

"Brazil" Script Development

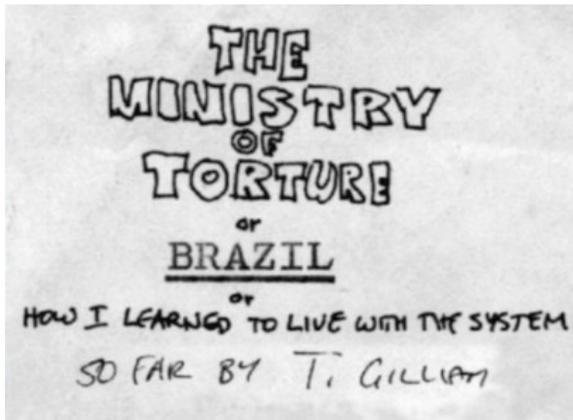
An analysis of screenplays and treatments for the Terry Gilliam film created by Gilliam, Charles Alverson, Charles McKeown and Tom Stoppard

By David Morgan

In this article the development of the script for "Brazil" is examined, including a synopsis of the original treatment by Terry Gilliam, and a comparative analysis of the contributions made to subsequent drafts by Charles Alverson, Tom Stoppard and Charles McKeown.

Note: The spelling of names fluctuated from one draft to another (i.e., Helpman/Helpmann). For clarity's sake, they are made consistent here.

Original Treatment



In this 89-page draft, there are long, extraordinarily elaborate descriptions of the environment, and little dialogue (though in a few scenes there is dialogue that survives intact into the final film). Many of the salient points of the final film's plot exist, though often in different contexts; more surprising is how the characters' personalities differ markedly from those in the film.

Sam Lowry is more of a milquetoast when it comes to making advances toward a beautiful woman (who obviously wants

him), and yet more keen to express anger (he easily lets the Kurtzmann figure have it with both barrels).

Unlike the film's Mr. Kurtzmann, the Head of Records puts on a noisy show of power for his staff, and does not reveal his weakness or seediness - to Sam or anyone. He is overbearing, belligerent, and quick to castigate Sam for being late *twice* in four years (rather than commiserating with him about faulty electricity).

There are also ideas which appear this early in the script process: the paying of interrogation charges by the victims; the plastic smoothness to Dr. Jaffe's skin; and Jill Layton's work as a truck driver.

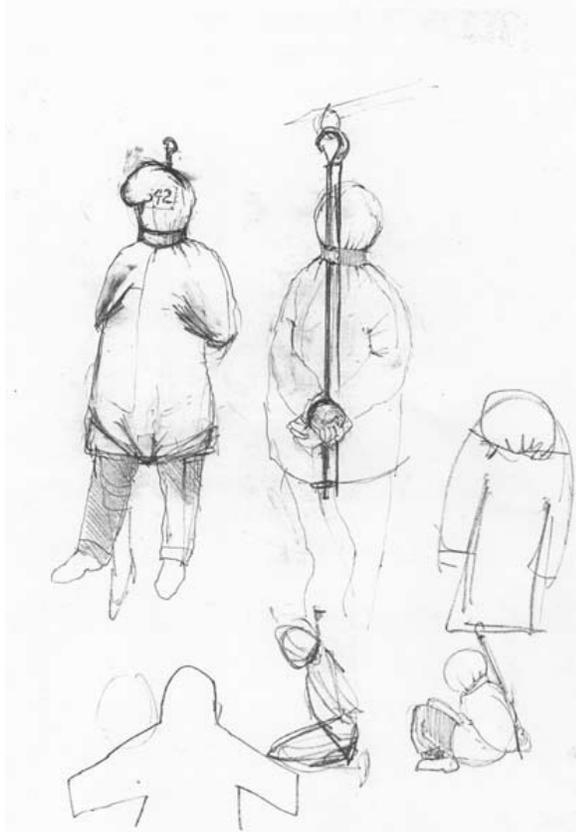
Synopsis

The script opens on the inky blackness of space, studded with distant stars. With the strains of Ry Cooder's "Marie Elena" in the background, we see one star grow larger, closer, until it is revealed to be the window of a bare, cell-like room inhabited by an elderly couple . . . bare, that is, except for ducts.

While the woman blissfully knits baby clothing, the old man happily shakes a stuffed teddy bear at the interior of a crib, a crib we discover to be empty. "Who are we to judge how others get their happiness?" the script asks.

After ominous shots cutting back-and-forth to the front door's slowly-turning doorknob, the couple is startled by the entrance of a pack of battle-dressed, overly-armed soldiers. The terrorized woman watches as

her husband is wrestled to the ground, thrust into a canvas bag, and locked into a metal brace that goes around his neck and down his back.



An officious little man in a trench coat then enters, reads some official-sounding documents, signs a form, and deposits a copy in the hands of the anguished woman. It is a receipt for her husband.

Under the opening credits this same piece of paper floats through the air to the tune of "Brazil," as it passes from hand to hand, stopping long enough for us to read selected paragraphs that attest to the brutal efficiency of the Ministry of Torture (now incorporated into the Ministry of Information - they just haven't the budget to print new letterheads).

A handwritten citation by Gilliam suggests that these passages be recited by schoolchildren (in a civics class?); we hear for example Section 8, Paragraph LV: "To

facilitate reimbursement to the Ministry, this receipt constitutes, if necessary, direct access to the detainee's banks account/s, and/or source/s of income. In certain circumstances extended-payment facilities can be made available."

As the credits end, the camera passes between row upon row of tall, Uriah Heep-like clerk's desks. A constant rain of canisters arriving via pneumatic tubes deposits mountains of paperwork to be processed. The film's celebrated tracking shot exists here, but the POV is from a low cart being pushed by a dwarfish office boy, collecting reams of papers as he passes each desk ("Brazil" by way of "Time Bandits").

The office boy is abruptly waylaid by the Head of the Department, "a towering mass of meat kitted out in a 1930s styled double-breasted suit that appears to be buttoned wrongly . . . whose shadow pinions the nervous lacky to the floor."

"Where's Lowry?" he yells as he fiddles with his buttons. No one knows, and Lowry's desk shows no sign of having been disturbed by work this morning.

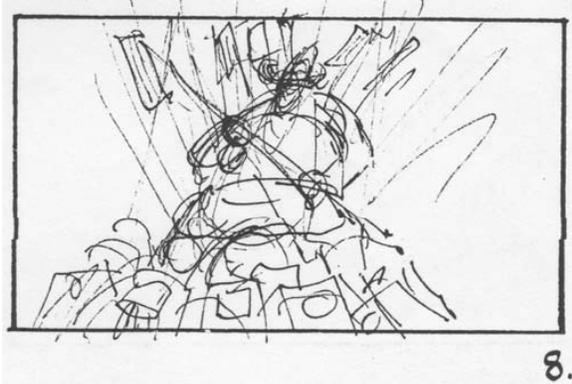
Cut to a brilliant clear sky. An object hurtles through the clouds - it is a stone cube, 10 feet square at each side. Attached by a heavy metal strap and manacles is Sam Lowry, dressed as a cross between Flash Gordon and a WWI ace. He is outfitted with wood-and-metal bird's wings.

Although he hears a distant female voice pleading for help, Sam cannot extricate himself from the cube, which plummets earthward, past skyscrapers made of brick. Crashing to the ground, Sam is freed from the cube. Unhurt, he heads off in the direction of a strange procession snaking through the skyscrapers.

Sinister black-robed, helmeted and heavily-armed figures march on, pulling a mammoth cube made of large granite blocks, resembling the Kaaba in Mecca. Tied

to columns on this cube is Sam's Dream Girl, busily screaming her pretty little head off . . . until Sam arrives waving a sword.

The Forces of Darkness lunge at Sam, but he bravely leaps into the mass of bad guys and proceeds to wipe them out. Then from the cube emerges a nine-foot-tall Samurai warrior, and he and Sam do battle (much as in the film).



Flames pour forth from the fallen giant's wounds, and as Sam removes his mask, he sees his own face. After climbing back onto the cube, Sam awakens to his ringing telephone . . .

Sam races to get dressed as his kitchen and bath automatically prepare his morning ablutions and meal. Except for the alarm, these devices all work properly, unlike those in the film.

At the office, Sam intrudes upon Head, who is struggling with his jacket buttons. Sam is berated for having been late, again. Head alludes to the new Minister who will not tolerate such sloppiness. Sam returns to his desk and meticulously sets about work, falling into his well-practiced rhythms, unconcerned about rumors that, with the new Minister in place, heads will roll.

Sam goes to the stockroom, to request a pad of G1738 forms from the grandmotherly Mrs. Thromboid. She climbs up an extremely tall ladder, along a vast wall of file drawers that seems to stretch out to infinity. From beyond this room we hear muffled

screams; Mrs. Thromboid complains how they haven't properly soundproofed due to budget cutbacks.

At the water fountain Sam chats with a clerk named Clerk Kent, who is astonished at the revised interrogation rates and the extra paperwork involved. In the background we see elevators carrying uniformed guards escorting hooded and manacled detainees, while Sam reflects Kent's amazement: "Ridiculous ... a 12% surcharge if liquids are used!"

At the sound of the lunch siren Sam heads out to meet his Mother, who sits in a plastic surgeon's chair, her flabby face reflected in triplicate in a three-paneled mirror (an allusion to the triplicate forms that Sam processes?). As her jowls are stretched like silly putty, the doctor prattles on: "You can see the difference immediately. 20 years disappeared!"

Mother admonishes Sam for not showing more ambition regarding his position, comparing him negatively to his father: "You know how much he wanted you to follow in his footsteps."

Cut to a *tres*-chic restaurant, where a short, plump, fussy maitre d' escorts Sam and Mother to Mrs. Terrain's table. In the center of the very sophisticated room, which is decorated with trellises, marble columns, antique mirrors and potted palms, is a great automated food and drink dispenser. Ducts intrude everywhere.

Mother asks Sam to be their waiter, and he gamely walks up to the imposing food dispenser. An overly solicitous female voice takes his order, and each entree is discharged through brass-framed glass hatch doors (along with a receipt). Sam bumbles a hot plate and spills gravy on his trousers; the coffee dispenser sprays liquid onto his suit as well. We later see other patrons wearing evidence of similar mishaps.

Mother and Mrs. Terrain debate the merits of their respective plastic surgeons' treatments, and Mother enthuses about the latest gift idea: Medical gift tokens. We do not meet Mrs. Terrain's daughter (here named Lucy), but the proud mother gushes over her girl's own medical progress: "The scars have completely healed and you hardly notice the squint."

Later that afternoon, as Sam's shift ends, he squeezes onto an elevator and there runs into Jack Lint, a very keen junior exec-type ("possibly Sam's best friend if Sam were the kind to have best friends"). As they exchange pleasantries, the elevator stops to let off two guards and a hooded/manacled detainee. Lots of banter and good humor among the crowd: "Easy does it!" "Let the uniformed workers through!" "Lucky bastards, 9 to 5-ers."

