

"BILLY BUNTER'S SWISS ROLE,"

A Comedy in Five Scenes

by

Maurice McLoughlin

introducing

**Characters from the Greyfriars School
Stories by Frank Richards.**

**Billy Bunter,
First Presented at :-
Victoria Palace Theatre,
London. Dec. 23rd. 1960.**

Characters:-

William George Bunter The Owl of the Remove

^{Harry}
Henry Wharton)

Bob Cherry)

Jurree Jamset Ram Singh ("INKY"))

Johnny Bull)

Frank Nugent.)

The Famous Five
of the
Remove at
Greyfriars.

Henry Samuel Quelch Remove Form Master.

Mr. Hilton-Crabbe. A Travel Agency Guide.

Signor Verdoni. A Swiss Chalet Proprietor.

Karl. A Waiter.

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SCENE ONE

The scene is Remove Study No. 14 at Greyfriars. It is a comfortable untidy room. Furnishings are chairs, a table which stands D. R. C. and a large leather armchair situated L. C. There is a door to the Remove Passage C. B. which opens into the room, and when wide open the passage can be seen. The Study is somewhat untidier than usual as the boys are filling a trunk standing C. with clothes for their holidays. They are not working with great enthusiasm, in fact they are, when the curtain rises, standing looking at them. The boys are WHARTON, BULL, and NUGENT.

NUGENT: (surveying the debris) I say Bull, why not just turf all this stuff in and hope for the best!

BULL: Good idea, Nugent!

NUGENT: After all, we've packed the suitcases tidily. This won't be opened until we get to Switzerland.

WHARTON: I think we should make a bit of an effort. We're not just ordinary holiday makers.

NUGENT: You don't think just because Linley won that Essay Competition the whole of Switzerland will be looking out to see what his pals look like. What's this? (holds up a gaily coloured sweater)

BULL: It's Bob's. He's under the impression it's the sort of thing one wears out there.

WHARTON: It looks as though he could get Bunter in there as well as himself.

BULL: Don't mention that fat gormandiser. Did you hear he's been grouching that the Essay Competition was a swindle and Mark Linley won it because some-one snaffled his paper ...

The other two laugh.

WHARTON: Bunter couldn't even spell Switzerland, let alone write an essay about it. It was certainly a feather in the cap for Greyfriars that Mark won.

- NUGENT:** There's no doubt about it, Wharton - old Mark's a brainy bird. Pity he can't come out with us. Shouldn't Bob be back by now, he went to see him off an hour ago.
- BULL:** Probably hopes to find all the packing done when he gets back ... Tough luck about Mark's Pater.
- WHARTON:** I think he's all right now. But Mark told me he didn't feel right about pushing off without spending a few days in Lancashire with his parents after his father's illness.
- NUGENT:** He's a good scout. Decent of him to ask us to make up his party of six. I've never been to Switzerland.
- BULL:** Neither have I. (takes up loud socks) My hat! Whose are these?
- WHARTON:** Oh, they're Inky's. He's afraid he's going to be frozen to death out there.
- BULL:** If he wears them often the rest of us will be blinded! Did Inky go with Bob and Mark?
- WHARTON:** Yes...
- BULL:** I'm sick of packing.
- NUGENT:** Me too!
- WHARTON:** Shall we give it a rest? Let's collect the other cases and take them down to the Porter's Lodge.
- NUGENT:** I asked Gosling to come up for them.
- WHARTON:** Gosling would faint at the sight of them. He's not the most energetic of porters.
- BULL:** You'd only have to wave half a crown under his nose to bring him round.
- WHARTON:** Let's take them anyway ...
- NUGENT:** Right! Perhaps Bob and Inky will come and finish the packing by the time we're back.

They take a last look at the chaos and leave the study.

As soon as they are gone, the door opens cautiously. Round the edge appears the face of WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER,

the Owl of the Remove.

BUNTER enters, he carries a large pudding in a basin. He moves to the armchair, sits and produces a spoon from his pocket, and eyes the pudding with satisfaction. He is about to take a spoonful when there is a knock on the door. He ducks behind the chair.

MR. QUELCH, the remove form-master looks in and goes again.

BUNTER: (emerging) Beast! (he settles down again when the three boys enter)

BULL: Bunter, you fat pirate! What are you doing here?

BUNTER: I say you fellows, I'm rather glad you came in.

NUGENT: Are you?

BUNTER: Of course, Nugent. As a matter of fact I wanted a word with you.

BULL: Hurry up then and make your choice.

BUNTER: Oh, really Bull...

BULL: That's three words. Out with him you fellows.

The boys grin and move to BUNTER.

BUNTER: Hold on! ... (backing) I say keep off! Can't you see what I've brought. It's for you chaps

He holds the pudding towards them.
They stop.

NUGENT: It's a Pudding.

WHARTON: Whose!

BUNTER: Oh really Wharton. I hope you don't think I'm the sort of fellow to snaffle a pudding.

BULL: If you aren't I don't know who is. We're still waiting to know who it belongs to.

BUNTER: I'm trying to tell you. I brought it for you fellows to pack.

NUGENT: To pack !!!

- BUNTER: I thought it might be useful. On the journey, you know. We might get a little peckish.
- WHARTON: We might get peckish?
- BUNTER: Yes, on the way to Switzerland. They tell me the grub on these foreign trains isn't up to much. It wouldn't matter much as far as you're concerned but I have a delicate stomach.
- BULL: That's not the word I'd use for it.
- BUNTER: Don't be a cheeky ass, Bull. If you don't want any of the pudding I dare say Nugent and Wharton can help me with it. (looks at trunk and wanders round it) You know you could get an awful lot of grub in that trunk. Why not take some of that clobber out. There's plenty more where this pudding came from.
- WHARTON: Where did it come from? We'd like to know.
- BUNTER: Eh? ... Oh I snaffled it from ... that is to say I've had the most magnificent hamper from Bunter Court. You know what sort of hampers they send from Bunter Court...
- BULL: Empty ones?
- BUNTER: I don't want any cheek, Bull... As I was saying, there's this Hamper from Bunter Court.
- NUGENT: Where?
- BUNTER: Eh? ... Oh, I've got it ... er... it's in...
- BULL: Your imagination?
- BUNTER: If you fellows don't want to share all this grub, perhaps you'd prefer to eat all that Continental muck in the train. All I can say is, you're welcome to it. I'll take my own grub...
- WHARTON: There seems to be some sort of misunderstanding. Are you under the impression that you're coming with us?
- BUNTER: I should think that's the least Linley could do, invite me to join his party. After all if there hadn't been that muddle over the Essay Papers I'd have won the Competition.
- BULL: You think you won the competition?

- BUNTER:** I hope I could turn out a better Essay than a Scholarship cad like Linley.
- NUGENT:** My hat! Listen to him!
- WHARTON:** Well, if you want to see Mark Linley you've missed him. He's gone to see his parents in Lancashire. Cherry and Inky have gone to see him off.
- BUNTER:** He has? ... I suppose he didn't like to face me. Knowing that he'd practically pinched the prize from me.
- BULL:** And what makes you think Mark Linley would invite you to join his party for the Holidays.
- BUNTER:** I know he'd jump at the chance. It's a bit of a lift-up for a scholarship cad from a poverty stricken Lancashire family to have a fellow of my breeding and connections to spend the holiday with him.
- BULL:** Let's bump the cheeky fat rotter!
- BUNTER:** Hands off, you beast!
- WHARTON:** You'd better face up to it Bunter. This is one holiday when we're not going to be saddled with you. The Prize is for a party of six and you aren't one of them. Got it?
- BULL:** I think we should kick him out.
- BUNTER:** Wait a minute you fellows ... How would it be if I came instead of Cherry. You know what a rowdy rotter his is ...
- WHARTON:** (dumbstruck) E... Eh?
- BUNTER:** Or Inky. I can't think why you fellows associate with a foreign beast like Inky ...
- NUGENT:** You... you can't ...
- BUNTER:** No... Yes, I think we'll leave Inky out. I suppose that cad Linley will have to come. They seem to think he won the Competition. Anyway if he's coming later it will be one less to share the grub with ...
- BULL grabs BUNTER.**
- BUNTER:** Yaroooh! You beast! What are you doing?
- BULL:** (holding him by the collar) Chucking you out old fat bean.

BUNTER: Careful you rotter. Mind this pudding it was the only one in the kitchen. . .

WHARTON: Wait a minute Johnny. . . (BULL relaxes) You swiped that pudding from the School Kitchen Bunter?

BULL: (grabbing it) I've got it.

BUNTER: Give me that Pudding, Bull. I tell you it came from Bunter Court.

BULL: I'll give you something, you fat robber.

BULL moves to BUNTER who backs to door. As he does so the door opens after a knock. BUNTER backs behind the door as it opens and QUELCH enters.

QUELCH moves into the room and BUNTER nips out behind him. BULL is left facing QUELCH, holding the Pudding. BUNTER disappears down the passage to R.

QUELCH: Bull! What are you holding there?

BULL: A P. . . pudding Sir.

QUELCH: I was informed that a junior had extracted a pudding from the school kitchen. I hardly expected you to be the culprit.

BULL: I . . . I'm not, sir.

QUELCH: Are you trying to contradict the evidence of my own eyes boy. You are holding the pudding.

BULL: I know Sir. I didn't take it though.

QUELCH: Is it your pudding?

BULL: No, Sir.

QUELCH: Is it the one from the Kitchen?

BULL: I think so sir.

QUELCH: Then perhaps you will be kind enough to explain how you acquired it.

BULL: A fellow handed it to me.

QUELCH: A boy from the Remove?

BULL: I... I'd rather not say, Sir.

QUELCH: Very well, I know you to be a trustworthy boy. I will accept your statement that you didn't purloin the pudding... if you see the boy who "handed" you the pudding inform him that he will be punished severely when I discover his identity.

BULL: Yes, Sir...

QUELCH: And now take it back to the kitchen at once, ... (to door) and if you should see Bunter, tell him I should like to see him...

QUELCH exits.

WHARTON: Quelchy doesn't seem to be in much doubt as to who snaffled the pudding.

BULL: (exploding) I'll murder the fat gormandiser ... Leaving me stuck with his pudding ... (dumps it on table)

BULL rushes out into the passage,
turns to L ...

WHARTON: Johnny! Come back ... We'd better get after him Franky, he'll murder Bunter.

They rush out after BULL.

As they turn R. in the passage...
BUNTER appears in the doorway.
He watches them go with a gleeful expression on his face. Then he turns to see the pudding and enters the Study, closing the door behind him.
BUNTER goes to the table where he takes the Pudding. He hears voices in the passage and quickly hides the pudding under the cushion of the armchair... He is about to hide under the table then changes his mind and nips behind the chair.

The door opens and BOB CHERRY enters with INKY.

CHERRY: Hallo, hallo, hallo! I say Inky those chaps don't seem to have got stuck into the packing.

INKY: Indeedfully not... I think I will restfully recline before I startfully begin to pack ...

He goes to sit.

BUNTER: (peeping round with alarm at the fate of his pudding) No! (squeaking almost)

CHERRY: What did you say?

INKY: (almost sitting, rises) Not a wordful.

CHERRY: I thought you said something. Now, come along Inky we've no time to sit about.

CHERRY moves to table to hand the clothes to INKY.

CHERRY: (looks in trunk) Just bung them in. The others don't seem to have spent a lot of time folding things ... (picks up a sweater) You'll need this Inky, all that snow.

INKY: Don't remindfully tell me ... Br... rrrr.

CHERRY: (looks in) They've put my sweater in there, and your socks... Let's pick up some of this stuff from the floor before we pack...

They wander round collecting oddments from the floor. Gradually they move round to the back of the chair. As they do, BUNTER moves to C. and nips into the trunk, pulling a rug over him.

CHERRY: (piles stuff on table) That's better. I'll hand it to you Inky. Put it in anyhow for now.

CHERRY hands INKY the items of clothing from the table. The first item he hands is a duffle coat... INKY puts it in the trunk BUNTER indignantly rises and puts it on the chair as INKY turns to take the next item. BUNTER ducks down again.

He repeats this with all the various items as INKY puts them in the trunk.

CHERRY: (turning) That clears that little lot. Now what about those on the floor over there ... (he looks and sees the items he has

CHERRY: (continued - - - just handed to INKY lying on the chair)
Why didn't you pack them you fathead!

INKY: (looking at the pile, aghast) The packfulness was terrific.

CHERRY: Then you must be cross-eyed. They're not in the trunk are they? ... (he moves across to chair) Here, take them again... No, wait, you give them to me.

INKY moves to chair and hands them to CHERRY.

CHERRY: (takes the first item, places it carefully in trunk) There! Get the idea! (turns to INKY)

The moment he turns away BUNTER indignantly appears and tosses the item on the table. Ducks down again.

INKY: My dear Bob. That is exactfully the extent of my preposterous packing.

CHERRY: I'll finish them off. Quickly now ...

