

'BIDDIES' BORSTAL'

by

Troy Banyan

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Characters

Philomena.....spinster warden in her 40's
Lucycare worker in her 20's
Buggis.....West-country handyman/gardener in 50's
Webster/Trevor.....would-be assassin/salesman in 20's
Ramsey.....man in care aged 60+
Hilda.....woman in care aged 60+
Hortense.....woman in care aged 60+
Katie.....woman in care aged 60+
Minnie.....woman in care aged 60+
Voice of Cy Lomax (achieved by Buggis actor doubling up offstage).....man in 50's

ACT I Scene 1 One hot Summer morning

ACT I Scene 2 Later that same morning

ACT 2 Scene 1 Early that same afternoon

ACT 2 Scene 2 Later that same afternoon

ACT I Scene 1 - Common room of the Biddies' Borstal

(Downstage right is a door that leads to the grounds and the main Home. Upstage right is the door to the staff quarters and the kitchen. Upstage left is a door that

leads to the rooms of the female residents and downstage left is a door that leads into the only male resident's room. Mid-way along the right wall is a window, through which the grounds and Home can be viewed, with a table positioned along the wall under it. Along the back wall, just inside the upstage right door is a beanbag with an easy chair by it. Running along the back wall is a three-seater sofa. Running down the left wall, between the two doorways, is a bookcase. Roughly in the middle of the whole set is a table with three chairs around it.

The room has a really dowdy, run-down feel about it, conveying the neglected nature of the Annexe and not helping the mood of all those who are resident, and who work, there. There is nothing new or modern in it and although the main Home isn't seen it is clear that the Annexe is the spartan, poor relation of Sunny Glades. The flooring and wall coverings are dingy and it is only the fact that it is such a bright, sunny day outside that lightens up the place)

(Tabs open to the interior of the common room of a Residential Home annexe. Philomena is sitting, on the right table, looking out the window, painting her nails. Lucy enters upstage left, struggling with armfuls of laundry.)

Philomena: *Look* at them out there, trudging around...like in a prison courtyard. They're bored already...and they've not long got up.

(Lucy accidentally drops the bundles on the floor. She kneels down and picks them back up. Philomena still ignores her.)

Philomena: Makes you wonder, doesn't it?

(Lucy carries on bundling.)

Philomena: As long as they don't do it later on when Zach - I mean Mr Trumball is showing around the...**(shouting out.)** leave those roses alone McGee...**(shocked.)** *really*, where *does* she learn those gestures?

Lucy: **(Sarcastically.)** I'll be all right with these...

Philomena: She's such a ruffian...

Lucy: Yes, you just sit there...

Philomena: I'd say she set a bad example...but the rest are as awful.

Lucy: ...and carry on painting your nails...

Philomena: They give the place a bad name.

Lucy: ...looking out the window.

Philomena: Sometimes I wish they'd just...

Lucy: What?

Philomena: Um...nothing.

(Lucy sneers, yanks up the bundles and walks upstage right. Philomena spots a pair of knickers on the floor.)

Philomena: Lucy dear...you've left a...something behind.

(Lucy glares at Philomena then exits upstage right. Philomena looks sadly out the window.)

Philomena: I don't want to grow old, it scares me. I want to stay young, **(walking towards the knickers.)** people should stay young forever. Listen to me, *I'm* not young...but I'm not old...and I've got a long way to go until I get to *this*, **(toeing the knickers.)** knickers, not silky...**(wandering.)** or cami...or French, the sort that drive men wi- **(calming.)** no, they're drawers, an old woman's drawers...and the result of yet another incontinent night. Life ends where it starts...by having no control over bodily functions and soiling undergarments. **(Bending slowly.)** Ah well, I can't rely on that Lucy, **(picking up knickers by fingertips.)** so it'll be down to me to get this place looking spick and span, on today of all days.

(Philomena holds the knickers in her out-stretched arm. Buggis, in gardener's attire, enters downstage left and leers.)

Buggis: Wey-hey, s'gat 'em off fer I at last, 'ast thee Philly?