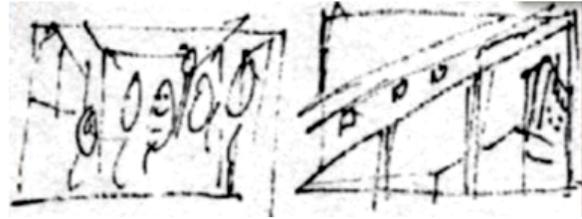
Sam and Jack pass through security checkpoints; it appears to be as difficult to get out of the Ministry as it is to get in. After Sam turns down yet another dinner invitation from his friend, Jack stands in awe of the new Minister, who is barely seen as he is shuffled through a parallel corridor by his bodyguards.

Jack mocks Sam for not sharing his enthusiasm about the trappings of power: "C'mon, Sam, what's the point of spending your life in the Ministry if you're not going to try for the top? ... Look at me, we both started at the same time and already I'm three grades up on you."

Sam tries to explain that he doesn't want the responsibility, and wants to limit his involvement. [In this respect, Sam shows slightly more awareness of the societal repercussions of the Ministry's work than he does in later versions, where he is more innocent and blithely accepting of what goes on in the name of anti-terrorism.]

We witness evening rush hour, in which cage-like elevated trains clatter along at different levels and angles; Sam hangs onto

his strap as the train ascends a steeply-angled enclosed track to a station in a tower.



Sam enters his apartment. "It is extremely simple and functional. There is little sense of individual personality on it. Books seem to be the only outstanding feature." Sam turns off a TV news bulletin about an explosion linked to terrorists, and relaxes to a good book and a bland TV dinner.

Sam eagerly gets ready for bed (even checking his breath in the bathroom, as if there were a girl waiting for him), and with an expectant look switches off the light. CUT to black ...

Sam's dream girl magically appears, as if out of pixie dust. She is riding on Sam's back as he flaps his wings, flying away from the brick skyscraper city. Sam assures her that he has lookouts watching out for them, as they touch down on a landscape composed of eyeballs scanning the skies.

Suddenly a terrible cracking sound is heard. Sam, the girl and the eyeballs all react in amazement as rips appear in the sky, first in one direction heading off to the horizon, then at right angles, forming a grid. One of the squares of sky then slides upwards, leaving a black hole in its place. One after another, blocks of sky disappear. The light fades almost to nothing.



Searching for a lantern, Sam tries to reassure the girl that they will be safe, but she has vanished. A maniacal laughter announces the entrance of a "horrible black flapping thing." Sam then finds himself clutching onto a tiny asteroid, sailing through interstellar space.

Discovering a metal hatch cover, Sam climbs into the asteroid, and through a door passes into a monumental stone hall (like an ancient temple) that seems to go on for miles. A bouncing blue ball captures Sam's interest, and he follows it down the hall to the ledge overlooking a vast chasm bordered by towering walls ("like the view down from the 50th floor of the Time Life building on 6th Ave in NYC").

Instead of windows, however, these walls are composed of file drawers - millions of them. Men raising themselves on window washer's platforms place people inside the individual drawers. It is the Repository of All Knowledge, and the people being filed are the great thinkers of the ages.



A Jolly Gent appears and explains to Sam that the entire world is depending upon Sam to rescue the day, and that he can glean the knowledge necessary to recover the day *and* his dream girl by entering a drawer. Sam complies, but feels claustrophobic and begins to panic, to sweat. He screams ...

Sam awakens to a busted thermostat. The temperature in his apartment is 96 degrees and climbing. The windows are screwed shut, but once he opens one a terrible green-brown smog pours into the room. Sam desperately shuts the window and replaces the screws.

Sam's call to Central Services only puts him onto a recording that "has *not* been a recording," but he finds a cheaply-printed business card advertising:

G. D. Tuttle
 Air Conditioning Specialists
 Any Time, AnyWhere
 Work done in strictest
 confidence
 946-754324 Hours

We hear on the line a hacking, phlegmatic Tuttle answering his phone. When Sam pleads that he has an air conditioning emergency, Tuttle takes down the address, but refuses to take Sam's name. "Stop, don't tell me. Better that I don't know, just in case."

Tuttle, in his late 50s, cautiously arrives shortly thereafter, dressed like a cross between a cat-burglar and a night-raid commando. "We'll call you Mr. X," he tells Sam, "just to be on the safe side. Discretion."



He easily handles the ducts, greasy pipes and wiring hidden behind a wall panel, as he lectures Sam on the quasi-legal nature of his work. Unable to complete the repair job, Tuttle clears up the mess, wipes off any incriminating fingerprints, and departs as unobtrusively as he came.

Now Sam returns to bed, and to his fantasy. The Jolly Gent has reopened the file drawer and Sam steps out, ready to proceed on his quest. Full of vigor, Sam's commanding presence speaks of courage and strength.

Returning through the ancient temple, he climbs out of the asteroid's hatch and throws out a rope ladder (which dangles upwards). Sam climbs up to a nearby planet, and steps out onto the top of a very thin, 100-foot tall column. Stranded, and with his wings hanging on a post some 40 feet away out of reach, he despairs, as taunting laughter cuts through the gloom.

In trying to fish for his wings with a hook and line, Sam accidentally triggers a mechanism (like an intergalactic loo handle!) that sends cascades of water rushing down upon him. As the water rises, Sam awakens ... to an overflowing bathtub.

Late for work again, Sam encounters a pair of Central Services repairmen who have arrived for their annual inspection. Spoor and Dowser are very miffed about having to re-schedule such an important matter, so Sam arranges to let them in when he gets home from work.

Sam arrives at the Records Department to find his desk missing - apparently a consequence of repeated tardiness. Sam storms into the Head's office and tells him off, but Head (still futzing around with his jacket buttons) reveals that Sam has been promoted. "But I don't want to be promoted," Sam says.

Cut to the fifth floor, where Sam is being welcomed by a burly Supervisor. Similarly to the swarm of expeditors hovering around Mr. Warren, this department's personnel dart out of their office doors trying to catch the Supervisor on the fly, and he offers curt, decisive replies to their queries.



Sam is shown his new office door with the newly-applied name, "F. Lowry." The letters are slightly crooked, and the Supervisor holds up his hand to obscure the errant initial. "Your very own name. On your very own door. And behind that door, your very own office!"

The room and furniture are bisected by a partition. There is no space under Sam's half-a-desk for his legs; as he rearranges the drawers the desk is pulled slightly into the adjoining room.



Investigating, Sam meets his neighbor, "a young, slimly hustling little junior executive creep named Lime." As introductions are made, Jack Lint joyfully bursts in to congratulate Sam on his promotion, and pulls him out for dinner with his wife, Allison.

Allison is an attractive, charming and effusive woman. She and Jack live in a nice modern apartment with all the amenities - they are definitely converts to a consumerist society. As Jack pontificates about the new wave of terrorist attacks, Allison gives Sam a present: a useless but stylish executive toy.

Just as dinner is being served, Sam remembers the appointment with the Central Services repairmen, and (with apologies) leaves. Allison and Jack's demeanor immediately turns from sunny to "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?":

ALLISON

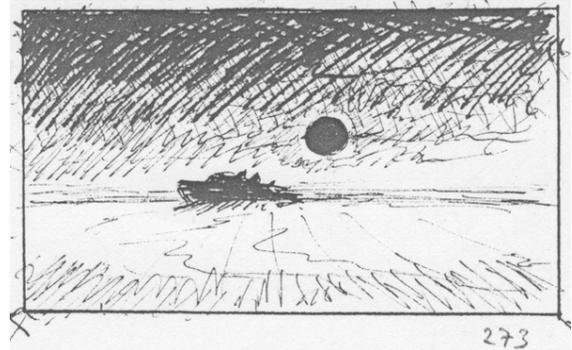
Why the hell do you ever bother inviting that little shit.

JACK

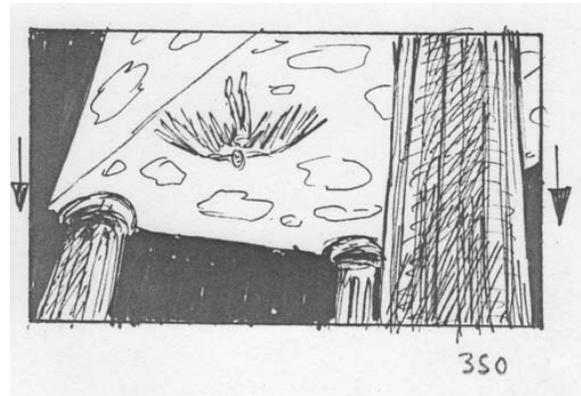
He's a friend, you bitch.

Arriving home, Sam finds Spoor and Dowser angry at having been kept waiting. He lets them in, and they begin their inspection - an all-night affair. As the two repairmen check over every gadget and every inch of ducting in the apartment, Tuttle shows up to finish his job. He retreats, but not without being glimpsed by Spoor, whose suspicions about Sam are now raised high.

Once Spoor and Dowser depart, leaving a right mess, we enter Sam's fourth dream, in which he encounters a huge ship listing to one side. Dark, evil, grey blocks of stone make up not only the ship's hull but its superstructure and smokestacks as well.



Sam enters and sees shrouded figures huddling together inside. Attracted to a light, he crawls through an opening and discovers four gigantic stone columns, on top of which rests a colossal transparent cube. Clouds are contained therein; it is the day, held prisoner.



Forces of Darkness set out from behind the columns. Sam unsheathes his sword and prepares to do them in, but he hears his Dream Girl's voice coming from beyond another opening guarded by two 15-foot-tall *golden chickens!*

Guarding the girl is a second battalion of Forces of Darkness. Sam must now choose: fight one army to release the sky, or fight the other to rescue the girl, for he could never hope to defeat *two* battalions of

Forces of Darkness! Save the world, or save the girl? Sam can't choose ... or at least doesn't before he wakes up.



Sam's kitchen appliances are starting to act up. (Is it Central Services sabotage?) But he heads for work, where he has wedged a desk drawer into the wall to forestall any further loss of desk.

Perusing his paperwork, he discovers an error. *Yikes!* He flags down the Supervisor for guidance, but finds he must sort this one out himself.

A bored Clerk O'thworks, whose wired hand takes steady dictation of a torture session, indicates to Sam that he may enter the office once the screaming has stopped. Inside Sam sees a large, white-tiled room, 50 feet wide, a perfect cube.

