlandish places must be so uncomfortable!

George's audience begins to break up leaving him with a small group.

AUSTEN LAYARD wanders by.

MOTHER
Sir Austen, weren't your own discoveries in the same region?

LAYARD
Oh yes indeed.

He goes into action.

LAYARD (CONT'D)
Quite an odd story really.
(MORE)
LAYARD (CONT'D)
As Mr Smith can tell you in Syria the mysteries of the past are totally covered with sand! Unlike Egypt in that respect!

George nods. He has never been to Egypt.

LAYARD (CONT'D)
As British Consul in Mosul I was able to gather quite a large team to do the excavations. Wild looking individuals who were quite convinced that we Englishmen were mad. Each had a basket on his head which he filled from the bowels of the earth!

He demonstrates. The audience laughs.

LAYARD (CONT'D)
We were taking lunch when suddenly, one of them called out. We followed him. And proceeded into a trench that descended about twenty feet. And found ourselves between a pair of colossal winged lions, with human heads. Forming a portal.

MOTHER
Like Mr Smith's bulls?

LAYARD
Why ... precisely! Though more majestic! From there we went into the principal hall and were just surrounded by figures.

He impersonates them with uncanny accuracy.

LAYARD (CONT'D)
Some with the heads of eagles, or lions - others entirely human! We issue from between them, and were on the edge of a ravine.

He demonstrates being on the edge of a ravine.

LAYARD (CONT'D)
And to our astonishment, there was a mighty pyramid towering above us. The find of the decade. The first to be discovered in the whole region!

CROQUET TEACHER
I would love to have ...
LAYARD
We were able to bring back some wonderful finds! That's why we have the museum. And curators. Isn't it, Mr Smith?

Layard moves on his regal way. George has been eclipsed, reduced to a museum attendant.

CROQUET TEACHER
(kindly)
Are you intending any further expeditions, Mr Smith?

George looks at her.

GEORGE
Perhaps.

MOTHER
You must be stronger than you look.

GEORGE
It's not really a matter of ...

MOTHER
A woman couldn't possibly endure it.

CROQUET TEACHER
Many women travel the world these days Mother.

She does not want her daughter to be one of them.

MOTHER
Not married women.

GEORGE
But the famous Italian explorer, Pietro della Valle met his wife on his travels. They went together throughout the East ... as far as India ...

The strains of HMS Pinafore.

The croquet teacher is distracted by a handsome young man at the keyboard.

GEORGE
For twelve years ...

She rises. George realises that he has no chance with her.
MOTHER
Out of society for twelve years!
Insufferable! Of course the
Italians ... 

CROQUET TEACHER
Mama, HMS Pinafore!

She drifts towards the music.

George watches her go. But she is intercepted by her husband before she reaches the piano.

GEORGE
Well the Signora was dead for the last ten.

Audience is loosing interest.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
He had had her embalmed ... You see he couldn't bear to ...

The remainder of George's audience evaporates.

126 INT A CARD TABLE -- CONTINUOUS

Henry is playing with a group of gentlemen including Northcote.

NORTHCOTE
What's your view of the Balkans Rawlinson? Do you see the Christians driving the Turks out?

MAN
Is there a revolt?

NORTHCOTE
A few Turkish officials have been murdered.

HENRY
A hundred.

ANOTHER MAN
The Turks will buy off the Christians. And it will all come to nothing.

HENRY
Except that Russia will be able to redraw the whole map of Europe.
SECOND MAN
Russia has too many problems at home to be a serious danger.

HENRY
I'm afraid you underestimate her. Afghanistan was full of Russian agents when I ...

NORTHCOTE
It's all changed since then Rawlinson. We can't risk another war like the Crimean.

HENRY
Let's hope we're given the choice.

127 INT ENKIDU'S CHAMBER -- EVENING

Enkidu plays the melody he has heard on a stringed instrument

128 EXT HAWARDEN -- MORNING

Gladstone's picturesque country estate in the morning sunlight.

129 EXT HAWARDEN -- THE FOREST

Gladstone swings an axe cutting down a tree.

130 INT. MUNBY'S STUDIO -- MORNING

Munby is setting up his cameras. He has screened a corner where his models are changing.

MODEL
I don't know why he wants to photograph us like this. We'd look much better in ...

They emerge. We see Hannah with two women dressed in their pit clothing.

HANNAH
It's just his way.

She begins to arrange them as Munby enters still checking his equipment.
131 EXT THE PLAINS -- DAY

The horses are tethered and grazing. Gilgamesh out of sight of the city begins to run.

Enkidu passes him easily. Gilgamesh throws a lump of earth at him.

Enkidu goes to retaliate and sees an angry mother bird with chicks in the grass.

Enkidu makes Gilgamesh see.

132 EXT THE EUPHRATES RIVER -- CONTINUOUS

Gilgamesh and Enkidu swim in the river. They are racing. Gilgamesh wins.

133 EXT THE RIVER BANK -- LATER

Gilgamesh and Enkidu cook fish over a fire.

Neither can cook but they are impressed with their efforts.

GILGAMESH
When I leave Uruk I'll stay out here.

ENKIDU
What about Inanna?

Gilgamesh does not reply.

ENKIDU (CONT'D)
Yarrim said that you are to ...

Gilgamesh gets up.

ENKIDU (CONT'D)
Don't you ...

GILGAMESH
Inanna's husbands die ... when there is a child ...

Enkidu does not reply.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)
It's my destiny.
Gilgamesh dives into the river. Begins swimming.
Enkidu is running beside him on the bank.
Keeps swimming.

ENKIDU
It was my destiny to be your enemy.

134 INT HENRY'S HOME -- AFTERNOON

Louisa and Henry are teaching their youngest son how to ride. Henry leads him around the park.

LOUISA
So the queen is making Dizzy an Earl now?

HENRY
It's the least she can do. He made her Empress of India.

LOUISA
Henry, there's to be a new college for women of all classes.

HENRY
Capital.

LOUISA
I've agreed to teach Greek.

HENRY
The more women speaking Greek the better.

135 EXT TOP OF A ZIGGURAT --DAY

Gilgamesh and Enkidu are looking out to the horizon.

Enkidu is eating dates.

They are each drinking wine from ceramic containers which have a narrow neck like a straw. They are slightly drunk.

GILGAMESH
Do you see that dark edge?

ENKIDU
Mountains ... trees ...
GILGAMESH
Timber. With timber like that we could make a ship.

SHOWS HIM A MAP ON A WAX BOARD.

URUK IS ONE OF SEVERAL CITIES DRAWN WITHIN A CIRCLE. THE POINTS OF A STAR COME FROM THE EDGE OF THE CIRCLE.

Gilgamesh wipes the board and begins drawing.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)
We could leave here. Go to Egypt.

Enkidu is still eating.

ENKIDU
What about the monster?

GILGAMESH
We'll kill him. ...

ENKIDU
What?

GILGAMESH
My deeds will be carved on stone.

Enkidu is unimpressed.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)
My father conquered Kish.

Enkidu shrugs.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)
He went to the Underworld. And back.

ENKIDU
Who says so?

GILGAMESH
Yarrim.

ENKIDU
Old buzzard ... How did he get out of there?

GILGAMESH
He had secret knowledge. You can't let them know you are an outsider or they will tear you to pieces. You can't wear clean clothes, or use sweet-smelling oils. Or carry a staff of power, or ...
Enkidu laughs.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)

They swarm on you ...

Gilgamesh finally joins in. Then stops.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)

My father gave me a drum with the power to overcome demons. A carpenter's wife took it to the underworld. One day I will go and get it back.

136 INT A BATHROOM IN THE PALACE --EARLY

Enkidu is putting the finishing touches on his grooming.

He chooses a sweet smelling oil and covers his body with it, adding some to his hair for good measure.

He selects some fine clean garments and then the most impressive staff, rejecting others less fine. He sets off.

137 EXT A CAVE. --DAWN

Now a less brave Enkidu goes into a cave.

We see him at the first gate of the Underworld.

He slips through.

138 EXT OLD ABANDONED MONASTERY. A DARK ARCHWAY -- NIGHT

George comes through.

He is leading a small party consisting of Henry, Louisa, the Croquet teacher and her mother.

They cross a cobbled courtyard into a dark entrance way and go down a long corridor with several twists.

Finally they enter a dimly lit chamber.

