

# Perfidious Albion

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MA Writing

2007

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I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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## Acknowledgements

Huge thanks to Gillian Leahy for her essential support, and to my other supervisors, Debra Adelaide, Anne Brooksbank, and Margot Nash.

Special thanks to Rilka Oakley for making all kinds of sacrifices.

Anna Chevalier, Julie Chevalier, Barrie Fraser, Stephen Gapps, Paula Hamilton, Piers Hammick, Una Hammick, Lisa Jenkins, Susan Kerrigan, Adrian Read, Juleigh Slater.

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## Abstract

The thesis, *Perfidious Albion*, is a feature length film script. Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet arrived off the coast of New South Wales late in January 1788. *Perfidious Albion* is a contemporary interpretation of the story of Arthur Phillip's struggle to establish the penal colony. The story starts as the fleet stands off Botany Bay, and continues through the discovery that Botany Bay is not suitable, the discovery of Sydney Harbour and Camp Cove, the arrival of the French, the establishment of the tent town at Camp Cove. The story reaches its climax at the unloading of the women and the ensuing storm and the orgy/rape. It concludes in Phillip's speech to his hungover population the following morning.

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1. EXT SOUTHERNMOST EAST COAST AUSTRALIA DAY 2

From a great distance a fleet of eleven eighteenth-century wooden sailing ships is coming up the coast towards us.

On board crowds of tiny figures scurry about, tending to the many, many sails.

From a distance you can see that there are no two ships in the fleet that match. Each ship seems built for a purpose, but none of those purposes is the same.

They are spread out in a straggling line. It all looks disorganised and a bit sad. The ships wallow and struggle through the water.

In voice-over a woman, HELEN, mature, dry, pontifical, a little scary, narrates.

HELEN V/O

In seventeen-eighty-seven the British government sent a thousand of their unwanted to establish a penal colony in New South Wales.

You can almost see her looking over her glasses to ensure that you are attending.

We move in at speed to see more. The fleet goes into fast forward and rockets towards us. The rocketing takes a jerky moment to get started.

HELEN V/O (CONT'D)

Things haven't changed much since then.

2. EXT SYDNEY HARBOUR DAY

Sydney Harbour, Boxing Day, one p.m. Thousands of boats pincushion the harbour. The Sydney to Hobart fleet are lined up to start, the gun goes off, they zip into fast forward, the yachts race down the east coast. In contrast to the other fleet these boats are smooth and fast and full of purpose.

HELEN V/O

The eleven ships contained convicts, marines and a man with a utopian plan. They arrived off the coast of Australia nine months into a journey that has been described as the eighteenth century equivalent of a manned flight to the moon.

Halfway down the coast the racing yachts cross paths with the north travelling fleet.

HELEN V/O (CONT'D)

That description isn't quite accurate, Europeans had been washing up on Australian beaches for more than a hundred years, and they were only the most recent visitors.

The two groups of ships mingle. Still in fast forward we turn around and follow those travelling north.

HELEN V/O (CONT'D)

What the trip to the moon comment does describe is the isolation. It's hard to imagine today, only a mobile phone call away from the world. In seventeen-eighty-eight the closest communication was months away and the possibility of a another fleet months after that.

The fleet breaks into two groups, six ships sail ahead. At first they make a solid lead, but gradually the following ships catch up. By the time the ships are nearing Sydney there's almost nothing between them.

HELEN V/O (CONT'D)

The government in England had to choose a leader capable of maintaining the rule of law in isolation. They chose a

retired Navy man, Arthur Phillip, a steady, reliable, practical man. The last thing you want that far from civilisation is a surprise.

We move in on the lead ship, SUPPLY, everything on board is thoroughly scrubbed, but there's a fuzziness to everything, that is maybe a result of the scrubbing.

HELEN V/O (CONT'D)

Arthur Phillip was planning something considerably different to what the government back home expected.

Closer still, up by the wheel there is a man. He's tall, he's in his prime, and has the long face of a rosy-cheeked Paul Keating. ARTHUR PHILLIP is looking through a telescope and comparing what he sees to something in the book resting in front of him.

HELEN V/O (CONT'D)

The stories mingle until they are neither the past, nor the present.

The six front-runners stand at anchor off Botany Bay.

3. EXT HELM, SUPPLY, OUTSIDE BOTANY BAY DAY

The ship is rocking under a heavy swell.

Phillip is not as happy at his first sight of his landing place as he should be.

At Phillip's side, WATKIN TENCH, twenties, perennial tourist, slouches at attention. Tench is flipping through a well-thumbed book.

The opening of Botany Bay is revealed with the rise and fall of the ship. The land is low and flat, all sand and mangroves. No rolling green hills, no rich brown soil, and it's the wrong colour. Phillip is expecting that rich grassy green that cows like, not this dun, flat, ochre.

They are both struck at how uninviting it looks.

TENCH

Maybe it will look better when  
we get closer.

Phillip is still optimistic.

PHILLIP

Hope so.

Tench spies figures on a beach and in canoes. He points  
them out.

TENCH

Oh, excellent, there are  
people, look. This will be  
fun.

To the officer of the watch.

PHILLIP

Station a high watch, see  
where they go.

WATCH OFFICER  
(yells out)

High watch.

One of the sailors runs for the mast and starts climbing.

PHILLIP

Guess we won't be getting in  
today.

Phillip heads for the steps.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Call me if the wind changes.

4.      EXT                      OUTSIDE BOTANY BAY                      NIGHT

Waves crash against the hulls, from high above we can see  
the masts arcing from side to side, it isn't a calm night  
at sea. The fleet is out of sight of land and each ship  
stands at a healthy distance from its neighbour.



5. EXT DECK, SUPPLY

MORNING

Phillip comes up onto deck for the first optimistic look of the day. The sun has only just risen and it is already busy on deck.

Convicts are being exercised in circuits around the ship. Marines in uniform are making work supervising them.

Over by the water butt the leader of the marines, MAJOR ROSS, almost fifty, almost universally disliked by everyone except his men, is leaning, idling, supervising his men exercising the convicts.

Sailors are busy - cleaning, coiling rope, polishing brass, sewing sails, changing sails. Lots of busywork being a sailor.

Over at the pig pen a fella is mucking out.

Everything is bustling and jolly. Phillip is the only person not busy at something and in company on the deck. He scans from one group to the next. There is a whistle for the change of watch and Phillip heads over to inspect.

6. EXT HELM, SUPPLY. OUTSIDE BOTANY BAY DAY

One fella is at the helm while three others stand behind him, just out of sight making a leisurely change of watch.

The three officers are eating Sandwiches (all the most modern fare and ideas for this expedition) and drinking something warm from tin mugs.

The fella at the helm can't leave and can't eat yet, so the officers are taunting him. They're noisily slurping at their drinks the moment he turns away from them, and banging their mugs together. Irritating, but good-natured fun.

It's driving the helmsman mad.

Phillip comes to the helm and the pranks stop abruptly. The officers are suitably chastened, like a bunch of schoolboys. The helmsman throws him a grateful glance.

PHILLIP

We going in?

## OFFICER 1

Couple of hours yet.

Phillip is glad to hear good news.

The younger man offers Phillip a chance for something more.

Phillip is about to say something, but he's always burdened with his leadership.

Phillip turns away and surveys all before him. From behind there's another clinking of cups. Cheeky buggers, Phillip isn't going to keep them from their fun. He heads for the pigpen with a bit of a smile.

7.      EXT              DECK, SUPPLY                      DAY

A convict, JOHN MCENTIRE, charming, capable, con artist, is shifting pig shit into buckets. He wears the same clothes as the convicts, but his are in much better shape, and he is not manacled. It is difficult to tell whether he is a convict or a free man. He affectionately nudges a pig out of the way.

Phillip walks down the deck in a bubble of silence. The pigpen is a long walk from the helm.

McEntire senses the change in the people around him and looks up to see Phillip. He's got a huge welcoming smile for Phillip and he's the only person that's looked Phillip in the eye and seen the man.

Of course it's a liberty that Phillip has allowed, but he still lights up when he catches McEntire's eye.

Phillip leans on the pen and sips from his mug.

When the bucket is full McEntire carries it stinking across the deck, followed by the protests of the exercising convicts, and dumps it overboard. He drops the bucket off the end of some twine and heaves it back up full of seawater and back to the pigpen.

It's a comfortable silence.

It is the brightest moment of Phillip's day.

8.      EXT              PIGPEN, SUPPLY                      DAY

Phillip leans on the pigpen and watches McEntire at work.

PHILLIP

Y'know, McEntire, there will be a quarter acre block for every free man.

McEntire has heard this all before.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

There'll be a space for a kitchen garden, and perhaps a sty for one of these fine fellows. The larger roads will be wide enough for two carriages abreast in each direction and the smallest road will still allow two carriages to pass without slowing. I will have none of those perilous dark alleyways that are such favourite spots of mischief for your manacled friends.

But he's willing to put up with a lot of boredom to get ahead.

Phillip can go on about this stuff all day.

And does.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

John, have I told you about my plans for the sewerage? Hand me that switch.

Phillip draws busily in the muck in the pigpen.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Now if you take these for the roads, you can see that they look mightily like the tributaries of a river. Imagine, each man having his own house to keep his family. When our city of Albion is complete there will be barely need for a man to work.

MCENTIRE

You know this will never work.

PHILLIP

I will not have you say that.  
I will make it work.

MCENTIRE

Look around you, my lord. Do  
you really think you can mould  
utopia out of such base clay  
as this?

McEntire gestures not only to the shambling convicts, but  
also to the pranks of the officers.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

It's going to be a bloody  
disaster.

He gives Phillip a jolly clout on the shoulder, and looks  
around to make sure that everyone is watching.

9.      EXT                      WATER BUTT, SUPPLY                      DAY

Phillip isn't invisible. His transgression of class lines  
isn't unnoticed. They wait to see how far Phillip will  
take his enthusiasm for this pigpen convict.

MAJOR ROSS and one of his toadying Marines observe  
Phillip.

MARINE 1

Governor loves his pigs, seems  
like he visits them every  
morning.

ROSS

Pig's arse, mate.

They both think that's hilarious.

10.      EXT                      PIGPEN, SUPPLY                      DAY

McEntire continues with his pig slopping. He has to wait,  
on his way to refill his bucket, as a row of convicts,

chained in a line, stagger past. A convict in the line speaks up.

CONVICT 1

Sir.

McEntire is surprised and pleased.

CONVICT 1 (CONT'D)

If you'd like anything, sir.  
Anything at all.

McEntire's got a long list of things he'd like.

The convict is suddenly pulled out of frame as his string of fellow convicts continue around the deck.

They're not moving fast enough for McEntire.

McEntire drops the bucket, whips out a belaying pin and whacks it down on a passing convict's arm, then a great whack to the thigh, enough to bring him down to the deck, covering him with pigshit, and leaving him limping for a week.

Two officers notice the commotion.

OFFICER 2

Right, who's for it?

McEntire turns, and the officer recognises Phillip's favourite.

The officer doesn't care, he'll go him and bugger the consequences of getting into a fight with Phillip's favourite.

OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)

Bugger it, he's just a  
convict.

Officer 2 lunges for McEntire. Officer 1 holds him back.

Phillip notices the commotion.

It all seems under control so he turns back to checking the night's log.



McEntire gives Officer 2 one cold look that cuts him to the core. It's enough to stop him in his tracks.

Phillip's whippet has scampered over to check out the excitement. McEntire gives it a swift kick, it goes sliding across the deck whimpering and whining and fetches up against the back of Phillip's legs.

Phillip turns, and bends, and picks the dog up. It's a whippet, so he's not surprised at its behaviour.

Ross has noticed all of this from the water butt and is watching with interest to see how Phillip will deal with this.

Phillip comes over to see what the trouble is.

He looks to the nearest officer.

PHILLIP

Do we have a problem here?

OFFICER 3

No sir. No problem here. A man fell.

PHILLIP

Make sure the surgeon sees him.

Phillip knows that McEntire has been up to something.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(with a bit of steel)

Back to your pigs, McEntire.

McEntire resists for a moment, but Phillip is king of this castle.

McEntire takes his bucket and heads back to work.

Ross is shaking his head. He can't believe that Phillip has just let McEntire get away with it. If Ross were in Phillip's place it would have ended a whole different way.

Officer 2 is in the same spot glaring at McEntire's back.

## OFFICER 2

That man's going to have a  
nasty accident one day.

11. INT CAPTAIN'S CABIN DAY

The floor is several inches deep in water that sloshes about Phillip's feet. A large sodden pair of boots stand slumped over next to the high block of wood on which he rests his feet.

He's writing a difficult letter. It's late in the afternoon, hard light bursts in through the windows, coloured by storm clouds.

He crumples the paper and throws it across the cabin. It bounces off the hull and into a overflowing wastebasket. Phillip has a moment of minor triumph.

Around the wastebasket are a small flotilla of crumpled paper, which sail from one side of the cabin to the other.

He picks up the pen, salvages the inkpot as it slides downhill, and takes to the paper with vigour.

A short time later a midshipman, MIDDIE, an undersized boy, no more than twelve, pokes his head around the door.

MIDDIE

Dinner, sir.

The boy bends over and fishes the wads of paper out of the water.

MIDDIE (CONT'D)

Having trouble, sir?

Phillip looks up from the final touches of the letter. He signs it with a flourish - Arthur Phillip. Swiftly he folds the letter in on itself so that it forms its own envelope, sets sealing wax to candle and has a pool of wax ready for the seal. He whacks down the seal with an exuberant thump and sends globbets of wax flying about.

PHILLIP

(rueful, not pissed)

Ooh. Oww.

MIDDIE

For the mail bag?

Phillip boomerangs the envelope sailing across the room.  
The boy fields it into the mailbag hanging on the wall.

PHILLIP

Champion.

It's obvious that the boy thinks Phillip is the greatest  
man in the world.

MIDDIE

Looks like hard work, sir.

Phillip nods.

MIDDIE (CONT'D)

But it's not like the penny  
post, sir, the letters won't  
be moving from the mail bag  
for months.

PHILLIP

It's a bit of a game. The  
information is fresher if  
reported swiftly.

He pulls on his dress coat.

MIDDIE

You could always open them and  
change it later.

PHILLIP

But then there's always  
regrets, and things written  
that one would like to change.  
Once they are sealed I'm on my  
honour not to return to them.

Phillip makes for the door shepherding the Middie before  
him.



PHILLIP

Come on lad, time for some  
dinner.

12. INT

WARDROOM

NIGHT

The table dominates the room, there is barely enough space around the edges for the chairs to be drawn fully back. Come to think of it, how did a table so large get into a space so small?

Each chair is filled by an officer in threadbare dress-best. Their cuffs are worn ragged, there are salty high tide marks on their backs and at their underarms. Ross is there, as is Tench, the watch officers from the helm are sitting furthest from Phillip.

Phillip settles at the head of the table and waits for silence.

When the chatter settles he rises, inadvertently elbowing a waiter who is trying to edge behind him.

PHILLIP

Gentlemen. Welcome to the  
beginning of the adventure.  
The pleasant weeks in Cape  
Town are behind us; those  
memories must ease the hard  
work ahead.

Phillip looks up expecting some response, nothing. The officers are stony-faced. They're not chatting, but they're not listening either.

The SURVEYOR, older and bearded, prone to anxiety, jumps up from where he's been sitting, head bowed, and raises his cup.

SURVEYOR

Hear, hear.

He looks around and realised that he's the only one standing.

That raises a laugh.

The Surveyor takes his seat with a sheepish look to Phillip.

Phillip is glad of the tension breaker.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

After Captain Cook's stirring descriptions of Tahiti I'm sure that some of you had hopes to make it a port of call. One might dream that such dusky beauties grace the shores of this southern land.