He takes the next item as he turns, transfixed, he stares at the article he has just put in the trunk lying on the table.

CHERRY: Well, I'm hanged. Look at that - on the table!

INKY: The lookfulness is terrific! Can it be that your eyes are closed Bob?

CHERRY: (snatches and puts it in) That's in! ... See it? (INKY nods) Give me the rest! (he takes them and puts them in, rams them down) There !!!!!

There is a squeak from the trunk.

CHERRY: What was that?

INKY: An esteemed and insignificant mouse?

CHERRY: If it's a mouse it can go to Switzerland with us. I'm not unpacking that lot! Anything else to go in?

INKY: (sees a hockey stick on the floor) This perhaps?

CHERRY: Why not? They have Ice out there. Toss it over!

CHERRY catches the stick and throws it into the trunk.

BUNTER: Ouch !!!!! Yaroooh !!!!!

The two boys move back in alarm.

CHERRY: You know that sounds like Bunter ... Let's get the fat robber out of there ... Hand me that stick out Inky.

INKY hands out stick.

BUNTER: (from trunk) You put that stick down Cherry - there ... there's no-one here!

CHERRY: Hear that Inky? There's no-one there... It can't be Bunter he's just said so ... What are you a mouse?

BUNTER: Yes !!!!!!!!!

CHERRY: Good then I'll ram the clothes down on top of you with this stick... I don't mind suffocating a mouse!

BUNTER leaps out of the trunk.

BUNTER: You put that stick away you beast! You knew I was there!

CHERRY: My dear old owl, how could we know? We thought a mouse might pop out, but not you. If you don't mind me saying so, you're a bit oversize for a mouse.

BUNTER: Yah !!!

CHERRY: Suppose you tell us what you were doing in there anyway.

BUNTER: If you must know I'd brought you fellows a pudding to eat with me on the way to Switzerland.

CHERRY: You're mistaken old fat bean. You aren't coming to Switzerland.

BUNTER: As a matter of fact I think I will ... In view of the mistake in giving the prize to Linley...

CHERRY: Hark at him !

BUNTER: ... it seems only fair that I should go. One of you fellows can drop out. Wharton, for instance. He's a bossy sort of chap and ...

CHERRY: Finished? ...

BUNTER: Or Nugent... Bit of a namby-pamby for a trip like that. Perhaps you'd rather that bad tempered beast Bull didn't come?

CHERRY: There's only one chap I can see will have to be left out ...

BUNTER: You mean Inky? ... Well, I did suggest him to Wharton .
(to INKY) You won't mind will you Inky?

INKY takes the hockey stick from
CHERRY and starts to stalk BUNTER.

CHERRY: I can see Inky agrees with me. The only chap to be left out of the party is a fat robber named Bunter!

CHERRY and INKY are closing in as
the door opens and QUELCH enters.

QUELCH: Ah. Bunter! I have been searching for you.

BUNTER: F... for me sir.

QUELCH: Some food has been purloined from the kitchen and being aware of your excessive greediness I surmised you might be responsible.

BUNTER: Me Sir ... No Sir ... I haven't seen any pudding.

QUELCH: I wasn't aware that I had mentioned a Pudding. How do you come to know what was taken?

BUNTER: Oh lor! ... that is to say ... I think it must have been a Pudding. I remember now I saw that beast Bull with one ... Yes, that's who it was ... I hope you don't think I'm the sort of fellow who'd sneak into the kitchen and take food Sir.

QUELCH: That precisely the precisely the reason why I sought you out to question you Bunter ... I am aware that Bull had a pudding. Did you give it to him Bunter?

BUNTER: Not likely! ... that is to say, No Sir ... I didn't give it to him.

QUELCH: Are you sure?

BUNTER: Absolutely positive Sir. I only came here to arrange about the holiday in Switzerland.

QUELCH: I was not aware that you were going Bunter.

BUNTER: That's what I came about. There was a mistake, Linley winning the Essay Competition.

The other boys chuckle, continually at BUNTER's floundering.

QUELCH: A mistake? I fail to understand you.

BUNTER: You see I should have won.

QUELCH: You should have won !!!!!

BUNTER: I think it's generally agreed that I'm the brightest fellow in the Remove. I entered for the Prize and by mistake they gave it to Linley.

QUELCH: Don't be absurd, Bunter. You are the most indolent boy in the Remove. Almost retarded.

BUNTER: That's what I'm saying sir ... I've always been frightfully indolent ... and highly regarded. It's obvious I should have been a cad like Linley. Especially as I know so much about Switzerland.

QUELCH: You surprise me Bunter... I didn't see your Entry. What, pray do you know about Switzerland?

BUNTER: Eh... Well, for one thing they're Swiss ... and ...

QUELCH: Proceed!

BUNTER: And they've got that mountain ... Blanc Mange ...

QUELCH: They have what !! (laughter from the boys)

BUNTER: It's a high mountain. Probably shaped like a jelly from the name of it.

QUELCH: (faintly) Really Bunter your ignorance is astounding. You are practically non compos mentis.

BUNTER: (with enthusiasm) Yes, I suppose I am but a fellow doesn't like to boast.

More laughter from the boys.

QUELCH: Silence! This is no laughing matter. Did you by any chance mention the principal industrial exports in your essay?

BUNTER: Eh? ... Oh, yes ... You mean the Rolls and Buns.

QUELCH: Rolls and Buns.

BUNTER: Yes, Swiss Rolls and Buns. That's one of the reasons I'm keen on going. The food sounds better than the grub at Greyfriars. I had an awful job to find something worth eating in the kitchen.

QUELCH: BUNTER!!! Then you admit purloining comestibles from the school kitchen.

BUNTER: No, Sir, I didn't even see any. I just took a Pudding for these fellows, then that Beast Bull snaffled it.

QUELCH: (removing his mortar board) Bend over Bunter!

BUNTER: I say, you aren't thinking of whacking me Sir ... It wasn't me... I haven't hidden the pudding ... I ... don't feel too well Sir... I should report to Matron ...

QUELCH: You may, as soon as I have caned you.

BUNTER: (holds his stomach) Ooooooh...Ow.

QUELCH: BEND OVER THE CHAIR BUNTER !!!!!!

BUNTER bends over apprehensively.

BUNTER: Beast !!!

QUELCH: What did you say Bunter?

BUNTER: I ... I said I didn't mind in the least.

QUELCH raises his cane.

BUNTER: Yaroooh !!!!!

QUELCH: Silence, boy. I haven't touched you yet.

He brings the cane down sharply.

BUNTER: YAROOOH !!!!! OOOOOOOOOH !!!!!

BUNTER leaps up and makes for the door.

QUELCH: Bunter! Come here !!!!!

As BUNTER rushes out of the room he crashes through WHARTON, BULL and NUGENT who enter.

WHARTON: (staggering) The fat idiot! Anyone would think Quelchy was after him ... (sees QUELCH) That is to say ... I ... er... didn't see you there, Sir.

QUELCH: (drily) I am sure of it Wharton. .. Did you return the ... er... article of food to the Kitchen, Bull?

BULL: No, Sir ... I left it here. I've just come back for it.

QUELCH: Then I imagine you are too late. Bunter was here, no doubt he has consumed it. (he is about to sit) I should like to speak to you all.

WHARTON: Yes Sir?

QUELCH: (doesn't sit on the pudding, but starts pacing) I understand you will be close to the Italian frontier during the vacation.

CHERRY: That's right, Sir ...

QUELCH: It so happens that I shall be in Northern Italy at a conference to discuss implications of certain recently discovered Etruscan relics.

WHARTON: (with trepidation) You... you will Sir?

QUELCH: (enthusiastically) Yes Wharton. These finds may cast a new light on certain aspects of Early Italian History. It occurs to me that it would repay you all to take a day from your vacation to inspect them. It is the opportunity of a lifetime.

CHERRY: Oh... Absolutely Sir.

QUELCH: I thought you would be pleased. I shall endeavour to make arrangements to meet you for a day, if you will inform me of your itinerary.

QUELCH makes to door. Looks at the boys.

BULL: It's awfully decent of you Sir... But we shouldn't like you to waste any time on your vacation.

NUGENT: No Sir.)
WHARTON: Shouldn't dream of it Sir ...) All in protest
CHERRY: Not fair on You sir...) together.
INKY: The wastefulness would be terrific.)

QUELCH: That's very considerate of you boys ... But it will be my pleasure.

He goes ... The boys stand and look at each other.

CHERRY: What do you think of that!!

BULL: A nice holiday we'll have with that trip hanging over us.

WHARTON: Let's not worry about it. If we don't remind him he may forget the idea.

NUGENT: Some hopes! ...

CHERRY: Let's come and get tea. I shall feel more like packing after tea.

WHARTON: No... Packing first ...

As they speak BUNTER peeps in...

BUNTER: I say you fellows ...

BULL: Bunter! Bump the fat rotter!

CHERRY: Let him alone. He just had a whacking from Quelch.

BULL: Good ...

BUNTER: Beast! ... I've a good mind not to tell you the Head wants you.

WHARTON: The Headmaster wants us? Why?

BUNTER: How should I know.

CHERRY: All of us?

BUNTER: He wants the boys who are going to Switzerland.

BULL: We'd better run along then... Shall we just kick Bunter once before we go?

BUNTER: Keep off, you rotter!

WHARTON: No. Come along. I expect he's going to jaw us about how we should conduct ourselves abroad. you can finish our packing Bunter.

They exit . . . laughing at BUNTER.

BUNTER: Beasts!!! . . . (rubs his seat) I've still got the pudding! . . . He he !!!

He goes to the chair and takes out the Pudding.

The door opens . . . the voice of GOSLING the school porter is heard.

GOSLING: Which as 'ow this Master Linley's Study . . . Whew !!!
Them stairs . . . Ah . . . Thank you sir . . .

BUNTER tucks the pudding away again under the seat of the chair.

The door opens fully and a tall, elegant slightly vacuous man of about forty enters . . . He is MR. HILTON-CRABBE.

HILTON C. Sorry to barge in like this . . . I'm Hilton- Crabbe from the Tourist Agency.

BUNTER: Oh yes . . . There's no one here. Come back later.

HILTON C: (strolling to chair) Mind if I fake a pew.. (about to sit)

BUNTER: (almost yells) Don't sit there!!!!

HILTON C: (jumping up) W... why not, old boy?

BUNTER: No- one sits there . . . As a matter of fact the chap who owns it died of . . . of typhoid.

HILTON C: (eyeing chair) I say . . . Shouldn't it be fumigated or something?

BUNTER: Eh? . . . Oh yes... We're waiting for a man to come and do it.

HILTON C: I should tell him to hurry up... (edges away from chair)
Frightfully catching you know.

BUNTER: Yes... I shouldn't hang about.

- HILTON C:** Have to see a fellow named Linley... Won a competition you know... Essay on Switzerland.
- BUNTER:** I won that. You see ...
- HILTON C:** You did. Well, that's fine, old boy. Must be the chap I'm looking... (feels in his pocket) Understand you aren't coming out with the first party. (brings out papers) I've got all your papers here... Travellers cheques, tickets and all that stuff.
- BUNTER:** Hold hard ... I'm not ...
- HILTON C:** I think you'll find it all here ... (hands it to BUNTER) To tell you the truth I don't know an awful lot about it ... My uncle pushed me into this job. He's a Director of the Agency...
- BUNTER:** (his eyes glinting as he looks at the tickets etc.) I see... Thank you Mr. Crab...
- HILTON C:** Hilton-Crabbe, old boy. You'll see where we're going. You can pick us up whenever it suits you.
- BUNTER:** Of course. Leave it to me ... Can you buy food with these travellers cheques?
- HILTON C:** Oh, definitely... Do you mind if I push off now Linley, old boy ... Want to get to my bookmaker. Got an absolute certainty for the two o'clock.
- BUNTER:** Yes ... You shove off before those other beasts come back ... (he pushes HILTON-CRABBE to the door)
- HILTON C:** Shouldn't you wait in case the chap comes to fumigate that chair ...
- BUNTER:** That's all right. Most of the school have had measles.
- HILTON C:** Measles? Thought you said the chap had typhoid.
- BUNTER:** He ... he had them both ... Looked like a leopard before he went ...

He ushers HILTON-CRABBE out ...

As BUNTER exits he almost shoves HILTON-CRABBE to the L down the passage. The boys appear in a few seconds from the R. They look for a brief moment down the passage, then enter.