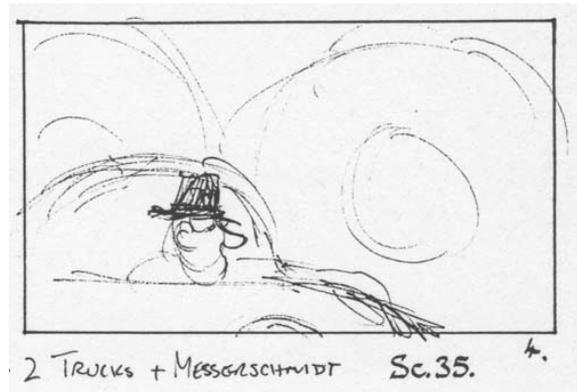
A chair and several unpleasant-looking objects rest in the middle of the room, where a charwoman is on her hands and knees mopping up a discreet puddle of blood. There is a small grill for drainage on the floor near her.



The Torturer is a jolly, bright-looking young executive, who turns to jelly when Sam informs him of a small discrepancy in the charge sheet for Unit 4977. The Torturer begs Sam to cover up the mistake - the new Minister would have his ass if this blot stains his otherwise exemplary record. Sam is moved by the groveling and promises to help, as a new "Unit" is brought in.

The Supervisor does not like hearing of an error ("I don't think I want to know," he tells Sam). But when Sam explains his problem to Jack Lint, it is suggested that the paperwork simply be lost. Sam argues that it is pointless to have all these rules if they aren't properly carried out. (Sam is nothing if not conscientious!)

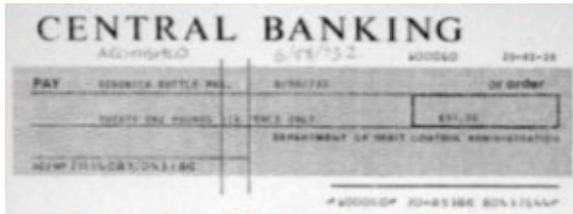
By his own initiative Sam has a check made out to Mrs. Tyler (the widow of Unit 4977), and peels out into the open countryside in a Messerschmitt auto. He is wearing "the steely glint of determination in his eyes. He knows he's doing the honorable thing."



He pulls up to a simple stone cottage on a lonely road, amidst a landscape of huge, white, vegetation-less peaks. The house is isolated save for the ducting that juts out of one wall and is strung (like telephone wire) on poles off into the distance.

When Sam tells a little kid that he is from the Ministry, the boy recoils in horror and vanishes into the house. Mrs. Tyler appears, wearing a frightened but determined expression that unsettles Sam.

He dutifully (and somewhat inconsiderately) lays out the facts of the error, namely that Mr. Tyler had been overcharged for his interrogation. Mrs. Tyler's composure erodes, calling Sam a bastard and to get out.



Sam reacts testily, revealing fear about his own position at the office rather than concern for the Tylers: "Dammit, I've gone through a lot of trouble to get this money for you. How can you be so ungrateful? I need your signature. This is really going to bugger up our books."

Finding all the tires on his car have been vandalized, Sam storms back to the house, railing with anger, but is disconcerted by the debilitating effect his presence has on them - this "official" visit has too many associations for them. His anger falters, and he sounds less convinced of his own beliefs:

SAM

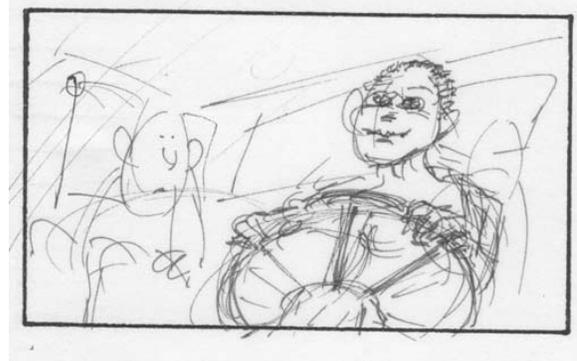
Listen, I'm sorry for coming in like that, but dammit, it's not my fault that your husband got himself into trouble. Anyway it's not like the old days, under the former government, where people just disappeared without their relatives knowing what happened to them. Everything is done very properly now. I'm sure you've been informed at every stage of the proceedings. Listen, try to think of it from the government's point of view. If people withhold information, the government is put at a great disadvantage. How can they expect to govern properly unless

they have as much information as possible?

Since the Tylers' phone does not work, Sam must hitch a ride back to the city. A bus won't pick him up (it's not an official stop), but he flags down a lorry, driven by a petite young woman.

Sam is hypnotized, for she looks familiar. Their conversation on the drive into town is stilted; a couple of overtures the woman makes to Sam are not picked up. He is unsure and self-conscious.

When they arrive at his stop, and he awkwardly prepares to leave, she grabs Sam and plants her tongue down his throat. The woman, named Jill Townsend, gives Sam her number, but surprises him when she reveals she already knows his name. Sam is "amazed, stunned, infatuated, perplexed, moist. Can this be love?"



Sam's view of the world takes on a brighter, rosier hue; the normally grim transport cages are now colorfully decorated and the passengers are festive and jolly. He practically dances down the hall to his apartment. ("Does this all sound a bit like 'Pennies from Heaven'? the script muses.) But a damper is put on Sam's high spirits when he sees, waiting at his door, Spoor and Dowser.

The repairmen proceed to complete their inspection. Hours pass. Just as Sam becomes engrossed in the midnight flick on TV ("An extraordinary scene involving a

beautiful lady, a blancmange, and a string quartet"), the power goes out. Spoor and Dowser, up to their armpits in mechanical entrails, are having the time of their lives.



Sam, meanwhile, nods off ...

In the fifth dream, Sam is hacking away at the Forces of Darkness. *Pow! Bif! Bam! Slash!* As the last evil creature is bisected, the columns holding the cube containing the sky begin to topple. The cube falls to the ground and shatters, thereby releasing the day. With the giant chickens now distracted, Sam slips past them to rescue the girl. *Slash! Bash! Slice! Rip!* The second battalion doesn't know what hit them.

The girl is freed from the bubble encasing her, but as she and Sam embrace, the chickens approach. He cannot get help from the shrouded figures (including Mrs. Tyler and her children) trapped with them in the great stone ship, so he concocts a plan: he and the girl get into a sack, which an approaching chicken then gobbles up. "And now," he says, "we just have to wait."

The chicken lays an egg, inside of which are Sam and Jill. The egg floats up out of the ship and into space, as they watch on a TV monitor. A tremendous red obelisk appears; its noisy rumbling causes cracks in the egg's shell. The egg loses altitude and crashes in the brick skyscraper city. Sam and Jill emerge covered in yolk.

As the dream girl leaves, saying she knows about "the other girl in his life," Sam is violently shaken out of bed. Spoor and Dowser stand over him, holding the broken thermostat (which resembles the red obelisk). Someone has been tampering, and they want answers. Sam, late AGAIN, rushes off to work.

At the office, Sam is being hounded by the Supervisor about the lost car. Tired and emotionally frail, Sam fantasizes seeing a beautiful garden through his office door. Jack comes in, warning Sam that his chances for promotion are now critically impaired.

Sam rages at him: "Get off my back! Can't any of you see past your own noses? Don't you ever think for just a moment the effects of all this shit?" (Sam is much more aware in this draft of his position - and culpability - within the system.)

The subject changes to the woman who drove Sam back. Apparently truck drivers in this society are predominantly women, who have the reputation for being fast and easy, and hell to tie down. (This is a gender-bending thematic device undeveloped in the finished film.)



Sam's attempts to contact Jill by phone fail. Her housing block, located in one of the more unpleasant parts of the city, is a converted power station. He spots posters of a strange, blurred face, with the words THE OPPRESSOR scrawled across. Everywhere he turns, Sam feels he is being watched.



At the office, Jack is flustered over the "Oppressor" posters that have been popping up all over the city, for they may be a picture of the new Minister, whom nobody has clearly seen: "If it is, it's a terrible breach of security," he worries.

Arriving at home, Sam races for the ringing telephone, but instead of Jill it is Mother inviting him to a party. It is then that Sam realizes his flat has been restored. His spirits pick up until - brushing his teeth - he spots an eyeball peering up at him from the plughole of his bathroom sink.

He moves to the left, then to the right; the eyeball following his movement. Turning the hot water on sends a screaming Spoor out from under the basin. Sam tosses him out on his ear, but Spoor mouths more threats.

A smiling Mother greets Sam at the door of her elegant apartment, looking not a day over 40. Mrs. Terrain, sadly, looks much worse from her treatments, but nonetheless she is amazingly confident in her doctor. Sam chafes at the unbearably smug, well-

heeled party guests, some of whom talk about terrorists.



Sam runs into Mr. Helpmann - an old friend of the family who shows a keen interest in Sam's career - but he makes his apologies and leaves.

In the sixth dream, Sam is searching again for his dream girl among the brick skyscrapers, while being pursued by yet more Forces of Darkness. He comes upon a street of lovely bijou terrace houses, in stark contrast to the towering monoliths that surround them. Sam enters one house, which he discovers to be alive; it is all that is left of the old world.

Black wrecking cranes approach; a voice is heard through a loud speaker, demanding that the houses release the traitor or they will be demolished. The dream girl stands outside, begging Sam to come out. Sam feels betrayed, as the wrecking ball smashes through the door of his house, sending not masonry flying but intestines, blood and organs. *Ecchhh!* What a way to wake up ...

The pile of papers on Sam's desk has reached dizzying heights (inversely proportional to the length of desk remaining on his side of the wall). All he can think of is Jill. But there is still the matter of the check to the Tylers to be taken care of. Inspired, Sam heads out to a truck stop.

Entering the cafe, Sam is at the receiving end of catcalls and whistles from the female

truckers. As he examines an "Oppressor" poster, Jill (or rather Jill's tongue) greets him, and leads him out with a picnic basket in tow, amid more knowing catcalls.

They dine before a billboard showing a picturesque Roman ruin whose columns remind Sam of his dreams; the surrounding area is littered with paper. "In its terrible way it is quite beautiful."

Gilliam's notes on the role reversal between Sam and Jill: "The girl is the glamorous cowboy or soldier, Sam is the girl infatuated with him. There is always an element of impending doom. The need to savour the moment. She may have to go away, may not return, there are things undone that she must deal with, etc. We normally accept this when the roles are the traditional way round in films. Can we accept it here? We must."

Sam awakens in bed, not from a dream but from the aromas of the breakfast that Jill has prepared. As they talk, Sam cannot get straight answers from her. There is a hint of desperation in their affair. Still, there is a new spirit about Sam. As he spies his briefcase with the Tyler paperwork, he decides to take the initiative - and dumps them into the disposal hatch.

As he opens the door to leave he is startled by a wave of soldiers that flattens him against a wall. The hood and manacles restrain him. The gent in trench coat and wide brim hat reads the standard statement and places the receipt for Sam on a nearby table. Witnessing the arrest outside are Spoor and Dowser, who smile: "We warned him, didn't we?"