Phillip was hoping for a laugh from this poor joke.

All he gets is leers from a few desperates.

That isn't what he meant.

Phillip singles those officers out and gives them a stern look.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I would that you consider your actions carefully in this and all matters of congress with the natives and for that matter, with the convicts.

Several of the officers sitting right at the far end of the table are horribly bored with Phillip's speechifying. Hands of cards appear from pockets.

One officer pulls his from under his belt.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

We are outnumbered many-to-one and I remind you that the memory of the lash lasts longer than the time it takes for the wounds to heal.

Ross doesn't hold with this soft crap.

Another officer produces a pair of dice and skittles them across the tablecloth. A complicated game continues, hands are laid down blind and the dice are thrown to establish the size of the bet. Large stacks of money change hands quickly.

## PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I fear we are not as well prepared for this endeavour as I would like. To combat this we must use our wits and our deeds to make up for what we lack.

Phillip notices the cardplay and bangs sharply on the table.

The boys have been caught out. The cards are off the table and an attentive silence reigns for a moment.

## PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Consider what kind of country we are about to create.

Phillip is gazing off into the future.

## PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Things will be different in this Antipodean Albion. We will make a better Britain, struck new. We shall mould a new empire and call it Albion to reflect only the best of the old country and our ambitions for the new.

Tench is liking it, as are a couple of others. Phillip is not completely alone in this.

Phillip realises that he might just have been ranting a little bit.

## PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I am sure you have heard enough of my reform enthusiasm, so shall we raise a toast.

The Surveyor is on his feet first and toasts loudest.

Glasses are raised around the table.

## PHILLIP (CONT'D)

To Albion.

## OFFICERS

Albion.

Phillip sits down.

As soon as Phillip looks away the first officer slides his cards from under his plate and tips his neighbour a wink.

13. EXT DECK, SUPPLY DAY

Phillip is waiting for the boat to be ready. He's so wound up that he can't concentrate on anything for more than a second.

A marine draws Phillip's attention to the ready launch.

MARINE 2

Sir?

PHILLIP

Excellently done.

McEntire is loitering about. He's just itching to be included.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

John McEntire.

MCENTIRE

Yes, sir.

PHILLIP

Come on man, come on, are you ready? I need a practical man to survey the local wildlife.

McEntire revels in the special attention.

14. EXT DECK, SUPPLY DAY

One of the chained convicts shuffling around the deck notices Phillip and McEntire. He nudges his companion.

CONVICT 2

Phillip's bumboy.

## CONVICT 3

You reckon? I heard the  
Admiral was setting it to the  
fancy women in Cape Town.

## CONVICT 2

Lucky bastard.

It's hard to tell whether he's talking about sex or  
freedom, but it's obvious he's deeply envious.

15. EXT SIDE OF THE SUPPLY DAY

Phillip, Tench, Ross, and a dozen marines in full grotty  
dress are in a large launch. McEntire is in the middle of  
them. A sailor pushes them off the side of the boat, and  
as soon as they are clear it's in with the oars.

16. EXT BEACH, BOTANY BAY DAY

Fifteen or twenty Aboriginal men, women and children are  
hanging about on the beach.

Some are fishing with spears in the shallows, some are  
collecting cunjevoi from the rocks.

They are also fishing with spears from canoes in the bay.

There is a fire on the beach and several people tend it.  
They take frequent looks to see what the fellas on the  
boat are up to, but keep on with what they're doing.

17. EXT LAUNCH, BOTANY BAY DAY

The launch is bouncing in towards the beach.

Phillip is so wound-up he can barely move. He can't tell  
if it's fear or anticipation of actually getting on with  
it.

Close on nervous faces all round, they don't know whether  
they'll be met by spears or smiles.

One fella's hat comes loose in a gust of wind, he grabs  
it and upends it in his lap. His neighbour leans over and  
chucks breakfast neatly into the crown of the hat.

## MARINE 3

You arse.



The vomiting marine is looking pretty pleased with himself.

MARINE 4

Not again. What is it with you  
and Smith's hat?

Tension breaking laughter all round.

Even McEntire gets a smile. The excitement breaks the barrier between free men and convict.

The marine dips his hat over the side to wash out the vomit. Of course it gets pulled out of his hand.

MARINE 3

My hat.

More laughter, grins all round.

MARINE 5

(to Ross)

Sir, we'll have to go back,  
Smith's uniform is incomplete.

Ross gives him a hard look. There'll be no turning back.

The marines are unrepentant, the mood is lighter.

It's worked on Phillip. He leans over and scoops up a handful of the spray. He's exactly where he wants to be.

18. EXT BEACH, BOTANY BAY DAY

As it becomes apparent that the launch is heading to the beach, the kids form a rowdy crowd, racing up and down working out where the launch will make shore.

Fifty metres out, the sailor at the tiller catches on and swerves the boat from side to side.

The kids respond with screams and giggles, feinting up and down the beach.

Phillip gives the tiller man the look

PHILLIP

Settle.

The sailor remembers he's representing the empire, is chastened by Phillip's rebuke and steers a straight course for the shore.

19. EXT BEACH, BOTANY BAY DAY

The launch is metres from the beach. Damp sailors are thigh deep pulling it onto the beach.

The kids are standing a few metres back up the beach, less sure. A group of men have advanced up the beach to meet the launch.

The sailors pull the launch up onto the beach and the marines pile out.

They're trying to look very official, but the lot of them have a bad case of sea-legs and they stagger about in the shallows like drunks, muskets at the ready.

This breaks the tension and the rest of the Aboriginals come to join the crowd.

The two sailors pull the boat back into the water and spin it around, ready to make a quick getaway. Four sailors sit over the oars, and a couple of marines, still in the boat make a better go of looking militant.

MCENTIRE

They stink.

Up close the Aboriginals have something on their heads. It's attracting flies.

Phillip gives McEntire the shut up look.

The Aboriginals are still having a great old time trying to work out what these guys are.

The marines form up into the best orderly line they can.

Opposite them are the Aboriginals. Standing slightly out in front is a toothily grinning fella wearing a piece of string around his waist. In the broadest Aboriginal English.

GRINNING ABORIGINAL

Funny looking mob this, eh?

The whitefellas have no idea what he's saying.  
Fortunately Tench picks it up quickly.

GRINNING ABORIGINAL (CONT'D)

What you want? we've got sea  
slugs, we got shells. What  
d'you have?

TENCH

They want to know what we  
want.

The Aborigines are getting a bit nervous at the  
staggering silent men in red.

GRINNING ABORIGINAL

What are you mob?

Voices out of the crowd call out.

ABORIGINAL 1

Women.

ABORIGINAL 2  
(spooked)

Ooh, ghost.

ABORIGINAL 3

Of course they're men.

Phillip  
(stiff)

Good afternoon.

GRINNING ABORIGINAL

Women.

Big laugh for this one.

TENCH

And they think we're either  
ghosts or women.



The Aboriginal leader forms breasts with his hands. Then he grabs his penis and gives it a shake. He gestures to Phillip to do the same.

PHILLIP

Ah.

Phillip scans across his men from officers, down through the marines until he reaches McEntire, the bottom of the pecking order.

McEntire knows his number is up. He throws Phillip one agonised glance.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Come along man.

Phillip's look is all apology, but there's nothing he can do about it.

MCENTIRE

Please. No.

The Aboriginals can see exactly what's about to happen and start to raise an excited howl.

PHILLIP

Come along.

McEntire steps up to the front and reluctantly strips. The mob let out a bit of a yell as each item comes off.

The marines join in too.

As he drops his pants and exposes himself they let up a great peal of relieved laughter.

McEntire joins in after everyone when there is nothing else he can do.

He casts Phillip a late, malevolent look. He's promising a harsh revenge.

Phillip has the grace not to laugh until he looks around and sees that it will be impolitic not to.

The Aboriginal man puts his arm around Phillip's shoulder and pulls him towards the fire. Tench is at his other shoulder.

## GRINNING ABORIGINAL

Good tucker up here.

There is something swollen and scary on the fire. Phillip is overcome by the combined stench.

PHILLIP

Tench, I'm going to need the book. Pray there is somewhere else. Somewhere with fresh water.

Phillip takes a moment with McEntire.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

There was nothing I could do.

McEntire doesn't buy that for a minute. He glares at Phillip until Phillip has to look away.

That isn't enough, Phillip can still feel McEntire's glare. He has to walk away from it.

20. EXT LAUNCH, BOTANY BAY DAY

Phillip is sitting next to Tench in the launch. They are moving further into Botany Bay.

PHILLIP

You have an excellent facility with language, sir.

TENCH

There's a whole section on local dialects in the book.

Tench shows off the very dog-eared book.

PHILLIP

That isn't the Cook Book.

TENCH

No, I found that one a little dry, this is a better read.

Phillip won't let the first setback get him down.

The large launch has a strong tailwind up Botany Bay.

From a distance everything looks green and lush, the perfect spot for growing stuff. The mood is jolly and optimistic.

PHILLIP

Keep a sharp eye out for  
water, lads.

They come around a bend and see a great plain of green pasture.

TENCH

Oh sir, this is magnificent.

A huge weight is lifted from Phillip's shoulders.

PHILLIP

Well, let's go in and have a  
look.

As they move closer in it becomes apparent that the pasture isn't quite what they expected, the sea of grass becomes clumps of sedge and the verdant green that looks so comfortingly English from a distance is a mixture of purple, yellow and dun green that is just strange to English eyes.

The mood is still high. The launch comes to the edge of the sedge, the tillerman drives the launch in between two clumps of grass.

TENCH

May I sir?

Phillip gives him the nod, share the fun around.

Tench struggles from his seat in the middle of the launch and makes it to the bow. He takes a manly leap over the side, the first man to set foot in the new settlement, and keeps setting foot, he's up to his knees as soon as he lands. He does the quick step about trying to find solid ground, moving futher away from the launch.

TENCH (CONT'D)

I'm sure it will firm up, sir.

He takes a couple of optimistic steps.

TENCH (CONT'D)

Oh, yes it looks good just a little bit on.

If he stands still he'll sink even further. Eventually he jumps onto a clump of grass and is able to get a firmish footing. From his slight elevation he can see that there is no solid ground in sight.

TENCH (CONT'D)

Perhaps not.

Tench takes a series of ungainly leaps and bounds from one clump of grass to another to make it back to the launch. His good dress pants are drenched with black smelly mud.

Phillip has set all his hope on Botany Bay.

And they have been destroyed.

He has to fight to hide the devastating disappointment from the men.

PHILLIP  
(to himself)

Bloody Cook, such a hero.

Tench throws a leg over the side, the men squirm away from the mud and the stench.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(to the men)

Back to the ship, I've had enough of this.

There are looks of surprise from the men. Botany Bay has been built up for months. They are confused, what happens next?

22. INT PHILLIP'S STATEROOM

26  
NIGHT

Phillip is at his desk writing another letter to Lord Sydney.

On the other side of the table the Middie is sitting working on some maths homework. It's a huge mess, he's doodling in the margin, pushing a pool of ink about with his pen.

PHILLIP V/O

Sir I cannot in good faith  
find this spot suitable to  
carry your name.

Phillip screws it up and tosses it away.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Oh, the temptation to tell  
them what they want to hear.

The Middie looks up, anything for a distraction. Are you talking to me?

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

No, talking to myself.

Phillip pulls out a clean sheet of paper and starts again.

The Middie goes back to his homework.

23. INT PHILLIP'S STATEROOM

NIGHT

Phillip and the officers enter Phillip's workroom. The middie rushes about getting drinks.

PHILLIP

Bring me the book.

MIDDIE

Which book sir?

PHILLIP

The Cook Book.

MIDDIE

You mean Hawkesworth, sir?

PHILLIP

Yes, bloody Hawkesworth, the  
street map to the Pacific, the  
guide to the southern  
continent, the Cook Book.

The middie disappears and staggers back dwarfed under the weight of a huge book, he's leaning backwards to balance the weight. It slams down on the table with a THUMP.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Now find me Port Jackson, lad.

The middie flips through the pages looking and looking, trying skim read all of the locations on each map, he has no idea which one is Port Jackson.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(almost whisper)

Same map as Botany Bay, lad.

The middie is grateful for the hint and instantly flips to the right map. On the map there is a blank space between the south and north heads of Port Jackson. It's labelled Port Jackson, but the Middie was looking for a place not a blank space.

The Middie runs his finger from Botany Bay up to the blank space where Port Jackson isn't.

MIDDIE

Oh, but there's nothing here,  
sir.

PHILLIP

Should be fun, eh? Somewhere  
bloody Cook hasn't been.

24. EXT

SUPPLY, BOTANY BAY

DAY

Sailors straining over the capstan, bringing the anchor up.

Straining at the ropes raising the sails.



Snap, and the wind catches them, and they're off again.

25. EXT

SYDNEY HARBOUR

DAY

The Supply is just outside South Head.

Phillip is standing, nothing to do but watch the men at work and wait and see.

Sailors stand ready at ropes and up the masts, it's like sprinters, poised on the blocks. They're waiting, ready for the last tack before entering the harbour.

From the helm.

WATCH OFFICER  
(shouts out)

And mark.

The sailors burst into action, and make a perfect transition. There's a great clattering and bustle, sails snapping as they pick up the wind, masts and beams creaking, ropes whistling through pulleys.

The ship heels over and slips between the heads.

The sailors are still at their stations again, and the only sound is of the water rushing against the ship and the snapping of sails.

And then they hit that point in between the heads when the wind is cut and everything is still.

Everyone on deck is perfectly still, even the water sounds have died away to almost nothing.

Already there's a glimpse of what's to come inside the harbour, and it's a very different story from Botany Bay.

Phillip can't wait, he presses against the rail to get the best, soonest possible view. He's got a big, joyous, relieved smile on his face.

PHILLIP V/O

My dear Lord Sydney, I have  
the good fortune to report  
that I have found the finest  
harbour in the world, in which  
a thousand sail of the line

may ride in the most perfect security.

The last tack into the harbour has headed them towards Manly. As the cove is revealed, so are a score of canoes bobbing about. Behind them on the beach are fires and more people.

Phillip doesn't want this. He looks to the Watch Officer and indicates for them to tack away from Manly.

The watch officer calls the tack.

WATCH OFFICER

To port.

The sailors do their thing again.

What could be better? Early in the morning, a little foggy, fish jumping out of the water.

26. EXT CAMP COVE DAY

Camp Cove is a small deep bay. The land slopes down to meet the water. A creek runs right down the middle into the bay. The cove is deep enough for the Supply to anchor close to shore. To the east is a point with a huge mound of shells. The next bay along is wider and more shallow.

Phillip watches from the deck and is pleased.

27. EXT SHORE, CAMP COVE DAY

The moment the launch slides into the sand McEntire is out of the boat and into the water. He's out of the boat before the sailors are and high stepping thigh deep in water to get to the sand.

He paces up and down in a small orbit waiting for Phillip to alight from the boat.

Phillip is out, dry, followed by the Middie and Tench, and McEntire is waiting for his attention.

McEntire asks the question with a statement.

MCENTIRE

Back in a bit.

Phillip nods his assent.



PHILLIP

Want anyone with you?

Phillip puts his hand on the Middie's shoulder.

MCENTIRE

Nuh.

The Middie is enormously relieved.

McEntire takes a look at the sun to get his bearings and he's off into the bush as fast as he can walk. He's loving it.

Phillip starts towards the creek.

The Middie considers following Phillip, then looks towards Bennelong Point which looks pretty interesting too.

From above a rancid stream of piss rains down on him. In the tree above a colony of bats start screaming and squabbling.