We see a sign which says 'The Grave Digger'.

HENRY
(Whispered to George)
I can't imagine why I agreed to this nonsense!
LOUISA
Ssshh Henry!

The party finds seats. A small audience is assembled.

The performance consists of an illusion using magic lanterns.

Images are shone onto columns of smoke or screens. Screens are moved to convey differences in depth.

The scene is an Egyptian temple. An actor portraying a grave digger enters.

He searches for treasure in the abandoned temple and finds a sarcophagus.

He opens the sarcophagus and takes out the first of several mummy cases, like a set of Russian dolls.

HE FINDS A SKELETON WHOSE HEAD IS STILL ORNAMENTED WITH A JEWEL.

At the moment when he reaches for the jewel, the skull opens its mouth. The grave digger falls dead with terror.

A RAT RUNS FROM THE SKULL.

The audience gasps with horror, especially Henry.

The croquet teacher's hand momentarily finds George's.

The apparatus is whisked away and a little more light allows a curtain call.

139 INT THE PALACE --MORNING

Gilgamesh with two bows enters the games room calling for Enkidu. Yarrim is writing.

Enkidu is not there.

Gilgamesh is puzzled, then turns and runs.

140 EXT THE ORCHARD --SAME

Gilgamesh finds Enkidu outside.

He offers Gilgamesh a drum and beater. Gilgamesh takes them.

Enkidu has changed. He shows the horror he has seen.
GILGAMESH
(With dread) How did you escape?

He turns away.

ENKIDU
Tammuz ...

141 EXT. THE ARMOURERS -- MORNING

Gilgamesh and Enkidu at the armourers.

ENKIDU
Why do we need all this?

The armourer hands Gilgamesh the axe.

ARMOURER
The Might of Heroes.

Gilgamesh accepts examines it. He nods approval.

The armourer hands Enkidu a mighty bow.

ARMOURER (CONT'D)
The Bow of Anshan.

Enkidu realises that they are both serious and takes the bow.

He copies Gilgamesh and examines the bow. He nods.

142 EXT URUK -- AFTERNOON

Gilgamesh faces the Counsellors of the city.

GILGAMESH
As for human beings, our days are numbered. I must set out on a road I have never travelled. If I fall I will have established my name. If I win they will say 'It was Gilgamesh who locked in battle with Humbaba the terrible.' Then I will cut down the Cedar, and make doors for the temple.

COUNSELLORS
You are young Gilgamesh. Your heart leads the way. Humbaba's roar is a Flood. His face changes.

(MORE)
COUNSELLORS (CONT'D)
His mouth is Fire. Who even among the gods dares to confront him? What says Enkidu?

ENKIDU
I have been to the forest. I have seen him. I will go with Gilgamesh.

COUNSELLORS
The one who goes on ahead saves the comrade. The one who knows the way protects his friend. Let Enkidu go ahead of you and lead the way back once again.

143 INT A TEMPLE —DAY

Sin Lequi and Yarrim are preparing objects for the ceremony.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
Enlil gave the forest to Humbaba. Humbaba can hear the rustling of leaves in his forest 100 leagues away.

YARRIM
Unlike you I don't pretend to know what the gods want. Gilgamesh must follow his destiny.

Gilgamesh enters in formal procession.

Enheduanna follows. Yarrim joins them.

Sin Lequi reluctantly follows.

144 INT THE COSMOPOLITAN CLUB — AFTERNOON

Henry is playing chess with Disraeli.

DISRAELI
Problems in the Balkans will not be solved with this proposal from Austria. Of course, we all sympathize with the Christians in Herzegovina ...
Disraeli is addressing parliament.

Disraeli

... but we must be cautious in involving ourselves in what may well be a revolt backed by Russia. If Russia drives out the Turks the Christian peoples would be no better off and the situation would become even more volatile.

CUT TO: INT TEMPLE -- MORNING

Gilgamesh offers gifts in front of the tree of life.

Gilgamesh

When I look over the city wall I see bodies floating on the river

146 INT PARLIAMENT -- CONTINUOUS WITH ABOVE.

Disraeli

We will however, be moving the Fleet into the Black Sea.

Cheers from the Government's benches. Rumbles from the Opposition throughout.

147 INT TEMPLE -- AS BEFORE

Gilgamesh

One day that will be my lot also. I must perform a deed to be carved on stone so that my name will be remembered for ever.

Enkidu gazes at the tree of life.

Yarrim stands beside Gilgamesh in the manner of the Assyrian bas-relief.

Gilgamesh (Cont'd)

Great Shamash, we will follow your path on the water.

148 INT COSMOPOLITAN CLUB DINING ROOM -- LATER

Arnold joins Henry and Disraeli.
ARNOLD

Bismark won't stand by and allow Russia a free hand. And what of France?

ANOTHER MAN

And Austria?

HENRY

I notice you fail to mention our ally Turkey.

DISRAELI

Turkey is a spent force. The sick man of Europe. We all know that ...

HENRY

None of the government have ever been further from London than Paris how can they possibly ...

DISRAELI

Times have changed Henry. It's not in our interest to rush into war these days. We're better off to wait.

149 INT TEMPLE -- MORNING

Ninsun stands beside Gilgamesh.

NINSUN

Shamash, protect my son Gilgamesh. Enkidu, Come forward ... I receive you as my adopted son; not as the foundlings in the temple but with the inheritance of a prince.

Ninsun gives Enkidu an amulet. Light catches on it and grows into the glare of the sun, Shamash.

NINSUN (CONT'D)

Shamash watch over Gilgamesh's brother Enkidu.

SHAMASH (V.O.)

In my name the winds will obey you.

DISSOLVE TO THE GREAT WINDS:

SHAMASH (CONT'D)

Go forward.

150 EXT THE PLAIN -- DUSK

A gazelle herd gathers around Enkidu.

They greet him gently but step back in a circle and vanish.

Enkidu desolate, returns to the fire where Gilgamesh is sharpening a sword.

Enkidu throws himself down to sleep.

151 EXT OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT -- DAWN

Disraeli, Noethcote and Henry enter a street. They observe a milk woman delivering milk.

DISRAELI

Rosie! Are you married yet?

ROSIE

No sir. Why don't you have me?

DISRAELI

Get Father O'Malley to read the banns.

The woman laughs and disappears into the next house.

DISRAELI (CONT'D)

She was a charming little thing once. Now her complexion has become ...

152 EXT THE FOREST -- DAWN

Gilgamesh is dreaming.

We see him alone on the plain. A mountain begins to fall on him.

He wakes.

ENKIDU

What is it?

GILGAMESH

Did some god pass by?
153 EXT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST. -- AFTERNOON
Gilgamesh and Enkidu enter the forest. It is silent.

GILGAMESH
There no birds here.

154 EXT DEEPER INSIDE THE FOREST -- NIGHT
Gilgamesh is dreaming again.

WE SEE A WILD BULL WHICH COMES OUT OF NOWHERE.
The ground splits under his feet while the bull roars.
Then the scene changes.
Gilgamesh still dreaming seems to awake. He sees Enkidu handing him a waterskin.

155 EXT. A CAVE. -- EVENING
Gilgamesh and Enkidu sit beside a small fire in the cave.

GILGAMESH
In my dream we were like the smallest of ... swamp flies.

ENKIDU
It's favourable. The mountain was Humbaba. He will fall down before us. The wild bull you saw was Shamash, the protector ...
Swamp flies?

GILGAMESH
I will ask Shamash to send you a favourable dream.

Enkidu is less than enthusiastic.

They settle down to sleep.

156 EXT DEEP IN THE FOREST. -- NIGHT
Enkidu comes to a gate in the forest and tries to open it. It looms above him but his hands have lost their strength.
He wakes in terror.
Enkidu is awake and sitting by the ashes of the fire.

Gilgamesh wakes.

GILGAMESH
What was it?

ENKIDU
We reached the gate of the forest. But when I tried to open it my hand lost its strength. I could feel ... nothing.

The sun is coming up.

GILGAMESH
A man does not start at every noise like an animal.

Gilgamesh begins packing

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)
Stay close to me, your weakness will pass ..

Enkidu watches.

There is no fire. Enkidu remains awake restlessly checking the forest.

Finally he sleeps and dreams:

DISSOLVE TO A FIERCE STORM

Enkidu is attacked by a merciless storm. He cowers against the mountain.