Philomena: **(Wearily.)** Oh Buggis...what do *you* want?

Buggis: By tha look a thee it's *thee* that wants summat...an' I'm just tha bloke ta give it ta thee.

Philomena: Now look here Buggis, I...

Buggis: Blige Philly...I didn't think thee'd wear knickers like that, I'd always imagined thee in summat a bit sexier.

Philomena: I'd sooner you not imagine me in anything at all...you horrible, little man.

Buggis: What? S'like I ta think a thee stark bollock naked w'ust?

Philomena: **(Sighing.)** Buggis, I...

Buggis: I gat it...thee dussn't wear 'em. Likes the wind ta circulate up there, d'ust? **(Excitedly.)** Vegans in an abattoir...I'm even more turned on than before.

Philomena: I have to say Buggis that you are the most vulgar, obnoxious, repellent excuse for a man it has ever been my misfortune to meet.

Buggis: **(Unscathed.)** Now, don't thee try to sweet-talk I Philly.

Philomena: **(Holding out hand, with knickers in.)** Not one step further.

Buggis: Cassn't thee put them knickers down Philly...they'm not doin' anythin' fer I...

Philomena: Just...just shut up. Your place is in the garden, now get back out there...and stop calling me Philly, I'm not a horse. It's Miss Crump to you.

Buggis: Still playin' 'ard ta git, b'ist? Well, I knows women and I can see signs of encouragement, thee's startin' ta melt.

Philomena: If I am then it's purely down to that rancid smell that always seems to accompany you. Now, did you actually want something...or did you just come here to be your usual disgusting self?

Buggis: **(Aghast)** Hitler in a kibbutz, I'd almost fergat, I gat summat fer thee, **(walking off but calling back in.)** but I also like to keep me 'and in at bein' disgustin'.

(Philomena shakes her head then puts her hand to it, realises the knickers are still there then throws them disgustedly onto the back easy-chair. Buggis re-enters downstage right, struggling to support a groggy Webster, who has a gash on his head and a Walkman/earplug around his neck.)

Buggis: Look what I foun' in the groun's...

Philomena: No, I've told you...you can't come in here.

Buggis: **(Aghast.)** Wha's want I ta do with 'im, toss 'im in like a caber or wot?

Philomena: Look, you...I...oh Buggis...why do you cause me so many problems?

Buggis: Cuz I know thee likes it. I knows women an' I can see that-

Philomena: - All right Casanova...you'd better bring him in I suppose.

Buggis: Tha's kind af yer. I dussn't s'pose thee could an ', c'ust?

Philomena: Oh no, **(blowing on fingertips.)** my varnish is still wet.

Buggis: **(Panting.)** Well, as long as thee's gat a good reason...tha's all right. **(Arriving at centre table.)** I'll dump 'im 'ere if tha's okay, **(dragging out chair with foot.)** before I do's meself an injury, **(positioning Webster over the chair.)** an' thee wouldn't want that, **(dropping Webster.)** w'ust?

Philomena: What you do with your nether regions, or indeed any other part of your anatomy for that matter, is no concern of mine. Now, where did you find him?

Buggis: Down by the boundary fence 'e wuz, flaked out, like 'e'd 'ad seven shades a shi-

Philomena: Yes, I get the picture...he was prostrate.
(Philomena holds up Webster's limp head and jiggles it about.)

Philomena: **(Loudly.)** Hello. Can you hear me? Who are you? Why are you here?

Buggis: Blimey Philly, bis checkin' 'im fer concussion or givin' 'im it?

Philomena: Buggis...you can get back to your *proper* duties now.

Buggis: Arr, I knows that but I'd sooner stay 'ere an' watch thee in action. Thee's gat a lovely body Philly, when's thee gonna let I getta piece af it?

Philomena: When Hell freezes over.

Buggis: So, I'm still in with a shot then?
(Philomena ignores Buggis, takes off Webster's Walkman/earplug and throws them on the corner beanbags. She then starts feeling around inside his jacket.)