The Middie refuses to be scared and walks calmly after Phillip.

The whippet jumps out of Phillip's arms and disappears into the bush.

Phillip looks after it.

PHILLIP  
(to himself)

Needs a run.

Phillip whistles for the dog, nothing happens, he isn't worried. He whistles again.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Come on.

28.     EXT                     SUPPLY, CAMP COVE                     DAY

The Supply is standing at anchor quite a way off Camp Cove. Two Aboriginal men come slipping towards it in a canoe, the boat is completely silent. One of them comes right up to the side of the boat and slides right along

it, running his hand along the wooden sides of the boat.  
They use the boat to push off.

29.     EXT                   FARM COVE                   LATER

Phillip and the Middie have moved into Farm Cove. Phillip is pacing along, making notes, nodding and loving it all.

PHILLIP

A cup of tea would be nice, I  
think.

The Middie can see it coming and is longing for the day  
that he can give some back.

Phillip looks to reinforce the order.

The Middie is distracted by something.

MIDDIE

Look sir.

He points out the fire already burning almost at their  
feet.

PHILLIP

Well that was quick work,  
excellent. Now we need  
something to boil water in.

Big sigh.

MIDDIE

Yes. Sir.

Everybody has to do some running. Phillip is enjoying  
winding the Middie up.

PHILLIP

Go on, get away back there.

Phillip calls after him.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

And remember the tea.

Phillip pulls a tape measure out of his pocket and starts pacing out the area, he gathers up some loose sticks and plugs them upright into the ground as corner markers.

Tench appears out of the bush. Behind him are the two Aboriginal men from the canoe. One of them is carrying a bulging bark bag.

TENCH

Hi, I found these blokes down there. They've got these great things, lobsters I guess.

Phillip speaks very slowly and carefully.

PHILLIP

Good afternoon, I am very pleased to meet you.

To one of the Aboriginal men.

TENCH

Here, pass me a couple.

Tench has a crustacean in each hand and is swooping them about above his head, getting a good look at them.

The Middie returns from the launch, loaded down with a bag of waterbag, a billy, a bag of tea. He pulls up when he sees Tench, it takes him a moment to take in the situation. Big breath, not afraid, never afraid, and into it.

PHILLIP

Water, hot water.

30.   EXT                   LOBSTER FIRE, FARM COVE                   LATER

The billy is bubbling away, there are a row of steaming enamel cups.

Tench has taken over the bark bag and is squatting over the fire.

TENCH

Now how do you cook these usually? Any particular herbs that you use?

One Aboriginal man nods yes, the other no, then they reverse it. Then they both start pissing themselves, they have no idea what Tench is going on about.

TENCH (CONT'D)

I'm thinking we should just  
boil a few up and see what  
they taste like. Do you mind?  
Okay, we'll start with just  
enough for one each.

Tench throws in a couple more.

31. EXT LOBSTER FIRE, FARM COVE LATER

Tench flips a lobster out of the pot to each of them and they start the hot lobster dance, tossing them from hand to hand.

32. EXT LOBSTER FIRE, FARM COVE LATER

Covered in lobster juice and shell.

PHILLIP

Good scan, this.

To the Aboriginal men through a mouthful of lobster.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Now over here I'm planning on  
a road wide enough to run two  
carriages each way, each block  
of land will of a generous  
quarter acre. Tench could you?

Tench steps in to interpret.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

We'll need to clear right  
through here.

Phillip leads them away from the fire.

McEntire bursts out of the bush, his mouth is dripping with blood and his shirt is wet through with it. he's carrying something skinned and dead.

MCENTIRE

Found a snack.

The Aboriginal men recoil in horror at the sight of McEntire.

McEntire notices the Aboriginal men. His expression is not friendly.

PHILLIP

What have you got there?

McEntire shows off his catch.

MCENTIRE

Dunno, some little thing.

They look around. The Aboriginal men have disappeared.

PHILLIP

I only turned my back for an instant.

MCENTIRE

Not a trace.

PHILLIP

They're nomads, you know,  
carry their entire lives on  
their back.

McEntire is casting about trying to sniff out where they went.

MCENTIRE

It's like they were never  
here.

Phillip looks out into the harbour and sees the canoe sliding across the harbour already well on the way towards Manly.

33. EXT SYDNEY HARBOUR

35  
DAY

We rise quickly from water level across the hull of the Supply. It's all water, wood and in the background bushland, pure unspoilt eighteenth century.

The Supply is under sail and moving quickly.

Phillip is standing at the stern not wanting to let Camp Cove out of his sight.

As we rise high into the air we can see the Supply heading out of the Harbour, a tiny Phillip at the stern.

Higher still and we see the bush all around. There are a few plumes of smoke from campfires, and off in the distance a great cloud of smoke from a bushfire.

The Supply is tiny leaving the harbour. It is not the only vessel on the water, over by Manly there are crowds of miniscule canoes.

34. EXT SUPPLY, BOTANY BAY

DAY

There's a lookout up the mast.

LOOKOUT

I see a ship.

Two ships are entering Botany Bay.

Phillip is absolutely flabbergasted.

He's so surprised he can barely take a breath.

There is a great moment of silence on deck, everyone is staring, mouth open, goggle-eyed at this unlikely sight.

Phillip recovers first, and a moment later he's on top of the situation.

PHILLIP

Are they ours?

Phillip turns to Tench

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Count the fleet.



Tench counts.

LOOKOUT

Two ships. French.

Tench checks that none of the English fleet have strayed.

TENCH

We're all here.

PHILLIP  
(to lookout)

Are you sure?

The lookout scans the horizon with a telescope and returns to the two French ships and focuses in on one.

LOOKOUT

Astrolabe.

The lookout finds the name on the second ship.

LOOKOUT (CONT'D)

Boussole.

PHILLIP

Anyone know these ships?

Phillip scans the decks for any sign of recognition.

Ross steps up.

ROSS

Sink them, sir.

Phillip is caught out of his stride.

Ross is thinking quick, too and puts his plan forward.

ROSS (CONT'D)

We outnumber them. We're  
probably already at war. We  
sink them both and word will  
never get back.

Phillip gives him a sarcastic look that suggests this is not the answer he is looking for.

Phillip is on the bridge in an instant and is back into it.

To the watch officer.

PHILLIP

I need the signaller up here.  
We need the fleet to make  
ready to leave Botany Bay and  
make for the new harbour, but  
you must wait until I'm on  
board his ship to distract  
him.

Phillip is thinking so fast that the officer can barely keep up.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Send up the truce. I'll take a  
launch and distract them. You  
take the fleet to secure the  
new landing site.

The signaller runs up the white flag.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Maybe the others have gone  
north to the new harbour?

The watch officer is still catching up and confused.

WATCH OFFICER

Others sir?

PHILLIP

Yes, yes, the rest of the  
French fleet. They might be  
after the new landing site.

The watch officer goes, ah.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

That must not happen.

Phillip waves the signaller to him.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(to signaller)

I'm going to need you to  
contact the fleet, send:  
Prepare for immediate  
movement. Tench will provide  
you with further signals.

The signaller nods and runs off.

Through the glass the lookout sees the signaller on the  
Astrolabe running up a white flag.

LOOKOUT

Astrolabe is flying the truce.

PHILLIP  
(to signaller)

Wait. Wait until I'm on the  
Astrolabe before you send the  
message.

TENCH

Sir, you'll be hostage if the  
fleet is not here to protect  
you.

Phillip is juggling so many options he's starting to wind  
himself up.

PHILLIP  
(to signaller)

Exclude the Sirius and the  
Supply from your signals. Pass  
the messages while all eyes  
are on me as I close with  
their ship.

Tench can't get a word in edgeways.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(to Tench)

You can block them if they  
look like following the rest  
of the fleet. No, you'll need

to lead the fleet to the  
landing spot. Wait. Change the  
order. Send the Sirius and the  
Supply. Leave the Fishburn and  
the Alexander. They've got the  
size to dissuade the French if  
they want a fight.

He looks to Ross, just to show he's got it covered.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(to all)

Any questions?

They shake their heads.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(to Tench)

We're clear? You take the  
fleet to the new spot and stop  
any French ships from taking  
it. Do anything that is  
required to achieve this end.

Tench finally gets his word.

TENCH

They're not likely to miss the  
fleet leaving.

Phillip pauses to take a breath.

PHILLIP

No.

And to think back on his plan.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

All we need is enough  
distraction to get a lead on  
them. Let's pray they're only  
two.

Tench nods with him.

Phillip moves quickly to the launch.

35. EXT DECK, SUPPLY

40  
DAY

Phillip is anxiously waiting for a launch to be made ready.

PHILLIP

Is he signalling? Is there another ship?

WATCH OFFICER

Still only the truce sir.

Phillip starts down the ladder.

WATCH OFFICER (CONT'D)

What do we do if he signals, sir?

Phillip pauses halfway down.

PHILLIP

Hope he doesn't. Don't set sail until I'm onboard.

WATCH OFFICER

But if he signals or sets sail?

Phillip has second thoughts and makes to climb back up.

PHILLIP

Fire across him. He can't prevail against us.

The watch officer is not convinced.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Just wait until I get on board. I'll distract him while you sneak away.

Phillip climbs down the rest of the way and the sailors push off.

36. EXT DECK, BOUSSOLE

Phillip and LA PEROUSE, 43, big-headed, boistrous, are standing on deck.

PHILLIP

So, sir, are we at war?

LA PEROUSE

I must ask you the same.

PHILLIP

Well.

There is a long silence.

Phillip is trying to quietly keep La Perouse from looking at the fleet. As soon as La Perouse sees the fleet setting sail he's going to know that something is up.

37. EXT DECK, SUPPLY DAY

The sailors are raising the anchor as quietly as possible, muffling each link of the chain as they come up.

38. EXT DECK, BOUSSOLE DAY

Behind La Perouse, in the distance the first boats of the fleet are manoeuvring towards the heads.

LA PEROUSE

You have quite a fleet with you. What are your plans?

PHILLIP

Oh, this is but part of the fleet. The rest of my ships are exploring.

Phillip takes steps from side to side to keep La Perouse's back to the fleet.

LA PEROUSE

Sir, how do you find this place?



PHILLIP

So far I am deeply  
disappointed. I was led to  
believe this bay would be  
perfect. This is less than the  
truth.

LA PEROUSE

Have you met any of the local  
Indians?

PHILLIP

They are very amiable folk,  
but not the beauties of  
Tahiti.

La Perouse has tumbled to Phillip's game. The physical  
one, but he's not too worried, he trusts his officers to  
warn him of trouble. He's going to go along with  
Phillip's dance.

LA PEROUSE

While this may be a great deal  
of fun, sir, could you tell me  
what you are doing here?

PHILLIP

That is information which I am  
not at liberty to divulge at  
this time.

There is a long moment of silence.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Sir, it is not my intention to  
obfuscate

La Perouse breaks in.

LA PEROUSE

You're rather a long way from  
home. We're a long way from  
home. I doubt that news of  
anything we say or do will  
reach home in time to make a  
difference. Relax, a drink?

Phillip doesn't know what to say. La Perouse seems honest, but there is so much at risk that he can't tell.

PHILLIP

A drink. Yes. Thank you.

It's taking Phillip a while to gather his thoughts.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

May I ask what you are doing here, sir?

LA PEROUSE

Why I follow your Captain Cook, and I follow what you're little colony is up to. We should be no bother, here for a few weeks, then we will be gone.

Well, La Perouse seems to be an honest guy, Phillip is inclined to trust him, he relaxes a little.

La Perouse finally angles himself around to where he can see the fleet.

LA PEROUSE (CONT'D)

Your ships appear to be setting sail.

Phillip knew it had to happen eventually.

PHILLIP

Indeed? Their moorings were bad, they need to be reset.

LA PEROUSE  
(hard question)

Indeed sir?

PHILLIP  
(trying distraction)

How have you found your voyaging?

Phillip is white.

The ships have short-winded each other and are in danger of driving each other onto the north head of Botany Bay.

La Perouse really doesn't know what to make of this. Is it some complex ruse, or is it really an accident? He's not going to let it concern him.

LA PEROUSE

Your ships appear to be in some trouble.

PHILLIP

Sir, I am sure it is merely parallax.

LA PEROUSE

Should we have dinner soon?

Phillip is terribly distracted.

PHILLIP

Perhaps next week, after the dust settles?

LA PEROUSE

Certainly.

39. EXT

MAST, SUPPLY

DAY

There are sailors swarming through the rigging, and in the background there is a similar explosion of action in the ships of the rest of the fleet.

It's like a formula one start, all the ships are bunched up, jockeying for position, trying to get into that turn first.

The men in the other ships appear so close that the sailors of the Supply could almost step across the yards from one ship to the next.

There is a great deal of shouting and turmoil. It is a sharp contrast to the earlier, smooth action of the Supply entering Sydney Harbour. That required almost no more communication than the order for the action.

As the pile up gets worse the ships are so close that with the yawing from one side to another that the yards

come together. Rigging is torn away, sails are torn with great screams.

This only makes the problem worse, the wind lost from the torn sails sends one boat left, one boat right and there is a great scraping as boats slide across each other tearing bits off each other in passing.

40.     EXT                   DECK, BOUSSOLE                   DAY

Phillip can't contain himself any longer. All of his work is going to be destroyed because of poor seamanship.

PHILLIP

Oh what can this be? No, this  
is too much. What kind of  
idiots are these people.

The fleet is lined up to get around the heads and something is going horribly wrong. Even from the great distance of the deck of the Boussole it is obvious that the fleet is on the point of the first traffic jam bingle.

All they can see from the Boussole is ship on top of ship. They form a carpet of ships, one merging into the next. The sounds are horrible, sails are snapping and there are horrible rending wood noises as ship slides against ship.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

No, no, stop you pack of  
idiots, go back. This is  
preposterous, how can I be  
expected to make a nation out  
of these imbeciles. I can't  
leave them for a moment. I  
gave them perfectly clear  
instructions and still they  
mess it up.

Phillip throws his hat on the deck.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I cannot believe this. I've  
babysat this pack of idiots  
for nine months. I leave them  
alone for a minute. I avert my

eyes for the merest moment and  
they destroy everything.

Phillip appeals to La Perouse

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I ask you sir, what would you  
do in my place? All of my  
plans lay awry. Once they have  
all drowned could I perhaps?

Phillip is sure the fleet is lost. He's a bit  
overwrought.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Have you a free berth?

The fleet separates and resolves into nine ships. They  
slide around the heads and disappear.

La Perouse finally has a chance to get a word in  
edgeways.

LA PEROUSE

So, this was all a diversion?  
Very clever Commodore Phillip,  
I was led to expect a duller  
man.

41. EXT SAILING NORTH FROM BOTANY BAY DAY

The fleet is sailing north towards Port Jackson.

On the deck of each ship is a signaller with flags.  
Behind each signaller is an officer.

The messages start out calm, very sedate flag waving,  
then the signaller turns to the officer for instructions.

As the pile up is discussed, tempers become heated, and  
the flag waving becomes more hurried.

The officers lean over the signaller's shoulders, waving  
their arms about, and shouting unheard insults at the  
other captains.

An officer grabs a signaller's arm, interrupting his  
signal, and points him towards a particular ship to make  
his point that much more clear.

This continues up the coast until they all have to separate to make their tacks into Sydney Harbour and need to concentrate on navigation to avoid another pile up.

42. EXT SHORE CAMP COVE DAY

There a stump of a small tree, more a large sapling. Next to it an axe and the stripped branches. Next again a pile of newly turned dirt with the sapling stuck deep in it.

The Middie is clipping the English flag to a rope. He has the honour of raising it.