Gilgamesh wakes. He is ready for anything.

Enkidu is silent.

GILGAMESH
The winds are with us Enkidu. The time has come ...

He begins cutting down one of the mighty cedars.
Who violates my woods?

A sudden flash of lightning. The sky darkens.

SHAMASH (V.O.)
Go forward. He has put on only one of the seven cloaks.

But Gilgamesh is unable to move.

SHAMASH (CONT'D)
Go forward.

Enkidu drags him into the shadows.

ENKIDU
Gilgamesh ...

Gilgamesh remains unconscious.

ENKIDU (CONT'D)
Wake up.

Enkidu tries to wake Gilgamesh but cannot.

ENKIDU (CONT'D)
Shamash ...

Enkidu speaks to the heavens.

ENKIDU (CONT'D)
Shamash! The storm!

THE RAIN COMES AND BEATS ON GILGAMESH'S FACE. FINALLY HE WAKES

GILGAMESH
Where is he?

ENKIDU
 Everywhere.

Humbaba's blaze sweeps the forest.

ENKIDU (CONT'D)
There's no way of finding him.

HUMBABA RAKES THE TREES WITH HIS LIGHT.

Gilgamesh and Enkidu advance.

A flash of light. Humbaba pins Enkidu and paralizes him.
A storm revives Enkidu but leaves him huddled and separated from Gilgamesh as in his dream.

THE BATTLE OF LIGHT AND WIND RAGES UNTIL THEY FIND THEMSELVES AT THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN.

160 EXT MOUNTAIN TOP

Humbaba's light has gone out. He kneels.

HUMBABA
I will build you a great palace of cedar. I will be your servant.
I will ...

HUMBABA'S LIGHTS BEGIN TO GLOW AGAIN. HE IS ABOUT TO STRIKE.

Enkidu kills him.

161 EXT THE RIVER -- EVENING

Gilgamesh and Enkidu are on a raft, made from the huge cedars lashed together.

Beside them is the head of Humbaba

GILGAMESH
We should have let him go.

ENKIDU
He would have killed you.

They proceed down the river. And see lights ranging the riverbank.

GILGAMESH
Lights!

ENKIDU
Who are they?

The forest is shaking. Thunder.

The raft is caught on a semi-submerged tree and stops.
GILGAMESH AND ENKIDU ARE SUDDENLY SURROUNDED BY THE ANANNAKI CARRYING THEIR TORCHES.

ENLIL (V.O.)
Gilgamesh! Enkidu!

ANU
Why did you kill my servant? You will be punished.

GILGAMESH
Where is Shamash? He protects us.

ENLIL
Shamash will not hear you. Henceforth may fire be on your faces; may it eat the bread that you eat; may it drink where you drink

GILGAMESH
We demand Humbaba's powers.

ENLIL
His cloaks are not for you.

Enlil takes the first of Humbaba's blazes

ENLIL (CONT'D)
I gave Humbaba the forest. This is not your destiny Gilgamesh.

GILGAMESH
Humbaba's powers belong to our people. Shamash. Shamash ...

ENLIL
The splendours are mine alone to give. Let water ...

CUT TO A QUIET STREAM

The river suddenly blazes with light and becomes a torrent

ENLIL (CONT'D)
Let earth ...

OF HUMBABA

The mountain blazes with light, an avalanche of boulders.

ENLIL (CONT'D)
Let beasts ...
LANDSCAPE

CUT TO AN ICY

A wolf blazes with light, and begins running

ENLIL (CONT'D)
Let fire ...

CUT TO THE PLAINS

A wild grass fire races across the plains.

ENLIL (CONT'D)
Let turmoil ...

CUT TO A FORGE

Weapons are drawn out of the fire. Light runs along sword after sword.

ENLIL (CONT'D)
Let stone ...

OF THE SEA OF DEATH

The stone of execration blazes, held by the scaly hand of Urshanabi the Crocodile man.

ENLIL (CONT'D)
Let Darkness ...

CUT TO THE UNDERWORLD

Ereshkigal holds out her arms

ENLIL (CONT'D)
Know these splendours.

162 INT HENRY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Henry is having a nightmare.

LOUISA
Henry?

Henry is unable to breathe.

HENRY
Connolly wait ... tell Stoddard ...

Louisa lights the lamp.

**LOUISA**  
Henry ... Are you alright? I'll get Webb.

**HENRY**  
No. No. ... nightmare. Haven't had ... for years ...

Louisa gives him a drink of water.

**HENRY (CONT'D)**  
I'm sorry ...

**LOUISA**  
You were calling out ... Tell me.

**HENRY (V.O.)**  
Afghanistan. I was 23. . A new Ameer in Bokkara ... Someone had to be sent. Connolly and Stoddard ... I was translator but orders changed.

Flashback: We see the remains of the two men in a well.

**HENRY (CONT'D)**  
I went to India.

**LAYARD**  
Henry what happened? You look ...

**HENRY**  
The Ameer imprisoned them ... Months ... they were ...

The mongoose hops onto the bed and curls up.

**HENRY (CONT'D)**  
We did nothing to save them. The Germans tried to intercede but Connolly said it would be unBritish to accept their help. He must have thought ... we would ...

Louisa comforts him.

**HENRY (CONT'D)**  
They died in a well in Bokkara.

163 EXT ROCKY DESERT -- LATER

*Gilgamesh and Enkidu are in a desolate place.*

*Gilgamesh sits with his head in his hands.*
Enkidu hands him a water storing plant and shows him how to eat it.

164 EXT THE RIVER -- DAY

Tired and bedraggled Gilgamesh and Enkidu refresh themselves beside the river.

Enkidu tries to race Gilgamesh but Gilgamesh is not interested.

165 EXT GATES OF URUK -- DAY

Gilgamesh and Enkidu prepare to enter.

Enkidu remembers something and pulls out the red cloak. With this Gilgamesh is almost king like.

Ninsun, Yarrim, and Sin Lequi Unnini come to meet them with the Councillors of the city.

ENKIDU
We should have kept ...

166 INT LORD FREDERICK LEIGHTON'S STUDIO -- DAY

Leighton is working in his studio in charcoal.

WE SEE HIM WRITING TURK'S HEAD.

167 INT. BUCKINGHAM (OR SOME OTHER) PALACE -- MORNING

Victoria pauses in her work to greet Disraeli who begins speaking as he enters.

DISRAELI
It is settled Ma'am! Four million pounds and there was only Rothchilds that could do it. They behaved admirably; advanced the money at a low rate!

VICTORIA
But my dear Lord Beaconfield ...

DISRAELI
The entire holding of the Egyptian Khedive is yours!
VICTORIA
But what is it?

DISRAELI
Why the Suez Canal Ma'am!

168 INT THE PALACE -- SAME

Gilgamesh bathes and puts on the robes of a king.
He turns as Inanna comes towards him.

INANNA
Gilgamesh.

GEORGE
Inanna.

INANNA
Do you remember what you said when we last met?

Inanna comes toward him.

GILGAMESH
I remember killing the snake ...

INANNA
Then my tree burst into flower.
The time has come now for you to be the happiest of men.

GILGAMESH
A bridegroom should have gifts.

INANNA
Give me the seed of your body.
I will give you a chariot of gold.
And the mighty demons of the storm to be your draft mules, forever ...

GILGAMESH
Which of your husbands did you love forever?

Gilgamesh backs away.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)
The many coloured roller - you struck and broke his wings. The lion - you dug seven pits for him.
These are lies of...

The stallion - conquered with whip and bridle. Where is Tammuz?

INANNA
Tammuz?

He is where you sent him...

INANNA
You dishonour your father. You dishonour your people.

GILGAMESH
I will choose my own bride.

169 INT. MILLAIS' KITCHEN -- MORNING

Hannah is cleaning the grate. Her face and hands are black. A quiet knock at the kitchen door reveals Munby agitated.

MUNBY
Hannah, do you know what this is?

HANNAH
Is it a marriage licence Massa?

MUNBY
Made out in both our names.

Takes her in his arms.

MUNBY (CONT'D)
Eighteen years together. Will we be married Hannah?

HANNAH
If no one but ourselves knows. And I hope that neither of us will be sorry for it.

170 INT THE HEAVENS -- LATER

Anu and Ea are playing the game. Inanna appears and picks up a piece.