- WHARTON: The spoofing fat rotter!
- BULL: We'll get after him and nab him this time; whacking or no whacking. Who was that he was talking to as he went down the passage? I couldn't see him.
- CHERRY: I couldn't see him properly. It might have been one of his titled relations.
- NUGENT: I felt such a chump when the Head asked us what we wanted.
- WHARTON: Never mind. Bunter will keep.
- INKY: The keepfulness is terrific! It's a bird in the hand that gathers no moss.
- CHERRY: I'd like to know where you dig up those proverbs Inky.
- WHARTON: Let's get some tea...
- BULL: In a minute. I'm fagged out with all that dashing about. Let's sit for a jiffy.
- He sits in the chair.
- BULL: (leaping up) My Sainted Aunt! What' that !!!!!!
- He lifts the cushion and discloses the pudding.
- CHERRY: It's the giddy old pudding! ...
- WHARTON: Bunter didn't eat it!
- CHERRY: (grabbing it) No, but he'll be back for it as soon as he's got shut of that mysterious bird he was talking to.
- NUGENT: Better take it back to the kitchen.
- CHERRY: No, I think Bunter should have it...
- BULL: You're going to give it to that fat pirate? Are you potty?
- CHERRY: They won't be expecting it back in the kitchen. Quelchy will tell them Bunter has scoffed it. That's why he whacked Bunter.
- WHARTON: But why give it to him?

CHERRY: I think he's entitled to it. If a man gets a caning for eating a pudding then I think he should have it - it's only common justice.

BULL: If you think I'm going to see you give that to Bunter...

CHERRY: But you are! You're going to help me give it to him... Look out in the passage Inky and watch for him. (he goes) Hand me a chair Harry ...

WHARTON: (handing chair) What's the idea?

CHERRY: (taking chair to door) I'm arranging to give Bunter his pudding. The pudding. Franky.

NUGENT: (handing pudding) I don't get it ...

CHERRY: (climbing on chair) Of course you don't. Bunter's the one who gets it...

CHERRY stands on the chair. INKY enters.

INKY: He's at the end of the passage. Talking to Tom Redwing... I think he is borrowfully trying to cash a Postal Order ...

The boys laugh. CHERRY leaves the door only slightly open and props the pudding on the top ...

CHERRY: I think Bunter should get that all right ... (the boys laugh) Come on now, behind the door ...

The boys move to the wall behind where the door opens...

WHARTON: Here he comes, I can hear him...

The door opens slightly there is a crash as the pudding falls. A muffled... "UGH!!!!!!!!!"

CHERRY: Got him !!!...(they all laugh)

CHERRY swings the door open and the laughter freezes on their lips. In the door-way stands QUELCH a basin up-ended on his head and pudding streaming down his face.

CHERRY: Oh help !!!!! Quelchy !!!!!

THE CURTAIN FALLS.....

SCENE TWO

This short scene is played before the curtain. It is a Continental Railway Terminus. A few days later.

BUNTER enters from R. He seems harassed and carries a large suitcase.

He stops suddenly as the TANNOY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS SPEAKER is heard.

- SPEAKER: Mesdames et Messieurs. Attention s'il vous plait.
- BUNTER: Why can't they talk a language a fellow can understand..
- SPEAKER: Our announcements will now be made in English ...
- BUNTER: About time too.
- SPEAKER: ... for the benefit of American Travellers ...
- BUNTER: Cheek! Go on then.
- SPEAKER: Hungary ...
- BUNTER: I'm famished!
- SPEAKER: Turkey.
- BUNTER: (opens case) I already have one. (produces it) But if there are any more going ...
- SPEAKER: Travellers for these two countries must embark on the Oriental Express. They are reminded they must have special visas for these destinations.
- BUNTER: (putting Turkey back) Fathead! What about Switzerland.
- SPEAKER: Further announcements will be made in English as the necessity arises ...
- BUNTER: What about me? ... Oh 'lor' ... Here are those other beasts with Stilton-Crab.. Better duck down into the subway and follow them... (he does so) Here we are ... (ducks down in Aisle of theatre, leaves his bag behind.

Enter HILTON-CRABBE followed by the FAMOUS FIVE. They stop C.

- HILTON C: (a little bewildered) Any of you lads catch that announcement.
- WHARTON: I think they were addressing passengers for the Near East.
- HILTON C: Were they ... Well, wait here for a tick, will you? I'll just check on the luggage ... And I have to telephone London ... Fellow on the train gave me an absolute certainty for the one-thirty ... I'll find out about the train, too.

He goes off L.

- CHERRY: I can't think how a bird like that ever got into a Tourist Agency.
- BULL: If we were travelling by horse, he'd be just the chap.
- NUGENT: I could do with a snack.
- CHERRY: Should have brought old Bunter and his pudding!
- BULL: I'd rather starve.
- INKY: The starvefulness would be terrific.
- WHARTON: Wonder whose bag this is? Think they've forgotten it.
- CHERRY: Probably a porter left it there. Think we should hand it in.
- BUNTER: Oh my hat !!!!!
- CHERRY: What did you say? (to WHARTON)
- WHARTON: Nothing ...
- CHERRY: I thought I heard someone say Oh, my hat! ...
- NUGENT: You must be batty. In any case they'd say "Oh Mon Chapeau!" here.
- CHERRY: I think we'd better hand it in ... (lifts it) It's heavy. Should we look in it?
- BUNTER: (sotto): Oh help... (LOUDLY) NO... that is, NON !!!!!
Puttez down la Baggage.

They all look around.

- WHARTON: Sounded like someone calling from the subway. Leave it alone Bob...

Enter HILTON - CRABBE.

HILTON C: Our train is this way, I think. Anyone know the french for One Thirty... or horse...

The boys walk towards him carrying the bag. They stand at L. end of stage, near steps. BUNTER stands below them.

CHERRY: I found this bag. Think we should hand it in?

HILTON C: What's in it, old boy?

WHARTON: We didn't open it. It's heavy ...

CHERRY has put it down. They stand talking to HILTON-CRABBE.

HILTON C: I think we've enough luggage of our own ... Extraordinary . The French for Horse and Hair seem to be the same word. Chevaux...

As he speaks, BUNTER sneaks up the steps and takes the bag away.

WHARTON: You think we ought to leave this bag then.

HILTON C: Which bag, old boy?

CHERRY: (turns) This bag ... My Sainted Aunt it's gone.

HILTON C: Shouldn't bother about it.

BULL: Porter probably came and took it.

WHARTON: Let's get to the train ...

They go ... CHERRY looking behind at spot where bag was, puzzled.

As soon as they are gone BUNTER comes up on stage.

BUNTER: Vous Cheeky Beasts! ... Better get after the rotters or I'll miss the train ...

SPEAKER: (very loudly) ATTENTION!!!!

BUNTER drops his bag, it bursts and sprays the Turkey, Sausages, etc., all over the ground.

- BUNTER:** Oh dash it! ... (gathering them up) I'll miss the train !!
- SPEAKER:** Mesdames et Messieurs. Regardez les Fiêhe d'Entrie pour L'Expresse Orientale.
- BUNTER:** (rushing off) Oh shut up, you cheeky foriegn beast!

.....lights down

SCENE THREE

The scene is a room off the Entrance Hall of a Chalet in Switzerland. The Room is roughly triangular with the apex of the Triangle C. B. Slightly R. C. is a Window Recess with a view through the Window of Snow Covered mountains. In the Recess is a large WINDOW SEAT. Further R. of the window seat in the wall is set a Large Serving Hatch, with a sliding door. The Hatch is about two feet from the ground and is operated by ropes which can be seen when the sliding door is shut. There is also a speaking tube on the L. side of the Hatch.

There is a door D. R. of the Hatch which leads to the Kitchens, cellars etc. In the centre of the apex-wall is mounted the Head of a large mountain-goat.

To the L. of the apex of the triangle is the main entrance to the room. An open arch-way leading to the Entrance Hall. Through this door we can see into the Entrance Hall. The door to the Chalet is off R. (People entering the Chalet can be seen passing the window from R. to L.) Leading off L. the stairs can be seen leading to the upper parts of the Chalet. There is yet another exit from the Entrance Hall to the rest of the Chalet which is OFF L. through the main door and is presumably reached by moving off L., parallel with the Staircase, D. S. of the Staircase. The furniture consists of a Dining Table and chairs.

As the curtain rises we see SIGNOR VERDONI enter. He is a large, stout Italian-Swiss about fifty. He is swarthy and has a large moustache which gives him an air of ferocity even when he is being kindly. He is the proprietor of the Establishment.

It is late afternoon on the day following the previous scene.

VERDONI looks round as he enters. He moves to the Serving Hatch, slides back the door and calls through the Speaking Tube.

VERDONI: Karl!!!!!!

He waits for a second then peers down the shaft.

VERDONI: KARL***!!!!!!

He shrugs his shoulders, then leans right into the hatch. As he leans in KARL shuffles in. He is a very old man in waiters' clothes. He is bearded and wears thick pebble spectacles. There is an air of professorial benignity about him. He watches VERDONI with mild interest.

VERDONI: Karl ... KARL !!!!!!

VERDONI emerges from the shaft and shakes his head sadly. He suddenly sees KARL and does a swift "take".

VERDONI: (slight accent) Why do you not come when I call you?

KARL: I have come.

VERDONI: You did not answer me!

KARL: I have a slight deafness Signor Verdoni.

VERDONI: (loudly) Also you are as blind as a bat. You creep about like a weary snail. I suppose I am fortunate to catch you before you pass out for good.

KARL: (thoughtfully) I think I shall last another ten years - with care.

VERDONI: And care you certainly take, my friend. Listen, we have guests.

KARL: Guests! There should be none before Friday.

VERDONI: Don't I know that? This fool of an English Tour Manager has bungled the dates. He is at the Station now with five schoolboys. They are to stay here for one or two nights before they pass on to their destination.

KARL: We have no staff.

VERDONI: We do. We have you. You say you have always wanted to learn the business of an Hotelier, this is your chance. You shall be the complete Hotelier.

KARL: Me?

VERDONI: Si! Who shall be our Reception Clerk? ... Karl! Who shall be our Chef? ...Karl! Our Headwaiter? No-one but Karl! ... Who is our Chambermaid?

KARL: Not Karl?

VERDONI: Yes, Karl! Even the Manager shall be Karl. There is an experience for you. You are the manager and you have these unexpected guests. What do you think to do?

KARL: Increase the salary of the Reception Clerk, the headwaiter, the Chef and the Chambermaid?

VERDONI: So? ... Then you may do so. But deduct the increases from the salary of the Manager.

As he speaks the boys are heard OFF. They pass by the window and into the Entrance Hall.

VERDONI: Our guests arrive... (eyes KARL) Try to smarten yourself. Who will they think you are with crumpled trousers and a shaggy beard?

KARL: Not the Chambermaid...

VERDONI rushes out to greet the guests.

VERDONI: Welcome to the Chalet gentlemen, Is Mr 'Itlon- Cramps with you?

WHARTON: Who! ... Oh, no he's at the Station still, arranging about the baggage. There's some more, a trunk.

The boys are eyeing KARL who is standing there brushing his clothes and tidying his beard. They put down their suitcases.

VERDONI: This is Karl. Unfortunately there is a misunderstanding with the Tourist Agency. You were to spend a night here on your way to Innesbrucken. I thought this would not be until the

VERDONI: (continued) end of the week. I have no staff until then, but Karl. You will bear with our service perhaps?

CHERRY: Don't worry Signor. We'll muck in.

VERDONI: Karl! The bags.

KARL starts to wander off R.

VERDONI: No Karl! The bags! ... (loudly) He is a little deaf (to the boys)

KARL: The bags? Upstairs?

VERDONI: Si!

KARL: Well !!! ... I am the Hall Porter too! ...

He moves to the bags. He lifts them and nothing happens.

BULL: Let the old chap leave them. We can manage the bags.

VERDONI: (depairingly) I am sorry gentlemen... Come with me. I will take you to your rooms ... Karl! Some food for the gentlemen.

KARL: (shuffles to speaker) Some food for the guests please. To be sent up through the Hatch ... The Headwaiter speaking.

He nods to VERDONI and moves to door.

KARL: (at door) Do you wish I should change my clothes to be the Chef, Signor?

VERDONI: NO!!! Get the food. Some sandwiches for now ...

KARL: At your service Gentlemen ... (bows and exits)

VERDONI: He is not too bright ... I just employed him to help between seasons...

WHARTON: I never thought anyone could be older than Gosling. But he must be.

NUGENT: It's because of the beard.

CHERRY: He does look a bit like Methusalah.

VERDONI: Come please!

He leads the boys out and up the stairs.

As they go we suddenly see the face of BUNTER peering through the window.

As soon as they are gone BUNTER comes in through the Entrance Hall into the Main Room. "I'm starving" he says.

He looks round cautiously. Then suddenly he hears a sound of the service hatch moving. He sees the ropes . . .

Cautiously he walks to the sliding door. Opens it and there to his surprise is a plate of sandwiches.

BUNTER: Nothing to complain about in the service at this place.

BUNTER:

He grabs the food and exits through the Hall and off R.

No sooner has he gone than VERDONI comes down the stairs he enters main room.

As he enters KARL comes in from R.

VERDONI: You have some thing for the boys to eat Karl?

KARL: I have just sent it up Signor. (points to shaft)

VERDONI: Then serve it! (watches KARL go to Hatch)

KARL: (opens Hatch with a flourish, not looking) There !!!

VERDONI stares at the empty hatch, incredulous.

KARL turns, peers, wipes his spectacles and takes another look.