Hand over hand, the flag's up, and he's tying the rope off.

Phillip is abrupt. This is a bit of symbolism wasted on him.

PHILLIP

Right. Back to the ship.

43. EXT SUPPLY, CAMP COVE LATE A/NOON

Major Ross and some of his men are on deck trading scuttlebutt. Phillip steps out onto deck. There is a chorus from the marines, in a disrespectful, raucous mutter, warning of Phillip's arrival on deck.

MARINE 6

Ducks on the pond.

MARINE 7

Ducks on the pond.

Ross silences his men.

ROSS

Shh.

Ross turns to his closest man and out of the side of his mouth,

ROSS (CONT'D)

Wonder what his nibs wants now?



Ross waits indolently for Phillip to approach, Ross is all kinds of flash in front of his men.

The rest of the crew of the ship know something is up and are paying quiet attention to the action.

PHILLIP

Major Ross, a word about tomorrow.

Ross, all obsequious in his smug way.

ROSS

Yes sir, anything you want, sir.

Ross is almost nudging and winking with his cronies.

Phillip notices and decides it's best to split the bellwether from the herd.

PHILLIP

In my stateroom, if you please.

Heads down, bums up and hard at work while Phillip passes with Ross looking daggers.

44. INT PHILLIP'S STATEROOM, SUPPLY LATE A/NOON

Phillip is behind his desk making the most of the trappings of power to keep Ross in his place.

PHILLIP

I'm anticipating some motivational issues with the convicts in the first few weeks.

ROSS

Lazy sods, nothing a taste of the lash wouldn't cure.

PHILLIP

As a last resort. Major Ross.

There's a moment of tense silence between them.

There's no agreeing to disagree on this issue.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I'd like your marines to  
provide some leadership for  
the convicts while we  
establish the colony.

Ross makes himself comfortable in his chair. Now he knows  
where the conversation is going.

ROSS

My men work to a strict brief,  
sir. What would this  
leadership entail?

PHILLIP

Supervision, keeping them  
focused on the job at hand.  
Provide them with a good  
example. There are alternative  
means of motivation.

ROSS

I don't care what anyone says,  
comrade. My job here is to  
protect the colony.

Phillip hoped that Ross would be more amenable. Phillip  
stands by his words.

PHILLIP

And my job, sir, is to tell  
you who to protect the colony  
from.

Ross is getting wily.

ROSS

Perhaps, sir, we could come to  
an arrangement.

Phillip might negotiate, but he's not giving Ross an  
inch.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Look sir, let me give it to you straight. Give my boys back the rum ration and tell 'em that the dirty French aren't about to invade and maybe we can come to an agreement.

Phillip isn't having a bar of this.

PHILLIP

I think not, Major Ross. You may go.

Ross isn't sure if he's stepped too far over the line.

Phillip is ropeable. Deep breath, there are always other options.

45.     EXT                   SUPPLY, CAMP COVE                   SUNSET

The fleet is moored in Camp Cove. Phillip and the blokes, Ross, Tench, officers, etc. are standing on deck.

Above them in the rigging, and on the other ships in the background, sailors are part way through repairs to the masts from the pile up. They are making things secure and finishing up for the day.

On deck there are great piles of sail spread out for repair, the whole thing is a bit of a mess.

It is one of those burning orange sunsets that sets the landscape on fire, the shadows are still long. The men on deck notice silhouettes slipping from the trees to stand on the shoreline, a line of figures outlined in black.

It's a little bit ominous.

The folks on deck are uneasy, they don't know if it's a threat or just something spooky.

On shore the crowd of figures resolve as a group of Aborigines who hadn't expected to see the ships in front of them.

There's a fair bit of nudging and giggling. The Aborigines find it all quite funny.

The gentlemen on board are even more disturbed by the laughter that carries across the water to them.

46.     EXT                   SHORE, CAMP COVE                   NIGHT

The group of Aborigines are standing on the shoreline observing the fleet at anchor.

GIRL

They don't smell good, Dad.

MAN

I think they make those boats  
out of special bark to keep  
the smell in.

GIRL

Doesn't work.

He addresses the group

MAN

Come on, smell scared the fish  
away.

The group turn and head off into the bush.

MAN

Hate to think what happens to  
the fishing round here once  
they start swimming in it.

Great joke.

47.     EXT                   DECK, SUPPLY, CAMP COVE                   NIGHT

Back on deck, Phillip and the officers are gathered watching the sun go down.

They are startled by a raucous white cloud of sulphur-crested cockatoos exploding out of a tree.

TENCH

The nightbirds have an odd  
call. I doubt you would  
compare it to a nightingale.

48. EXT CAMP COVE

52  
DAY

Bright and early next morning and it's all bustle in the fleet, figures like swarms of ants rushing about, hatches are thrown open, derricks are swung into place, boats lowered, loads transferred.

Three boats make for shore, one with Phillip and the officers.

The second, marines kitted up to invade and occupy.

The third, with pale convicts all weedy, and big-eyed.

49. EXT SHORE, CAMP COVE

DAY

Skip to the boats pulled up on the shore. Again we have our three groups.

Convicts huddled together. Several of them are stretching, they look just like officeworkers warming up for a lunchtime run. This is the first chance in years for some to be more than an arms-length from another convict.

The marines are still martial, not quite yelling out, 'hup, hup, hup,' but they've got all their gear in neat piles, they've formed an orderly line, one fella is about to hand out hatchets and machetes.

ROSS

This'll do. Camp, men.

And Phillip, flanked by the officers and McEntire in the background.

PHILLIP

Major Ross. If you please.

ROSS

(to the marines)

Hold it lads, just got to talk to his nibs.

To Phillip.

ROSS

With you sir.

PHILLIP

Before your boys get settled  
in.

Ross breaks in.

ROSS

Yessir.

PHILLIP

I'd like you to hold off until  
we've got some sites marked  
out.

ROSS  
(sarcastic)

Yessir, any suggestions of  
what we should be doing.

PHILLIP

I'll get back to you.

Phillip opens his sketchbook and walks away.

ROSS

Stand down, boys. Who's got  
fixings for tea?

All jolly that things aren't going Phillip's way.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Coming sir.

Phillip and officers, including the Surveyor, carrying a  
tripod across his shoulder, head off for an inspection.

There's an uneasiness between the convicts and the  
marines, neither know quite what to do with each other.  
Both groups stand there with nothing to do. Some are  
nervous to be in this new place, some are fascinated.

50. EXT

CAMP COVE

DAY

Late in the day nothing has changed. Time to pack up,  
back to the boats.



PHILLIP

Nice night to camp out, who's  
with me?

McEntire immediately drops his gear and squats down, he's  
happy to stay.

Tench follows McEntire, he's always up for an adventure.

The Middie is an old hand at this bush stuff, he just  
wishes he could have said yes first.

The marines aren't sure if this is an order or an option,  
they look to Ross to confirm.

Ross picks out the two that look interested in staying.

ROSS

You two post guard.

Ross picks up his pack.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Rest of you, back to the boat.

The marines grab up their gear and turn to the boats.

51. EXT PHILLIP'S FIRE NIGHT

Phillip, Tench, and the Middie are sitting comfortably,  
already Phillip has some nice camp chairs set up.

PHILLIP

(out of the blue)

Do you know any good stories?

Neither Tench nor the Middie know whom Phillip is  
addressing.

MIDDIE

(blurts out)

Me sir?

Tench looks to Phillip to find out.

PHILLIP

Well either of you.

MIDDIE  
(racking his brains)

Um, no sir.

TENCH

How long do we have? I was speaking to some of the men earlier, fascinating stories, some of them. All of them innocent it transpires.

Phillip pays the lame joke with a big laugh.

PHILLIP  
(laughing)

Well of course.

TENCH

I'm surprised at how many of them are happy to be here.

PHILLIP

Good, good.

Phillip pauses for a moment.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I'd like more of this.

Phillip gestures at the other campfires.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

We should all be together.

TENCH

People like space. Convicts like space too.

PHILLIP

Indeed.

52. EXT PHILLIP'S FIRE

56  
DAY

Dawn has barely cracked. Tench is asleep on the ground, hair everywhere, three day growth.

Phillip is spick and span and clean shaved and ready to go. He's looming over Tench waiting for him to wake up.

Tench is immune to Phillip's anxiety.

Phillip picks up a stick and starts slashing away at things. This wakes Tench.

TENCH

What's the problem?

Tench wriggles out of his nest and tries to get himself together.

TENCH

What's the rush?

PHILLIP

Sex. There's only so long the men will wait before we land the women.

Tench is almost ready to go.

TENCH

Breakfast?

But he's talking to Phillip's back.

Tench takes hop steps trying to get his other boot on and catch up with Phillip.

53. EXT PHILLIP'S HOUSE SITE

DAY

Piled high in a cleared space are white canvas bags. Phillip advances towards them followed by a ragtag group of convicts.

PHILLIP

Right. Three groups, sort yourselves out.

The convicts shuffle into three huddles.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Today you're going to build my house.

He drops the pages of instructions down on the top of the pile, and settles back to watch the fun.

The convicts immediately fall on the packages and start emptying them on the ground.

Phillip considers intervening.

One convict, youngish guy with a red beard, SMITH, reaches for the instructions.

SMITH

Stop. Let's see what we have here first.

Smith puts on his glasses and settles himself for a read.

SMITH (CONT'D)

I could go a drop of rum right about now.

Behind him another convict, THOMAS, straight dark hair, craggy, grabs the end of a bag.

THOMAS

Hey. I need a hand over here.

A couple of convicts help him to shift the bags.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

We'll clear some space to work in.

Phillip is pleased with how things are going.

54. EXT

PHILLIP'S HOUSE SITE

LATER

Phillip returns to find the kit house completed. The convicts are sitting about, sweaty but pleased with themselves. The kit home is a canvas cottage with rooms, doors, windows, the lot. It even has a covered verandah.

The house is made up of wooden frames with canvas stretched over them. Very clever.

PHILLIP

Excellent.

To Smith and Thomas.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

You two.

Phillip turns to the convicts.

Smith indicates a pile of pieces next to the folded bags the house came in.

SMITH

We've got some spare parts.

PHILLIP

Doesn't matter. Good job. What are your names?

The two convicts are suddenly sheepish.

SMITH

Smith.

THOMAS

Thomas.

PHILLIP  
(to everyone)

Right. You're in their charge.  
They'll give you work  
assignments, they can assign  
punishments.

Smith and Thomas are suddenly unpopular. One of the gang spits on the ground.

Another convict, WEEDY GUY.

WEEDY GUY

No fucken way.

PHILLIP  
(to Smith and Thomas)

Right, I'll leave you to  
discipline him.

Phillip walks off.

Smith and Thomas aren't the least bit happy about this.

55.    EXT                    CAMP COVE                    NIGHT

Four campfires, Phillip's, marines, convicts, and convict  
overseers. They look very small in the darkness.

56.    EXT                    CONVICT'S CAMPFIRE                    NIGHT

Four convicts are lolling, exhausted around the fire,  
checking out their scars and scratches from the day.  
FITTLE is young and silly, PATRICK is old and silly,  
ANDERSON is the clever one, SHARPE is clever and grumpy.

FITTLE

I've gone pink. I'm a lobster.

And he's clacking his lobster claws about.

ANDERSON

Quick, take him to the  
surgeon.

SHARPE

No, throw him into the pot,  
anything'd be better than salt  
pork.

PATRICK

He looks a little like salt  
pork.

ANDERSON

He's as pink.

PATRICK

Perhaps we should take a bite.



FITTLE

Pray that McEntire is not in earshot or he might take you at your word.

McEntire steps into the circle of firelight.

MCENTIRE

Did somebody call my name?

They all jump.

FITTLE

Euahh! You nearly scared me out of my skin.

SHARPE

You'd probably be better off without it, state it's in.

MCENTIRE

I've heard you're doing a bunk.

FITTLE

A bunk?

MCENTIRE

Scarpering. Making a run for it.

PATRICK

Fella told me you can walk to China from here.

FITTLE

I don't fancy walking on my head like a Chinaman.

Sharpe thinks this might be a good idea.

SHARPE

Prefer that to chained hand in hand with you lot.

MCENTIRE

Think about it. I can help  
you. More chance now than  
later. Gotta go.

McEntire slips off into the darkness.

The convicts are greatly relieved that McEntire has gone.

There's a great thump just out there in the darkness.  
Their mouths snap shut.

FITTLE

McEntire?

He doesn't know which is worse, McEntire or something  
even more terrifying.

Something crashes through the bush, breaking branches.

ANDERSON

Fuck was that?

SHARPE

And you want us to go out  
there?

They're not quite so keen about running away.

PATRICK

(yells out into the dark)

Forget it McEntire. I'm not  
going out there just for you  
to eat me.

57. EXT

MARINE'S CAMPFIRE

NIGHT

McEntire is hidden, scoping out the marines around their  
campfire. He could have been squatting just out of sight  
for hours.

McEntire steps into the light. The marines look up at  
him, they're about as tired as the convicts, but they've  
got enough energy to show McEntire that he's really not  
welcome. With a couple it's active dislike, with most  
it's indifference.

McEntire flourishes a bottle of rum. All eyes follow the rum pendulum.

MCENTIRE

Anybody up for a drop?

Tin cups come at him from every direction. Suddenly McEntire is everyone's mate. There is a hum of conversation.

ROSS

Cheers.

MCENTIRE  
(hearty)

Cheers.

The men respond in a mutter, just because he's giving them rum doesn't mean they have to like him.

58.    EXT                    MARINE'S CAMPFIRE                    LATER

McEntire still has the bottle tucked under his arm. The first cups are empty, and they weren't full enough the first time round.

McEntire throws the bottle across the fire, there's a scuffle to grab it.

McEntire pulls Ross aside.

MCENTIRE

Don't worry, I've got another bottle.

He pulls another bottle out of his pocket and pours them both a hefty cupful.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

Having fun yet?

ROSS

Am now.

Ross nods the question back at McEntire.

## MCENTIRE

I'm having a great time, out  
all day, killing stuff,  
walking about, love it. Can't  
be this way forever, but.

They clink their tin cups together.

59.     EXT                   TOWN PLAN                   DAY

Phillip is bent over a big sheet of paper, on it is a rough sketch map of Camp Cove marked out with Phillip's plans for the town. There's a space marked out for a hospital, Governor's residence, lock up, stores. Phillip is marking up plots of land and divvyng them up. He marks down names, allocating each a plot of land. Ross is there, as is Collins and the names of Ross' marines.

The Surveyor is looking over his shoulder, pressing a little close and blocking the light. Just a little too keen.

Phillip gives him an irritated look.

The Surveyor jumps back, a little more scared than you'd think he should be. He's a jumpy guy.

Phillip looks back to his work with a little shake of his head, some people are just odd.

60.     EXT                   TENT TOWN                   DAY

A Marine is shifting axes and shovels from the beach, he dumps them any which way under a tree.

Another guy leads a crowd of convicts to the pile. Both Marines have done, they turn and start to walk away.

CONVICT 4  
(to Marines)

Hey.

The Marines stop.

CONVICT 4 (CONT'D)

What do we do now?

The Marines look to each other.

MARINE 1

You know what they're doing?

MARINE 2

Nah, I'm supplies, not  
implementation. You brought  
'em here.

MARINE 1  
(to convict 4)

Sorry mate, can't tell ya.

The Marines turn to go, lots of things to do, no time to  
chat.

CONVICT 4

But.

The convict has second thoughts, not his job, either.

The convicts settle down.

The Marines are walking back towards the shore.

MARINE 1

Do you think?

MARINE 2  
(definite)

Nuh. Not our job.

They walk away.