ANU
The bull of Heaven?
ENLIL
Seven years of drought.

ANU
Have you saved enough grain for
the city, and grass for the cattle?

Inanna places the piece on the board.

171 EXT THE GATES OF URUK EVENING

WE SEE THE GATES BROKEN OPEN BY THE BULL OF HEAVEN.
It is the dream that Gilgamesh had in the forest.

A CRACK IN THE EARTH OPENS BENEATH THE FEET OF ENKIDU, BUT
HE STEPS ASIDE.

Gilgamesh comes out of the palace.

GILGAMESH
Inanna!

Gilgamesh and Enkidu fight the bull.

ENKIDU
Seize the horns!

Enkidu kills the Bull.

Gilgamesh cuts off the horns and throws them at Inanna's
temple.

Sin Lequi is terrified.

The Counsellors gather.

172 INT THE PALACE NIGHT

A feast is held in the palace - the horns are displayed as
a trophy.

The guests are uneasy.

But Gilgamesh and Enkidu are enjoying themselves.

Sin Lequi rises to withdraw.

GILGAMESH
Sin Lequi it's too early to go to bed.
Sin Lequi accepts the cup of wine and sits.

173 INT GAMES ROOM, PALACE — NIGHT

All are sleeping except Enkidu.

Enkidu idly picks up a piece from the game.

AND SEES THE GAME OF THE HEAVENS.

CUT TO

THE HEAVENS

INANNA
He killed Humbaba. He killed the Bull of Heaven ...

Inanna reaches for the piece that represents Gilgamesh

ENLIL
It is not his destiny.

Anu smiles and reaches for Enkidu's piece.

INANNA
Enkidu?

Anu takes Enkidu's piece from the board

INANNA (CONT'D)
Enkidu is innocent. He must not die.

ANU
Gilgamesh will learn what it means to lose his brother.

DISOLVE TO

THE GAMES ROOM

Enkidu sits alone in the darkness.

Enheduanna sees him

ENHEDUANNA
Enkidu what's happened?

ENKIDU
I saw ... my fate. I must sit on the threshold of the dead ...
Why did you take me from the wilderness? Once I had everything ...

WE SEE A CREATURE WITH A VAMPIRE FACE. HE HAS LION'S FEET AND TALENS OF AN EAGLE.

He falls on Enkidu.

ENHEDUANNA

Gilgamesh ...

Enheduanna runs to find Gilgamesh.

Enkidu struggles with the creature. He is overcome.

174 INT GAMES ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Enheduanna and Gilgamesh return.

TO SEE ENKIDU FOR A MOMENT IN THE DOORWAY WEARING THE WINGS OF THE DEAD.

Then he is gone, leaving his dead body.

175 INT SAME ROOM. TEN DAYS LATER

Gilgamesh sits beside the decomposing body of Enkidu.

He is playing the game; trying to defeat the gods.

KNOCKING on the door.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (O.S.)

Gilgamesh! It's me! Sin-Lequi_Uninni. Open the doors!

CUT TO OUTSIDE THE DOORS. NINSUN APPEARS.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (CONT'D)

Lady Ninsun. Your son will not open the door. It has been many days ...

THE DOORS OPEN FOR NINSUN.

She goes in and sees Gilgamesh beside Enkidu.

The musician escapes.

Ninsun sits beside the body of Enkidu without acknowledging Gilgamesh.

NINSUN

Dear Enkidu.

(MORE)
NINSUN (CONT'D)
My adopted son who brought the freedom of the plains to your brother Gilgamesh: The people of Uruk mourn for you. They weep and call your name. The paths you trod, from the forest of cedars, mourn for you; the meadows weep; the bear, the hyena, the deer, the lion, the wild bull, the ibex—all the animals of the plain cry out for you ...

Gilgamesh has begun to listen.

NINSUN (CONT'D)
The river Ulaj laments you. The Euphrates and the Tigris and the Habur bewail you. The men of Ur and those who praised your name in Eridu, all mourn for you. The people of Shurrapak mourn for you. Enheduanna, the one who placed food in your mouth, longs for you. The people of Uruk, like brothers they weep for you, like your own brother Gilgamesh loves you, weeps for you, and mourns for you.

Finally his vision clears.

At last he sees that Enkidu lies dead before him.

He begins to weep deeply and totally. Ninsun sits with him.

Yarrim brings attendants who wrap Enkidu's body with linen and take him away.

176 INT THE TEMPLE --MORNING

Funeral for Enkidu presided over by Enheduanna and Sin-Lequi. Enheduanna moves mechanically.

Ninsun supports Gilgamesh who cannot lift his head. Sin-Lequi's wings are closed tightly around her.

Yarrim's head is lowered.
178 EXT THE CITY WALLS —DAY

Gilgamesh is overseeing a bas-relief of gold, depicting Enkidu's deeds. He turns away.

The artist presses a small winged ibex into Gilgamesh's hands. That from the British Museum.

GILGAMESH'S FINGERS CLOSE AROUND IT.

179 EXT ZIGGURAT —EVENING

Gilgamesh is once again alone looking out on the plains.

Now seems much older. Enheduanna comes and stands beside him.

A song about Ziusudra is heard from below.

ENHEDUANNA

The people sing for him, just as they sing for Ziusudra the immortal ...

GILGAMESH

Ziusudra ... the man from Shurrapak The one who conquered death ...

ENHEDUANNA

Gilgamesh ...

GILGAMESH

I must find Ziusudra.

ENHEDUANNA

He is in the island of the immortals.

GILGAMESH

I will search the earth. And the heavens.

180 INT MUSEUM — MORNING

Henry is working. A knock and George enters.

HENRY

George. Come in.

GEORGE

Do you have a few moments?

HENRY

Of course. What is it?
GEORGE
I must go back. To Syria.

HENRY
But there are uprisings throughout ... 

GEORGE
Would the museum fund an expedition?

HENRY
That's not the point. It's not safe. Anyway it would be months before you could obtain a firman from Constantinople in the present ...

GEORGE
Delitzsch has offered to help me publish in Germany. If I wait much longer it will be too late.

HENRY
You must consider Anne and the children.

GEORGE
I'd thought of going straight to Constantinople to save time.

HENRY
If you're sure you won't change your mind ... I'll prepare a letter of introduction to the Ambassador.

George holds out his hand.

GEORGE
Thankyou Henry.

Henry senses that it is their last meeting.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
I'll always be grateful for your assistance.

They shake hands.

181 EXT THE PLAINS --DAWN
Gilgamesh dressed simply has quietly left the city.

AS THE SUN RISES HE GLIMPSES A SOLITARY GAZELLE.

It vanishes in haze.
182 EXT THE PLAINS AND THE MOUNTAIN. DAY

_We see the endless stretch of the plains as Gilgamesh travels towards the sun._

183 EXT CONSTANTINOPLE 1886 -- AFTERNOON

The old city looking inscrutable.

184 INT THE PALACE AT CONSTANTINOPLE -- AFTERNOON

A. _We see George tired and hot making his way up a maze of stairs._

B. _We see George waiting._

C. _We see George again in a series of corridors._

D. _We see George waiting._

185 EXT THE PALACE -- CONTINUOUS

George comes outside dejected.

186 EXT. A STREET. -- LATER

George sees Rassam coming toward him.

**RASSAM**

Smith! How are you? What are you doing here? Why didn't you write that you were coming?

**GEORGE**

I left so quickly. But I've been waiting here a month.

**RASSAM**

What are you doing here?
GEORGE
I want a firman to go back to Nineveh.

RASSAM
Let me buy you a drink.

187 EXT A COFFEE HOUSE NEARBY -- LATER

GEORGE
It seems every door is closed in my face.

RASSAM
To whom have you sent ...?

GEORGE
You mean gifts? To no one.

RASSAM
Then it's no wonder. I'll draw up a list. Let's see, you should start with ...

GEORGE
I have absolutely no intention of anything so dishonourable.

RASSAM
But ...

GEORGE
I'm not giving bribes Rassam.

RASSAM
I see. But it hardly matters - the times are not fortuitous. The roads south of Aleppo are in the hands of bandits. And I hear plague has broken out.

GEORGE
Then it's hopeless?

RASSAM
Let me suggest a different approach. A new site north of Aleppo.

GEORGE
I'm haven't got time for wild goose chases.