VERDONI: Well, where is the food? What are the boys to eat? Air? You make a Chef's work easy.

KARL: It... It was there . . . I sent it up myself.

VERDONI: Now as well as your eyes and ears, your mind is going!
 (off, we hear HILTON-CRABBE speaking to someone)
 Get some more you idiot! ... And this time get in the
 lift with it.!

KARL goes. Puzzled, he takes another
 look at the service hatch and lowers
 it before he leaves.

HILTON-CRABBE comes into view
 through the window. He is calling
 instruction re - the unloading of the
 trunk.

VERDONI exits to help him. We see
VERDONI exit and cross the window,
 outside. He and **HILTON-CRABBE**
 move across out of sight R.

BUNTER enters From L.
 Entrance in Hall.

BUNTER: I suppose that wasn't too bad. A little more would just
 take the edge off my appetite.

As he speaks the lift in the hatch
 is heard again.

BUNTER runs across to it eagerly.
 He can scarcely contain his excite-
 ment until he opens the sliding door.
 More food.

BUNTER: I told Quelchy, there'd be no complaints about the grub here.
 (lifts the food quickly)

BUNTER hears **VERDONI** and **HILTON-**
CRABBE coming with trunk. He nips
 off through hall to L., as before.

HILTON CRABBE and **VERDONI** enter
 hall with Trunk. They leave it in the
 hall and enter the main room.

VERDONI: I have sent the guests to their rooms. I do not understand
 'ilton-Cramps why you say they arrive on Friday.

HILTON C: No, Old Boy. What I meant was that the other one, Linley
 wouldn't be here until about Friday ...

VERDONI: It so happens it is better this way. There is no staff but an old man I took on to help out. But these things must be watched in future. ' ilton-Cramps.

HILTON C: It's Hilton-Crabbe old boy, if you don't mind. Cramps are things you get in the water ... although come to think of it, so are crabs. (KARL enters) I say, who is that?

VERDONI: That is Karl... The staff! Have you sent food up Karl?

KARL: This time I am sure ... (he moves to Service Hatch opens door as before) There !!!

KARL suddenly look at VERDONI who is turning purple at the sight of the empty hatch. He turns to hatch, sees it is empty. Wipes his spectacles.

VERDONI: It is your brains that need cleaning. Not your spectacles... (to him) Get some food and CARRY IT UP YOURSELF!!!!

Poor KARL leaves in a daze. After lowering Hatch.

HILTON C; Do you think he can carry anything upstairs?

VERDONI: It is a risk I am prepared to take. Now, my friend, is that the trunk?

HILTON C; That's the one ... Do you have the ... er... er stuff.

VERDONI: That is my business. It will be here. I think the trunk will be ideal for our purpose. We shall leave it in the hall. The boys will not need it upstairs. It will leave early tomorrow ... Excellent. Come, I will take you to your room where we can talk.

They leave and move upstairs ...

BUNTER emerges. He hears the boys coming downstairs and nips out L. again

The boys come into the main room.

CHERRY: That poor old boy is taking his time with the grub.

BULL: I should think it's as much as he can do to lift one slice on another to make a sandwich.

INKY: B. rrrrrrrrrr..

WHARTON: Cold, Inky?

INKY: I think this absurd trip is preposterous.

CHERRY: Let's nip out and take a look at the lake.

NUGENT: Good idea. We're staying somewhere on the other side aren't we?

WHARTON: Don't ask me ... Come along then ...

INKY: I think I will remainfully stay here.

CHERRY: A good brisk walk in the air is what you need.

INKY: What I need is terrific fire and some blankets.

WHARTON: (grinning) You'll get used to it Inky ...

CHERRY: We shan't be five minutes. Don't scoff all the grub Inky.

They go...

INKY strolls over to the window to watch them go. He stands there looking out.

BUNTER enters hall from L. He peers into the room as he does so KARL appears from R. He carries the food on a tray. He eyes the lift shaft as he walks past to put the food on the table.

He goes to the lift shaft and opens the door and looks in still puzzled.

At this moment, when INKY is looking through the window and KARL is looking in the service hatch, BUNTER siezes his opportunity to snaffle the food from the table. In a flash he is gone.

INKY turns from the window and moves down to table. KARL comes from the lift shaking his head sadly.

KARL suddenly does a terrific "take" He looks from the table to INKY and then back to the table again.

INKY: You have the look of terrific astonishment my good man.

KARL: It ... it's you ... W... Where does it all go?

INKY: The wherfulness is terrific. Where does what go?

KARL: I ... I just put it on the table there ...

VERDONI enters from upstairs.

VERDONI: Karl. Where is the food!

KARL: I brought it myself ... I put it on the table, and this boy ... He has eaten it. Before I could lift my hand to pull my beard it was gone.

VERDONI: You couldn't have brought enough.

INKY: Food? ... There has been no food. Our aged friend here was peerfully looking in the lift when I turned to the table.

VERDONI: KARL! ... You are nothing but a halfwit... (to INKY)
I apologise Signor... This time I shall accompany this foolish old man and prepare something myself ...
COME !!!!!!!! (they go)

The other boys enter as VERDONI and KARL exit R.

CHERRY: Hallo, Hallo Hallo! No grub yet?

INKY: I regret to say the preposterous waiter is still bringing imaginary food.

WHARTON: I think the poor old boy is past it. I feel sorry for the people here. Mr. Hilton-Crabbe seems to have made rather a mess of things.

CHERRY: Why not give them a hand and carry the trunk upstairs? That will warm you up Inky.

WHARTON: Good idea!

The boys exit to hall, jostling each other and laughing they move the trunk upstairs.

BUNTER appears again. He enters, moves to the hatch. There is nothing there so he moves to main exit again. As he does so HILTON-CRABBE enters

from the stairs. They collide.

- HILTON C: Ouch! ... Oh I say, take it easy!
- BUNTER: Oh help! Stilton-Shrimp!
- HILTON C: (gasping) Hilton-Crabbe, old boy. I say, what are you doin' here? You shouldn't be here until the end of the week - Friday.
- BUNTER: Eh?
- HILTON C: You're Linley, aren't you?
- BUNTER: I should hope not. I'm not a scholarship-cad. My Pater pays fees...
- HILTON C: But my dear old boy. I gave you your tickets. You haven't lost your memory or anything have you?
- BUNTER: Oh Lor! ... Yes, that's it. I've lost my memory. I don't remember you coming into the Study and giving me all that travel stuff.
- HILTON C: You ... you don't?
- BUNTER: Not in the least. As a matter of fact I don't remember - er Greyfriars at all. Quelchy, or the Head or those rotters upstairs.
- HILTON C: But wait a minute, I mean you're talking about them.
- BUNTER: I hope you don't think I'm pretending to lose my memory, just because for a moment I forgot I was supposed to be Mark Linley. I'm not Bunter you know.
- HILTON C: (fogged) Hold on ... You're not Who?
- BUNTER: I said I'm not Bunter. He's a fellow at Greyfriars. The most popular chap in the school... A very athletic chap, I think I can say safely that it's only jealousy that keeps him from being Captain of the Remove.
- HILTON C: I get the idea... You aren't this fellow then?
- BUNTER: No ... Although I have the same athletic build.
- HILTON C: (eyeing him) You ... you have? ... Well, the fact of the matter is. I know you aren't this other chap. You're Linley ... I met you at Greyfriars.

BUNTER: I know that.

HILTON C: You do? ... Then you must have your memory back, old boy.

BUNTER: I've just been telling you! I don't remember!

HILTON C: Oh! ... Well, not to worry old boy. I know who you are. Any time you want to know, I'll be around. Your friends are here, too. I'll pop up and tell them to keep an eye on you ...

He moves off to hall...

BUNTER: (stymied for a second) ... I say ... don't do that you chump! ...

But HILTON - CRABBE has gone. As he reaches the stairs CHERRY and WHARTON come down.

HILTON C: I say, your trunk has gone.

CHERRY: We thought we'd give a hand and take it upstairs.

HILTON C: Oh ... Well, never mind old boy. Your pal Linley is here.

WHARTON: Mark Linley, here already?

HILTON C: Yes he's in there. I think you ought to keep an eye on him. Not too well, you know. Amnesia or something.

The other boys come down the stairs.

CHERRY: Hear that you chaps, Mark's here.

BULL: Already. Where is he?

HILTON C: In there ...

WHARTON: Mr. Hilton-Crabbe says he's not too well. We'll go and see the poor chap.

During this conversation BUNTER becomes panic stricken. He searches madly for an exit. Rushes to door R. But hears VERDONI coming.

He looks round and then goes to the window. He puts his hand on the window seat to get up and climb through the

window. He puts his hand on the window seat to get up and climb through the window. But as he does he finds there is a lid.

In a flash he has opened the lid and hidden himself in the window seat.

VERONI enters with KARL from R. They carry food.

The boys enter also from hall.

VERDONI: Now, put it on the table.

KARL: That's what I did last time.

VERDONI: But this time my friend I can see you, I shall know it is not food of your imagination.

WHARTON: Where's Mark?

VERDONI: You say?

WHARTON: Hilton - Crabbe said our friend Mark Linley was here.

VERDONI: I have just entered, young Signor. There is no-one here. Would your friend have gone for a walk perhaps?

CHERRY: I... I don't know. See if he is in the other lounge Johnny. Perhaps Mr. Hilton whatnot meant in there.

NUGENT: I'll come with you.

NUGENT and BULL exit through main door and off L.

VERDONI: At last, gentlemen I have managed to procure something for you to eat. (look at KARL) Despite the assistance of our friend here!

VERDONI moves to hall door.

VERDONI: Your trunk is gone!

WHARTON: We took it up ourselves. Thought we'd help, but Mr. Hilton-Crabbe seems to think it would be more convenient out there.

VERDONI: It would. If you do not need it. It well save a rush to bring it down in the morning.

CHERRY: We'll give you a hand.

VERDONI: No, No. Search for your friend. Mr 'ilton-Cramps and Karl will help me down the stairs with it. I will prepare a room for this new guest also . . .

He exits, dragging KARL with him upstairs.

NUGNET and BULL enter.

BULL: No sign of him.

WHARTON: Verdoni could be right. He may have gone for a stroll around the village. Let's take a look.

BULL: You go. I'll stay with Inky.

The three boys leave and pass the window as they leave the chalet.

HILTON-CRABBE, VERDONI and KARL are struggling down with the trunk.

BULL: I'm starved. (to table) These sandwiches look good.

BUNTER opens the lid and peers. INKY turns and the lid goes down with a slam. They both turn to each other.

BULL: What was that noise?

INKY: The noisefulness was terrific.

They see VERDONI with the trunk in the hall.

BULL: Must have been the trunk.

VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE pass off L. below stairs. KARL enters.

KARL: (relieved to see the food still there) I will get you something to drink gentlemen. Some coffee?

BULL: Please . . .

He passes out to R. Taking a look at the shaft as he goes.

BUNTER opens the lid. Peers out. His mouth waters at the sight of the food. The boys look round and once again the lid slams.

BULL: That wasn't the trunk! Sounded as though it came from the window. Might have been something outside. Let's take a look.

INKY: The lookfulness is the proper caper.

They both move to the window.
They climb on to the seat to look out.
They lean out. BUNTER forces up the lid.

BULL: Stop wriggling about Inky. You'll have me out of the window.

INKY: My dear Bull. I have not movefully shifted.

BUNTER raises the lid again. This time he gets a clear view of the food.

It is too much for him. He makes an effort and forces up the lid violently.

INKY and BULL are pushed right through the window, with a yell of surprise.

BUNTER is out of the window seat in a flash. He gathers all the food and rushes out and up the stairs L.

The minute he is gone KARL enters.

KARL: (seeing the food is gone) No! ... It is impossible...

He is standing there as the other two boys rush in. They are covered in snow.

BULL: (stops short as he sees KARL) No... He couldn't have pushed us ... not an old man like that!

They stand staring at each other incredulously as the

CURTAIN FALLS.

SCENE FOUR

The scene is the same. BULL and WHARTON enter. They sit wearily.

WHARTON: I'm fagged out. I should think we've walked half over Switzerland. Where can he be?

BULL: I don't understand it. Mark isn't the sort of fellow to push off without saying a word to any of us.

WHARTON: You don't think he might have gone on to Innesbrucken without us?

BULL: Not a chance. His bag is up in his room.

WHARTON: It's not the case he has at school.

BULL: Might have another one at home and brought that instead.

HILTON-CRABBE enters from upstairs.

WHARTON: We still can't find Linley Mr. Hilton-Crabbe. You sure he was here?

HILTON C: Absolutely positive, old boy. Saw him spoke to him. Told me he wasn't someone else, you know.

BULL: He told you what?

HILTON C: Said he wasn't another chap.

WHARTON: Why should he be another chap?

HILTON C: That's exactly what I said.

BULL: Well, what other chap wasn't he?

HILTON C: I couldn't say. You see I didn't know the other chap. Linley said he could be the Captain of the Remove.