Sam is seated in a chair that swivels in one direction, then another, to face blinding lights and a circle of strong-arm investigators who bombard him with questions. Photos flashed on the wall reveal incriminating scenes: sabotaged utilities in his flat, midnight meetings with notorious illegal operatives (Tuttle), frequenting

terrorist hangouts (the truckers' cafe), etc., etc.

Sam reveals nothing, but is shattered by the images flashed of Jill's bloodied body; she had been killed trying to escape.

Sam - officially now Unit 5476 - is processed through a gauntlet of clerks and orderlies. He is a non-entity to those dealing with the formalities of finger-printing, photographing, recording, measuring and credit checking Unit 5476, although he does receive copies of every form completed down the line. He is even given an instructional brochure on what to expect from his interrogation.



Sam is then taken to the Minister, whose face he cannot see in the dark and phenomenally vast hall. Once seated, Sam's chair rockets across the floor to within a few feet of his desk (later dramatized vertically in Bruce Willis' interrogation scene in "12 Monkeys").

The Minister orders the guards outside, and in private offers Sam a pistol with one bullet - which he tauntingly suggests Sam use on him. Sam denies being a terrorist, but that defense doesn't cut it with the Minister: "It doesn't really matter who you are. In the end most people discover they are guilty."

Reminded of Jill, Sam does pull the trigger. A mirror shatters. Sam had aimed at a mere reflection, and the Minister steps from the shadows, revealing himself to be Mr. Helpmann.

Now follows the big expository scene (you always get these at some point in a film like this!), in which the Minister explains how the system is out of control, and how he is as trapped by the machinations of the system as everyone else at the Ministry. The bureaucracy is SO big, SO insidious, that the right hand never knows what the left is doing.



In fact, he tells Sam, there are NO TERRORISTS - they've all been done away with long ago - so innocent people are continually made victims, but that's a small price to pay to preserve this key facet of the nation's economy.

In fact, some of these so-called terrorist actions are created by agent provocateurs working *for the Ministry!* And who should have been one but *Jill Townsend!* She had been trying to infiltrate groups of anti-terrorist Ministry agents who were posing as terrorist groups to entrap potential terrorists. (Got that?)

Now Sam must face Information Retrieval (a.k.a. torture). He is hooded, bound and escorted to the lift, where he overhears a conversation Jack Lint has with someone about Sam's curious absence these past two days: "He's damaging his chances for advancement!"

Sam is bound by electrically-operated clamps into a chair in the white-tiled Information Retrieval room. Electric cables snake through the room leading up to the

terrifying devices resting near him. There are surgical instruments, and a Black and Decker circular saw (not the kind of product plug they would likely approve).

The Torturer comes in, and Sam breathes a sigh of relief, for it is the same Torturer whom Sam covered up for about the overcharges. Surely he will return the favor? But no, the Torturer refers to Sam by his Unit number, and in a cold, programmed manner goes about his business. He prepares a suction device and places it under Sam's neck. Ready to begin, the Torturer slips on a horribly grinning Halloween mask.

Suddenly everything goes black. A power failure! *Central Services incompetence to the rescue!* Guards enter the room with flashlights and find the Torturer with a needle stuck in his hand. They begin searching for the escaped Sam.

The chase through the corridors is a dance of flashlight beams bounding up and down halls and around corners. The power outage and ensuing chaos convinces everyone that it is a terrorist attack. Armaments are broken out. Meanwhile, Sam has knocked out one guard and removed his uniform.

He makes it out of the Ministry building before the power comes back on, and rides away on a transport cage. But he spots two Ministry agents standing outside his apartment door, and so moves on.

He telephones his Mother but gets her answering machine - she's at the plastic surgeon's. Jack listens to Sam's predicament but is wary of bypassing normal procedures to enlist the Minister's help. Nonetheless, they agree to meet.

In a shopping district, Sam tries to appear inconspicuous while keeping an eye out for Jack. He sees more of the "Oppressor" posters, and realizes that they are advertising a play at a nearby theatre.

Jack approaches, walking into the wind. Blown papers catch on his foot, but he can't shake them off. Other papers, including "Oppressor" posters, wrap their way around him. Trying to free himself he falls to the ground, while shoppers ignore his travails. Sam watches in horror as Jack writhes on the pavement, a ball of paper.

Sam tries to extricate Jack but the papers flutter away, revealing no sign of Jack. All the shoppers have now stopped, and are staring at Sam. He is vulnerable.

Sam darts to the plastic surgeon's. Hanging in his operating theatre is the carcass of a cow, with sucking tubes leading off into a machine. The doctor directs Sam to Mother's favorite restaurant, and dials up once Sam leaves.

The Maitre d' leads Sam to Mother's table, where she is enjoying the attentions of three young men. In Mother's youthful appearance Sam sees his dream girl. As Mother tries to dismiss him, troops burst into the restaurant. Sam tries to escape, climbing over the string quartet, who are revealed to be mechanical dummies (Inspiration for the dismembered mannequins in the film's department store explosion?).

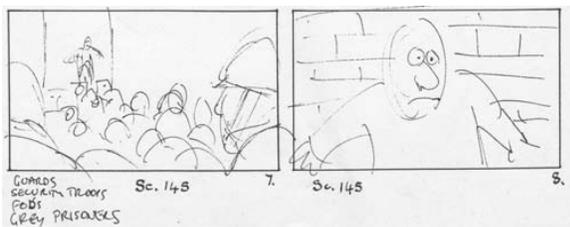
Running through a maze of machinery, Sam feels pursuing forces closing in on all sides. Turning a corner, he comes to a dead end. Climbing and digging through a pile of consumer junk, he stands back to the wall, as his pursuers approach. His hand finds a doorknob, and he dives through a doorway, coming out onto a beautiful garden. The doorway then vanishes.

He is left standing amidst beautiful trees and manicured hedges that stretch into the distance. He rushes to a girl, Jill, who assures Sam that they are now safe. They stroll off into the garden, music swelling. A happy ending ...

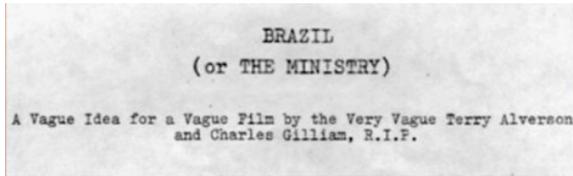
... That is, until two unpleasant faces appear HUGE in foreground, looking directly into camera. They shake their heads in disgust and frustration. Nope, they agree, there is no way we're going to get anything out of him. The bastard got away.

We see Sam in a straitjacket, scrunched in one corner of his cell. His face is wreathed in a benign and very happy smile. His eyes are miles away.

The two agents leave and lock the door, as "Marie Elena" is heard once again. "The camera pulls back and back. The cell begins to float off into the sky. A beautiful sky. It becomes a speck and eventually disappears completely. The End."



Second Draft and Notes



Subsequent drafts and notes were prepared by Gilliam with longtime friend Charles Alverson, a former editor of *Help!* Magazine, and the co-screenwriter (with Gilliam) of "Jabberwocky."

In this version, the plot of Gilliam's first treatment was not changed substantially, in terms of the order of scenes. Many scenes were presented here as mere summaries, with somewhat cheeky text stringing them together. (The writers even manage to quote a negative review of "Jabberwocky" from the *Fort Worth Star-Gazette!*) The dream sequences were left intact, but the page count was down to 52.

The descriptive copy also gave a more formidable sense of the characters' environment and how it shapes their lives, in language reminiscent of Tom Robbins: "It is neither future nor past, and yet a bit of each. It is neither East nor West, but could be Belgrade or Scunthorpe on a drizzly day in February. Or Cicero, Illinois, seen through the bottom of a beer bottle ..."

Place becomes even more of a character in this version, as evident from the following text: "Ignore Mrs. Terrain. She's just a gimmick, a cheap gag. It's the restaurant that is the thing here." Also introduced: Mrs. Terrain's "barely eligible daughter," and the fact that Jack Lint is the torturer whose "accounting" error it was that Sam catches.

One curious name change is that Central Services is now *General Services* - a poor choice for such a universally intrusive outfit, it is switched back by the next draft. There is

also new information incorporated into the text, some of dubious importance ("Meat is very expensive").

The overall effect of Gilliam and Alverson's collaboration in this treatment is that the story became a bit more grounded. More backstory is given on the government and its bureaucracy. Emphasis was changed; some of the weirder elements were toned down or replaced (for example, instead of kootchy-cooing a non-existent baby, the old man pets a lap dog).

Changes in the Narrative and Characterization

The script suggests a more touchy-feely encounter between Sam and the widow to whom he delivers a refund check. They have "a human to human talk and Sam comes to understand why she can't accept the refund cheque and to wonder just a bit about the system itself." This point of transformation gains and loses importance in subsequent drafts.

Sam watches the girl ("whose name is either Jill or Ezekiel") repair a breakdown in her truck before stopping at a roadside cafe. He is impressed by the truckers' joie de vivre, but he senses something sinister. Perhaps it is the girl, for she is more clearly linked to terrorism here.

Jill does not give Sam her phone number; instead, she insists that she must contact him. But Sam has noted her cap-badge number.

Sam's television blares a news flash about a raid on a certain roadside cafe (guess which?) where a flock of suspected terrorists was apprehended and carted away. But Sam misses this impressive bit of coincidence, for he is in dreamland once again.

Lime also gets to enjoy a few more digs into Sam; once, after Sam returns from a tongue lashing by his Supervisor, Lime is seen

replacing the telephone in Sam's office, saying that some girl was trying to reach Sam but wouldn't leave a name or number. Lime happily reminds Sam that he's not supposed to receive personal phone calls at work.

Sam goes to the Central Records Office and looks up the badge number he took down (using the system to his own ends). Pulling out Jill's personnel file, he discovers a photo which is *not the Jill he met!*

Meanwhile, Jack has gotten a promotion from Information Retrieval to the Propaganda (and Anti-Propaganda) Department. Jack goes to meet him at an orientation meeting, and slips into the back of a darkened lecture hall. Flashed on a giant screen is a huge, menacing, slightly vague photograph of a man, with the words "The Oppressor" scrawled above his head.

The paper that litters the picnic scene is revealed in this draft to be documents that Sam has taken from the office, and is disposing of them with all due respect.

"I'm breaking loose," he tells her. "I'm changing my life. Help me!" Jill humors him and they have a euphoric good time throwing away the last of the paper and then embrace.

(This scene develops later into the burst-pipe paper blizzard and the litter lady.)

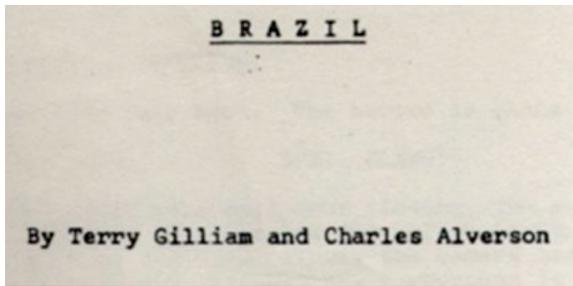


Jack Lint is the torturer on duty when Sam is brought in for interrogation. After Sam

escapes during the power outage, he calls Mr. Helpmann for help (how stupid can you get?), and waits in the shopping district. When Helpmann arrives, it is *he* who becomes entangled in floating papers that stick to him, envelop him, and then mail him off to the Great Beyond.