RASSAM
I thought we'd been rather successful at that.

(MORE)
RASSAM (CONT'D)
Let me show you the area I've been considering. I've seen a few interesting pieces found in this region.

Gets out maps.

RASSAM (CONT'D)
And I hear some promising ... 

188 EXT THE BALKANS -- MORNING

WE SEE A GROUP OF OTTOMAN MERCENARIES, MAINLY BASHI-BAZOUKS AND CIRCASSIANS.

They ride through the mountains towards Bulgarian villages.

189 EXT THE PLAINS -- LATER

George and Rassam are on horseback.

They stop and survey the landscape.

GEORGE
We've wasted another day ...

Rassam turns his horse.

RASSAM
I need a hot bath and a cold ...

The setting sun begins to cast new shadows over the land.

REVEALING THE CONTOURS OF A BURIED CITY.

GEORGE
Rassam!

190 INT A TENT AT THE NEW SITE. -- MORNING

George and Rassam are examining finds. George is deciphering.

GEORGE
Hittite ... Wright must have been correct!
RASSAM
Carchemish! The city of travellers. Even the Romans found it too useful to destroy!

GEORGE
These battles are mentioned in Egyptian papyrii.

RASSAM
They support previous finds?

GEORGE
Almost. They disagree about who won!

They laugh.

RASSAM
These might make your career!

GEORGE
And yours.

RASSAM
I've had many careers. Did I tell you that I began as a diplomat and spent two years in an Abyssinian prison ...

191 EXT DESERT -- DAY
Gilgamesh is battling thirst in the desert.
Then he remembers the plants that Enkidu showed him. He digs one out of the ground and drinks the juice.

192 EXT OUTSIDE BELGRADE -- LATER
The Bazouks reach the outskirts of the town. Stop to assemble.

193 EXT DARKNESS
Gilgamesh going forward in darkness, using the drum to keep himself moving.

194 EXT. CARCHEMISH DIG -- DAY
George and Rassam are uncovering a wall carving.
They brush away the dirt.

GRADUALLY WE SEE PARTS OF THE SCENE: AN INSTRUMENT, FEET.

It is a carnival of animals. Some are dancing. Others play musical instruments.

George and Rassam look at each other.

195 EXT BELGRADE -- LATER

The Bashis go from house to house slaughtering men, women and children.

Bodies are piled in the streets.

196 EXT ANOTHER VILLAGE -- LATER

The Bashis arrive at the next village.

197 INT DISRAELI'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Various members of the government, and Henry are present.

HENRY
They believed that England would come to their aid ...

DISRAELI
Eliott would have let us know if the matter had been serious. The only newspaper to print the story was the Daily News.

NORTHCOTE
There has been nothing from The Times.

OTHER
Eliott's not known for decisive action.

HENRY
The Bashi-Bazouks are the most savage mercenaries in Asia. I can't believe the Turks didn't mix them with Regular troops.

NORTHCOTE
Gentlemen be calm. You all know how it is in the East.

(MORE)
NORCOTE (CONT'D)
A Consul hears, no doubt truly, that there has been some wild work on the part of the Bashis so he engages someone to go to a coffee house frequented by these ruffians. One present says '5000 or 6000 must have perished innocently' when another answers 'If you had said 25,000 or 26,000 you would have been more correct'.

DISRAELI
But I am not justified to adopt coffee-house babble by an anonymous Bulgarian as proof!

HENRY
Then cable Elliott. We must go to their assistance.

198 EXT. HAWARDEN -- DAY
Gladstone is about to cut down another tree. He is joined by his son.

SON
Something has happened. Mother says you must return to London.

Gladstone puts down his axe and puts on his coat.

199 INT PARLIAMENT -- DAY
Disraeli is on his feet. The house is in uproar.

DISRAELI
With respect to the reports of the terrible atrocities I would still hope that when we become better informed it would be found that the statements are scarcely warranted ... Our ambassador at Constantinople Sir Henry Elliot, is not a man to be insensible to such terrible proceedings. These are not wars carried on by regular troops - in this case not even by irregular troops - but by a sort of posse comitatus of an armed population. Therefore outside England's provinance altogether.

Opposition responds vociferously. Gladstone watches.
DISRAELI (CONT'D)
I cannot doubt that atrocities have been committed in Bulgaria: but that girls were sold into slavery, or that more than 10,000 persons have been imprisoned I doubt. In fact I doubt whether there is prison accommodation for so many, or that torture has been practised on a great scale among an Oriental people who seldom, I believe, resort to torture, but generally terminate their connection with culprits in a more expeditious manner.

Some laughter as Disraeli sits.

DISRAELI (CONT'D)
(to Northcote sitting next to him)
What is there to laugh at?

200 INT GLADSTONE'S STUDY LONDON -- EVENING
Gladstone takes up his pen and writes at white heat.

201 INT LONDON WORKING MAN'S PUB -- EVENING
A man is holding a pamphlet.

MAN
"The Turkish race is the one great anti-human specimen of humanity. The crimes that have been committed would move the indignation of European gaol-birds and South Sea cannibals. Britain and other states should bring about the extinction of the Turkish executive power in Bulgaria.

MAN READING.

ANOTHER MAN
Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner - (MORE)
ANOTHER MAN (CONT'D)
namely by carrying off themselves.
Their Zaptiehs and their Mudirs,

CUT TO A KITCHEN SOMEWHERE IN LONDON.

ANOTHER MAN (CONT'D)
Their Bimbashis and their Yuzbashis,
their Kaimakams and their Pashas,
one and all ...

CUT TO ORIGINAL PUB

MAN
... bag and baggage. Shall I hope,
clear out from the province they
have desolated and profaned!"

Chorus of Hear hears!

202 EXT BIRMINGHAM -- AFTERNOON

Birmingham looking significant.

203 INT PUBLIC MEETING BIRMINGHAM ENGLAND -- EVENING

A large agitated provincial crowd.

SPEAKER
The Turk is the uncontrollable
beast of Europe and ought to be
extirminated as wolves have been
in England, and tigers would be in
India!

Applause from most of the crowd.

Others appalled.

204 INT PUBLIC MEETINGS MONTAGE -- AFTERNOON

A Belfast

SPEAKER
We call upon the government to
insist upon a rigid inquiry into
the barbarities reported!

B. Birmingham
SPEAKER (CONT'D)
If we English people did not speak out upon it the very stones themselves would cry out against these atrocities!

The crowd cheers.

205 EXT THE DIG -- AFTERNOON
Rassam is reading a cable.

RASSAM
Smith! It's no longer safe. We must pack up and go Moshul.

206 EXT A BRIDGE -- EVENING
Gilgamesh crosses a bridge. There is no water under it. Only clouds.

207 INT A CLUB -- EVENING
Henry is dining with Arnold.

ARNOLD
What do you think about Gladstone's pamphlet?

HENRY
I think he'll win the next election.

208 INT. GODWIN'S STUDIO -- MORNING
Godwin is completing Noon Day Rest, putting the finishing touches on the leopard skin.
On which a model is reclining with a fan of peacock feathers.

209 INT RAWLINSON'S HOME -- MORNING
Henry is at breakfast with Louisa. It is raining.

HENRY
Without our presence this slaughter will continue throughout the East.
LOUISA
What is Disraeli doing?

HENRY
He seems to care nothing for the consequences of our negligence ...

210 EXT LONDON ZOO -- DAY

Henry approaches Fahad's cage.

HENRY
Fahad! Fahad!

Fahad is sleeping listlessly in the corner.

HENRY (CONT'D)
Fahad!

He raises his head but does not get up.

KEEPER
I wouldn't put my hand in the cage if I were you Sir. These brutes are savage.

211 EXT A GARDEN WALL -- SUNSET

Gilgamesh comes through a break in the clouds.

WE SEE A WALL WHICH CUTS IN HALF THE SETTING SUN.

The wall is covered with scorpion beings.

They hear his footsteps. Some disappear onto the other side. Others emerge from cracks.

SCORPION MAN
He who comes to us, his body is flesh of gods.

FEMALE SCORPION
Two-thirds of him is a god. One third is human.

SCORPION MAN
Why have you come here? On the Road to the Sun?

GILGAMESH
I must see my ancestor Ziusudra who was given eternal life.
The Scorpions consult with each other.

FEMALE SCORPION
Never has there been a mortal man come this way alive.