WHARTON: Who? Linley?

HILTON C: No. The other chap.

WHARTON: I'm head boy of the Remove.

HILTON C: You are? Well it must have been you he wasn't.

WHARTON: I know he's not me. What was that about Amnesia?

HILTON C: He said he'd lost his memory . . . Something odd about it though.

BULL: What, for instance?

HILTON C: He told me all the things he couldn't remember. I suppose you don't know whether it's possible to reverse the charges on a phone call from here to London?

WHARTON: Haven't the foggiest.

HILTON C: Must have a try. Want to get in touch with my Bookmaker. . . Had an Omen when I was asleep in the train . . . Horse called Hay-fever. Made me think about that poor chap who had typhoid at your school.

WHARTON: Typhoid at Greyfriars!!!!

HILTON C: Absolutely. Nearly sat in the fellow's chair.

BULL: When?

HILTON C: When I saw Linley. Matter of fact he tipped me off about the chair. . . Excuse me, old boy. Have to find a telephone, somewhere . . .

He drifts out R.

WHARTON: Well, if ever a chap was off his rocker, it's Hilton-Crabbe.

VERDONI comes down the stairs.
He stops and looks at the trunk
on his way into the room.

VERDONI: Ah gentlemen. . . Have you discovered your friend yet?

WHARTON: No. We were just speaking about him. We've been all over the village. Not a sign. Our friends are still out.

VERDONI: Could he have gone to his room since you were out?

WHARTON: We could look, I suppose.

VERDONI: I will have some supper for you soon. Also I notice we damaged your case slightly bringing it down. Karl and I will have it in here and repair it.

BULL: Thanks. Come on Harry, we may as well go up.

They exit . . . L and upstairs.

VERDONI goes to shaft and calls for KARL.

While he is calling HILTON-CRABBE comes in and stands behind him. Taps him on the shoulder. VERDONI wheels round . . .

VERDONI: Fool! You startled me! Where is Karl?

HILTON C: Don't know, old boy.

VERDONI: I will find him. . . I want to talk to you and it would be better if Karl were occupied. We have work to do.

VERDONI exits R.

As he goes BUNTER enters from L. below stairs in Hall. BUNTER wheels about when he sees HILTON-CRABBE. Too late.

HILTON C: I say, Linley. Your pals are searching the place for you. Where have you been all the afternoon?

BUNTER: Me? . . . Oh, I went to . . . er. . . do a spot of climbing Blanc Mange, you know.

HILTON C: What?

BUNTER: It's a mountain. . . I did some shooting too. Bagged a couple of chemises . . .

HILTON C: A couple of what?

BUNTER: (points to Chamois Head) Those Goat things. A lot bigger than that though.

HILTON C: I say, you shouldn't do that you know. Verdoni tells me they never shoot them any more. Apparently anyone who kills one turns into a goat-man and has to haunt the Mountains. . .

BUNTER: Sounds a lot of rot to me.

HILTON C: Expect it is. But I shouldn't tell anyone you shot one. The people in the district are odd about it, don't you know. Better get up and see your pals, they're very worried, old boy.

BUNTER: Right! ... Any supper yet? I 'm famished.

HILTON C: Signor Verdoni says he'll have some a little later.

BUNTER: Tell him to send it up to my room... Don't think I want to see those other chaps tonight. I'm tired after fagging up that mountain ...

HILTON C: But they want to see you ...

BUNTER: I'll call in there ... (he exits to hall but does not go upstairs. He passes out L. below stairs)

VERDONI: I cannot see Karl. Let us have the trunks in now.

They exit to hall and begin to drag the trunk which can still be seen.

While their backs are turned BUNTER nips in. He is about to run off R. when he hears KARL. He quickly jumps into the window seat. The other two drag in the trunk. Then exit again. They return with a new trunk. And leave the two of them on the stage D. R. C.

KARL enters.

VERDONI: Where have you been Karl?

KARL: Below. Is there anything the matter with the trunk.

VERDONI: It is damaged. Our guests shall have a new one compliments of the house. The lock is broken.

KARL: Can I not repair it?

VERDONI: I would like them to have it before next Christmas. Prepare some supper for our guests. But first collect a parcel from out there (hall) It is the outfit for the Chef who may be here tomorrow.

KARL: Will I cease to be Chef then?

VERDONI: You have never started to be Chef!

KARL moves off below stairs L.

- VERDONI: Now my friend. Here is the trunk I am so kindly exchanging with our guests. (lifts lid) There is a compartment here which will carry our ... er... Exports to England. These boys shall act as our agents to smuggle these articles.
- HILTON C: I say, that's pretty bright.
- VERDONI: Not so. It has been tried before often. Any cleverness lies in the choice of our Agents. Who will suspect a party of schoolboys of smuggling watches and jewellery worth several thousand pounds?
- HILTON C: What if they catch us... I mean to say. I shall be with the boys.
- VERDONI: They will not ... If, anything should go amiss, why should you know what is hidden in the padding of a boys' trunk?
- HILTON C: Quite right, old boy, why should I. But I'll have to get the stuff out when we get there.
- VERDONI: That should be a simple enough task. A few minutes alone with the trunk. Arrange to have the luggage forwarded and take charge of it.
- HILTON C: I see ... One more think ... When do I get paid for all this. I mean to say, my Bookmaker is getting pretty nasty ... (VERDONI looks blank) The fellow I put the money on for horses.
- VERDONI: (shrugs) That is up to you my friend, if you wish to buy horses with your money ... Remember this. Do not neglect to deliver the valuables to the address without delay ... Or by the beard of the Goat-man ... (points to Chamois Head) You will have a slit throat! (gesture)
- HILTON C: (nervously) I'll take them straight there ... I hope you don't think I'm dishonest.
- VERDONI: If you were honest. You would not be helping me. Watch out Mr. Hilton-Stamps.
- HILTON C: Hilton- Crabbe, old boy. Where is all this stuff anyway?
- VERDONI: You shall see it in due course, as they say. Meet me here, when the boys are asleep.

KARL enters with a bundle. They shut trunk hurriedly.

- VERDONI: You have found them?

KARL: Yes, I'll take them below.

He carries bundle to service hatch.
Opens door. Pulls up lift. Puts in
bundle.

VERDONI: Help us carry this trunk to the Hall.

They all three move the old trunk out
to hall.

As they are doing so BUNTER nips out
of window seat. Rushes to service
hatch. Sees parcel. Opens it ex-
pectantly... Disgusted he is about to
throw it away. Then he has an idea.
He wraps it again. Goes to the
Chamois Head and takes a piece
of black fur.

BUNTER give a giggle. Tries the piece
of black fur against his face as a
moustache, or Beard. He gives a chuckle
and exits R.

The other boys. CHERRY, NUGENT
and INKY enter into hall.

VERDONI greets them and ushers them
into Main room.

VERDONI: Have you seen your friend ?

CHERRY: Not a sign of him. I just don't understand it. It isn't like
Mark to behave this way.

INKY: Could it be he has froze to the deathfulness... Brrrrrrr!

NUGENT: Oh, Pipe down Inky. It's quite warm... I shouldn't worry
any more Bob. He'll come when he's ready. Might be
that things at home aren't too good. He's got a lot on his
mind.

CHERRY: Perhaps you're right. But he ought to tell us. That's what
pals are for.

VERDONI: He may be upstairs.

HILTON C: Yes. Your two pals went up there. They haven't come down,
they might all be having a party up there.

VERDONI: Get the food Karl! And hot drinks for the guests...

KARL shuffles over to the shaft...

KARL: It has gone! The parcel!

VERDONI: Idiot! You have dropped it down the shaft! Get the food!

KARL exits, after shutting shaft door.
He goes R.

VERDONI: You must excuse him ... Now I will tell your friends you are back ... You will see I have a new trunk to replace the one which was damaged. Your old one is in the Hall. The things can be transferred later.

CHERRY: That's decent of you Signor Verdoni!

VERDONI: No trouble at all. Part of our service. Come Mr. 'ilton - Stamps I wish to show you the rooms we shall have available for your Agency very shortly ...

They go off L

WHARTON and BULL come downstairs as VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE move across hall to go upstairs.

HILTON C: Did you see him?

WHARTON: He is not in his room.

VERDONI: He is tired perhaps, and resting in the lounge.
(points off L.)

BULL: Then he can find us when he wakes up.

VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE pass upstairs. WHARTON and BULL enter.

CHERRY: Pretty odd about Mark, don't you think Harry?

KARL enters and goes to shaft. He pulls up lift by ropes. Opens service hatch door and discloses food. A ham, chicken, sandwiches, cakes etc... As the boys are speaking he serves the food to the table.

WHARTON: I don't know what to think. There must be something wrong with him. According to Mr. Hilton-Crabbe he says he thinks

- WHARTON: (continued) he's the Captain of the Remove.
- BULL: No, he thinks he isn't the Head Boy of the Remove.
- CHERRY: Well, that's all right, he isn't.
- NUGENT: Why should he think he isn't?
- BULL: Because he's not. Do you think you're the Head boy of the Remove?
- NUGENT: Of course I don't you chump! I know Harry is!
- BULL: All right then. So does Mark Linley . . . If he's potty then you're potty!
- NUGENT: Are you calling me potty! (goes to BULL)
- WHARTON: Oh, stop it, the pair of you. We'll find out what it's all about when we see Mark . . .
- CHERRY: If we see him.
- BULL: You don't think Hilton-Crabbe is mistaking someone else for Mark Linley?
- WHARTON: It wouldn't surprise me. If you ask me Hilton-Crabbe has a couple of screws loose himself.
- INKY: He certainly seems unsteady on his absurd rocker!
- CHERRY: I'm still worried.
- WHARTON: Snap out of it Bob. We can't do anything. He'll see us when he wants to. Leave it at that.
- NUGENT: That food looks good. I'm starving after all that walking.
- BULL: Terrific . . . You managed to get some up here at last Karl!
- KARL: (with dignity) The food has been here before. . . (a look at INKY) Some people have seen it. I will prepare some coffee. (he goes R.)
- WHARTON: Thank you. . . (to BULL) Don't chivvy the old boy.
- BULL: I still think he shoved me and Inky through the window.
- CHERRY: What rot! I doubt if he could even open a window. Come on let's take a look at what he's dug up for us.

He moves to table. They pull up chairs and sit . . .

CHERRY: What about sampling this ham first. . .

As he speaks BUNTER enters from R.

He is dressed in the Chef's clothes and walking in a slightly mincing manner. He has a small moustache and beard.

The boys turn and stare at him.

BULL: Some of the staff arrived. I knew Karl couldn't have got all this lot ready by himself. Good evening (to CHEF)

BUNTER: Bon Evening Mong Garcongs . . . Ah Les 'am. Wait un minute.

He walks to CHERRY who is about to serve the ham and takes it.

BUNTER: (holding ham, sniffs it) Ugh !!!

CHERRY: What's the matter?

BUNTER: Zis 'am you cannot eat. No, it ees not good enough even for ze cheeky rotter like vous.

BUNTER marches out to the hall and off L. with ham.

BULL: Well. What do you make of that?

WHARTON: What was the matter with the Ham, Bob?

CHERRY: Nothing that I could see . . . I didn't have a chance to taste it.

NUGENT: I suppose he knows what he's doing. Let's have some of that chicken.

WHARTON: I'll cut some . . . (moves the Chicken to him)

He is about to slice it when BUNTER returns.

BUNTER: Half un mo' . . . (he goes to WHARTON and takes the chicken from him)

WHARTON: Wait a minute, what's the idea?

BUNTER silences him with an imperious gesture, and examines the chicken.

BUNTER: (with a look of distaste) Oh... Non ...

He marches out L. with the chicken.

INKY: Where has our chicken disappearfully, gone to?

WHARTON: I'll swear there was nothing wrong with that. It was under my nose.

NUGENT: Not for long though. These foreign cooks are a bit fussy you know.

CHERRY: I expect he'll bring us something else... Let's tuck into these sandwiches...

He lifts the plate to hand them round.

As he lifts the plate BUNTER enters. He takes one look at the sandwich plate and takes it from CHERRY

BUNTER: Merci, very much! ... (opens a sandwich, tastes it, smiles, then remember to pull a face, and shakes his head sorrowfully) C'est no good whatever!

He exits with the sandwiches.

CHERRY: You don't think he's off his rocker? ... Anyone would think it was poison.

BULL: Perhaps it is.

NUGENT: If those cakes are poisoned, I don't care. I'm starving hungry and I'm going to eat them.

He takes a cake and holds it to his mouth to bite.

He is not quick enough, BUNTER is in again and has the cake and the rest of the cakes on the plate off the table before NUGENT can so much as take a bite.

NUGENT: Hey! Wait a minute!

But BUNTER is gone. Turning at the door to shake his head at them.

They have all risen. They sit again. As they sit BUNTER is back. He quickly removes what is left on the table and exits... They watch him spellbound.

BUNTER: (as he goes) Bong Night, Mong Garcongs ...