Buggis: Caw...I wish thee'd do that to I.

Philomena: I'm checking for identity...you ball of filth. Ah, **(pulling out a thick wallet.)** what have we here?
(Buggis closes in eagerly. Philomena sniffs at his odour so backs away, also trying to shield the contents of the wallet.)

Philomena: Mmm, driving licence, store cards...big wad of cash...

Buggis: **(Aghast.)** Termites in a wooden leg...look at that.

Philomena: There must be...there's got to be...this is enough for -

Buggis: Me and thee t'ave a nice, romantic break together.

Philomena: **(In shock.)** Yes. **(Flicking through the cash then realising what was said.)** What?
(Lucy re-enters upstage right, minus her bundles.)

Lucy: What's going on?

Philomena: Um, **(guiltily.)** nothing, nothing at all. **(Slipping wallet discreetly back into Webster's jacket.)** Buggis just found this dazed, young man in the grounds.

Buggis: Arr...flaked out like 'e'd 'ad ten pints a scrumpy 'e wuz.
(Lucy approaches Webster and examines his head.)

Lucy: Mmm...nasty, I'd better get that cleaned up **(walking upstage right.)**.

Philomena: You *do* that, there's a good girl.

Lucy: Yes, *you* take it easy, don't go wearing yourself out...in case Trumball calls.

(Lucy exits upstage right.)

Philomena: **(Calling after Lucy.)** Less of your irreverence girl...it's *Mr* Trumball... and he pays your wages, **(softly.)** plus...he's a lovely man.

Buggis: Oh, I gets it...thee thinks 'e might ask thee along ta 'is shindig s'attemnoon, d'ust?

Philomena: It is *not* a shindig, it is a gathering of various shareholders, dignitaries and officials that he intends to show around the Home and its grounds...ending with a buffet and beverage refreshments.

Buggis: Arr...a shindig.

Philomena: I've heard that he intends to enlarge the Home...which will hopefully encompass this wing so that is no longer annexed. Obviously, as warden, I should be present at any discussions concerning its future.

Buggis: So, 'e's asked thee then?

Philomena: N...not in so many words.

Buggis: 'Ow many words *did* 'e use exactly?

Philomena: I don't have to answer to *you*; in fact one word from me could get you fired by him: that's the sort of relationship we have, the sort of power he wields...and how little you mean to me.

(Lucy enters upstage right with a glass bowl of water in one hand and a first-aid kit and flannel in the other. She watches as Philomena closes in on Buggis.)

Philomena: Zachary Trumball is a wealthy, upright, smart, refined gentleman... whereas you are a poor, vulgar, uncouth, bag of manure...and he is ten times the man you'll ever be. Now, get back out in that garden and make it look at least presentable for our guests. I'm going to tidy up the bedrooms. **(Walking upstage left.)** Am I the only one who does anything around here?

(Philomena exits upstage left.)

Buggis: **(Calling after.)** Arr...but 'e dussn't wanna shag the arse aff thee like I do, d'ust?

(Buggis turns and trudges slowly across the room then stops by Webster.)

Buggis: Women, thee cassn't live 'em...thee cassn't live without 'em, so be warned young 'un...or thee'll end up like I.

(Lucy intercepts Buggis as he walks downstage right.)

Lucy: Don't let her get to you, Mr Buggis.

Buggis: Cassn't 'elp it lass, Philomena Crump gat ta I the first day I clapped eyes an 'er. **(Signalling Webster.)** Look atter 'e Lucy, I'm aff back out with me plants. **(Approaching right doorway: calling out.)** Oi, get away fram they roses you lot, **(exiting.)** arr...an' the same ta thee.

(Lucy kneels at Webster's side, puts her wares on the table and looks up at him.)

Lucy: At last, I'll be able to do what I was trained to do, **(wetting flannel.)** once a nurse always a nurse I say, **(squeezing excess into bowl.)** instead of a skivvy-come-orderly-come-packhorse, working to someone who hasn't got a clue, **(dabbing gash.)** but I don't want to burden you with my problems.