61. EXT

TENT TOWN

DAY

Fittle, Anderson, Sharpe, and Patrick are leaning on  
shovels, they're hot and sweaty. They've had enough, they  
stop even the pretence of work.

ANDERSON

Where did he come from?

PATRICK

I heard he was a barber, his  
wife had a thing with his best

mate. The mate came in for a shave and he gave him the real close cut. Did the wife the same day, baked 'em both into a meat pie, sold 'em on the street.

SHARPE

Oh, bollocks, he never.

ANDERSON

So you tell us what he did.

SHARPE

Well I don't know. But I know he woulda got the knot if he butchered his wife and got caught.

FITTLE

Bet he ate 'em too. He could, you know.

ANDERSON

Do we trust him?

SHARPE

Hell no, but I've had enough of this. If we leave it much longer we'll have nothing left and there'll be no chance to escape. Once everything's built we'll be locked up.

Patrick agrees.

PATRICK

Now's the chance.

They all agree on that point.

ANDERSON

So it's a go?

Each of them makes the decision.



Nods all round.

62. EXT CAMP COVE NIGHT

The number of campfires has grown. Now there are a dozen.

63. EXT CONVICT'S CAMPFIRE NIGHT

The four convicts are more grotty and more worn, they're all sunburnt and they're not joking around anymore.

McEntire plucks up a glowing stick from the fire and sweeps a clear patch in the dirt with his other hand.

MCENTIRE

I've seen the maps. Here.

He sketches out a rough map of the coastline from Camp Cove to Botany Bay in the dirt with the glowing point of the stick.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

Here we are, and there they are. All you need to do is head south and east. How many of you are going?

The first two hands, Fittle and Sharpe, are up quicksmart, the others take a little longer.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

Right-ho, gather round and memorise this.

They form a huddle.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

Got it?

Uncertain nods all round. Sharpe is sure, Fittle and Patrick are going to get lost if someone doesn't hold their hands, Anderson is still weighing up the options.

FITTLE

Nuh.

SHARPE

We start walking. We stow away  
with the French. We get off  
when they get home.

FITTLE

And then?

ANDERSON

One step at a time, mate.

They're not the smartest marks McEntire has ever met.

MCENTIRE  
(sarcastic)

Excellent.

McEntire sweeps the map from the dirt and throws the  
stick back in the fire.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

I was never here.

McEntire steps back from the light of the campfire and  
darkness swallows him up.

PATRICK

I wish he were.

FITTLE

What?

PATRICK

Never here. That man scares  
the willies out of me.

They all go quiet, lots of long looks into the fire.

64.    EXT                    ROSS' CAMPFIRE                    NIGHT

Ross and his men are extremely jumpy, even with a fire. A  
possum coughs just overhead and they all jump. One of the  
men throws a stone up at it.

McEntire runs up and stands panting.

MCENTIRE

Sorry I'm late, just making  
some trouble.

MARINE 8

Where's the fucking rum, mate?

McEntire doles out his spoils.

MARINE 8 (CONT'D)

Can ya get us girls, too?

McEntire ignores him and sits down by Ross, they're a  
little away from the rest of the men.

MCENTIRE

Now look, we both want to make  
a fig out of this.

Ross is all in agreement on this point.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

You know Phillip's plan is for  
one little plot of land for  
every man, but look around  
you, this is where it's at.  
This is going to be the centre  
of everything and a wise man'd  
be... (MAKING THE MOST OF IT  
WHILE HE STILL CAN).

Ross jumps in over the top of McEntire, he knows exactly  
where McEntire is going.

ROSS

Loosen the rules up.

MCENTIRE

That's what I'm saying.

ROSS

Take advantage of it while  
things are still soft.

McEntire offers up his mug; Ross clunks his against it.

MCENTIRE

Cheers.

Two smiles, and we've got a plan.

65. EXT

CAMP COVE

DAY

A group of convicts are sitting beside a great gum tree that has been mildly scarred. Around the base stand picks and shovels, and a loose pile of axes.

Two marines are walking nearby, they're going nowhere fast. One of them spots the group.

MARINE 9

Look at this.

They head over.

Some of the convicts make their cards disappear quickly.

MARINE 9 (CONT'D)

Room for a couple more?

The card players shuffle over to make space for the two marines, and pass their hands in to Smith. Smith starts shuffling the cards.

SMITH

Red over black. Your first marker bids doubles, your second doubles again.

MARINE 9

We all know the rules, matey.  
Lay out the cards.

66. EXT

PHILLIP'S HUT

NIGHT

Phillip and Tench are winding down at the end of the day. They're eating something tough and gristly.

PHILLIP

How'd it go?

Tench gives a sideways nod, it's impossible to tell what it means.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

So how much did you do?

TENCH

I didn't expect much, but these are the laziest arseholes I've ever seen.

Phillip is worried by this news.

PHILLIP

The convicts or the marines?

TENCH

Both.

Now he's really worried.

TENCH (CONT'D)

You must have known.

No. Phillip was hoping it would all work out.

67. EXT BUSH TRACK DAY

Fittle is pelting flat out down the path.

He skids to a halt, great stretch of snake across the path, a huge python, looks like a log.

Closer look, shiny log.

What the fuck's that? He gives it a poke? He knows it's alive. Jumps back, it's alive. He's terrified and fascinated.

He decides to have another look. This time he follows the line of snake off the path. Looong snake.

Finally he gets to the head end, huge bulge just before the head and two tiny feet, like babies feet with claws, ringtail possum, the tail is dangling out the side of the snake's mouth.

FITTLE

Feet, tongue.

One look and he's stumbling backwards. Back up the path, not far to the rest of the escapees.

FITTLE (CONT'D)  
(panting, terrified)

Dragon

Points back down the path

FITTLE (CONT'D)

Got into a fight with a tiny devil.

Pauses for another breath

FITTLE (CONT'D)

Think they killed each other.

The escapees exchange worried looks.

ANDERSON

I think we'll camp here tonight.

PATRICK

It's still early.

ANDERSON

I think we'll camp here tonight.

68.    EXT                    BLOODY BIG TREE, CAMP COVE                    DAY

A group of convicts are setting to cutting down a hardwood, a crowd of them, a pile of axes.

The biggest of them, real strong fella, CHOPPER, steps up there, huge swing of the axe.

And it comes back over his head at a skewy angle, faster than he threw it.

Hits the fella beside him.



Chopper is down too, hands sandwiched between his knees ringing with pain.

The struck fella is out with blood pouring down his head, a couple of guys grab him up under the arms and take him away.

Chopper won't be beaten, he gets up and grabs the axe back off the fella who picked it up.

Another mighty swing, no luck, not a mark on the damn tree.

A marine comes up, all shoulders.

MARINE 10

Here, let me at it, you don't know how to swing an axe.

Same thing happens, convicts think it's just about the funniest thing they've ever seen, marine doesn't see it that way.

And then he does. Laughter all round, thanks.

An Aboriginal man has been sitting there on his haunches watching them at it the whole time. He's been so still that he hasn't been noticed, it's almost like he appears in the midst of them.

CONVICT 5

Euagh, where'd you come from?

He pushes his way into the group and slips the axe out of the marine's hands.

He hefts the axe, has a feel of the blade, not sharp enough, holds it right up near the head, taps it against the tree, getting a feel for the new toy. Makes sign language that the axe isn't sharp enough, the lads'll be in this one, send it off with a runner, go sharpen it for him.

69. EXT BLOODY BIG TREE, CAMP COVE LATER

The fella runs back, sweating, passes over the axe, good enough.

The Aboriginal man gets a casual grip on the axe, you wouldn't know today is his first sight of a steel axe,

and takes an easy swing at the tree, great hunk of wood comes flying out towards the crowd pressed up close against him.

One of the convicts takes a whack from a huge chunk of wood.

CONVICT 6

Ow.

They all take a big step back.

Moments later the tree is coming down with a mighty crash, everyone is looking very pleased with themselves.

The tree is down, Chopper is wanting the axe back. The Aboriginal bloke won't let go.

Chopper turns to the marine with an appeal to get it for him.

The Marine steps up close and puts his hand out, no way.

Marine shrugs to Chopper, well what am I going to do. Shoos the Aboriginal man away.

MARINE 10

Go on, it's yours.

And the Aboriginal man is gone.

CHOPPER  
(to the marine)

Did you see how long he was sitting there?

Chopper turns back to the convicts.

CHOPPER

Come you bunch of girls, hop to it. If Blackie can do it, you shouldn't have any trouble.

They don't want to be outdone, and set to work. They've got more enthusiasm than skill.

Their axes make no more impression on the trees than they did before.

The convicts give up almost immediately, drop their axes, and make themselves comfortable on the ground.

70.     EXT                   BENNELONG POINT                   DAY

Phillip is standing at the point with a good view of the campsite, sketching, making plans. He's going a thousand miles a minute, plans, plans, plans.

Ross is taking it easy, his boys have it all set up and he's got a mug of tea in hand.

ROSS

Governor?

Phillip is miles away.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Sir?

Phillip notices him.

Ross opens negotiations.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Not much getting done there.

Ross nods to the lack of activity in the camp.

Phillip is worried about this too, but he isn't going to admit it to Ross.

PHILLIP

It isn't all about getting it built.

This is a bit too deep for Ross, he moves on.

ROSS

I think you need my help.

Phillip knows what Ross is here for, might as well cut the crap.

PHILLIP

I'll give them their rum, but they'll have to wait until the camp is complete.

ROSS

Some of my boys ain't going to like waiting.

PHILLIP

You tell them what they like.

ROSS

I know what my boys will and won't do, easiest way is to make them want to do it. My boys are missing their rum, governor.

PHILLIP

They can wait a few more days.

ROSS

And the Frenchies? I don't trust any of 'em.

This is an easy one, Phillip knows he has a dinner invite with La Perouse.

PHILLIP

I'll sail over shortly, see what they're up to.

Ross is triumphant and smug about his win.

ROSS

Well, I think we've come to an accord, comrade Governor.

Phillip reckons he's got out of it easy, having given away stuff that he'd always planned to. Can't show Ross that, though.

Phillip savours it as Ross walks away, all cocky shoulders and attitude.

Ross stops, thinks again and turns to look at Phillip. Sees Phillip return to his sketches obviously happy with what's gone on, and Ross knows that Phillip somehow got the better of him.

Phillip looks up, Ross scowling.

PHILLIP  
(with a smile)

Afternoon, Major.

Ross knows he's been beaten, he turns and leaves.

71. EXT CAMP COVE NIGHT

The campfires have grown again, now there are almost forty.

From Phillip's hut he can see them all spread before him.

And when he looks across the water he can also see half a dozen fires burning on the other side.

72. EXT PHILLIP'S HUT NIGHT

Another weary night sitting around the campfire. The Middie cuts big chunks of butter and drops them into three mugs. He then grabs a pot off the fire and pours hot rum over the top of the butter and passes it around.

PHILLIP

Ahh.

TENCH

Thanks.

He takes a big glug.

TENCH (CONT'D)

I was talking to some of the  
Indians today.

Phillip doesn't exactly leap at this one, he's already getting a little bored of Tench's endless little chats with people.

TENCH (CONT'D)

You know those kangaroos.

Phillip grunts yes.

TENCH (CONT'D)

Turns out they're not called kangaroos.

PHILLIP

Well what are they called then?

TENCH

Dunno, they kept falling about laughing whenever I asked.

The Middie is feeling the buttered rum.

MIDDIE

Sounds like they're called kangaroos.

Nothing like quite a lot of rum to make a lame joke funny.

TENCH

They told me about some kind of bear.

PHILLIP

Like those small grey bears, those (PRONOUNCING) ko-ala bears.

TENCH

I think not.

Tench might be holding back a bit of a smile around the corners of his mouth.

PHILLIP

So another bear.



TENCH

Quite a bit larger, if I  
understood them right.

Phillip wants to know about this.

PHILLIP

How do they taste?

TENCH

Good they say.

PHILLIP

Easy to catch?

Tench is getting to the good bit.

TENCH

They live up in the trees like  
the koalas.

PHILLIP

How big?

Tench won't be stopped.

TENCH

Have to take care, they jump  
out the tree on top of you.

The Middie is all goggle-eyed and holding very tight to  
his mug of rum.

PHILLIP

I'll have to warn the men.

Tench is quietly happy with this.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

How common are they? I  
wouldn't want to worry the men  
unnecessarily.

TENCH  
(deadpan)

Oh, quite common.

The Middie is looking up at the trees all around, they could be anywhere. He inches his chair closer to Phillip.

73.     EXT                   TOWN PLAN                   DAY

The campsite is a wasteland of fallen trees. Branches and roots poke at the air. The dirt is churned and raw red. The Surveyor is directing a handful of marines, carrying sledge hammers, where to set out white stakes into the dirt.

Convicts are ferrying stakes from a great pile on the beach to the Surveyor.

More marines are running bright red twine between the stakes marking out evenly spaced plots.

The Surveyor directs them into position from a distance. Phillip is standing by the Surveyor, he's got a hatchet in his hand, he bends over and cuts a cake-slice of soil out of the ground.

Ross comes up fuming.

ROSS

Some prisoners have run off.

PHILLIP  
(laconically)

Well that's a worry.

Phillip isn't surprised, or particularly concerned. He's anticipated some escapes.

ROSS  
(itching for a fight)

What are you going to do about it?

PHILLIP

Sir, I suspect that is your responsibility.

Phillip plays with his slice of dirt, infuriating Ross.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

How were they missed?

ROSS

How were they missed? They got away because no one was watching.

PHILLIP

Well, what are you going to do about it?

ROSS

Me, sir?

PHILLIP

(loving every moment)

Well these escapees could be a threat to the colony. That falls firmly into your purview.

Ross is completely blindsided.

Phillip keeps hammering him.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Do you have a plan?

Ross doesn't.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I could lend you my man McEntire. He's been out in the bush these last few days. He might have seen something or be able to track them.

ROSS

Thank you. That would be a great aid.

Phillip takes control.

PHILLIP

I'll send McEntire out. He can  
lead a party on their trail.

Ross is shocked almost speechless that Phillip could  
suggest such a breach of the status quo.

ROSS

Not lead.

Phillip realises what he's saying and back-pedals.

PHILLIP

No, of course not. Sorry. He  
can scout ahead and guide your  
men on the right track.

Ross doesn't think Phillip is taking this quite as  
seriously as he should.

ROSS

You would trust this McEntire  
out there?

PHILLIP

McEntire knows which side his  
bread is buttered on.

ROSS

Excuse me, sir. I must see to  
this.

PHILLIP

Indeed.

Shows Ross the slice of dirt.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Good brick soil, you think?

Ross doesn't have time for that crap, he gives him the  
nod and leaves.

There's a moment there where he's wondering why Phillip isn't taking this seriously enough, then shakes his head and gets on with it.

74.     EXT                   BENNELONG POINT                   DAY

McEntire is squatting on the sand at the water's edge. He's scraping at a bloody sheet of fur and blood. Phillip, as usual, is fascinated.

PHILLIP

And what do we have here?

MCENTIRE

Some kind of small bear. I pulled it out of a tree.

PHILLIP

Koala. Good eating?

MCENTIRE

Ate it last night. Tastes like this shit.

McEntire grabs up a eucalypt branch.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

Gave me the squits. Horrible. Little bugger bit me. Make a good hat.

PHILLIP

We seem to have lost some men. Can you scare them up?

McEntire nods.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

See Major Ross; he's sending some men.

75.     EXT                   MCENTIRE'S FIRE                   DAY

McEntire has set up camp near his livestock. They are all penned neatly.

Ross has sought McEntire out, and don't think McEntire hasn't noticed. This is the way it should be.