Text: "Incidentally, we note that one of the shops is a phonograph record establishment, and that one LP with a big display is by a group called The Oppressor, and I'll just bet you can imagine what the sleeve looks like."

Finally, Jack Lint is one of the two men who intrude upon our enjoyment of Sam's imagined escape. "Nope, there's no way we going to get anything out of him."

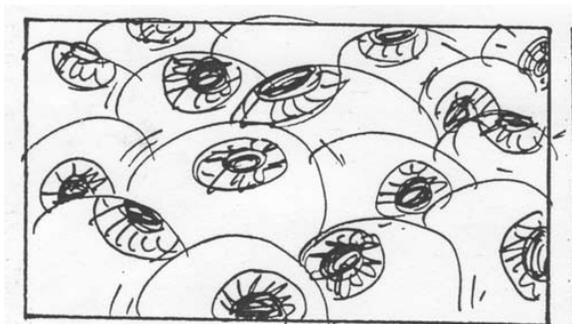


This is the first draft to appear in a standard screenplay page format, and it is surprising how much of the dialogue here appears, in whole or in slight variation, in the final script.

This draft takes some major leaps forward in advancing the storyline to that of the finished film. Many of the pieces are now falling into place, and some scenes which had only slight significance are developed more fully.

The posh restaurant scene, for example, now features menus with full-color pictures, and offers "a big splotch of brown lumpy stuff" for food. And when the authorities arrive, the police begin arresting waiters.

Other new elements: the baggie bouncing off the walls as in a pinball machine; the brick incarnation of Kurtzmann; and the first mention of a 27B/6.



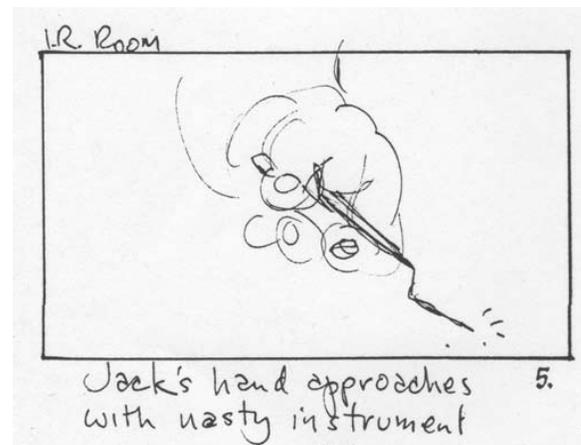
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A key change occurs with the eyeball scene; instead of hiding among the eyeballs with the girl, Sam flies to the eyeballs seeking help in finding her. The eyeballs demand that Sam forsake his wings if they wish to borrow their vision; he does so, and can see the girl trapped in a bubble in the distance.

This is an important analogy to Sam using the system in the real world in order to achieve his goal (finding and then rescuing Jill), and that he must sacrifice something of himself in order to accomplish this.

The widow, Mrs. Brown, also shows much more wisdom about how the system actually works - more so than Sam, in fact. When he naively tries to explain that the overcharge for electrical services was not necessary, she states, "Because Vic was dead by then, you mean?" She tears up the check and calls Sam a murderer.

Sam's friendship with Jack also becomes more of a plot point. When he learns of the error on Jack's interrogation, Sam agrees to erase any hint of Jack's involvement, in effect taking responsibility for the overcharge upon himself. Later, when the authorities arrest Sam, there is no paper trail attributing guilt - and the only one who knows is now strapped in Jack's chair!



Among other changes:

A visitor from the Ministry of Information indoctrinates some schoolchildren about the dangers of terrorism and the need for information. And the father arrested in the beginning is reading from "The Three Little Pigs" when the police burst in.

In the clerks pool, Sam's immediate supervisor is Jones (later named Frazer), a stentorian section chief who lords it over his

underlings, but who trembles with fear at the thought of Kurtzmann ("a beefy Broderick Crawford type"). Jones is constantly shown up by Sam (who knows better how to handle the department head), to the amusement of the other clerks.

A funny scene later deleted takes place when Sam has moved up to Expediting. He has no work assigned to him, and is reduced to rearranging his pencils. Suddenly his computer sparks to life and begins printing out commands. Sam reacts happily - *Something to do!* Then he reads the message: "Just testing. Ignore this transmission."

When Sam tries to dispose of the refund check, Lime suggests he take it to a man named Proctor, who knows how to handle such problems. Sam presents the check to an incredibly neat man who places it into a drawer *filled* with refund checks. Sam suspects it will never make its way to the widow, so he takes it back to deliver himself.

There is also a motor pool dispatcher named Chester, who crudely changes Sam's requisition form from "personnel transporter" to "personal transporter," thereby perpetuating Sam's difficulties with explaining the disappearance of a troop carrier.

More work is done on the relationship between Sam and Jill. Here, Jill is a social worker, and at one point Sam traces her to a carnival playground, where she is chaperoning some children, many of whom have lost a relative to the Ministry's interrogators. "I work with the results of what they do at Information Retrieval every day of my life," she tells Sam.

The children are not so innocent, however; Jill knows that some kids file weekly reports on the teachers to the Ministry. (Also: the "Oppressor" signs are actually advertisements for the carnival.) Mr. Helpmann is now in a wheelchair, and has a fingerless hand thanks to the bombing.

Reading his late father's diary, Sam sees it is filled with juicy gossip about Helpmann, such as his habit for wearing black silk knickers and a training bra (the script doesn't go into *how* Lowry Sr. knew that!). It is also suggested that Helpmann killed Sam's father.

Once Sam is in the chair, terrorists break into the torture chamber, killing Jack and two guards. The Ministry building is blown up, and then Tuttle (finally!) gets caught by the floating paper.

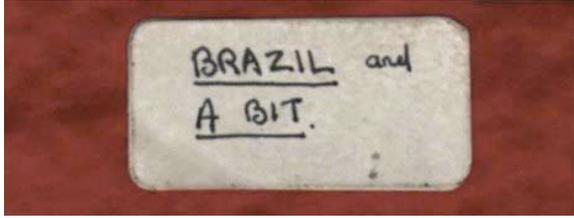
The funeral for Mrs. Terrain is also included for the first time, and we see Sam's Mother surrounded by young gallants. Sam spills the contents of the coffin and then exits through a door. And at the end it is Jack and Mr. Helpmann whose faces intrude upon Sam's fantasy of escape.



All in all, this period of collaboration has shaken out a lot of the excess ideas with which Gilliam had started out, and introduced some key dialogue. But the characters have still not found a focus.

Jill's profession here pushes guilt into Sam's face to a greater degree than her speaking out about the Buttle arrest, and it gets in the way of their romance. And the Ministry is too much a suffocating character to wrestle with dramatically.

Perhaps the most important idea introduced in this draft is the notion of a misread name. When the police come to the home of Mr. Timms, they ask for a Mr. Tibbs. Told of the error, they arrest Timms anyway.



Charles McKeown

While Gilliam had become involved in production of "Time Bandits," he felt his work with Alverson on "Brazil" seemed to be leading nowhere.

Gilliam conferred with Charles McKeown, an actor/writer with whom he had worked on "Life of Brian" and "Time Bandits" (and who would eventually play Harry Lime in "Brazil"). McKeown ended up contributing a collection of ideas for the script in an undated 37-page scene breakdown titled BRAZIL AND A BIT. It demonstrates vividly how certain conceits and images which Gilliam had in mind from the start are tried out in different situations and contexts, in order to make them fit with the story's other elements.

This is a stubborn trait, and in fact many of the new plot ideas and characters introduced here did not survive subsequent treatments, perhaps showing a reluctance on Gilliam's part to deviate too far from his original intentions. The comedy here is broader, and focuses more upon day-to-day relationships among departments within the Ministry.

In this treatment, Sam is a dreamy, sympathetic-looking bloke of 20 years. His flat is a refuge from the world, and he decorates it with things he has made, i.e., models of beautiful and famous buildings (like the Taj Mahal) constructed out of matchsticks. He also keeps a tank of tropical fish.

The audience gets to witness a propaganda film being made by the Ministry for

potential recruits. The Records Department is filled with young clerks dressed in fancy waistcoat, shirts with frills and puffed sleeves, breeches and stockings, and three-cornered hats (with feathers!).

It is not clear if this attire is for the benefit of the rolling propaganda camera, but if this recruitment film were depicting a history of the Ministry, it would imply that this bureaucracy has been raging for a very long time, and is even less likely to be overthrown.

One unusual new feature of the Ministry is the Ventagro Room, a place where workers can go to let off steam by bashing dummies representing their bosses. Of course, this room is under constant surveillance, so any employee getting a really good workout comes under immediate suspicion. When Sam walks in for the first time, he demonstrates his inhibitions, for the only aggression he can exhibit is to stick out his tongue at a dummy of his boss.

Jack Lint (who shares Sam's affinity for tropical fish) is in the same department as Sam, but has taken the qualifying exam for promotion which Sam has declined to undergo. Head of Department is much kinder than in earlier drafts and - like Jack - wants to see Sam aspire to the heights of the Ministry.

Mother's plastic surgery is only in the planning stage when we first meet her (Jaffe makes no appearance here), and she and Sam dine at a posh restaurant where everyone is dressed in "nostalgic" Victorian costume. They share a table with Mrs. Terrain, her too-too beautiful daughter, and Mr. Helpmann, Sam's Uncle, who has taken Sam's deceased father's place at the Ministry (shades of "Hamlet" here).

They order dishes by number, and eat their meal while an explosion erupts in the restaurant. Sam makes an attempt to go and help the injured but is prevented from

interfering by his uncle and mother: "Leave it to the experts."

The dream sequences are not sketched out in detail, but we learn early on that Jill is also experiencing dreams, and in fact she shares the *same* dreams with Sam, so they know each other before they actually meet in person. One morning when she awakes, she spots troops outside her window entering the flat next door, where a Mr. Timms is arrested.

The pleasant, avuncular arresting officer, Dennis, is showing the ropes to his rookie partner, Barbara Boulton, a plump, pleasant, jocular woman. When Dennis and Barbara escort Timms to the Ministry Building, they discover their elevator is broken. Taking the stairs, they soon tire of the 75-story climb, and so disguise Timms as a policeman so that they may gain entrance to a special elevator (No baggees allowed).

Sam notices that one of three police officers sharing his elevator is unshaven, disheveled and shaking uncontrollably. When he asks if he is all right, Timms - aware not to anger his handlers - nervously says "Yes yes very well indeed thank you very much I'm very well very well never been better."