(Webster opens his eyes and tries to focus on Lucy.)

Webster: Who...who are you?

Lucy: I'm Lucy. Who are you?

Webster: I'm...(pausing.) I'm...(looking perplexed.) Who am I? **(Looking around the room.)** *Where* am I? **(Anxiously.)** What am I doing here?

Lucy: **(Standing.)** My...you *have* bumped your head, haven't you?

Webster: I don't know, **(standing.)** *have* I? **(Falling back into seat.)** Yes, I have, haven't I.

(Webster puts his head in his hands. Lucy walks behind him caringly.)

Lucy: Try to relax, I'll look after you...I'm good at that, I don't get much chance to do it here...but I've been told in the past that I'm quite a-

Webster: **(Straightening up.)** Tree.

Lucy: Well, I was talking more along the lines of-

Webster: No, tree.

Lucy: **(Cagily.)** O...K, if you insist.

Webster: No, **(facing Lucy.)** a tree is the last thing I can remember, and... **(holding Lucy's face.)** you know...you're like Florence Nightingale.

Lucy: *That's what I've been trying to say.*

(Philomena enters upstage left looking faint and rests up against the left wall.)

Philomena: Oh...I've come over all peculiar, I must've overdone it...and what with this heat and the smell in there...well. Lucy, would you kindly fetch me a glass of water?

Lucy: I suppose so...it'll be another string to my bow. **(To Webster.)** How about you? Can I get you anything?

Webster: Water will be fine for me. Thank you.

Lucy: Why don't you sit down Miss Crump...you must be worn out after all that activity.

(Lucy exits upstage right.)

Philomena: *That girl, she's got too much lip by far.*

Webster: I like her, she's nice.

Philomena: Yes, I noticed you seemed to be getting along well, **(sitting at table.)** why don't you sit back down and take the weight off your wall-...um... feet?

Webster: **(Sitting.)** Where exactly am I?

Philomena: You're at Sunny Glades Residential Home, but surely you know that already.

Webster: I'm not sure of anything at the moment.

(Lucy re-enters upstage right carrying two glasses of water. She sits at the remaining chair and hands them out.)

Lucy: I've been thinking Miss Crump...perhaps our guest here should see a doctor, he's clearly had a heavy knock on the head.

Philomena: I can see that, Lucy.

Lucy: He's even lost his memory.

Philomena: I can see *that*, Lucy.

Lucy: There might even be some evidence of concussion.

Philomena: I can see your medical training has all been worth it.

Lucy: Then *why* don't we get him to a hospital?

Philomena: Look, it might be better not to move him yet, let's see how he is later on.

Lucy: Then why don't we call the police and see if *they* know anything about him?

Philomena: We don't want police cars and ambulances buzzing around here, not today.

Lucy: Oh, I get it, you don't want anything happening that might cause undue activity here, is that it? **(Close to Philomena.)** Don't want Trumball's prospective investors and bought-off officials thinking anything goes on here, mmm? **(Closer still.)** Yet again the condition of a fellow human-being is bottom priority.

Philomena: Look, he was trespassing, wasn't he? They'd want to know why, wouldn't they? And in his current state he wouldn't be able to tell them, would he? Now, you like him, don't you?

(Lucy turns away and looks at Webster.)

Lucy: Okay, so what *do* we do with him?

Philomena: Right, well I suggest we make him as comfortable as possible here, you bandage his head and I'll take off his jacket, he must be boiling.

(Lucy nods and walks to her kit whilst Philomena takes off Webster's jacket.)

Philomena: There, that's better, **(straightening out jacket.)** who knows, we might be able to find something in here **(running hands inside.)** that'll tell us who he is, so that we don't have to keep referring to him as 'guest'...or just 'him'.**(In mock surprise.)** Oh, what have we here? **(producing wallet.)**

Lucy: That's called a wallet.

Philomena: So it is. Do you think that, perhaps, if we look through it we might find out?