Ross isn't comfortable with asking favours of a convict, even if it is McEntire.

ROSS

Governor wants me to chase up those convicts that did a runner.

MCENTIRE

I can make 'em go away.

Ross is relieved. Having the escapees back is good, having them gone is better.

ROSS

You want any help?

McEntire gives him the look that shows how much his fun will be ruined with company.

Ross agrees with him.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Best my men weren't there, then.

Ross doesn't want to know what McEntire is up to.

76. EXT

BUSH CLEARING

NIGHT

The escapees are sitting around a tiny sad fire, shivering.

FITTLE

So what'd happen if we didn't run off?

Fittle's going somewhere with this.

Anderson just thinks he's a prattling idiot.

ANDERSON

You serve out your lag.



FITTLE

And.

ANDERSON  
(forced)

And they let you go.

PATRICK

I don't want to stay here.

ANDERSON

And that's why we escaped.

FITTLE

So that was a good idea.

ANDERSON

You thought so.

FITTLE

I did then.

77.    EXT                    OUTSIDE BUSH CLEARING                    NIGHT

McEntire is out there, calm as, as usual, perfectly at home out there in the dark. He's keeping an eye on the escapees. No hurry, no rush, all the time in the world.

78.    EXT                    BUSH CLEARING                    NIGHT

The escapees are still at it. Patrick is going on.

PATRICK

There's just nothing there.  
You walk, there's a tree;  
there's another tree, if you  
can call them trees. But  
there's nothing you can get a  
fix on. Just more of the same.

ANDERSON

We'll be out of here soon  
enough.

Fittle's back to his idea.

FITTLE

Where would we live after  
we're done?

ANDERSON

Lag's done, you're out.

Sharpe rolls over.

SHARPE

Shut up, can't you.

ANDERSON

You're free, you find  
somewhere to live.

PATRICK

You didn't tell me they'd give  
us land.

79.    EXT                    OUTSIDE BUSH CLEARING                    NIGHT

That draws McEntire's attention. He's got an idea. He's  
getting a little uncomfortable just sitting there.

80.    EXT                    BUSH CLEARING                    NIGHT

The escapees are still at it.

ANDERSON

I don't know if they'll give  
us land.

SHARPE

Shut up.

PATRICK

I don't want to go back.

ANDERSON  
(incredulous)

You mean you want to go back?

FITTLE

Yeah.

SHARPE

What?

FITTLE

I'm going back.

PATRICK

They'll string you up.

FITTLE

Nah, I'll tell 'em I went for  
a crap and got lost.

ANDERSON

And then?

FITTLE

Then I see out my lag, get  
some land, get a girl, grow  
some spuds, milk a cow. Better  
than you get back home. If I'd  
known it was going to be like  
this I'd've done it ages ago.

He adjusts his blanket into a cape.

FITTLE (CONT'D)

See ya blokes, I'm off.

PATRICK

It's fucken dark.

FITTLE

If I go now they may not even  
notice I'm gone.

Fittle walks out into the darkness.

ANDERSON

Get up. We've got to go after him.

PATRICK

Hey, hey Fittle. Stop.

SHARPE

I'm not going out there.

ANDERSON

He'll start pissing himself,  
he'll be back in a tick.

There's a sudden human-sounding scream out in the darkness. It cuts off sharply. They're all thinking the same thing.

ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Nah that was some animal.

PATRICK

Yeah?

SHARPE

What kind of animal you ever  
heard of makes that noise?  
Last time I see this place'll  
be too soon.

PATRICK

Too bloody right.

ANDERSON

Y'know he might be right.

SHARPE

Well go on, run after him.

ANDERSON

Not bloody likely. I'm not  
that fool.

They settle back down for the night.

81.     EXT                   SHORE, CAMP COVE                   DAY

Lunchtime. The convicts are sitting around on the beach after lunch, they get a little time off. There's close to a hundred of them. It's stinking hot.

One guy just can't take it.

CONVICT 7

Bugger this.

He's up and he's off down to the water, and clothes are going everywhere.

He's into the water with huge splash, and comes up with a great yell.

CONVICT 7 (CONT'D)

Come on.

A bunch of them are up immediately and in with him.

Soon all but a few are in the water.

82.     EXT                   FLEET, CAMP COVE                   DAY

The noise from the men reaches the ships.

People appear at the rails.

Women appear at the rails. They like the show and let the men know.

83.     EXT                   WATER, CAMP COVE                   DAY

The men hear the women and respond in kind.

A couple of the more adventurous ones strike out towards the boats.

The rest are content with wolf whistles, catcalls and invitations.

There's a great deal of horseplay and wrestling, let's hope they're all waist-deep. One of the men calls out.

## CONVICT

Show us ya tits!

84. EXT FLEET, CAMP COVE DAY

The women urge each other to respond, one pulls up her top and exposes her breasts, to great acclaim.

85. EXT BUSH PATH, BOTANY BAY DAY

McEntire is strolling along, he's got a stick in his hand and he's whacking about at whatever takes his fancy, not too worried. The ground is pretty open and the growth is sparse, he could be almost walking in a track.

Every once in a while he looks down at the path, flicks something with his stick, nods to himself.

He comes to the remains of a campsite, flattened spaces where people have slept, the remains of a small fire.

MCENTIRE  
(to himself)

I'm sorry governor, I just  
couldn't find them.

He's happy with this.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

Disappeared into thin air.

86. EXT BUSH PATH NEAR BOTANY BAY DAY

The escapees are dashing downhill. Anderson is ahead. He calls back over his shoulder.

ANDERSON

I can see the beach.

They go galloping down the path, breaking through undergrowth, gaining speed.

They break out onto the beach, tumbling onto the sand, flushed with final success.

Until they see the encampment of French soldiers. The soldiers jump to arms immediately and quickly move to secure the escapees.



ANDERSON (CONT'D)

Bugger.

SHARPE

Guess we didn't think that one out.

The escapees are not all that surprised that it's gone pear-shaped.

87. EXT BUSH PATH NEAR BOTANY BAY DAY

McEntire is standing at the top of the path above the beach and sees the escapees. He shakes his head, no fun for him today. Lucky escape for the escapees.

MCENTIRE

Bugger.

McEntire turns and starts retracing his footsteps.

He's pissed.

88. EXT BOUSSOLE, BOTANY BAY NIGHT

From the deck of the Boussole you can see the tiny French camp on shore and the Supply moored nearby.

Phillip and La Perouse are standing on deck looking out.

La Perouse is getting the shits, he's been trying and trying, and this damned, arse-stuck, Englishman is giving him nothing. Graceless.

La Perouse indicates towards the beach.

LA PEROUSE

We've taken a beating over there.

Phillip is still adding nothing to the conversation, nods for him to continue.

LA PEROUSE (CONT'D)  
(trying for effect)

I expected half my crew to be out there getting shore time.

I had to shoot a man. Now I only leave guards there at night to protect our equipment.

At last, some reaction.

PHILLIP

Shot an Indian?

LA PEROUSE

Yes. Have you had trouble?

PHILLIP

We haven't shot anyone.

And the conversation closes down again.

LA PEROUSE

Oh, enough of this. How goes it with you?

It's like pulling teeth, but Phillip really has no one else he can confide in.

PHILLIP

The convicts don't want to work, they're unfit. The soldiers are barely better.

Phillip thinks about it.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

As expected, I guess.

LA PEROUSE

Ah, but I have some of your prisoners. They are runners?

Phillip is gobsmacked.

LA PEROUSE (CONT'D)

Three, we caught them on the beach.

PHILLIP

Unhurt?

LA PEROUSE  
(surprised)

You don't want to see them?

Oh, this Phillip is an odd man.

LA PEROUSE (CONT'D)  
(DEFINITE)

No. They are fine. I will send  
them to your ship.

Maybe it will be an interesting night after all.

LA PEROUSE (CONT'D)

Now I think we should eat and  
make conversation. Tonight we  
have soufflé and a roast  
chicken.

Phillip is again amazed.

PHILLIP

Soufflé. Chicken.

LA PEROUSE

Your cook is not so good?

PHILLIP

My cook makes only gray food.

La Perouse takes Phillip by the arm and leads him to  
dinner.

89. EXT

ROSS' FIRE

NIGHT

Ross and McEntire are on the other side of the fire  
conspiring. Ross now has his own tent and campfire set  
up. From the campfire there is an excellent view across  
the rest of the colony, Ross can keep an eye on everyone.

ROSS

Pity that's the last of the  
rum.

McEntire reaches into his pockets and comes up with two  
bottles of rum. He throws one over to Ross.

MCENTIRE

Don't think I'd leave us out?

Clinking and drinking.

90. EXT ROSS' FIRE

LATER

Ross and McEntire are a bit under the weather.

ROSS

We gonna do this thing?

MCENTIRE

We need the plans. Surveyor's  
got the only copy.

ROSS

Right.

91. EXT SURVEYOR'S FIRE

NIGHT

The Surveyor is asleep around another fire.

ROSS

(he's a little smashed)

Shh.

McEntire thinks this is hilarious

MCENTIRE

Ssshhhh.

ROSS

You shh.

The Surveyor stirs.

McEntire is momentarily sobered.

MCENTIRE

Sh.

They freeze, the Surveyor settles. Ross creeps over and slips the plans from the Surveyor's jacket.

They sneak away.

92. EXT

TOWN PLAN

NIGHT

McEntire and Ross are standing in the field of white stakes, in the moonlight. Ross is poring over the Surveyor's plan.

ROSS

I can't see a bloody thing.

McEntire snatches it out of his hands.

MCENTIRE

Give't 'ere.

No problems reading it.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

We're here. Your plot is there.

They head towards Ross' plot, McEntire immediately trips over a string. Ross nearly pisses himself.

MCENTIRE (CONT'D)

Rotten drunk.

They set too uprooting the stakes. Ross tugs that little bit too hard and the string snaps.

ROSS

Bugger.

McEntire produces a roll of red string from his pocket.

Ross picks up the fallen stakes and moves them out so that the plot of land is significantly larger than those around it.

93. EXT TOWN PLAN

LATER

They're finished and the job looks good. Ross scuffs dirt back into an empty stake-hole. McEntire looks over the plan.

MCENTIRE

What're the other names?

ROSS

Scott, Collins, Clarke, Tench.

MCENTIRE

Slow down.

94. EXT ROSS' FIRE

NIGHT

Ross and McEntire are feeling unbelievably pleased with themselves after getting away with their caper, and now they're really drunk.

ROSS

Ohh, doesn't get much better than this.

MCENTIRE

Feel like a fuck?

There's an ominous pause.

ROSS

Poofter.

They think it's the funniest thing ever.

ROSS (CONT'D)

We could swim out to the ships. Plenty of women.

Ross rolls over onto his back laughing.

He's not going anywhere.



95. EXT SHORE, CAMP COVE

Late afternoon, launches are ferrying the women from the ships.

Ross stands on shore, having a great time, supervising the whole thing.

The convict men are gathered around.

There are armed marines who look like they should be guarding the convicts, but as soon as the first round of women reaches the shore it's every man for himself, and the women are mobbed.

96. EXT MESS, TENT TOWN DAY

Ross and the Middie are standing before two huge barrels.

Behind them the tent town is complete, row upon orderly row of tents, all waiting for residents.

Ross fetches his barrel a huge hit with a hatchet.

The top of the barrel is destroyed. Ross flips broken pieces of wood out of the liquid with the blade of the axe. With his other hand he dips a mug into the RUM and takes a cautious sip.

Yep, it's fine.

Ross passes his axe to the Middie. It takes him a few goes to break the top of his barrel.

He also takes a cautious sip.

And spits it out, it's off.

ROSS

Ah, start with this one. By the time they get to the second barrel they'll be too thrashed to tell.

Ross claps the Middie on the shoulder, lets out a deafening between-the-fingers whistle, and moves off.

There's already a line of thirsty folk waiting for a drink.

The Middie starts doling it out as fast as he can.

Phillip is on deck, he has the escapees in irons next to him. He's watching the bush sliding past. It is impenetrable.

PHILLIP

You men are lucky to have made  
such a direct route, you  
might've been caught up in  
there for days.

The boys don't relish that idea.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

What a remarkable feat, just  
remarkable.

Phillip looks up at the dense impenetrable growth that comes down to the waterline. He gestures to the bush.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Look at that. You boys are  
just the types for our colony.  
Brave, resourceful,  
adventurous.

The boys are more than surprised at this. Maybe things are looking up.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

You'll have to take your cuts,  
but I think you have a bright  
future here. I expect good  
things of you.

The boys aren't quite sure if this is a good thing or bad thing. Anderson and Sharpe keep quiet waiting to see what comes of it. Patrick jumps in.

PATRICK

Thank you, sir.

PHILLIP

You'll find, once this trouble  
is behind you, that there will

be many opportunities for men  
such as yourselves.

That sounds fine by the escapees.

Phillip notices the huge purple storm clouds building in  
the south.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Looks like we might get some  
weather later.

98. EXT SHORE, CAMP COVE DAY

As the launch slides into shore Phillip notices the row  
of launches pulled up on the beach.

PHILLIP

Slackness, I call this gross  
slackness.

Phillip knows something is going on.

99. EXT SHORE, CAMP COVE DAY

McEntire is expecting Phillip to be in the worst of  
tempers. McEntire is surprised to see the escapees  
return, and in Phillip's company.

MCENTIRE

I see you've found your  
escapees, sir.

Phillip notes McEntire's recognition of who the escapees  
are, but is still too stoked about what an escapade it  
was to process it.

PHILLIP

Terribly sad, we lost one. But  
what a brave journey, no maps,  
out into this ragged bush.

McEntire is taken aback. The last thing he is expecting  
is Phillip to be applauding the escapees.

McEntire has no idea what to say or how to react.

MCENTIRE  
(fishing)

Intrepid.

Phillip beams.

PHILLIP

Exactly.

100. EXT

TOWN PLAN

DAY

Phillip inspects the cleared space neatly cut into blocks by the red string. The Surveyor is showing him around. There are groups of men and women about the place, they aren't too drunk. It's more like a picnic.

PHILLIP

Oh this is excellent.

He steps over a string line and into one of the blocks.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)  
(pacing and pointing)

Room here for a modest cabin,  
and here for a garden.

Pacing the boundary between blocks. Phillip notices something wrong.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

This is not right, that one is  
bigger.

He looks to the other near blocks.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

And this. And this one.  
They're all wrong.

Phillip turns on the Surveyor.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

What is going on?

SURVEYOR  
(terrified)

No, no, no, it wasn't me.  
There has been tampering. This  
is not my work.

101. EXT PATH TO PHILLIP'S HOUSE DAY

Ross is quite drunk and supporting himself between a couple of convict women. He reels up.

ROSS

I started the party early.

Phillip can't express how much he loathes Ross.

ROSS (CONT'D)

Like one of mine?

Ross opens his arms and offers up his convict women.

Phillip has to leave. He walks off without a word.

Ross laughs and watches him go.

102. EXT MESS, TENT TOWN DAY

The rum barrels are on their sides empty. Someone has tipped both over to get to the dregs. One table has been tipped over; the rest are a just a horrible mess.

103. EXT PHILLIP'S HOUSE SUNSET

From his verandah Phillip can see the whole colony spread out before him. The sun is going down and with the southerly building the sunset has that hard purple-green light that only comes with a southerly.

As Phillip watches alone, the storm comes sheeting in.

He can hear rising shouts of surprise coming from the tent town.

104. EXT TENT TOWN SUNSET

Things are get more raucous in the tent town. The storm hits gently at first, sparse huge drops of rain breaking

the heat and cooling everyone down. For the first moments it is mostly surprise and elation.