GILGAMESH
Open the gate!

SCORPION MAN
Fear not Gilgamesh. In safety may your feet carry you.

The gate swings open into ...

212 EXT STRANGE GARDEN -- CONTINUOUS

Gilgamesh finds a carob tree. He reaches for the fruit.
But the tree is covered with emeralds.
He looks around. Everything in the garden is made out of jewels.
He sinks beneath a tree in despair.
He takes out the drum and the beater and looks at them.

213 INT THE HEAVENS

THE GAME. Gilgamesh's piece is now on the smaller part of the board.

ANU
He is exceptional.

214 INT RASSAM'S HOUSE MOSUL -- EVENING

Rassam is pacing.

RASSAM
Disraeli has replaced Eliot as British ambassador in Constantinople.

GEORGE
Has he sent Henry?

RASSAM
Layard.
GEORGE
Layard. But the man's a ...

RASSAM
Survivor. Always was. Did he ever tell you how we discovered Nimrud?

GEORGE
You were his partner? I'm sorry I didn't know.

RASSAM
I haven't care to publish an account.

Rassam begins to set up a game of chess.

GEORGE
What happened?

RASSAM
The situation was like the present. The Pasha was kept busy struggling to hold his power. He refused to give us permission to excavate. Even with gifts. Layard and I had already begun excavating secretly. The Pasha got wind of it and we were taken to the palace. The rest is more farce than tragedy. I can still see him, with his one eye and one ear telling us that the reason we could not excavate was that the site was a Mohammedan burial ground. His men had imported grave stones in the night.

GEORGE
What did you do?

RASSAM
Waited. Played chess. Then Layard heard a rumour that the Pasha was dying. We ...

GEORGE
Plague?

RASSAM
The palace was closed. We saw a huge crowd gathered in the courtyard. The windows were shrouded. Three days went by. We watched from the walls. The eunuchs gave the death wail. The people were shouting with joy!

(MORE)
RASSAM (CONT'D)
Another foreign Pasha gone. There was singing and dancing when suddenly the doors flew open. And there he stood. With a grin on his evil face. He was I'm afraid very much alive.

GEORGE
What happened?

RASSAM
He gave the order to slaughter them all ...

GEORGE
Layard didn't ...

RASSAM
But he was dead himself soon after. In prison ...
(a beat)
Our discoveries made Layard's career.

A servant enters with a letter.

RASSAM (CONT'D)
It's for you.

George reads the letter.

GEORGE
Some tribesmen have found tablets. The authorities will hold them in Baghdad for a few weeks. After that they're going to Germany.

Rassam studies the game.

RASSAM
Keep to the main roads.

215 EXT TAVERN OF THE GODS -- DAY

Siduri, winemaker, in the garden of the tavern.

She sees a vagabond coming.

She goes inside and closes the lower half of the door as a ragged and desperate Gilgamesh approaches.
Gilgamesh collapses.

Siduri half lifts him and gives him a cup of wine.

Siduri

Only the dead walk here.

Gilgamesh

I am ... looking for ... the island ...

Siduri

You must turn back the way you came.

Gilgamesh

I seek Ziusudra.

Gilgamesh gets to his feet. He is unsteady.

Siduri

Ziusudra is on the other side of the Sea of Death.

Gilgamesh

I have given up everything. I have crossed the wilderness.

Siduri

Only Urshanabi the boatman can cross the waters. Why is there such sadness within you?

Gilgamesh stumbles.

Siduri (CONT'D)

Rest here for a while. Drink this.

Gilgamesh

Am I dreaming again?

Siduri

I am Siduri. (MORE)
SIDURI (CONT'D)
Here are the vineyards of the gods. But you are partly mortal. Why is there such sadness deep within you?

GILGAMESH
I must go ...

SIDURI
You're Gilgamesh ...

GILGAMESH
I have come because Enkidu ...

Gilgamesh begins to weep.

GILGAMESH (CONT'D)
I'm sorry ...

SIDURI
Gilgamesh go back. You cannot cross the Sea of Death. The life that you are seeking you will not find. Let every day be joyful. Let a wife delight in your embrace. Attend to the little one who holds onto your hand ...

GEORGE
I waited but worms devoured him ... I seek eternal life. Ziusudra must help me.

SIDURI
Urshanabi is the boatman. Only he can cross the waters. He has the things of stone. If you reach the waters let him see your face.

216 EXT. VINEYARDS -- AFTERNOON
Gilgamesh travels through the vineyards of the gods until the road enters a forest.

217 EXT FOREST OF SNAKES -- EVENING
Gilgamesh follows a road that goes deeper into the forest. He sees a snake coiled at the side of the path. He passes it on the other side of the path.

Gilgamesh proceeds until again he meets a snake. This one coiled to attack.
He passes it by moving to the other side of the road.

Now the road is dark and quiet. There are more snakes in the trees overhead.

He passes quickly bending, his movements smooth and sinuous.

The snakes are becoming more numerous and the road darker.

Gilgamesh looks ahead and finds that the road is completely blocked with snakes.

He pauses a moment. We see his eyes. Gilgamesh has become a snake.

He slips through the snakes.

Sees waters through the trees.

218 EXT EDGE OF THE SEA OF DEATH -- DAY

STRANGE BONES LIE ON THE EDGE OF THE WATER.

Gilgamesh stands at the end of the road. He drops a piece of bread into the water and sees it destroyed.

He stares into the white glare of the waters and hears a sound.

OUT OF THE GLARE COMES A SILVER BOAT PILOTED BY URSHANABI, CROCODILE MAN.

Gilgamesh stares back along the road he has travelled.

The boat reaches the shore.

GILGAMESH
Urshanabi ...

The Crocodile man looks up

Urshanabi steps out but is careful not to touch the water.

URSHANABI
You're alive.

GILGAMESH
I am seeking Ziusudra.

URSHANABI
He doesn't have visitors.
GILGAMESH
Urshanabi I am Gilgamesh. Help me to finish my journey. Show me the stones ... Urshanabi takes the stones out of the boat.

GILGAMESH SEES A LIST OF NAMES. HE SEES THE NAME OF ENKIDU. He sees his own name beginning to form. Urshanabi tries to stop him but enraged, Gilgamesh breaks the stones.

THE LIGHTS OF HUMBA BA ARE RELEASED. GILGAMESH (CONT'D) I will find my own way.

URSHANABI What have you done?

Ziusudra stunned sits on the shore.

219 EXT SEA OF DEATH -- LATER Urshanabi looks up and sees Gilgamesh cutting down some of the trees. He turns his back.

Gilgamesh lays out poles.

Eventually gets up and begins to help.

220 EXT SEA OF DEATH -- DAY

Gilgamesh and Urshanabi take the boat loaded with poles and push off.

221 EXT SEA OF DEATH -- LATER

GILGAMESH USES THE POLES TO PROPEL THE BOAT. THE WATERS EAT AWAY THE POLES ONE BY ONE. The glare of Shamash is almost intolerable. Gilgamesh at last makes out land. He has only one pole left. Then the pole is eaten by the waters.

Gilgamesh looks for something to make a sail. He collapses.
118.

URSHANABI SPREADS HIS WINGS AND THE BOAT SAILS TOWARD LAND.

222 INT. MUSEUM AT BAGHDAD. -- MORNING

George is working on tablets. He goes from one to the other hoping that he has missed something.

    OFFICIAL
    Are they what you had hoped?

    GEORGE
    I'm afraid not. Thankyou for allowing me to see them.

    OFFICIAL
    Tell Mr Rassam my wife sends her best wishes to the family.

George nods.

223 EXT CLIFFS ABOVE THE TIGRIS -- AFTERNOON

George is on horseback, watching his reflection in the water.

224 INT ZIUSUDRA'S ISLAND -- CONTINUOUS

Gilgamesh is sleeping.

Ziusudra stands in the doorway.

225 INT RASSAM'S HOUSE MOSUL -- NIGHT

Rassam opens a letter and begins reading.

    GEORGE (V.O.)
    I am almost out of funds and this may be my last chance.
    Needless to say I shall avoid all unnecessary risks but I must reach Kuyunjik. Thankyou for all that you ...

LONDON PUTTING DOWN THE SAME LETTER.

Henry remains sitting thoughtfully.
Gilgamesh wakes refreshed. He looks out of the door at the Sea of Death.