In *Expediting*, we see that whenever the Supervisor Warren sports a bandage from some surgery or treatment, his toadying underlings eager to suck up all do likewise. Lime is even more self-conscious and paranoid than in the film, if that were possible:

LIME

You were going to say that you thought I was a bit long-in-the-tooth-looking for this job, weren't you?

SAM

No.



LIME

Alright, but that's what you were thinking, wasn't it? ... I don't want a promotion and that's why I'm here. It's not because I can't pass the exam. And it's not because people don't want me in their departments. Certain people. It's purely and simply because I want to stay here.

SAM

Yes, alright. That's alright by me. As a matter of fact I didn't want to be promoted from clerks' grade one.

LIME

There's no need to be so *understanding*.

Having been thrown out of Mrs. Timms' apartment with a bloody nose, Sam meets up with Jill, and the realization of their mystical, shared dream states leaves Sam feeling weird. She cares for his injury, then drives him back to town in her 30-ton truck. They fall more quickly into the clinch, though the script suggests Jill's fear that making love to a Ministry official is tantamount to collaboration.

Their anxiety about being detected is a greater element of dramatic tension here, and their relationship is more clearly paralleled by the narratives of their dreams;

Sam and Jill each dream that they die and are grieved over by the other.

Meanwhile, Lime has fixed in his mind to destroy Sam; if he can catch a spy or traitor within the department, his own chances for promotion would be exponentially increased. He follows Sam around.

Checking into the Timms mess, Sam investigates the screams he hears wafting over the ducting system by crawling inside; Lime follows, and his weight sends him crashing through the duct into the clerks' pool. When we spot him next, he is heavily bandaged and wears a defeated expression.

Tuttle, who resembles Humphrey Bogart, refers to himself as "Mr. X," and can find nothing wrong with Sam's air conditioning, and so departs to get some more gear. When Central Services repairmen Spoor and Dowser come on the scene, they look to us suspiciously like Dennis and Barbara in disguise.

However talented they may be as police officers, they know nothing about machinery, and soon Sam's flat is a mess. When Tuttle returns, he puts two and two together: "You're under suspicion, mate. There's only one organization that could have done a repair job like this: Ministry of Information security police. Stay furtive."

Sam makes another trip to the Ventrago Room (following a fellow worker who might provide clues in the Timms' mess); Lime trails Sam. We see Dennis and Barbara making out in the observation room, oblivious to Sam's workout, and after the Ventrago's dummies have been trashed by Sam, they grab Lime by mistake for questioning.

At Mother's unveiling party Sam - loosed by wine - speaks frankly to Mr. Helpmann regarding his fears about the Ministry. Helpmann is very understanding but warns him away from Jill.

Sam's friend Jack informs him of allegations being made by Lime that Sam is a traitor. Sam tells Jack that Lime is a liar and mad (which he knows will put Lime in danger, but what the hey).

Jill has disappeared for some time, and when Sam meets up with her again (following a police chase), she admits she feared being the cause of his death, as she was in one of her dreams. But she then takes Sam to an underground haven for escapees, rebels, victims of the Ministry, artists, freaks, etc.

We learn that revolutionaries, trying to avoid detection, have resorted to plastic surgery to alter their appearance and fingerprints. As such, one group all looks like Humphrey Bogart, another like Marilyn Monroe, another like Albert Einstein, etc. There's no going back now for Sam; he's in it thick, associating with the likes of these.

Upon his arrest, Sam is taken to the torture room, to where Jack Lint has been promoted. ("Isn't he doing well at the Ministry?" the script caustically rhapsodizes. "His parents will be pleased.")

At this point the film stops, and a narrator admits that, if this film were to be realistic, it would have a harrowing ending (and we could all guess what that would entail). "Nevertheless, the maker of the film knows that we'd all prefer a happy ending and so in deference to the wishes of the audience, here it is."

The film restarts, and Sam is rescued by a band of rebels, all of whom look like Humphrey Bogart and Marilyn Monroe. There is a huge battle, and Lime actually clings to Sam begging to be rescued, too. Sam escapes, and comes upon a chapel, where Mother is marrying Mr. Helpmann. Mother's surgery has been a success; she looks younger than ever, but bears a nasty, disturbing resemblance to Jill.

Sam snatches a machine gun from one of the Humphrey Bogarts and shoots both Helpmann and Mother. And maybe all the wedding guests to boot. Sam then runs off to the shopping precinct, Lime still clinging to him; there Sam shakes him off, only to watch Lime be consumed by paper. Dennis and Barbara, sporting riot gear, arrive in time to witness this freak event.

Sam and Jill are reunited in the underworld, which turns into something resembling a happy, life-enhancing dream sequence.

This ending was a unique way to handle the expected criticism that Sam's fate in the chair was too bleak, by sarcastically agreeing with it and then looking down upon the unwashed masses who would clamor for something more comforting. *Have it your way, you bastards!*

This turnabout was probably the most Pythonesque element of any "Brazil" script, but it would have added another level of artificiality to a film that was already taken up to a great degree by fantasies.

This treatment is also less ambiguous about the existence of terrorists, and about Sam's embrace of them.



Introducing Tom Stoppard

After having conferred with Charles McKeown, in late 1982 Gilliam brought the "Brazil" script to playwright Tom Stoppard. Their collaboration changed the direction of the project to one more closely matching the final film.

A playwright known for his linguistic alchemy on stage, Stoppard's film and TV credits prior to "Brazil" included "The Romantic Englishwoman," an adaptation of Graham Greene's "The Human Factor," and "Travesties." [Post-"Brazil" credits include Steven Spielberg's "Empire of the Sun," "The Russia House," "Billy Bathgate," "Enigma," and the Oscar-winning "Shakespeare in Love," for which Stoppard shared an Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay.]

Stoppard helped Gilliam focus upon the original treatment's strengths, and brought a more consistent structure to disparate scenes, piecing them together to make the story more of a whole. He also created some priceless dialogue, and turned some scenes which were already darkly comic a little darker.

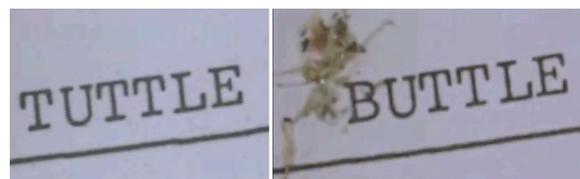
But Stoppard also introduced (or emphasized) scenes in which the power of computers and the manipulation of information (words, numbers, categories and data systems) became important plot mechanisms. This corresponded with his

interest in investigating how the system of the Ministry operated and how it subverted human relationships and communication.

This helped demonstrate Sam's mastery of the tools within his environment, and how he could use those very tools to subvert the system. But by relying upon such unemotional, calculated devices, it also made Sam's development as a character colder. And because films of the early- to mid-1980s were discovering the computer as a plot device (and a rather visually stodgy one at that), this narrative emphasis seemed to mimic what was going on elsewhere.

Stoppard created some scenes and characters (such as the Singing Telegram girl) to help bridge scenes that existed as far back as the first treatment.

His biggest contribution structurally, however, was the Tuttle/Buttle link. In no previous draft was the arrest victim at the beginning of the story in any way linked to the "obsessive heating engineer" Harry Tuttle.



Although in earlier drafts Sam and Jill had met through the false arrest, this single narrative scenario was neater; humorously demonstrated the efficiency (or lack thereof) of the Ministry of Information; and increased the sense of danger regarding Tuttle (who was he, that the government wanted him?) and his fate (if the police didn't get him at the beginning, when would they?).

Changes in the Narrative and Characterization

Stoppard wrote an inventive and gloriously complex opening for the film, in which a

beetle flies from a clear-cut forest to a city that "does not look like a city; it looks like a couple of dozen filing cabinets hundreds of feet high and a 16-lane highway."

After we follow a tree harvester/wood pulp truck to a plant, we see huge paper rolls come out, headed for a printing plant.

Out of the printing plant comes a massive document: "Natural Resources, Conservation of, Regulations for. Circulation: Heads of Sub-Section and above, all Departments," a copy of which arrives in Jack Lint's antiseptic office. He glances at it, then disposes of it in a paper shredder.

Meanwhile, the beetle has flown into the room and gets too close to an insect killer on the ceiling; it falls into a teletype machine printing out arrest reports, creating a warrant for the arrest of a Mr. *Buttle*. The machine rights itself (back to printing "T" surnames), and the bug crawls out again (somewhat maimed). It takes flight and just manages to clear the open windowsill, out toward Christmas trees decorating the city.

The Buttles are enjoying a video book of "A Christmas Carol." Mr. Buttle has unwrapped an executive toy; he is pleased and baffled. We hear laughter from the apartment above, where Jill Layton is watching "Sgt. Bilko" on TV while taking a bath.

During the arrest the arrest official without comment hands Mrs. Buttle the receipt; she questions him about it. "Are you stupid or what?" he responds. "I have to give you a receipt for your husband, you have to give me a receipt for my receipt." Their conversation goes on further, with Mrs. Buttle pleading for answers, while the official takes down Jill's name and snaps her picture, documenting her intrusion upon the proceedings.

Our first view of the record clerks' pool is one of stillness; they are doing nothing, and we hear the strains of spaghetti western

music ... until Kurtzmann's door opens. Then it is a hive of activity until he retreats within his office again. Then, back to "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly."

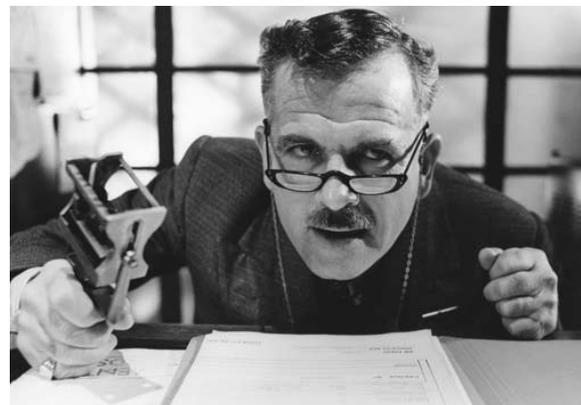
We see Jill pull up to the Ministry of Information (at about the same time Sam arrives at work); she places a "Doctor Visiting" sign on the windshield of her 18-wheeled flatbed truck. Referring to the wrongful arrest, she asks the porter for information, but he admits, "We collect information. We don't *give* it away."

Kurtzmann's brashness and egocentricity have been toned down from earlier drafts. He is liable to sway from authoritarian to submissive in a blink of an eye - as here, after Sam learns he has been promoted:

SAM (leaving)
I'll be back after lunch.

KURTZMANN (on his dignity)
I'm in charge here, you can't just come and go as you please.

SAM
If I don't sort my mother out they'll promote me over your dead body.