The rain just gets harder, for a moment the mix of calls from the tent town, surprise, anger, elation, compete with the sound of the rain, but only for a moment.

105. EXT PHILLIP'S HOUSE SUNSET

Then the storm hits full force and a curtain of water obscures Phillip's view of the tent town.

Moments later the sky lights up with distant lightning strikes.

106. EXT TENT TOWN LATER

The storm gets heavier, some of the revellers get up and dance, others take shelter inside their tents. Everybody is soaked almost instantly.

107. EXT TENT TOWN LATER

The storm gets heavier still, tents collapse and most of the convicts go out into the storm to continue the party.

108. EXT PHILLIP'S HOUSE NIGHT

Phillip is sitting alone with a bottle at the table outside his house. There has been a lull in the rain and around him he can hear the revels and screams.

Phillip takes a heroic slug from the bottle and heads off into the storm. He can't not witness this.

109. EXT CAMP COVE NIGHT

Phillip is staggering through the storm, his boots are covered with mud and he's soaking wet, his hat has started to sag.

Down by the marine's fireplace Phillip discovers Tench fucking in the mud with one of the convict women.

A few metres on he sees a uniformed man face down over a sodden table of food.

Phillip grabs him up by the hair. It's the Surveyor, out to it. Phillip drops his head and moves on.



Ross is out too, he's sitting between the two great barrels of rum, an arm around each. He isn't unconscious, but he hasn't the energy to do more than stare at Phillip as he passes.

Under a tree the Middie is asleep in a little nest with two girls.

Phillip keeps walking. He comes to a huge fire. To his dismay he finds seated around it his three escapees, all drunk. They're deeply engrossed in convict women too.

It is possibly the worst blow for Phillip since he had such high hopes for them only hours ago.

110. EXT

TOWN PLAN

NIGHT

Phillip is sitting, drunk, on a stump. He's hanging his head a bit, but he's still got that distinctive upright posture. He's not doing a thing, just sitting, just looking.

He can't see a thing in front of him that isn't broken.

A convict woman is passing by, not going anywhere in particular.

She glances over and recognises him. She sees an opportunity and heads for him. As she gets close she pulls off her shirt and exposes her breasts. She makes a bit of a performance out of it.

There's a palpable moment before Phillip gives in and pulls her towards him.

He buries his head between her breasts. He's burning with shame. Her tits aren't that big, but for Phillip, all of the noise around him falls away.

Phillip hears laughter.

He looks up to see McEntire leering at him from only feet away.

Phillip pushes the woman away.

Phillip and McEntire share one long look. Phillip is full of despair, his dream has all gone wrong and McEntire is at least in part responsible.

And he's standing there enjoying the hell out of it.

But McEntire didn't let this happen, Phillip did.

Phillip steps towards McEntire, and for a moment McEntire thinks Phillip is going to thump him.

But he doesn't, Phillip shoulders past McEntire and staggers off into the night.

McEntire turns his leer on the convict woman, still standing there, shirt open.

She puts her tits away, nothing here for McEntire.

She walks away and McEntire is left standing, surprised and rejected.

111. EXT                    PATH TO PHILLIP'S HOUSE                    LATER

McEntire is heading up to Phillip's house, boiling with it all and isn't sure what he's going to do.

McEntire has a nasty idea that makes him smile.

He pulls a hunk of raw meat out of his pocket and whistles.

Phillip's dog comes whimpering up to McEntire and crouches around his ankles.

He squats down to pat the dog.

His expression doesn't change as he snaps the dog's neck with one hand.

112. EXT                    TENT TOWN                    NIGHT

Lightning and thunder are crashing all about. It is a sea of red mud. Bodies strewn in the mud, it is difficult to find where mud stops and people begin. They are all busily writhing in every form of human congress imaginable.

Lighting cuts down and hits a tree. There is a huge explosion, a ball of fire. The tree topples across a pen full of animals and several tents.

Phillip, returning to his house. He is the only one paying any mind to this destruction of his dream, and he wishes he couldn't see it.

The convicts, officers, seamen, and marines revel on oblivious.

113. EXT TENT TOWN

NIGHT

Phillip's tent town, so clean and orderly only hours ago is a sea of mud.

With so much of the land cleared there isn't anything to hold the ground in place, mud slides wash entire ranks of tents down the hill.

In the slide are the remains of Phillip's stakes and red string, his surveying has been washed away.

Phillip is sitting at the table on the verandah outside his house. He's really drunk now. That drunk, like Ross. He is barely capable of doing anything but witnessing.

After the mudslide has stopped, he slumps face down onto the table.

114. EXT PHILLIP'S HOUSE

DAY

Phillip wakes in the same position.

He drags himself into the daylight. He's still hungover and feeling sorry for himself. From where he stands he can see wreckage all around him. What the storm hasn't destroyed has been ruined by the party.

All he can see are his ruined plans all around him.

A couple of marines are making heavy weather of it standing guard.

PHILLIP  
(to the first marine)

Find me an officer. One who  
can stand up straight. Pass  
him my orders to gather the  
colony under the flag.

Phillip turns to the second marine.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

That table and the books upon  
it down on the shore.

It's taking a long time for these instructions to get  
through to the marines.

## PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Now.

The marines start moving, slowly.

115. EXT CAMP COVE BEACH DAY

Phillip paces through the camp. He's shaved and is wearing the best of his uniforms. He's trying to look like he's got it together and last night didn't happen.

116. EXT TENT TOWN DAY

Around the camp marines are herding convicts down towards the shore. It's hard to tell who is in worse shape. The marines are as hung-over as the convicts. It's all going very slowly.

117. EXT MRS MACQUARIE'S CHAIR DAY

If he faces the harbour Phillip can't see anyone or the things he's done. He doesn't know what to say. He's holding a pile of paper catalogue cards.

## PHILLIP

This. This is. No, this is not what I planned. This is not my Albion.

Across the harbour he can see specks of canoes bobbing about.

118. EXT MRS MACQUARIE'S CHAIR LATER

Phillip turns back to the camp.

The clouds are burning off. Beams of light cut up the fog. Steam rises from leaves. There's a great flare of light and Phillip sees the camp has been washed clean by the storm, it's a clean slate.

For the first time since he returned from Botany Bay he can see some hope for the future.

119. EXT LIGHTNING TREE DAY

Phillip finds McEntire asleep in the ashes of the fire from the burning tree. It's hard to tell man from ashes.

Phillip stands over him, crisp in his clean uniform.

There is no transition between McEntire sleeping and waking. One moment all is still, then McEntire explodes kicking and punching out at everything in reach.

A figure springs out of the ashes propelled by a kick from McEntire and scuttles away.

Then he sees Phillip. McEntire is all aplomb. Well he's trying for it.

MCENTIRE

Governor, Phillip. I believe  
some of the livestock were  
lost in the storm.

McEntire shuffles in the ashes to hide something he's eaten.

PHILLIP

And more stolen. A pig, I  
believe.

McEntire's not going to feel guilty about that.

MCENTIRE

That could be, sir. I haven't  
yet counted.

PHILLIP

Don't bother, I have.

Phillip is about to speak.

McEntire jumps in. He can see how pissed Phillip is and he's working real hard to charm his way back into Phillip's good books.

MCENTIRE

How did you fare last night,  
sir? You don't look the worse  
for wear.

PHILLIP

You will make a survey of the  
native livestock.



Phillip judges his words carefully.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Finding out how these local  
people hunt would be in order.  
Meet with them.

McEntire's disgust is obvious.

As an afterthought.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

You may take a musket.

And another

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I'm sure you'll be able to  
supply your own food along the  
way.

Phillip signals forward one of the marines who has been  
trying to stand up straight just out of earshot.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Provide him with a musket and  
shot.

Phillip calls back over his shoulder.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Make sure he is ready to leave  
immediately.

He's about to head off again.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I can't find my dog.

McEntire knows he's in trouble.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

No musket.

For the first time McEntire doesn't know how to wriggle  
out of the sticky situation. He might actually be  
genuinely upset.



Phillip is seated at his table. It is not level, one leg is supported by a block of wood. Large leather bound books are piled high on the more stable side.

Cross-legged on the ground in front of him are the convicts. In a semi-circle surrounding the convicts are armed marines. It all looks a little like a school assembly with Phillip the ranting headmaster.

PHILLIP

When I look at the faces  
before me.

Phillip pauses.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

This is not what I expected.

Phillip bends and picks up one of the Surveyor's stakes that has washed down the slope in the storm.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

These stakes represent a hope  
for us all. Each of us can  
look at these markers and see  
what lies before us. They  
offer you all an opportunity.  
For the convicts it is what is  
to come. Once your sentences  
have been served a plot of  
land bounded by these markers  
is yours to cultivate. In this  
country you are a rich man.  
You will have land.

Phillip reaches for a book off the pile.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

This is the rule of law. These  
words and my lien from His  
Majesty the King give me the  
power of life and death, and  
there will be death among us.  
A night such as the last shall  
not be repeated without  
consequences.

His message is as much for the marines as it is for the convicts.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Do not expect my leniency to last beyond this morning. The events of last night are forgotten, they have washed away like these stakes. We are clean. Today we will replace these stakes. Now is a time to build, look to the future, and the gifts that we will reap when our crop has matured.

121. EXT THE ROCKS, NEW YEARS EVE TODAY NIGHT

Moments before the fireworks go off and the crowds are packed thick in The Rocks, the rain is pouring down, but it doesn't stop a scene similar to that of Phillip's storm, a sea of bodies at all acts imaginable.

A great strobing explosion lights up the night and still doesn't distract the revellers from their distractions.

HELEN V/O

We are not finished with the past, it is not closed, the present intrudes upon it and examines events, turning them about until they represent something never considered by those who were there.

Some problems encountered when writing  
Australian, historical, costume drama,  
on boats.

Simon Fraser  
MA Writing  
2007

The story for my Master of Arts (MA) thesis, a feature-length film script, *Perfidious Albion*, is of the first few weeks of Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet after their arrival off Botany Bay. It begins with the fleet standing off Botany Bay, unable to enter due to adverse seas, and ends the morning after the great storm and orgy/rape. I have tried, and mostly succeeded, in staying within that timeline, telling the story through events that happened in that time, or interpretation of those events.

This essay is a discussion of the process of researching and writing the script, fully engaging with the theoretical issues that arise in the script are beyond its scope. The discussion covers audience, historical accuracy, genre, structure, character, things not done, and analysis for future drafts.

## Audience

To paraphrase Robert McKee (McKee 1998, p. 63), you can write any story you like as long as the budget fits the market or expected audience. *Perfidious Albion* as a marketable project has always had problems. The limiting factors are as follows: There are no major female characters in the script, it is Australian history, and it is costume drama on boats. Each of these factors either reduces the possible audience or increases the budget beyond sense.

I tried several ways to combat this, without much success. In early plans and drafts of the script I included contemporary material within the fabric of the story. This took two parts. The first was a sense of premonition on Arthur Phillip's part, he has occasional glimpses of Sydney as it will become. The second was a certain casual approach to historical accuracy.

In earlier drafts of the script Phillip sees Botany Bay as we see it, with the airport on one side and the refinery on the other; not an

inviting sight. By using this metaphor I hoped to clearly point out that Phillip's interpretations of the landscape are still in evidence in our engagement with the Sydney of today.

The application of the second point leaned towards using modern objects where it was easier. In earlier drafts the sailors used tinnies with outboard motors, rather than launches with sails and oars. Phillip writes with a ball-point pen and wears gumboots. The use of this was a production decision on one part, and a mode of engaging with historical drama on another.

The plan to include present day objects from a productions perspective was a matter of convenience and budget, tinnies and outboards are cheaper and easier than historically accurate boats. I also wanted to leave an option open so that if present day Sydney happened to appear in the background it would present as part of the production design of the film, not some continuity error.

My reasons for attempting to include present day material in the script was primarily a way of reminding the audience that historical drama, like science fiction, is never about history, and always about now. I hoped that by these constant niggling reminders the audience would be forced to think of the characters and story as contemporary.

This doesn't conflict with attempting to maintain historical accuracy when representing reported historical fact within the script.

## Historical accuracy

Early in my candidacy I was told that early First Fleet Australian history would be easy to research since it is such well covered territory. To the contrary, although there is much written about the early days of the colony, the first three weeks are almost invisible. There are only a dozen primary sources and they are



sketchy, conflicting, or obviously written at a later date. There are huge wonderful holes in the timeline that leave room for imagined interactions, and conclusions drawn in the gaps between one recorded event and the next. I thought I had stuck strictly to the facts as presented, but on reconsideration I notice that I've gone down the path of interpretation way past the point of historical accuracy, well I used what I wanted.

The first problem was the opening sequence on board the *Supply*. Very late in the writing process I discovered that there were no convicts on the *Supply*; there goes McEntire, and his confrontation with the exercising convicts. Of course there could be loopholes; it's possible that Phillip returned to the *Sirius* in Botany Bay. I chose to continue with that scene for the dramatic convenience of gathering all of the groups involved in one place at one time. I continued Phillip's use of the *Supply* for the same reason, it is confusing enough that the fleet splits on the way up the coast, having Phillip jumping from one ship to another doesn't advance the story. It was easier to keep it all together.

Tench is another of those historical problems. I became caught up with his character as I read through his journals, as many people have. That was the Tench that I wrote into the script. Only on recent reflection did I consider his relationship with Phillip doesn't reflect the propriety of Tench's position within the marine hierarchy. As a possible loophole, I'm choosing to think that the dislike later shown by Phillip of Ross, he transferred Ross to Norfolk Island in 1790 (Tench & Flannery 1996, p. 121), is already a problem that Phillip is struggling to work around.

John McEntire<sup>1</sup> possibly presents the greatest digression from historical accuracy. I happen to think not. He leaped at me when I was looking for Phillip's antagonist. I found him in Tench's journal, charging around the country drawing hatred and abhorrence from every Aboriginal who encounters him. (Tench & Flannery 1996, pp. 135,148,164) It took me several weeks to realise that he was a convict. From all of the references to him I drew the conclusion that there must be much more to his relationship with Phillip that is only hinted at in Tench.

These are the small things, the liberties that you take with historical events to work them into a dramatic story. Aboriginal stories are much more difficult. Early in my research I found myself faced with a lot of expectations to emphasis the Aboriginal side of the story. Again I came up against my three week timeline, and historically there just aren't that many encounters. I was pointed toward Rhys Jones' essay (Jones 1985), which I always think of as the *Edge of the trees* (Emmett et al. 2000), from the installation at the Museum of Sydney. Jones' essay suggests that too much of our historical viewpoint is white; the men looking from the ships to the shore, rather than the view of those standing on the shore.

I took issue with this, and spent too much of the year arguing with myself over where one draws the continental line, (too much children overboard), and wondering why the Aboriginals would be hiding among the trees when the fleet arrived rather than carrying out their business on their shore and in their water.

After reading, *Invisible Invaders* (Campbell 2002), and considering that Cook had spent time in Botany Bay, the sight of white people would not be that surprising. *Invisible Invaders*

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<sup>1</sup> My spelling of McEntire is taken from Tench's journal, there are several other spellings of his surname, I chose Tench's for obvious reasons.



(Campbell 2002), tracks the path of infection as smallpox is transferred from the far north of Australia to Sydney in 1790. The path of infection relied on contact between numerous groups making frequent meetings across Australia. I drew from this, right or wrong, that stories must travel with the smallpox, and that such consistent, almost predictable contact also implied a bush telegraph. I doubt that the idea of travelling strangers was unexpected.

I could not make anything of the big drama of encounters between the First Fleeters and local Aboriginals, those opening exchanges, as reported, don't include great fights, or conflicts, or debates about land rights. In my reading, they mostly involved curiosity and caution on all sides.