He sees a fresh loaf of bread on a table and goes outside eating. He finds Ziusudra in his garden.

ZIUSUDRA
So you have woken.

GILGAMESH
How long have I been here?

ZIUSUDRA
Some days. What is it you have come here to find?

GILGAMESH
My friend is dead. I want to know ... how did you defeat the common fate? How did ...?

ZIUSUDRA
It was the wish of the gods, not I.

GILGAMESH
But can you tell me the secret?

ZIUSUDRA
Listen and decide whether death might have been better.

THEY EAT AT A TABLE LOOKING OUT OVER A STRANGE LANDSCAPE ON THE SHORE OF THE SEA OF DEATH.

ZIUSUDRA (CONT’D)
My wife and I are from Shuruppak ... The city oldest and closest to the gods ... One day I heard Ea say: Man of Shuruppak, build an ark. Abandon riches - seek life. Ea went on: Load the seed of every living thing into your ark Let her breadth and length be equal. Cover it with a roof as the abyss is covered.

DISOLVE TO

SHURUPPAK IN THE PAST.
A YOUNG ZIUSUDRA IS DRAWING UP THE PLANS OF THE ARK.

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
One acre was its whole floor space; ten dozen cubits the height of each wall! I gave it six decks and divided it into nine parts.

THE ARK IS BEING BUILT WITH THE HELP OF MANY CRAFTSMEN WHO REGARD THE JOB AS THE WORK OF A MADMAN.

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I poured 24,000 gallons of bitumen into the kiln -- on the seventh day, the ark was completed ... I made all my kin and family go onto the boat.

THE FAMILY ENTERS THE ARK, CARRYING THEIR FAVOURITE POSSESSIONS.

Two of the younger children smuggle friends aboard. Sin Lequi is supervising.

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
All I had of gold and silver I loaded. The animals of the fields; wild beasts of the plains; the children of the craftsmen. Then Puzur Amurn caulked the boat, and I gave him my palace and all my goods.

227 EXT RIVER AND THE PLAINS -- MORNING

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.)
At first it was quiet. We waited as something of dawn appeared, and a black cloud rose up from the horizon ...

WE SEE STRANGE CLOUDS ON THE HORIZEN.

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Then Adad, the thunder god roared. Within the clouds came - Nabu, the god of despoilment. Sharru the god of submission rushed before it, moving the heralds over mountains and land.
LIGHTNING

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The Annanaki lifted their torches; the land glowed in their terrifying brightness. The confusion of Adad swept the heavens, turning all that was light to darkness.

STORM OVER WATER

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The wide land was smashed like pot.

(a beat)
For one day the south wind blew. Imdugud, now had his revenge. Rain and wind gathered speed, storms submerged the mountains; like a war, it swept over everything.

(a beat)

PEOPLE DROWNING

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Brother could not see brother; The gods themselves were terrified by the flood, curled up like dogs at Anu's door. Even the Annanaki wept.

(A beat)
Six days and seven nights the wind shrieked, the storm flood rolled through the land.

228 INT THE ARK -- MORNING

ZIUSUDRA OPENS A WINDOW.

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.)
On the seventh day, there was silence. I opened the window and light fell on my face. But all of humanity was turned to clay.

ZIUSUDRA WEEPS.

229 EXT A MOUNTAIN TOP PROTRUDING FROM WATER.
THE EARTH IS COVERED WITH WATER. A BATTERED ARK LEANS LOPSED ON A PROTRUDING PIECE OF EARTH.

ZIUSUDRA (V.O.)
I sent out a dove, but there was no land for it to stand - it returned. I sent out a swallow, it too came back. I sent out my crow ... it saw that the waters had receded; it circled, turned and did not come back. So I sent the other, and offered sacrifice to the gods.

DISSOLVE TO ZIUSUDRA'S GARDEN

ZIUSUDRA (CONT'D)
Enlil was furious: I meant no man to live. Ea spoke then: Instead of bringing on the Flood, let lions rise up and diminish the people. Let the wolf, let famine, let plague, let war ...
(a beat)
Enlil came up to the ark. He placed his hand on us. Now Ziusudra and Alitum are transformed beings like the gods.
(a beat)
They took me far away to live here forever where rivers meet the sea. We live alone. Until you came we have seen no other human being.

ALITUM
No one could assemble the gods for you.

GILGAMESH
Is there no other way?

ALITUM
There is ... a plant - of everlasting life.

GILGAMESH
Where does it grow?

ZIUSUDRA
In the abyss.

Gilgamesh is silent.

ZIUSUDRA (CONT'D)
Urshanabi the waters of death reject you. Show Gilgamesh the way.
URSHANABI
It will be ...

Realizing that he is now free.

URSHANABI (CONT'D)
A great pleasure.

230 EXT TIGRIS RIVER -- MORNING
George is riding fast on the low ground beside the river.
Once again he sees his reflection in the water.

231 INT HUT IN A VILLAGE -- MORNING
George has been sleeping on the floor of a hut. He gets up exhausted and takes a piece of bread out of his pocket. Instead of eating he puts it away and tastes a bowl of yoghurt.
He examines his map and goes outside to his horse.

232 EXT THE PLAINS -- -- EVENING
George is tired as he comes to another poor village.

233 EXT A HUT -- MORNING
George tries to get up but is unwell.
Finally he staggers to his feet.

234 EXT KUYUNJIK -- AFTERNOON
George surveys the incomplete excavation from a nearby hill.
A battle is raging between local tribesmen.
George turns away in despair.
235 EXT THE PLAINS. -- MORNING

George is lying on the ground. His horse is tethered nearby.

His notebook is beside him.

Two men from the village find him.

They place him across his horse.

236 EXT ON THE SHORES OF THE OCEAN -- DAY

GILGAMESH AND URSHANABI STAND ON A NEW SHORE.

They are tired and dirty. They throw themselves into the surf.

237 INT A VILLAGE HOUSE. -- LATER

George ill and delirious.

238 EXT THE OCEAN SHORE -- CONTINUOUS

Urshanabi comes is searching among the rocks

He finds the opening

URSHANABI

Who knows what's there. In the abyss ...

THEY STARE INTO THE DEPTHS.

GILGAMESH TIES STONES TO HIS FEET

URSHANABI (CONT'D)

Have you thought what everlasting life will mean?

GILGAMESH BEGINS TO DECEND.

CUT TO THE FLOOR OF A STRANGE SEA.
SOME ANCIENT FORMS OF SEA LIFE WATCH GILGAMESH DESCEND.

THE PLANT IS GROWING DEEP IN A DARK CREVASS. ITS FRONDS REACH OUT FROM THE OPENING.

Gilgamesh enters and searches for the roots of the plant. He tears out the plant by the roots despite its thorns. The leaves swirl around him as if to swallow him. The thorns tear at him. He is trapped in the fronds and his struggle is seen by indifferent creatures from the depths. Just as he is about to run out of air he cuts the stones from his feet and rises to the surface.

239 EXT THE BEACH -- CONTINUOUS

Urshanabi is waiting anxiously for Gilgamesh to surface. We see first the kelp-like leaves of the plant, then Gilgamesh entangled.

Urshanabi enters the water, drags the plant away from Gilgamesh. Urshanabi helps bring both to the beach.

240 EXT. EXT THE BEACH -- LATER

They examine the plant in wonder.

URSHANABI

Do you ...?

Gilgamesh shakes his head.

241 INT A VILLAGE HUT -- AFTERNOON

George is lying ill. Rassam appears with food.

RASSAM

It's a chicken. You've become ill through eating nothing.

GEORGE

Rassam. When did you ...?

RASSAM

I received word two days ago.
GEORGE
... I'll soon be ...

RASSAM
You're coming back with me to the Consulate.

242 EXT BANK OF A FOREST POOL -- NIGHT

Gilgamesh and Urshanabi have lit a fire and Gilgamesh is cooking. A weight has finally been lifted from him.

GILGAMESH
The old will be made young. You and I will return to our youth. Then I will find Enkidu and bring him back.

URSHANABI
The plant of Openings.

CLOSE UP OF THE PLANT SPREAD OUT BESIDE THEM. ITS WHITE FLOWERS LIKE GREAT WATERLILLYES BEGIN TO OPEN AS THE MOON RISES.

URSHANABI (CONT'D)
Eternal life - what they will do with it?