KURTZMANN (energetically)
I want you to go and sort your mother out and don't come back till after lunch ... Strangle the bitch. She can't just go around arranging for people to

be promoted.

SAM

Yes she can. She knows everybody.

KURTZMANN

Does she? Can I meet her?

At Dr. Jaffe's, Sam's arguments about how comfortable he is in his position, as opposed to living the anxious life that the Jack Lints of the world must live, is not accessible or convincing enough. Perhaps he doesn't truly believe it, or doesn't feel the need to convince himself he believes it. Mother doesn't expend much energy arguing her case with him, instead shrieking whenever the word "death" is mentioned.

Some of the film's more memorable lines, such as "My God it works," Shirley's shy offering of salt, and an assertion by the Maitre d' that bombings "very rarely happen here" are heard for the first time.



One new exchange features a somewhat nasty play on words:

MOTHER

The head of Information Retrieval is looking for a new right hand.

SAM

Sounds like a job for Dr. Jaffe.

Walking through a shopping district, "Sam sees a Father Christmas being dragged along by two Security Troops. Sam moves forward to intervene and his ineffectualness is, as it were, confirmed by a rifle butt which clubs him out of the way."

Hanging up on the Central Services recording, Sam remembers his conversation with Kurtzmann about a heating engineer. "Tuttle . . . Buttle . . . Tuttle. Tuttle, Archibald." And as we see in the following phone call, Stoppard's dialogue is playful but dense. He reveals as much about the characters through their *miscommunication* and misunderstandings as he does through their direct dialogues.

SAM

I've got an emergency - I need help.

PHONE VOICE (irritated)

Why didn't you say so. I'm standing here naked.

SAM

I'll wait until you put something on.

(His calling Tuttle mirrors earlier versions, but it was in later drafts that Tuttle appears in Sam's life rather than be called upon, which more suits Sam's passive nature.)

Stoppard also introduced the echo to Dowser's lines. But upon hearing the terrible phrase "27B/6," instead of going catatonic, Dowser begins speaking fluently. Spoor is even more distressed than before.

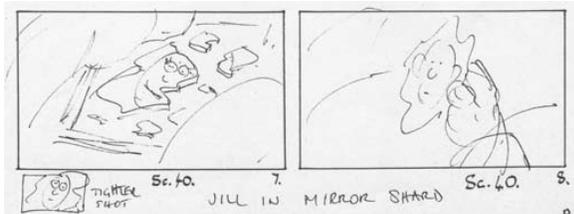
Tuttle tries to recruit Sam into the underground. And when Tuttle prepares to leave and cannot read the transport cage signs, Sam realizes that he is illiterate. Tuttle takes umbrage, much as Harvey Lime would: "I could read if I wanted to! If I

wanted to be a pen-pusher in triplicate I could read as good as anyone!"

There is also a motive added to Sam's willingness to deliver the refund check. When Kurtzmann opens the Buttles file, Sam catches sight of the photograph of the Buttles' neighbor, Jill, taken by the Arrest Official. He quickly offers to deliver the check himself.

During his drive, Sam hears a radio performance of a Mozart quintet, interrupted by confused shouting and a muffled explosion and gunfire. After a pause, the announcer apologizes, and says that the program will continue with a Mozart *quartet*.

Having caught sight of Jill in a broken mirror, Sam rushes upstairs from the Buttles, but knocks on the wrong door. He is greeted by a white haired old man who shouts "Welcome brother!" and invites Sam in for a revivalist meeting.



There is then an extended sequence in which Sam rummages through and manipulates computer databases seeking information on Jill Layton. He is shown to be dexterous and imaginative in dealing with computer programs, sorting out Laytons from Leightons, females from males, 45-year-olds from 23-year-olds.

As the clerks throughout the pool watch Rocky Balboa beat the crap out of some poor sod on their monitors, Sam gets closer and closer to his goal. . . .

Then, the dreaded IRQ/3 stops him dead in his tracks.



Another important structural change is that Mother's party and Sam's meeting with Mr. Helpmann have been moved up to *before* he gains his promotion, so that the party now has a dramatic function other than showing off Mother's new look. Still, Sam sees no hallucination; he has not yet developed the conscience regarding the Buttles.

Gilliam's note to this script adds the Brick Kurtzmann as a face in a cliff, who warns Sam in his dream that "She's not what she seems."

Arriving at the monumental but anonymous Information Retrieval building (whose door plate is the size of a matchbox), Sam is quizzed by the Hall Porter to test his identity:



PORTER

In the last opinion poll did you put the government down as excellent, very good, good, quite good, or not bad?

SAM
Er, I don't know ...

PORTER
Correct.

In the lift Sam wishes a good morning to a baggee; we hear his muffled reply. More comfortable around detainees than he is later, Sam is also more cunning in this version. He easily gets on people's good side, such as the unctuous Harvey Lime (Sam makes a slip of the tongue calling him "Harry").

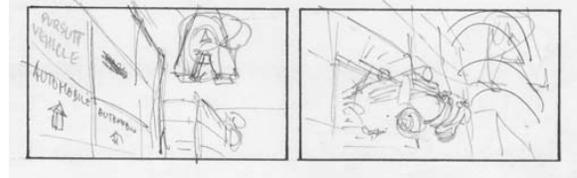
When Lime admits that expeditors await dossiers on interrogation subjects to work on but that he's never had a dossier, Sam puffs up his encounter with Helpmann, making it seem that Helpmann has teamed them together. Sam then assigns him the task of digging up information about Jill on his computer. Lime is eager for the work, and to prove himself, never having actually operated a computer.

In his meeting with Jack, Sam learns that there has been a tip that Tuttle will perform repairs at the Primrose Cottage Complex that night. Later, Sam makes a phone call from a roadside stop, warning Tuttle of a trap. Sam is now a collaborator.

After the power plant, Jill takes Sam to see a valley of unspoiled beauty. She admiringly says to him, "You see, they haven't got hold of it all."

Driving her rig, Jill delivers the house to Central Supplies, where it is unloaded and stored between the Hot water bottles and the Hovercraft.

Sam wanders amusedly through the open air warehouse, taking in the Hoses, Horns, Harmonicas, Hats, Hip flasks, Hoes, Hobbyhorses, Hypodermics. Across are the G's: Gazebos, Gates, Giraffes (stuffed), Golliwogs ...



Police cars arrive, one swerving and knocking a bunch of F's asunder (Flowerpots, Fretsaws, Flame throwers, Fungicides. . .). Sam and Jill make their escape via a rope ladder (found between Rhinestone and Rosaries) and scale a boundary fence.

Jill comes with Sam to his flat, when they meet Spoor and Dowser amidst a deep-frozen living room. When handed a 27B/6 by Spoor, Sam smashes it over Spoor's head before tossing them both out. He then takes Jill's hand and marches into the bedroom. But a broken pipe makes the bedroom uninhabitable as well.

We learn that Jill had been a squatter in the apartment above the Buttles, living free. (Sam: "Free? More like an outlaw.") She takes Sam to a multistory shanty town she knows, a vertical slum converted from an old car park, some 30 feet from Big Ben. (Apart from the currency, this is the only element that might give a sense of recognizable place to "Brazil.")

Although he realizes that Jill knows Tuttle (she once had problems with her own air conditioning), Sam begins to doubt that there are terrorists at all.

He then takes her to Mother's, where they are let in by the porter, Matthews, who eyes Jill.

MATTHEWS
You're not a professional, are you?

JILL
No, an amateur.

An interesting, uncinematic device is employed as Sam witnesses bombs going off

across the city; the stage directions specifically indicate that we see the flashes seconds before we hear the actual sound. Films rarely depict such distant explosions accurately, instead syncing sound to picture, because otherwise they would "look" out of sync.

Stoppard did not alter the dream sequences much, but the Dream Sam experiences more self-doubt and fear when he confronts the hooded figures in the monolith city:

A mob of figures reaches desperately for him with outstretched hands. The Buttles and other familiar faces.

SAM

Get back. I can't help you. Get back! Leave me alone!

He begins to get panicky. Fumbling for his sword to keep them back, he accidentally swings it up and it severs one of the outreaching arms from its owner's shoulder. Everyone stops in horror. Sam doesn't know what to say. The crowd cringes back from him in terror. Terror in their eyes. The arm lies between them on the ground.

SAM (stepping forward)
Oh, God ... I'm sorry. I didn't mean to ...

The crowd shrinks further back.

He then turns, hearing the girl's voice, and as he heads off in its direction his cape sweeps past the severed arm. The hand grabs hold of a corner of the material and clings to it. The arm begins to claw its way up the cape. As Sam climbs through an opening and sees the transparent cube and the bubble imprisoning the girl, the severed arm reaches from behind and seizes his throat. Choking, Sam struggles with the arm, before waking up next to Jill. It is here

that he confesses that he has been dreaming about Jill for years.

Going to Mr. Helpmann's office entails more James Bond-ish spy stuff; the elevator stops at a duplicate eighth floor, and when Sam presses a sign in front of one door the entire wall pivots around, to a space "largely occupied by the sort of set-up which puts one in mind of Cape Kennedy."

It is deserted. Sam seats himself at a computer console and tries out EREIAMJH as a password. It works!



This section is perhaps the most difficult to depict cinematically, in that it revolves around the dissemination and study of raw and refined data. Accessing the central computer system, Sam is able to call up lists of suspects, categorized alphabetically, chronologically, geographically, by height, weight, methods of explosion, type of weapon, hair color, shoe size, dog ownership ...

By studying the processes and codes used to place people on the detention list and then excise them (due to death), Sam is able to "delete" Jill Layton. But having mastered this ability, he then spends the night at the office, going over masses of data, until Mr. Helpmann shows up.

Helpmann behaves as if Sam's presence is not unexpected or unwelcome. He is impressed, in fact, by Sam's abilities, as Sam explains how he has generated and studied

computer models of terrorist activities over the past several years, randomly chosen from fires reported throughout the city. If the fires were set rather than accidental, there would be some pattern evident on the computer model.

Sam demonstrates how the patterns change over time as the variables smooth out. "Something is making the fire-bomb incidents more and more like each other," Sam theorizes, as if the explosions had been planned "by fewer and fewer people as years went by." Sam discusses matrix filters to winnow through suspect characteristics, and reveals that there are really only one or two people setting off bombs.

This leads to Helpmann divulging the "truth" about the Ministry and the great lengths to which the apparatus must be supported, even at the cost of "not entirely innocent" people. Still, he is bemused by Sam killing off Jill: "We'll let her stay dead for a moment. But how long she is allowed to rest in peace depends upon your discretion, Sam."

After his arrest, Sam's encounter with Jack in the chair is depicted through the typist's transcription printed out for the camera. For its coldness it can't be beat:

ON TYPEWRITER
Am I glad to see you! There's been a dreadful mistake. How do you mean, confess? Jack? What do you mean, Jack? Ooooh ...
aaaargh ... Christ! - Don't -
For God's sake, Jack -
Eeeeeee!!! - AAAAHH!!!!!!