## Genre

### Costume drama

Historical drama comes with baggage. Costume drama conjures images of sumptuous production design, a feast for the eyes and possibly a consequent thinness of plot. I recall watching a BBC production of a Jane Austen novel. It was shot with the early tube video cameras so that every scene with extreme contrast – like a candle carried through a dark room – showed up the limitations of the technology with a persistent glowing trail of where-the-candle-had-been. That production also included exterior hand-held camerawork. I read it as jarringly cinema verite and action-style camerawork, out of context in a genre governed by lingering shots of the luscious production design.

There is a constant contradiction in historical films. As viewers we cannot get away from the means of production being out of context with the period that they are portraying. For me this is limited to specific genres. Fantasy, science fiction, action – those film genres that are most explicitly fictional don't concern me; it's easy to suspend

my disbelief and submerge myself in the fiction rather than the mechanics of production. It is that genre of historical films, costume dramas that catch my eye and drags me out of the story to the edge of the frame and the methods of production.

My ire isn't limited to films presenting historical truth, but also to historical fictions. Adaptations of the novels of Jane Austen appear to me as being one with films presenting themselves as historical truth.

There are rules to the costume drama as it is presented on film. Subdued 'naturalistic' lighting – from the extremes of the candle-lit *Tom Jones* (Fielding et al. 1963), to the ballroom sequences of *The portrait of a lady* (Campion et al. 1997) – the room had one wall of windows, all of which were crammed with high-powered lights perched up on scaffolding that ran the length and height of the building (Gentry 1997). This lighting in theory presents as close to what light would be available in a pre-electrical age. Except that almost nothing can be shot within those limitations. The balance between showing up the costumes and sets and keeping within the artificial strictures of no electric lights always loses out to the pretty pictures when taken over the course of a film.

Camera techniques have a similar set of guidelines. Calling them guidelines is apt, because it is not so much that they are the unbreakable rules of costume drama production, but that they work and everyone tries to break them without much success.

Costume drama camerawork is essentially slow. It is full of long static shots, lots of time to admire the scenery and the background. If the camera needs to move it moves slowly and smoothly. Show-off crane shots that start on an ant and end in the clouds have no place in costume drama. Hand held camerawork also has no place in costume drama, it smacks, to me, of too much gritty reality.

## Structure

### The problem of the women

Lack of a female character is not necessarily a problem in all films. It became a problem for me, when combined with a lack of other audience/marketing factors, and because it became a distraction in my research process.

I could not find a way to include a major female character within the story. Some possibilities present themselves, there were no shortage of women convicts, but to follow my plan to limit my story only to those first days bounded by first sight of Botany Bay, and the morning after the storm, I didn't leave myself much leeway to present a woman's story. All of the female convicts were kept on the ships until tents were erected to house them. This wasn't completed until the afternoon before the storm. She could have been the wife of an officer or a marine, but I couldn't find any evidence of one of these women landing before the convict women, and although I could imagine an excursion on shore during those first weeks, it doesn't leave much opportunity to develop the story unless the greater part of it is set on board a boat. That removes my story from engaging with the landscape and would take the rest of the major characters back to the boats. A film set on boats did not seem a great way to show the colony's first encounter with a new land.

I could have attempted a woman character in disguise as a man, but that seemed like a narrative conceit, and I couldn't imagine a way of doing it without her overtaking the rest of the story, which would have then taken me away from historical accuracy. I could have made McEntire a woman secretly dressed as a man. Problem solved, Phillip's attraction to McEntire would be easily explained, and that difficult homosexual attraction would have been diluted. A cross-



dressing convict would have taken me a long way from my comfort zone with the story and suspension of disbelief.

In an early draft I opened the story with Phillip writing a letter to his wife. I was looking at ways to engage with his character as I was developing the story and I wondered what would lead this man to leave a comfortable semi-retirement on a seriously risky undertaking that would keep him away from home for at least five years. It provided an interesting means of exposition, but ran into serious plot problems on later analysis. I started asking myself questions about what the audience would expect from a story that started with my main character engaging by letter with his wife. My expectations, on reading, were of a story about a man and his wife. By opening the story in that way it also implied to me a face to face engagement between Phillip and his wife at some later point. I abandoned that story line since it strongly conflicted with my timeline and abandoned the idea of a major female character.

As an attempt to correct some of that imbalance I chose a female voice for the introductory narration. It doesn't make up for the absence of female characters, instead it draws attention to it, which may or may not be a successful method of reducing perceived audience problems with that lack.

*Perfidious Albion* already has problems of marketability, the lack of a female character adds to it. However, there are numerous successful films without a major female character. The several version of *Mutiny on the Bounty* (Brando et al. 1997; Donaldson et al. 2000; Laughton et al. 2001) come to mind.

## Character

### Phillip and McEntire

Phillip was an easy and obvious choice as a protagonist. The more I read of him, the more fascinated I became at the contradictions within his character. There are stories about him that come up again and again, such as his diligence in provisioning the fleet, and his insistence on quality supplies for the convicts. As a result of this diligence, the First Fleet had a tiny death rate in comparison to later transports. Stories such as this show Phillip as a meticulous planner, in the face of government pressure he delayed leaving England until all of the supplies were procured. In contrast, Phillip faced a number of obstacles to his establishment of the colony, pressure from the government in England to establish their colony and not his, reluctance of his colonists, the pressures of leadership, maintaining the rule of law and resisting dissent and mutiny, obstacles of landscape such as Botany Bay being unsuitable, the hardness of the timber, the sheer foreignness of Australia.

Phillip has to overcome these obstacles to establish the colony, but none of them are represented by a single character. I felt that not having a single antagonist to go up against Phillip was a real problem. My plan for Phillip's antagonist was to present him with character who would be a constant source of conflict without being his nemesis. A subplot rather than the main story.

The best way to describe the relationship between Phillip and McEntire, and the irreconcilable views of McEntire, from Phillip, from the rest of the world and that of McEntire himself, is to look at what Tench has to say.

On the death of McEntire, and his self-interpretation -

“The poor wretch now began to utter the most dreadful exclamations, and to accuse himself of the commission of crimes of the deepest dye, accompanied with such expressions of his despair of God’s mercy as are too terrible to repeat.” (Tench & Flannery 1996, p. 166)

The impression of the wider world -

From the aversion uniformly shown by all the natives to this unhappy man, he had long been suspected by us of having in his excursions shot and injured them. To gain information on the head from him, the moment of contrition was seized. On being questioned with great seriousness, he, however, declared that he had never fired but once on a native, and then had not killed but severely wounded him, and this in his own defence. Notwithstanding this death-bed confession, most people doubted the truth of the relation, from his general character and other circumstances. (Tench & Flannery 1996, p. 166)

Phillip directs Tench to lead a punitive expedition to avenge McEntire’s death and return with the heads of ten Aboriginal men from Botany Bay. On Tench’s questioning this unprecedented death sentence Phillip says,

but in this business of McEntire, I am fully persuaded that they were unprovoked, and the barbarity of their conduct admits of no extenuation; for I have separately examined the sergeant, of whose veracity I have the highest opinion, and the two convicts; and their story is short, simple and alike. (Tench & Flannery 1996, p. 169)

These passages confirm for me just how far the universal condemnation is of McEntire, and how far Phillip is willing to shut his ears to any words of dissent. Tench in his diplomatic way never states it directly, never even hinting at Phillip’s emotions as he orders Tench on the expedition, although moments after calling for ten executions Phillip asks Tench if he can suggest any changes to the plan and they negotiate ten, to six, to two.



In three pages from *Tench*, we meet McEntire the monster and Phillip who, even when carried away with grief, is still questioning the fine moral balance of his vengeance.

## Things that didn't get done

I always intended the story to be focused mostly on Phillip's interpretation of events and as such, expected it to be a script with a limited number of characters. Even with this in mind I have carried a worry that I had too few characters doing too many jobs. Maybe there isn't a solution within the story as it is.

In the current draft, the only present day material is the bookends of Helen's voice over and the scenes of the Sydney to Hobart race and the New Year's Eve celebrations at the start and the end. My intent was to include present day material throughout the script. I deleted all of it when it became clear that rather than adding depth to the story it was drawing the reader's attention away from the drama.

One way of implementing this idea that interested me, was to open the story with Phillip debating Helen's introduction with a rebuttal of her comparison of the First Fleet's journey to that of the flight to the moon. It would take the script into a whole new direction.

## Australia Day

One of the great ironies, and a completely surprising discovery in itself, was the events of the 26<sup>th</sup> of January. I had always assumed, with no detailed knowledge, that the Australia Day that we observe would be the first landing of the First Fleet. The first surprise was that the 26<sup>th</sup> was days after they both arrived, and landed, and that the only event of note on the 26<sup>th</sup> is that it is the day the First Fleeters secure Camp Cove from the possibility of the French taking it. It is possibly not quite so likely that the French were going to take Camp Cove for themselves. Again, reporting of those dates is conflicting, but



my reading was of the French arrived in Botany Bay on the 26<sup>th</sup>. So Australia Day is celebrated as the day that maybe someone else wanted it, so we surely wanted it. It makes an uncertain start to the colony. Unfortunately, much as I wanted to I couldn't find a way to bring this into the script without way too much irritating cleverness or text telling us it is Australia Day on the screen. Even if I did all that, I doubted that a non-Australian audience would get the joke, and all of the text and cleverness would just take away from the story.

## Lord Sydney

At a later point in the development I ran into problems with Lord Sydney. I had a brainstorm that there needed to be an engagement with Lord Sydney back in England. I wrote an elaborate scene, full of all of the costume drama frills that I have denied Phillip. It included an elaborate ballroom, huge crowds of London aristocracy dressed to the nines at a ball; and Lord Sydney and a crony discussing Phillip's progress in the foreground. Unfortunately this also just didn't work. I couldn't find a way to return to Lord Sydney more than the once within my timeline, more than one packet of letters being delivered to him in that time again stretched my credibility beyond the point where I could write that story, and I couldn't find a convincing short plot to warrant a return to Lord Sydney without a motivation from events occurring in the new colony. In the end it seemed best to stick with Phillip and other early colonists' points of view.

## Analysis for future drafts

### Phillip and McEntire

The story between Phillip and McEntire loses momentum once the action moves to Camp Cove. Although they have several scenes together the conflict that started on the beach at Botany Bay isn't

carried through and this weakens the Camp Cove section of the script leaving it a little slow and directionless.

The primary convention of the *Disillusionment Plot* is a protagonist who holds high ideals or beliefs, whose view of life is positive. Its second convention is a pattern of repeatedly negative story turns that may at first raise his hopes, but ultimately poison his dreams and values, leaving him deeply cynical and disillusioned. (McKee 1998, p. 87)

While re-examining the script I realised that it follows the disillusionment plot as described above, except that Phillip's ending is currently equivocal and mildly upbeat, which diverges from McKee's definition of the disillusionment plot.

Phillip and McEntire form the classic character duality. They are opposite sides of the same coin. Phillip is beset by moral quandaries, and can be almost immobilised by the need to do the right thing. McEntire is a moral vacuum. He will follow any impulse, whatever the consequences, relying on his charm to get him out of trouble. As the story progresses the behaviour of both characters escalates.

### Act one – Botany Bay won't work

The first turning point for Phillip and McEntire is the moment on the beach at Botany Bay when Phillip betrays McEntire by forcing him into the humiliating position of stripping in front of the other Englishmen and the local Aboriginals (scene 18, p. 23). This does not coincide with the turning point for the main story – establishing the colony – which occurs when Phillip decides that there is no chance of establishing the colony in Botany Bay (scene 20, p. 26).

### Act two – Securing Camp Cove

I feel there is a strong argument for the second act to start from the Cook Book scene where Phillip asks the Middie to point out Port Jackson (scene 22, p. 27), continuing through the discovery of Camp

Cove, with the climax of the act at the arrival of the French (scene 33, p. 36), and concluding with the claiming of Camp Cove (scene 41, p. 48).

### Act three – Setting up camp

With this structural breakdown the third act would start from Phillip requesting Ross' assistance with supervision of the convicts (scene 43, p. 49), this act follows McEntire's escalating attempts to disrupt Phillip's endeavours while Phillip, having solved the problem of location in the previous act, battles the laziness, indifference, and intractability of convicts and marines. This act concludes with Phillip's return to Camp Cove to discover that Ross has completed the tent town, unloaded the women convicts, and started the party (scene 99, p. 102).

### Act four – Breaking it down/loss of faith

The fourth act covers the party and follows the final betrayal of Phillip's faith in all of his supposed supporters, and Phillip's loss of faith with himself. It starts at Phillip on his verandah (scene 101, p. 102), reaching a climax at Phillip's loss of faith with himself and the climax of the Phillip and McEntire story (scene 108, p. 104), and concluding with Phillip's passing out that night (scene 111, p. 106).

### Resolution

The conclusion begins the next morning with Phillip surveying the wreckage of his dreams, his clean-slate epiphany (scene 116, p. 107), and his admonition of his entire population.

If you discard the idea of having four acts, then act two and three are combined to form one fat second act of almost seventy-five pages. That I am able to define an extra act is an indication of the problem.



As can be seen from the uncertainty of my definitions of the third and fourth act there is work needed to be done.

My plan is to strengthen the Phillip/McEntire story. At present through the third act McEntire is escalating his action to disrupt Phillip's establishment of the colony, but Phillip spends very little time either being disturbed by it, realising that McEntire is the architect of his trouble, or in scenes with McEntire in which they have developing conflict.

I think that similar editing needs to be done through the third act to accentuate Phillip's downward spiral of moral indecision.

The second act also concerns me. At under twenty-five pages, it is both too short for a mid-script act, and too long to comfortably tack onto the end of the first act. Of most concern is that neither the Phillip/McEntire nor the Phillip/Ross plots are significantly advanced in this section.

I created this problem by not being clear how the relationship of Phillip to McEntire works. My original plan for the script was a simple story structure. Phillip is trying to establish the colony. The difficulty with this is that there isn't a single character obstructing him in this. Instead there is the inappropriateness of Botany Bay in the first act, the risk of losing the Camp Cove to the French in act two, Phillip's loss of faith in humanity in the third act, and Phillip's loss of faith in himself in the fourth act.

I introduced McEntire as an antagonist who would continue complicating Phillip's life throughout the script. He was never intended as Phillip's nemesis. Unfortunately, I think I lost track of this in the current draft. This is particularly reflected in the third act where it is not clear why McEntire is doing what he is doing. Is he trying to get Phillip's attention? Is he really trying to destroy the

colony? I don't think so. Is he just a troublemaker? I think that once these questions are answered the structural problems will be resolved.

## Conclusion

*Perfidious Albion* is an increasingly subjective and fictionalised, contemporary, examination of the three weeks in 1788 starting with the arrival of Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet in Botany Bay, climaxing in the Southerly buster and torrential thunderstorm that follows the landing of the women convicts, the ensuing mass rape/orgy, and culminating in the hungover lecture-from-the-headmaster pull up your socks or be flogged speech the next morning.

On a more intimate level it follows the path of Arthur Phillip's disillusionment. He betrays his station to find a confidante in the convict John McEntire. As a result of this difficult relationship of special privileges he leaves the door open for all corruption to destroy the utopian dreams he holds for his new colony. His eventual rejection of McEntire and discovery that the settlement has been washed clean by the storm are bitter rewards for the work that will come before him.

In the process of writing *Perfidious Albion* I have examined the concerns of audience, historical accuracy, genre, structure, character, and things not done. The result is the current draft. The analysis of the script in this exegesis has led me to a plan and a new set of problems for the next draft.

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