GILGAMESH
There will be no grief to break their hearts and made them old before their time. Your kind lives so long. You cannot understand ...

A RIPPLE ON THE WATER.

URSHANABI
(Nods) One day I understood that I had became the ferryman. I don't mind giving up that kind of immortality.

UNNOTICED, A HUGE SNAKE APPROACHES. ATTRACTED BY THE SCENT OF THE FLOWERS.

GILGAMESH
What strange things have you seen Urshanabi?
URSHANABI

Nothing strange. Just the dead.
Some by plague; Some by another's
hand and some by their own. Many
who drowned. Some before their
time ... others too long after.
From Uruk, from Shurrapak, from Ur
and Nippur ... From lands far beyond
the two rivers -Egyptians, Hittites,
Chaldeans .... more. All weeping.

GILGAMESH
And .. Enkidu?

URSHANABI
Not him.
(laughs)
He steered the boat. The Annanaki
bowed to him when he ...

THE SNAKE SUDDENLY SEIZES THE PLANT AND DRAGS IT INTO THE
DEPTHS OF THE POOL.

Urshanabi follows it immediately but the snake has
disappeared. Gilgamesh and Urshanabi dive for the snake.

They dive several times in a frenzy.

THEN FINALLY WAIT ON THE BANK FOR THE WATERS TO STILL,
HOPING TO SEE WHERE THE SNAKE HAS TAKEN THE PLANT.

GILGAMESH
(In despair) It's gone! It has
all been for nothing.

THEY SEE WHAT THEY THINK IS THE SNAKE. URSHANABI SEIZES
IT.

URSHANABI
It's skin. The snake is immortal.

GILGAMESH
I have failed my people. And
Enkidu.

THEY STARE INTO THE WATERS OF THE POOL.

THEY SEE THE MOON REFLECTED LIKE ONE OF THE PLANT'S GREAT
FLOWERS

THE SURFACE BECOMES DISTORTED BY WIND.
WHEN IT IS STILL GILGAMESH SEES THE REFLECTION OF A WINGED ENKIDU STANDING BEHIND HIM.

ENKIDU
Do not turn around Gilgamesh.

GILGAMESH
Enkidu? ...

ENKIDU
Ereshkigal has released me to bring you comfort.

GILGAMESH
You died instead of me.

ENKIDU
There was nothing you could do. You have wept enough. Leave your grief with the plant. Care for your people.

GILGAMESH
I sacrificed you so that my deeds would be carved on stone.

ENKIDU
Your name will endure as long as there are children born to your house ...

GILGAMESH
But I failed ... in everything ...

ENKIDU
You will be remembered as one who loved his friend.

ENKIDU THROWS A PEBBLE INTO THE WATER.

ENKIDU (CONT'D)
Look ...

GILGAMESH SEES THE RIPPLES RECEDE TO REVEAL THE GAME OF THE GODS.

HE TAKES HIS KNIFE AND PLUNGES IT INTO THE BOARD.

AS THE IMAGE ON THE WATER STARTS TO BREAK UP A CRACK APPEARS ON THE BOARD. IT SPREADS AND BREAKS THE BOARD IN TWO. THE WATERS ARE IN TURMOIL.

WHEN THEY BECOME CALM ENKIDU HAS GONE. GILGAMESH TURNS AND SEES URSHANABI.
243 INT A CAVE -- ONE THOUSAND YEARS LATER

URSHANABI
If only I had seen the snake, Sin Lequi ...

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
What happened then?

244 EXT THE PLAINS -- EVENING

Gilgamesh and Urshanabi turn away from the pool. Downcast they hear MUSIC.

They come to a clearing and see the carnival of the animals. Animals are dancing in the twilight. A gazelle PLAYS the double pipes.

Urshanbi and Gilgamesh begin dancing quietly on the edge of the group. They dance faster and their spirits lift. The music goes on.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI (V.O.)
Urshanabi ...

CUT BACK TO THE CAVE

URSHANABI
It was the strangest thing. But what is it? Sin Lequi what's the matter?

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
The plague ... has ... touched me ...

URSHANABI
I will get ...

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
I am glad that I will not see what he does to Uruk.

URSHANABI
You ...

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
When he took Babylon he left no one alive. He diverted the river to wipe away all traces of the city.
URSHANABI

(Nods)
He carried the earth itself to
his own place ... all those miles
and flung it to the winds.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
How could the gods aid such a one?

URSHANABI
They aid him no longer. His own
sons have murdered him.

Gives Sin Lequi a bowl of herbs.

URSHANABI (CONT'D)
You must rest now.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
Will you finish it for me Urshanabi?

URSHANABI
What?

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
... my story of Gilgamesh?

URSHANABI
I would not know what words to
use.

SIN LEQUI UNINNI
The word are not important. I
have gathered many stories about
him. Take what you need. There
is a Babylonian tale that tells of
his death ... an old man loved by
his people. It's quite good ...

URSHANABI
(Contemptuous) That's not how his
story should end ...
SKENE
James Skene, British Consul. At Aleppo. I take it you're the Consul here? Hormuzd Rassam?

RASSAM
That's right. Come in.

They shake hands.

SKENE
I came as soon as I heard Mr Smith was ill. How is he?

RASSAM
Very weak. He seems to have contracted a virulent form of fever ...

SKENE
Can you get him ready to travel? I want to take him with me.

RASSAM
But he's receiving the best treatment we can give him. The doctor has just left.

SKENE
My wife will care for him herself. Sir Henry Rawlinson is an old friend of mine. I'd never forgive myself if I felt I hadn't done all I could.

RASSAM
But ...

SKENE
We appreciate all that you have done for him but there are times when an Englishman needs ...

RASSAM
I'll inform the driver.

247 EXT LONDON STREET — EVENING

Henry is crossing the road.

GEORGE (V.O.)

Henry!

Henry looks but sees no-one.

GEORGE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Henry! Henry!
248 INT HENRY'S STUDY -- LATER

Henry checks the time and makes a note in his diary.

Suddenly he finds himself weeping.

249 EXT THE CITY -- DAY

Gilgamesh and Urshanabi enter the city. They are welcomed warmly by the people.

Ninsun embraces Gilgamesh and greets Urshanabi. Enheduanna is beside her.

Sin Lequi leads the way.

250 INT HENRY'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Henry is opening his mail. He picks up a letter with foreign stamps.

He reads it and puts it down without speaking.

LOUISA
Henry, what's the matter?

HENRY
George Smith is dead!

Henry looks up.

HENRY (CONT'D)
He died on the night I heard him call ... The 19th of September at 6 o'clock ...

And sees Louisa as if for the first time.

Louisa is in shadow.

HENRY (CONT'D)
I must go

Henry looks through the French doors towards the garden where Sennacherib is bayoneting a tree. Watched by his delighted younger brother.

HENRY (CONT'D)
And see Anne ...
Gilgamesh stands looking out on the city which is beautiful in the evening light. He holds a lion cub in his arms.

HE SEES SIN LEQUI IN THE COURTYARD TEACHING CHILDREN TO WRITE.

Her wings enclose them as they struggle to copy a tablet onto their wax boards.

HE SEES THE FINAL STONE BEING PLACED IN THE WALLS TO ENCLOSE THE CITY.

Inanna stands in the doorway.

THE LAST RAYS OF THE SUN CATCH THE BAS RELIEF OF THE EYE OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE WALLS. IT GLOWS BRIEFLY AS DARKNESS DECENDS.

Gilgamesh hears the sound of the herd on the plains.

252 INT THE CAVE

Sin Lequi is dead. Urshanabi picks up the stylus and holds it awkwardly:

HE LOOKS OUT OVER THE RUINED CITY, OVER THE DESERT FAR INTO THE FUTURE.

A. HE SEES HENRY COMFORTED BY LOUISA.

B. WORLD WAR I SOLDIERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, BEING LED INTO BATTLE BY A GROWN-UP SENNACHERIB RAWLINSON

C. ARMENIANS CHAINED TOGETHER FALLING INTO A RAVINE

D. TANKS FROM THE GULF WAR

E. REFUGEES FROM KOSOVO FILING DOWN A HILL...

HE WRITES ANGRILY:

URSHANABI
Look thou about thee and see

DISSOLVE TO GEORGE'S PEN WRITING:

GEORGE (V.O.)
That all men are fools...

Fade out.