CHERRY: Come here! What about our supper? *

BUNTER is gone.

As soon as he has gone KARL staggers in with coffee on a tray, from R.

KARL: (takes one look at the table and drops the coffee tray) NO!
NO! NO !!!! (he clutches his head in agony)

BULL: Well, I'm hanged! Even our coffee has gone west!

KARL: It is impossible! ... Even Hippopotomuses could not eat so much in such a short time.

WHARTON: We haven't had a bite! Your Chef took it away.

KARL: Our Chef? We have no Chef!

CHERRY: You jolly well have. He's been and sniffed everything on the table and whipped it out there!

While they are speaking BUNTER appears in the Hall. He has the food wrapped in a clumsy parcel using the paper or bag which contained the chef's outfit.

WHARTON: Come and see for yourself. He must be there, somewhere!

KARL follows them out. As they move to entrance hall BUNTER hides behind the stairs.

They pass out L. taking the reluctant KARL with them.

BUNTER quickly nips into the main room and puts the food parcel in the window seat. He has just finished when VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE come in

from stairs. He has to hide in the window seat.

VERDONI: They have finished their supper. Good! Perhaps we could transfer the things now.

As he speaks KARL enters from L.

VERDONI: You can clear away Karl. Our guests have finished.

KARL: They haven't even started!

VERDONI: I do not understand you!

KARL: I brought in the food...

HILTON C: Are you sure, old boy.

KARL: I brought it in! With my hands I felt it. The boys watched me. They admired... on the table, this time there was no mistake.

VERDONI: So!

KARL: I went to get coffee... Not three minutes was I away. When I returned... (he waves his arms in despair) No food!

VERDONI: They had eaten it!?

KARL: No Signor, they say a Chef came and took it from them.

VERDONI: We have no Chef!

KARL: That I told them. They say he went through to the other lounge!...

The boys return.

BULL: He must be in the place somewhere!

VERDONI: Have you found this... this Chef?

WHARTON: No, Signor Verdoni.

VERDONI: Karl did not serve you any wine, perhaps?

CHERRY: I tell you we saw him. He swiped every partical off the table... I've had enough of this you chaps. I'm just going to take it that the service here is non existent, I'm going to bed!

BULL: Me too!

VERDONI: Please Gentlemen, allow me to apologise. I shall find this man who says he is a Chef... He shall be found. Meanwhile Karl will bring something to your rooms. ...

WHARTON: All right Signor Verdoni, but I shall believe it when I have it in my mouth!

The boys exit and go upstairs somewhat dejected.

VERDONI: Get something for them Karl ...

KARL: I will get it Signor... But whether it will ever reach them... Who can say? ...

He shakes his head sadly and shuffles out R

VERDONI: I do not like this my friend ...

HILTON C: Don't like what, old boy?

VERDONI: Those are five English boys. Sensible. If they say they saw a Chef, they saw one.

HILTON C: Sounds reasonable.

VERDONI: I have no Chef here. This man masquerading as a Chef may be a Police Spy!

HILTON C: Oh, I say. Do you really think so?

VERDONI: I am sure of it...

As he is speaking we see BUNTER quickly raise the lid. He peers out.

VERDONI: If I catch this man disguised as a Chef ... (he produces a knife and makes a gesture of throat-slitting)

As he does so BUNTER sees it and the lid goes down with a bang. They both look round.

HILTON C: What was that !!!!!!

VERDONI: (grimly) I do not know.

HILTON C: From the hall I think . . .

VERDONI: We will look. Come!

HILTON C: You first, old boy.

He edges behind VERDONI and they go cautiously into the hall.

VERDONI: Nothing, we will take a quick look outside.

They move to front entrance in hall R.

HILTON C: You go outside, old boy. I'll s. . . stay here.

While they are out there BUNTER emerges. In a sweat he removes his chef's garb. Tosses it in the window seat. He takes the food parcel and is about to leave with it when HILTON-CRABBE enters. Quickly BUNTER pops the parcel back and faces him.

HILTON C: Linley! You know your pals are frightfully cheesed off, old boy. Why don't you go up to them now?

BUNTER: I . . . I was just going up when you came in.

VERDONI comes in again.

VERDONI: There is no-one to be seen my good Hilton-Stamp. What is this?

HILTON C: Oh! this is the other chap they're all lookin' for - Linley.

VERDONI: It is a pleasure to have you as my guest Signor Linley. I hope you are satisfied.

BUNTER: The place is fine. But I don't think much of the grub, you know.

VERDONI: And what is grubs? You have insects in your room? Never! In our Chalet there are never insects. You are mistaken.

BUNTER: I don't mean bugs. I said grub! Pity these foreigners don't learn English, Hilberry-Cant.

HILTON C: (to VERDONI) He means he doesn't care for the food.

BUNTER.: There isn't enough!

VERDONI: I apologise. I am short-staffed Signor. Soon our Chef will be here ... Then ... (kisses his fingers) but alas, you will be gone ... Speaking of Chefs. Have you seen a man in here masquerading as a chef?

BUNTER : Eh?

HILTON C: There seems to have been a chap wandering round dressed as a chef. We think he might be from the police.

VERDONI: (sharply) Not the Police! We think he may be a robber! If I find him I will ... (knife business) Have you seen this masquerader Signor Linley?

BUNTER: Who? Me? No ... That is to say, yes.

VERDONI: You have seen him.? Where?

BUNTER: He was ... er ... in here.

VERDONI: When?

BUNTER: A few minutes ago. As a matter of fact he was in here when I came out of the ... the ... er lounge.

VERDONI: He was in Chef's clothes?

BUNTER: Not half!

VERDONI: (to HILTON- CRABBE) You see my friend. It is as I thought. Can you describe this Chef?

BUNTER: He was ... very tall. Yes, that's it. Tall and ... er skinny, you might say. Not a decent figure like mine, or yours Mr. Verdoni.

VERDONI: I understand. Continue.

BUNTER: And ... he ... wore spectacles.

VERDONI: He was dark?

BUNTER: Definitely. Very dark. Could have been a gypsy or an Iti.

VERDONI: A what?

BUNTER: A wop! An Italian... foreign looking ass.

HILTON C: (quickly) Was he young, Linley?

BUNTER: Oh, no... Quite elderly... Four or five times as old as me.

VERDONI: Where did he go?

BUNTER: (hears boys who appear on stairs) That way !!!
(points wildly off R.)

VERDONI: (quickly off to R) There is no time to lose! Come 'ilton-Scram!

They are off R.

As the boys appear BUNTER nips into window seat. They stand in hall doorway.

WHARTON: Why bother to look again Bob!

CHERRY: I'm not giving up. I want to talk to Mark and see what the game is. I think we ought to make one more effort to find him.

BULL: It's a waste of time. I think this Hilton-Crabbe fellow is mixing him with someone.

CHERRY: Just one more look. You three look in there. (off left)

NUGENT, BULL and INKY move off left.

NUGENT: (as they go) This is the last time. Then I'm going to bed!

CHERRY and WHARTON enter room.

WHARTON: Satisfied he isn't in here?

CHERRY: Let's give a shout for him out there. (off R.)

WHARTON: What would he be doing out by the kitchens?

CHERRY: I don't know. But we can see.

They move off R. WHARTON reluctantly.

As soon as they have gone, BUNTER emerges from seat. Dressed as a chef once more. He has the bag of food.

He is about to leave when WHARTON and CHERRY return. Bag dropped in seat again.

WHARTON: It's dark out there. He wouldn't be there, fathead. (sees BUNTER) There's that giddy Chef, that swiped all our food.

CHERRY: Have you seen a schoolboy here... ?

BUNTER looks puzzled.

CHERRY: Oh, my hat! ... Er... avez-vous regardez un garçon Monsieur?

BUNTER: Eh ... Oh un Garcong?

WHARTON: Oui! Qui s'appelle Linley.

BUNTER: No... He ... er wasn't eating une apple.

WHARTON: None of these chaps seems to understand their own language.

CHERRY: Ou est le Garcong? ... Hang it! Where did he go?

BUNTER: (points off L) That-a-way.

WHARTON: Merci Monsieur! ...

They both rush off to L. below stairs.

BUNTER wipes his brow "PHEW"

He is about to retrieve the bag of food when the cuckoo clock on the wall yells "CUCKOO" twice. He drops the seat lid and turns.

BUNTER wheels round and sees it is the clock. He is relieved. Not for long. At this moment a tall figure passes the outside window and enters the hall, carrying a bag.

It is Mr. QUELCH. He enters the room. Puts down his bag.

BUNTER: Oh my hat! QUELCHY!!!!

QUELCH: I beg your pardon?

BUNTER: That is to say, Good Evening Monsewer. (accent)

QUELCH: I should like to book a room, if I may.

BUNTER: No! ... Most definitely NON!

QUELCH: Do I understand you to refuse me accomodation?

BUNTER: Yes... Oui!... We have no rooms.

QUELCH: But surely... I mean to say I am not frightfully particular.

BUNTER: No but I am! ... That is, we aren't open ... We are fermez ... Closed!

QUELCH: There must be some mistake. I can see you have some Greyfriars schoolboys staying here. I can see their trunk. .. (sharply) I should like to see the Proprietor.

BUNTER: I am the Proprietor...

As he speaks the boys enter from left.

CHERRY: Oh my Sainted Aunt! Quelchy!!!!

QUELCH: (wheels round) What did you say Cherry?

CHERRY: I was saying what a pleasant surprise it was ... to er ... see you.

QUELCH: I am endeavouring to make the Proprietor here understand that I want accomodation. He says the Chalet is full!

BUNTER: We have no room for beasts of Schoolmasters!!!
Good-night ...

He sweeps off R.

QUELCH: How extraordinary. How did he know I was a schoolmaster?

WHARTON: There's something odd about him ... Excuse us Sir.

CHERRY: Yes, he swiped all our grub ...

The boys rush off after BUNTER.

QUELCH: Come back boys! ... Remember where you are! You mustn't cause a disturbance!

He wanders out after them calling sternly.

In a few seconds BUNTER comes back the boys chase him across the stage off R. He is back in a flash and runs out into the hall. He hides on the R. side of the hall as the boys come pelting through and run off to L.

BUNTER comes in and quickly ducks into window seat to get food. In a few seconds he throws out his Chef's clothes and is about to emerge when he hears VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE coming. He hears them off R.

VERDONI: (off) It is those boys searching for their friend. Why do they have to run about like elephants ...

BUNTER lifts lid and stands in seat. He suddenly looks down as his kicks the side.

BUNTER: I say! What's this! ...

As we watch him he slowly sinks in the trunk and closes the lid as he goes.

QUELCH: (entering from L) Boys !!! Where are you?

He stops and picks up the chef's clothes.

QUELCH: Well, Bless my soul!

He is standing looking at them before the window seat when VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE enter.

VERDONI grasps HILTON-CRABBE. Pulls him back as they see QUELCH standing there examining the chef's clothes.

VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE exchange glances. They obviously think they have found the police spy.

They creep up behind QUELCH and VERDONI produces a Black Jack. He gives QUELCH a sharp crack over the head and stuns him . . . Then the boys are heard.

Quickly they bundle QUELCH into the window seat as the boys enter the room from L.

- WHARTON: I say, Signor Verdoni. We saw that Chef again. He was talking to Mr. Quelch!
- VERDONI: He spoke to who?
- WHARTON: Mr. Quelch. Our Form-master from the School. He was here in the room a few moments ago.
- HILTON C: Your School-master !!!!
- CHERRY: Yes. A tall bird, with specs and wearing a dark overcoat. He was planning to take us to Northern Italy for a day.
- BULL: He wanted to stay here!
- HILTON C: Oh! . . . But we've -
- VERDONI: (cutting smoothly) Ah, Yes, Signors. I did not realise he was your schoolmaster. He left a message. It is not convenient for him to take you yet. He said he will be in touch with you when you reach Innesbrucken.
- NUGENT: He might have waited to tell us.
- WHARTON: We did rather all dash off and leave him standing.
- INKY: The Dashfulness was terrific!
- BULL: Hope the old boy isn't too peeved.
- VERDONI: He apologised. he said he had a connection to make.
- CHERRY: As long as he wasn't upset.
- VERDONI: Not at all. Karl is nearly ready with supper. I have told him to bring it to you in your rooms. Good-night gentlemen.
- BOYS: (as they go) Good night . . .

All exit upstairs.

HILTON C: (to VERDONI) Now what do we do! That's their School-master, you've whopped over the head. Do you think he saw us?

VERDONI: We must take no chances . . . Some rope, quickly.

HILTON C: I say, what are you going to do?

VERDONI: Rope !!! Out there!

HILTON-CRABBE goes off R. . . .
VERDONI opens the window seat and with a handkerchief he gags QUELCH. . .
HILTON-CRABBE returns with some longish tapes.

VERDONI: Fool! I said rope. That will do for now. We can attend to him later when we change the trunks over.