Jack picks up the executive toy from his desk ("which now suddenly has other possibilities"). Then a hole is cut in the ceiling behind him and Tuttle comes down - never mind the fireman's pole, 'cause he's *Tuttle!* Jack is killed and Tuttle's compatriots set off explosions.

Sam is driven away by Jill, and they set up home in a portable habitation unit in the beautiful valley we saw earlier. There is a cow and chickens in the yard, as Jill enters carrying a basket of eggs. Sam is in bed, waking.



When Jill asks how he slept, Sam smiles; "I don't dream anymore." We then pull back to the glorious vista - which is then darkened by the faces of Jack and Helpmann.

Additional Changes in Narrative and Characters

Gilliam and Stoppard worked through several drafts, in which the action of their first draft together became more condensed, losing some of the more turgid sequences (like the 9 page-long computer modeling scene). That scene was changed to where Sam and Jill *both* go up to Helpmann's office to delete her. This gives Sam someone with whom he may communicate his actions (so that the audience would understand it better), but it was dramatically implausible.

In the opening beetle episode, Jack Lint was changed to an anonymous white-coated technician, since there was no dramatic need for it to be Jack. Also, rather than allow the bug to escape (maimed but alive) from the teletype machine, the beetle is killed outright (No need to be gentle in such matters).

A few minor touches were added, such as the fact that the arrest official carries a stopwatch, as if the performance of the invading troops were being measured and rated.



Also, Sam sees the hallucination of Mrs. Buttle in the mirror at Mother's party.

A curiosity is this uncharacteristic outburst from the demure Shirley once the restaurant bomb goes off, admonishing Sam to take the promotion to Information Retrieval where he can "show those fucking murderous bastards a thing or two." This comment causes no little consternation on the two mothers' parts.

In this conversation, Sam wonders why Lime has plenty of time to explain the processing of expediting dossiers:

SAM (glancing at Lime's empty desk)
Are they a lot of work?

LIME (seeing Sam's line of thought)
A fair amount, but if you're good, you can get through them quickly.

SAM
How many dossiers do you get in a day?

LIME (shiftyly)
Depends, really.

SAM
Depends on what?

LIME (wiping beads of sweat from upper lip)
Well ... on how many get sent.

SAM
How many did you get today?

LIME (suddenly becoming breathless)
Er ... let me see ... er, none ... yet!

SAM
None?

LIME (irritated)
No, not yet! Sometimes they're late!

SAM
How many yesterday?

LIME
Look, I really don't see that my dossiers are any of your business!

SAM (taken aback)
I'm sorry. I just wanted to know what to expect.

LIME
Well, I've been here much longer than you - so we're really not comparable! ... Actually, as a

matter of fact I don't get many dossiers because I'm experienced and I only get sent *special* ones!

In the office scene between Jack and Sam (which probably occasioned the most rewrites and scrawled notes of any scene throughout the "Brazil" script process), Jack reveals the interdepartmental politics between the "hawks" (who wish a return to the ruthless practices of the past) and the "doves" (among whose number Jack counts himself).



Jack is convinced that terrorists and their lackeys (including Jill) are in league with the right-wing, to create worsened social conditions so that the hawks may rise to power once again.

Jill may not be a terrorist, but her relationship with Sam is more contemptuous. She castigates Sam about the government's role in polluting the environment, and how factories produce useless and destructive consumer products. Sam can only shrug and say that he hadn't really thought about it.

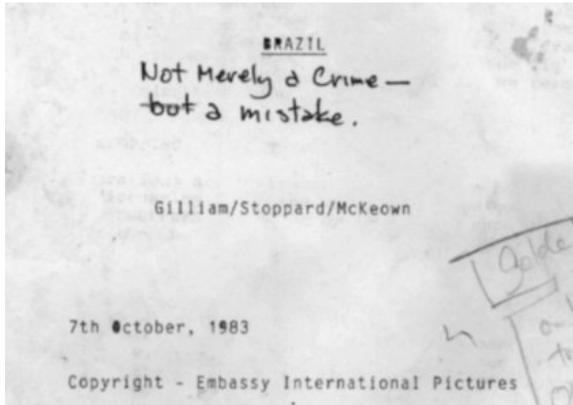
Jill is also more uninhibited, at least in talk, a throwback to the Jill of Gilliam's first treatment. There isn't much physical romance in this draft, but there is a lot of bridled passion, so that it sounds especially brazen when spoken of out loud:

JILL

You Ministry of Information Retrieval men all have one-track minds. You only ever think of one thing: bombs! Why don't you think of something else for a change - like, sex!



Re-enter Charles McKeown



McKeown worked with Gilliam over several months to rework Stoppard's many changes and additions. Some of the characterizations were slightly reoriented, and while the story structure did not really change, some scenes were given more emphasis.

Mother became a more commanding figure over Sam, a driving force in his professional life. One could more clearly see how the passive, escapist personality of Sam would have developed, growing up in a household run by such a woman.



Sam and Jill's romance was made more gentle and ambiguous, indeed an escape from their harsher environment.

The processing scene at the end, in which Sam is paraded before one official after another, was fleshed out, as are Sam's scenes with Jill in the truck, the guards in the van, and the Father Christmas scene (in

which Helpmann admits that Jill appears to have been killed twice).

Some of the most memorable elements of the final film made their first appearance here, such as Tuttle's departures via rope, the messy deaths of Spoor and Dowser, and Sam's escape from the funeral chapel through Mrs. Terrain's coffin.

The paper blizzard within the corridors of Expediting was also created (Sam had previously only tied together the pneumatic tubes without any fallout). And Sam's computer scenes (in Records, where he is stymied by Jill's classification, and in Helpmann's office, where Sam "deletes" Jill) were reduced to the bare essentials.

Once shooting started in November 1983, it was determined that the fantasy sequences as originally planned would be too time-consuming to produce and would take too much time in the finished film, so they were cut back and restructured.

Test footage had been shot of the eyeballs, but the sequence was scrapped, as was the transparent cube containing the sky, the Storeroom of Knowledge, the stone ship, and the "flapping black thing" (a late development).

U.S. release version cuts

20th Century Fox had purchased foreign distribution rights to "Brazil," and released the film across Europe beginning in February 1985. The running time was 2 hours 22 minutes.

However, Gilliam and producer Arnon Milchan met with resistance from Universal Studios, which had put up \$9 million of the film's \$15 million budget in return for North American distribution rights. Universal refused to release the film, in what ultimately became a protracted war between a Hollywood studio and a maverick director, compellingly recounted in Jack Mathews' book, "The Battle of *Brazil*."

Before the battle, however, there was a skirmish. Although Universal had approved the screenplay - and Gilliam's film delivered on it - there was a mere technicality on which the studio could refuse to pay the balance of its agreed-upon fee (which Milchan needed) once filming was complete, and that was running time. An amendment to the contract for "Brazil" specified a film no longer than 2 hours 5 minutes, and Gilliam's cut was 17 minutes over.

Universal was willing to give an inch - accept a 2 hour 10 minute version - and so in order to gain Universal's acceptance (and funds owed them), editor Julian Doyle and the director managed to trim 11 minutes from the film.

Most of the cuts were trivial - for example, Sam is seen plugging one cable into his phone instead of *two*. Some lines of dialogue were trimmed, from Mr. Kurtzmann's complaints about Information Retrieval, to Jack's revelations about "the Layton woman."

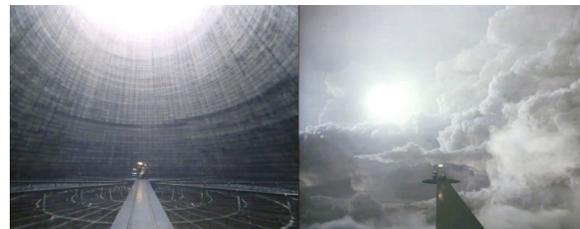
A set-up for a visual joke was cut, too: The Buttle daughter's contention that Father Christmas can't visit their home "because we haven't got a chimney" no longer

precedes the hole being drilled through their ceiling for the invading security forces.

There were some deeper cuts in the narrative, including the opening of the restaurant scene (when Ida's wrapped Christmas present causes a security X-Ray machine meltdown); Sam and Jill's bedroom idyll before Sam's arrest, when he undoes a bow wrapping "something for an executive"; the processing of detainee Sam through the Ministry of Information; and the "Father Christmas" scene between Sam and Mr. Helpmann.

Minor additions include a reaction shot of Sam just before the restaurant explosion (inserted to accommodate a trim of Mother and Ida's conversation about cosmetic surgery just before the blast and the offer of salt); and a shot of Dream Jill shouting for Sam as he enters Information Retrieval to begin his new job.

Gilliam also added the "Brazil" music to the beginning of the film, and clouds superimposed over the torture room at the end - suggestions made by Universal Studio head Sid Sheinberg to alleviate the film's bleak closing image, if only a little.



The biggest narrative change, however, involved Sam's duel with the Samurai. In the International version Sam wages a single lengthy battle, including a long, solitary walk down a corridor, before killing the Samurai, removing the warrior's mask and finding himself within, only to be awakened by the Singing Telegram Girl.

The story then continues through Mother's party, Sam's acceptance of Helpmann's job offer, and his arrival at Information Retrieval. The Samurai - having been killed

- then makes a *second* appearance in the department store lingerie department, where Sam assumes a battle stance and is knocked out by security forces.



In the U.S. version, the duel was cut down and its ending delayed: Sam is awakened midway through the fight by the Singing Telegram Girl and leaves for the party, where he accepts the promotion; Dream Jill then cries out for Sam just before he enters the headquarters of Information Retrieval; finally, Sam meets up with the Samurai again at the department store, where in his fantasy he kills his opponent, and discovers himself behind the Samurai's mask - and then in reality is knocked unconscious by the guard.

By incorporating the fight (and Sam's victory over his opponent) in this fashion, the U.S. version depicts Sam as failing to succeed *until* he has accepted the post at Information Retrieval - becoming part of that system - which both enables him to track down Jill Layton *and* exposes himself to mortal peril. This makes more dramatic sense than Sam defeating the Samurai *before* he has accepted the job promotion.

But the alternative in the International version also poses an intriguing message: that while Sam might defeat the Samurai - meaning the system - it cannot be destroyed. It is unconquerable.

DAVID MORGAN is senior editor at CBSNews.com. He is author of "Monty Python Speaks" and "Knowing the Score," and has contributed to such publications as the Los Angeles Times, The Hollywood Reporter, American Cinematographer, Millimeter, Cinefex and The American Bar Association Journal. He co-produced the Criterion Collection's special edition releases of "Brazil" and "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen."

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An earlier version of this article appeared on the Criterion Collection's special edition laserdisc/DVD of "Brazil" (1996/1999).

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