VERDONI takes the rope and leans over the window seat. He expertly ties the hands and legs of the unconscious QUELCH.

HILTON C: (as VERDONI shuts lid) I say, I don't like this.

VERDONI: A pity my friend! But most necessary . . .

HILTON C: W. . . what are you going to do with him?

VERDONI: I shall think of something - later. Come. Now we shall retire until Midnight . . . Meet me here.

They exit off L. upstairs. . . HILTON-CRABBE giving nervous looks at the window seat as they go.

As soon as they are gone BUNTER enters from R.

BUNTER: (chuckling) He! He! He! . . . That's useful. A false bottom to the window seat and a way out to the cellar . . . They'll never find me now . . . Ah! Now for grub, left it there in the rush . . .

He goes confidently to window seat. There is a gurgling and groaning from inside. He moves to it cautiously, opens it gingerly. As he does so QUELCH sits up moaning and spluttering.

With a yell BUNTER rams the seat down on his head and knocks him out again and rushes off to L. below stairs. in panic. . . as the

CURTAIN FALLS.

SCENE FIVE

The scene is the same. It is nearly midnight. Moonlight lights up the room brightly through the windows. . .
C.

Very softly we see HILTON-CRABBE come down the stairs, He peers nervously about him as he enters the room. He is followed a few seconds later by VERDONI:

They are both peering in the opposite direction from one another and gently back into each other.

HILTON C: OH !!!!!!!

VERDONI: (turning on him) Silence you idiot! . . . Turn the light on.

HILTON C: I . . . wondered what it was . . . (turns on light)

VERDONI: Not full on . . .

HILTON C: (takes them down half) Better, old boy?

VERDONI: That will do. . . Now we shall bring in the full trunk from outside. . .

They exit off L. below stairs and return immediately bringing boys trunk with them.

VERDONI: Let us empty this first.

They open it and quickly dump all the clothes etc. on the floor.

HILTON C: (while they are doing so) I say, where are these things we have to smuggle? The watches and so on.

VERDONI: Get on with this. You will see in time.

HILTON: Don't you think we should look at the Schoolmaster? He may be . . . not so well.

VERDONI: Too bad for him.

As he speaks there are gurgles from the window seat.

- VERDONI: You hear? He is still breathing. In a moment I will attend to him.
- HILTON C: I'm afraid I can't be a party to any violence old boy.
- VERDONI: You are already a party to violence. Did you not help me put him in the box?
- HILTON C: Me? ... No, Old boy. You whopped him with that little thing of yours.
- VERDONI: Would you care for me to whop you with it?
- HILTON C: No ... Not at all.
- VERDONI: Than be silent. Do what you are told. There! We shall place these in the new trunk then in with the jewellery and watches. Si?
- HILTON C: Yes, I see. But look here ... I'm only doing this to get a little ready because of my trouble over the horses.
- VERDONI: With our profits from this, you can buy the best horses in Europe.
- HILTON C: I don't want to buy horses ... You see ...
- Gurgle from window seat.
- VERDONI: Our friend calls us.
- They move to window seat and open it. QUELCH sits up he looks at them angrily.
- VERDONI: Have you had a comfortable rest my friend?
- QUELCH: Grrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr!
- VERDONI: (slamming lid on him) Have little more sleep.
- HILTON C: I say, you'll hurt his napper.
- VERDONI: Now we must decide what to do with him ... (fingers his chin)
- HILTON C: D ... Do with him?
- VERDONI: He must be kept out of the way until the boys get back to England with the goods. I think we must get him to a safe place...

They are by the window seat when BUNTER comes down the stairs. He enters the room, suddenly sees the two of them and quickly pretends to be sleep-walking. He moves slowly across the room, arms extended to off R.

VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE watch him closely.

HILTON C: Linley!

VERDONI: What is he doing?

HILTON C: Walkin' in his sleep!

VERDONI: In his clothes!!!

HILTON C: Maybe he dropped off before he could undress. Tired, you know.

VERDONI: I do not like this.

HILTON C: Lots of people do it, old boy. Done it meself when I had a sticky time at Goodwood once.

VERDONI: I think we will watch this walking sleeper. Come ...

They hide behind the door D. R.

In a few seconds BUNTER walks in. He does not see them walks past them. Still arms extended. He moves quietly to the window seat and is about to open the top when the cuckoo clock comes out.

CLOCK: Cuckoooooo! Cuckoooo!!!

BUNTER leaps up with a start. He turns and sees the two others who move towards him.

Immediately he extends his arms. VERDONI walks up to him as he starts to walk out through main door. He taps BUNTER firmly on the shoulder.

HILTON C: Don't do that old boy, you might kill him! Give him a terrible shock.

VERDONI steers BUNTER round and he walks off to R. again.

VERDONI: If he is asleep why did he jump at the cuckoo clock?

HILTON C: I don't know... But one has to be careful.

VERDONI: Why does he go to the window seat? Does he know the Master is there?

HILTON C: How could he ...

VERDONI: Come! We shall remove the schoolmaster.

They take the unconscious QUELCH out of the window seat and put him in the boys old trunk...

VERDONI: Next we must take him to the cellar and keep him there until these boys have left in the morning. Tomorrow we must think again.

HILTON C: What was that Parcel in there?

VERDONI: What Parcel? Get it!

HILTON-CRABBE does so.

VERDONI: (looks up) It is a bag of food.

HILTON C: Must be the food the boys said the Chef took from them.

VERDONI: (thoughtfully) How can we be sure this is the schoolmaster in here. It is possible he was the Chef and was the man who took their food. I think, tomorrow he must go ... (knife act)

HILTON C: No, old boy. Not that ...

VERDONI: Perhaps that is what the fat youth Linley, is after - the food! Come, he may be back.

They move off R. leaving bag of food on window seat.

BUNTER enters. He is still sleep-walking. He sees the bag of food. Drops his sleep-walking and grabs it. The other two rush in.

BUNTER drops the bat and extends his arms.

VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE move up to him. He walks slowly away D. L. They follow him quickening their pace, BUNTER speeds up until they have circled the room twice and are practically running. Suddenly BUNTER drops all pretence and nips out of the door at the C. B. and off L. below stairs.

The other two dart after him madly.

KARL enters from upstairs. He shuffles on to the stage. Peers round sees the food and picks up the bag then exits off R.

BUNTER enters again from L. He rushes to get the food but it is gone. He searches frantically for it but cannot see it anywhere. He looks in the new trunk and under the pile of clothes from the old one.

Then he looks at the old one. Opens it and QUELCH sits up. He has worked his gag off.

BUNTER: Help !!!!!! Ow !!!!!(he starts to rush off)

QUELCH: BUNTER! Bless my soul! Come here you stupid boy. It is I, Mr. Quelch, your form-master.

BUNTER: (pulls up at the sound of the voice) W... What are you doing in there Sir! Is that where they fixed you up to sleep?

QUELCH: Quickly, you foolish boy. Release me. I am tied.

BUNTER: Who tied you sir ?

QUELCH: The rascally proprietor of this establishment. I think the man must be demented. Don't stand there boy! Undo these tapes!!!!

BUNTER: (fumbling) I expect they think you're after the grub sir.

QUELCH: They think what !!!!!

- BUNTER: Wait a jiffy Sir. I've got a penknife. (takes it out) They think you're after their grub. They're trying to stop me getting it to... (opened knife) This has got some toffee on it. You don't mind do you sir?
- QUELCH: Use the knife, boy! I don't care what is on it.
- BUNTER: Make your hands sticky sir... It's that new stick-jaw they have in the tuck-shop. I brought some with me in case I felt peckish!
- QUELCH: (almost hysterical) Bunter will you cut my bonds?
- BUNTER: Oh, righto ... (he puts knife down in trunk)
- QUELCH: OUCH!!! Be careful boy!
- BUNTER: Sorry. Pretty blunt though. Hardly went through the toffee.
- QUELCH: (hands free) Now my ankles ... Thank you Bunter. What, pray, are you doing here at all?
- BUNTER: These other fellows and Linley, they pressed me to come. You know how the chaps always want me with them.
- QUELCH: (climbing from trunk) From my observations I would have said that precisely the opposite was the case.
- BUNTER: They begged me to come with tears in their eyes.
- QUELCH: Very well. Now hurry up and warn the boys to stay in their rooms. These men are dangerous. I am going to the authorities. (BUNTER stands there) Hurry boy!
- BUNTER: I'd rather not see those other chaps.
- QUELCH: Why not?
- BUNTER: They might kick me!
- QUELCH: Why on earth should they kick you? Didn't they invite you with them?
- BUNTER: Oh, yes sir ... Only they didn't know I was coming.
- QUELCH: Bunter! Cease prevaricating. Get up to those boys at once. I am going for the police. You cannot persuade me that these men would nearly commit murder to obtain food.
- BUNTER: What other motive could there be Sir ... I mean it strikes me as a very good reason -

QUELCH: Silence Bunter. Do as I tell you !!! I am going there is no time to lose.

He marches to the door C.

He is too late the two men, VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE meet him in the hall.

BUNTER sees them and jumps into the boys old trunk without delay.

VERDONI: (produces revolver) Too late Mr. Schoolmaster ... This way please...

He backs QUELCH into the room.

VERDONI: Turn around please. Take him to the cellar and lock him up my friend ...

He gives HILTON-CRABBE the revolver and he marches QUELCH out. Not looking too steady with the revolver.

QUELCH: You rascals, shall pay for this outrage.

VERDONI: Careful, Mr. Schoolmaster. Do not startle my friend his hand on the revolver is most shaky.

HILTON-CRABBE exits with QUELCH.

The minute he has gone, VERDONI goes to the Chamois Head on the wall. He brings it to the two trunks. From the inside of the head, having removed it from the mount. He produces a largish box.

He tosses the Chamois Head carelessly into the trunk in which BUNTER is hiding.

He then looks at the lid of the new trunk and fiddles with it.

As he is doing so, HILTON-CRABBE re-enters. He still has the gun in his hand, which shakes.

VERDONI: (looks up) Point that thing away !!! Give it to me !

He takes the gun from HILTON-CRABBE.

- HILTON C: I locked him in the cellar.
- VERDONI: Where is the key?
- HILTON C: I say, I've left it in the door!
- VERDONI: (gesture of despair) On the outside I hope?
- HILTON C: Oh, yes, old boy. I had to ... You see ...
- VERDONI: Silence. We shall retrieve it in a moment. See! (shows box)
- HILTON C: My hat! All those watches and ... the jewellery. Must be worth a fortune...
- VERDONI: It is! So there must be no mistakes ... You see we secrete them in the aperture in the lid.
- HILTON C: That's terrific. No-one would ever spot that.
- VERDONI: So we hope... Now ... We put them in ...
- He is about to put them in the aperture when KARL appears from R.
- VERDONI: (quickly dropping jewels into new trunk) KARL! What are you doing here!
- KARL: I have found the food that was stolen by the Chef Signor Verdoni ...
- VERDONI: Excellent. Now go to bed... but first. Take that old trunk outside. We can dispose of it in the morning.
- KARL goes to the boys old trunk which is D. L. and in which BUNTER is hiding. The two men are busily engaged in packing the clothes etc. Into the new trunk. Having removed the box of watches etc., and placed it where KARL cannot see it.
- KARL takes the trunk in a grip and tugs hard. He manages to drag it to the door.
- VERDONI: (turns and sees him dragging it) Lift it, idiot! It is empty. (resumes his packing)

KARL tries to lift the trunk and we see BUNTERS legs come through the bottom of it.

The trunk starts to walk away from KARL and settles D. L. again.

KARL watches it thunderstruck.

VERDONI: (out of the corner of his eye sees trunk, looks up) Mama Mia! Are you insane. I told you to take it outside.

KARL: I... I... did Signor. It came in again!

VERDONI: This is too much. First we have food that is not there. Chef's who do not exist! And trunks which wander away from you!

VERDONI strides to the trunk. Grips it and drags it to the door C. B.

He puts it down, just in the hall and stands by KARL.

VERDONI: Observe, you foolish old man. That is all I required you to do. Although I will grant you it is heavier than an empty trunk should...

He suddenly stops and looks at KARL. Who is staring before him at the trunk which has moved to D. L. again.

VERDONI: N... N... No... It cannot move. It is impossible.

HILTON C: What 's the matter old boy. I say, haven't you moved that old trunk yet. We ought to hurry you know.

VERDONI: I... I... moved it. It went back again.

HILTON C: Oh really, I mean to say. How could it, old boy?

VERDONI: I tell you it did. Karl saw it. Did you not Karl?

KARL nods.

HILTON C: But my dear old chap... It couldn't! You do look shaken. Here let me shift it for you.

HILTON-CRABBE goes to the trunk and grabs it.

HILTON C: I say, we must have left some junk inside.

He gets the trunk up to VERDONI and KARL.

HILTON C: There! We ought to take a look inside you know ...

The trunk starts to move away.

VERDONI: You see ! ... LOOK#!!!!!!!

HILTON C: How peculiar... I say, you know I ... I don't care for this.

VERDONI: There is something there. An animal perhaps ... I will put a bullet through it ... (OUT WITH GUN)

BUNTER: (from in trunk) M...M...N... (a series of gurgles)

VERDONI: It is an animal.

HILTON C: Sounds like some sort of chimpanzee, y'know. All the jabberin'

VERDONI moves up to trunk with gun.
It moves away ...

HILTON C: Don't shoot yet, old boy. Let's try and get it alive. Sittin' bird, you know.

VERDONI: Guard that door. (over R.)

HILTON C: (over there) Hope it doesn't bite.

BUNTER: (more gurgles from trunk) M...M.....

Together they close in on the trunk and get it C. stage by the window seat.

VERDONI: I am going to fire at the creature!

As he says this BUNTER bursts open the lid of the trunk and appears.

Or rather the head of the Chamois appears
It was jammed over his head when
VERDONI threw it in there after re-
moving the box of watches etc.,

He calls out.

BUNTER: (muffled) D... Don't shoot. It's me...

VERDONI: Heaven spare us! ... The Goat Man! We are doomed!

HILTON C: Oh help! W...W... What is it?

They both back away from the figure.

KARL makes no bones about it and just dashes off R.

BUNTER moves out of the trunk.

VERDONI: ...NO! ...KEEP AWAY!!!!

He rushes off to L. below stairs with HILTON -CRABBE hot on his heels, infected by the panic.

For a moment BUNTER struggles but fails to get the head off.

After a few seconds we see CHERRY and WHARTON appear on the stairs. They enter the hall.

CHERRY: (at door) Sounded a frightful racket.

WHARTON: As though someone had seen a ghost.

CHERRY: Let's take a look in here. The lights on. Never find ghosts with the light on, they ... (he enters as he says this, sees BUNTER with the head on and backs out sharply - knocking WHARTON back into hall)

WHARTON: What's the matter ?

CHERRY: In... In there!

WHARTON: Don't be an ass, what's in there?

WHARTON marches in. Sees BUNTER still struggling with his head.

BUNTER: Gr... Help!

WHARTON: Oh, my sainted Aunt!... What is it? (in hall again)

BULL, INKY and NUGENT appear from upstairs.

BULL: What the dickens is going on down here? Yells and Screams...

CHERRY: It's ... In there...

BULL: What's in there?

NUGENT: Oh, let's take a look.

NUGENT, BULL and INKY push past the other two who follow them gingerly.

They take one look at **BUNTER** who by this time is nearly frantic trying to dislodge his head.

In a body the first three turn and crash into **CHERRY** and **WHARTON** they finish up on the floor by the C. Door in a wriggling heap.

BUNTER goes up to them.

BUNTER: (yelling) Is that you, you rotters? Get me out of this.

CHERRY: (looking up) I say you chaps LOOK! It's got Bunter's body!

BUNTER: GET ME OUT YOU CHEEKY ASSES!

WHARTON: And Bunter's voice!

BULL: It is Bunter! He's got that Goat's Head from the wall stuck on him.

NUGENT: What are you doing in there Bunter?

CHERRY: Better get the fathead out, then he can tell us. You get his tail and I'll take his head!

CHERRY grabs the head and the others take the other end of **BUNTER**.

CHERRY: Right! HE... E... E.. AVE****!

They all tug and **BUNTER** is parted from his head-piece.

BUNTER: Ouch! You stupid rotters! You nearly pulled my head off!

CHERRY: (laughing) That's exactly what we have done, you fat gorman-diser!

The boys laugh.

WHARTON: Now suppose you tell us what you're doing here?

BUNTER: I was invited by my old pal Mark Linley.

BULL: Tell us another. How did you get here?

BUNTER: Oh really, Bull. I hope you aren't implying that I took Linley's tickets when Stilton-Crabs came to the school....

CHERRY: This sounds more like it! You mean you swiped Mark's tickets?

BUNTER: As though I would. In any case I was entitled to them. If it hadn't been for that mistake about who won the Essay Competition they would have been my tickets. . .

BULL: You mean the tickets you didn't take?

BUNTER: Oh, really Bull. . .

WHARTON: It all adds up. That's why Linley was avoiding us. It wasn't Mark at all it was this fat robber!

NUGENT: He was the Chef who swiped all our grub, too.

CHERRY: Of course! Come on you fellows. He must be bumped well and truly . . .

BUNTER backing round new trunk. . .

BUNTER: I say you fellows. It's all a mistake. Linley wanted me to come instead of himself . . . He said so. Begged me with tears in his eyes . . .

The boys converge on him round the trunk. . . Suddenly WHARTON looks down and sees all the watches and Jewellery.

WHARTON: Hold on! What's all this?

BUNTER: It's those beasts Verdoni and Cheddar-Gorge or whatever his name is. They're trying to stick those in the lid of your new trunk.

BULL: What are you babbling about?

BUNTER: It's true! I heard them. They want to use you to smuggle them back to England.

NUGENT: Stuff!

WHARTON: Wait a minute Franky. There's something in what he says. Those two are very thick and they have asked us to take this trunk ... Look! There's a compartment in the lid!

BUNTER: They've got Quelchy too. Locked up somewhere. I untied him once but he was nabbed again.

CHERRY: Well, I'm hanged. We must find them. Where are they Bunter?

BUNTER: They dashed off somewhere... They seemed scared of this thing ... (points to head)

NUGENT: I'm not surprised!

CHERRY: We must find the rotters...

WHARTON: We'll look in the kitchens... Bob, Inky and Johnny go upstairs. Frank you and Bunter can go and look over there in the other lounges.

BUNTER: I say, do you mind if I go in the kitchens. My grub is down there...

CHERRY: Listen to him !

NUGENT: I'll stay here. I won't go into the lounges on my own.

CHERRY: No, better not. Stay with Frank, you fat Owl!

CHERRY and WHARTON exit
off R. INKY and BULL upstairs.

WHARTON: You all watch your step. These men are armed.

They go leaving NUGENT and BUNTER.

NUGENT wanders over to trunk. Looks at jewels etc....

NUGENT: These must be worth thousands ...

As he is speaking VERDONI and HILTON-CRABBE appear in the hall they see him.

And enter.

BUNTER is standing by the window seat. He takes one look at them and in a flash

he is inside.

VERDONI creeps up behind NUGENT and hits him with the blackjack.

HILTON C: I say, he's only a kid.

VERDONI: This will only give him a headache. Watch him while I look for the other boys . . . They were all here. We must silence them all.

VERDONI goes off L. below stairs.

HILTON-CRABBE hears a noise off r. He moves NUGENT to the window seat opens it and pops him in.

Then he goes to call VERDONI.

HILTON C: (upL) Signor Verdoni. . . . Signor Verdoni!

He goes off L.

Enter CHERRY from R.

CHERRY: (calls) I say, Harry. Frank and Bunter have gone! I'll wait and see if they come back.

He is standing there when VERDONI enters and creeps up behind him. Black Jack out he hits CHERRY.

He looks round and takes CHERRY over to the window seat and leaves him there.

Exits upstairs off R.

HILTON-CRABBE enters from L. He sees CHERRY on the window seat. Opens it and looks in. Sees it is empty and puts CHERRY inside.

He moves off to L. again. Calling VERDONI.

BULL and INKY come downstairs. They enter the room.

BULL: Where have Franky and Bunter gone?

INKY: They may have gone to make a further searchfulness.

BULL: Funny. If they saw anything they should have yelled out. I'll see if Harry and Bob are out here.

He goes to door R. turns to INKY.

BULL: Give a look in the other lounge Inky. They may be there.

As BULL turns he is hit by VERDONI who pops out from R. door behind him. Then ducks out again.

INKY turns and sees BULL on the floor.

INKY: My esteemed Bull, have you fainted?

As he bends over him. VERDONI nips out again and bops him with the black jack.

VERDONI catches INKY as he falls and carries him over to the window seat and puts him in.

Then he goes out again as he hears a noise.

It is HILTON-CRABBE. He enters sees BULL, shrugs and then gathers him up takes him to the window seat. Looks in, sees it empty shrugs again and puts him in.

VERDONI enters.

VERDONI: Ah 'ilton-Stamps. There is only one boy left to account for. Quiet!!! Outside !

He exits R and in a second is back carrying WHARTON.

VERDONI: (puts WHARTON down) That is all of them. Watch him I will ascertain that the Schoolmaster is not free.

He goes ...

HILTON C: I say old boy ... (but VERDONI is gone)

HILTON-CRABBE then takes WHARTON looks in the seat empty again. He puts

WHARTON in and closes the lid.

VERDONI enters again.

- VERDONI: The key was still in the lock. I have it here (in pocket) I am afraid we shall have to make other plans to get this to England now. Where did you put the boys?
- HILTON C: I put the last one in there. Where did you put the others?
- VERDONI: I left one in the window seat. The Dark one. The others I left for you to deal with.
- HILTON C: But I left them in the window seat for you to deal with, old boy.
- VERDONI: That is impossible. Are you trying to tell me you have put four boys in that window seat?
- HILTON C: (looking at seat) And one you put in makes five !!!!
- VERDONI: That is impossible!
- HILTON C: Perhaps they recovered and nipped out?
- VERDONI: They would need to be revived after such a blow. Who is there in a window seat to revive them.
- HILTON C: Well, if there were five of them in there they might have revived each other...!
- VERDONI: (rushes to seat, opens it) Where is the last one then!
- HILTON C: (goes to him) I say! He couldn't possibly have got out. I mean to say, I've been here!
- VERDONI: You are a dolt! Where did you put them?
- HILTON C: In... In there I tell you!
- VERDONI: You lie! English swine!...
- HILTON C: No, old boy, honestly. I popped them there. Anyway, where's the one you put in!
- VERDONI: They must have revived... Come let us take the valuables and go while we may.

He rushes to trunk and gathers up all the watches etc. . . .

VERDONI: Quickly, my friend. We must escape. These boys cannot do us any harm yet. Who would believe a pack of English schoolboys . . .

HILTON C: How did they come round . . . They were right out.

KARL enters . . . He holds a revolver.

KARL: I revived them, Mr. Hilton-Crabbe.

HILTON C: Karl!

VERDONI: Put that thing down Karl. You may injure someone . . . An old man like you.

KARL: (suddenly upright) A little younger than you thought Signor. (removes spectacles and beard.)

VERDONI: Who . . . Who are you?

KARL: Inspector Karl Manstein of Interpol . . .

VERDONI: You won't get away with this. We still have the schoolmaster.

KARL: I'm sorry to disappoint you, Signor. Come in Mr. Quelch.

QUELCH enters followed by the boys.

KARL: Your plans have gone sadly wrong. You left the key in the cellar door, very conveniently. And the window seat you have been using has a false bottom leading to the cellar, discovered by our young stout friend, known to you as Mr. Linley.

QUELCH: Thank Heaven you were here Inspector Manstein.

KARL: I came here to keep an eye on the Signor. We have suspected him for some time. Give me the valuables.

VERDONI bends to pick them up. As he does so he kicks the trunk and sends it across the floor. It hits KARL and knocks the gun from his hand.

In a second VERDONI is on him. He has the gun . . .

VERDONI: Now, Inspector. Stand away please . . . Come along my friend . . . Hilton-Stamp.

The boys seem inclined to rush.

QUELCH: Be careful boys...

VERDONI: Yes, have a care... I am not scrupulous like my English colleague ...

He backs away from them moving round stage. He has to pass the service hatch.

As he does so. There is a knocking from inside.

VERDONI: (to HILTON-CRABBE) See what that is my friend...

HILTON-CRABBE by the side of him opens the hatch and there is BUNTER. Sitting with a plate of food.

BUNTER rams a jam tart in his face.

HILTON C: Ouch!!!!!!

VERDONI: What is the matter my friend... (he turns)

As VERDONI turns BUNTER jams another one in his face

VERDONI: Ouch ***!!!!!!

This is the opportunity KARL waits for. He leaps and grabs VERDONI. The boys take HILTON-CRABBE.

KARL: Excellent... Come along gentlemen.

KARL leads out the two crooks.

The others gather round BUNTER.

CHERRY: Good old fat man! He's done it again!

WHARTON: I think the least we can do it let the fat pirate stay with us. Even when Mark gets here.

QUELCH: Very quick thinking Bunter... Well done my boy.

BUNTER: I say those two tarts are wasted... I hope you fellows will replace them.

The boys roar with laughter.

CHERRY: We'll stand you the biggest feed you've ever had.

The boys take BUNTER from the shaft and chair him round the stage.

BUNTER: All right you fellows, let me down. I was in the middle of a snack. I'm starving!!!

The boys laugh...

They continue the chair him round the stage.

As they pass the cuckoo clock the cuckoo, pops out.

CLOCK: Cuckoooooo... Cuckooo -

Before the clock can finish it's last "CUCKOO" BUNTER has snatched the bird and popped it in his mouth.

BUNTER: (as the Curtain Falls) No bad! Not bad, at all!

FINIS