Lucy: We might, **(taking wallet.)** but as it belongs to him it might be better if *he* looks. Agree?

(Lucy gives the wallet to Webster. Philomena smiles falsely, re-folds the jacket then throws it onto the corner beanbags. Webster opens the wallet and sifts through its contents on the table. Lucy takes a bandage from her kit, stands behind him and starts winding it around his head.)

Webster: Mmm, I appear to be a sales rep called...Trevor Maxwell.

Philomena: **(Ogling money.)** Mmm...and a very successful one it would appear.

Webster: None of this is familiar to me.

Lucy: **(Holding his head straight.)** The money *definitely* isn't to me.

Philomena: There are more things to work for than money, there is 'for the love of it'.

Lucy: Well, *you* should know, you work here for that...but it's not for the love of the *job*, is it?

Philomena: Yes, well...I'll just finish off in here, before the hoodlums get back.

(Philomena exits upstage left. Lucy finishes bandaging and pins at the back of Webster's head.)

Lucy: There. Finished.

Webster: What did she mean...hoodlums? Didn't she say I was in a Residential Home?

Lucy: Well, you are...and you aren't. I'm afraid Miss Crump's terminology is not what you'd expect of a warden, she doesn't even *like* old people.

Webster: So, what *is* this place?

Lucy: Well, to quote Miss Crump again, this is the Biddies' Borstal, a subsidiary wing of the main Home. I know it's a contradiction in terms but her label seems to have stuck. It's basically an annexed building...converted to cater for...well, you'll find out soon enough.

(Webster nods then winces. Lucy packs up her stuff then helps Webster to his feet.)

Lucy: Come on, have a lie down over here, **(walking him to sofa.)** I'll take these away **(lowering him to sofa.)** then bring you a nice cup of tea. **(Leaning over him.)** Okay?

(Webster kisses Lucy on the cheek)

Webster: Thanks, for everything.

(Webster lies back down. Lucy smiles, holds her cheek then exits upstage right. Webster eventually clambers slowly to his feet and walks around bemused before going to the table, at which he sits, sifting through the wallet's contents again. Just then the singing of 'Hi-ho, hi-ho, it's off to work we go' is heard off in the distance, getting closer and closer from downstage right. Then through it enter, Hilda and Hortense, in cardigans, shin-length skirts and slippers: Ramsey, in a white, short-sleeved shirt, long white shorts, black socks and sandals; Katie in an overcoat, padded boots and scarf around her neck: then, finally, Minnie wearing a midway buttoned blouse, knee-length summer skirt, bobby socks and sneakers. All are carrying a rose except

Ramsey who has a bunch of weeds. The singing ends and they surround Webster.)

Hilda: Who's *he*?

Hortense: I don't know.

Minnie: **(Looking at bowl.)** Whoever he is he's thirsty. **(Walking to table.)**
Heh kid, what are you on...a sponsored water drink?

(Webster wearily raises his head, perplexed.)

Minnie: What are you doing, filling the glasses with the bowl or drinking straight from it?

Webster: Are...are you talking to me?

Minnie: No, I'm chewing a brick.

Hilda: **(Quietly.)** But she wishes it was something similar sounding.

Minnie: **(Retorting.)** What's that?

Hilda: Nothing Minnie.

(Minnie glares at Hilda.)

Minnie: Well, if you're not going to drink this: **(dropping rose in the bowl then walking up left.)** like the headgear by the way.

(Minnie exits upstage left. Hilda and Hortense go to the table and drop their roses in bowl.)

Hilda: **(Snidely.)** That's one-nil to me by the way.

Hortense: The day's young yet.

Hilda: You said that yesterday...but I still won.

Hortense: She'll hear you one day and you won't get away with it.

(Hilda and Hortense start walking upstage left.)

Hilda: Nor will you.

Hortense: I said it first.

Hilda: But I said it first yesterday.

Hortense: And I did the day before that.

(Hilda and Hortense exit upstage left, still bickering. Ramsey then approaches the table, holds out his bunch of weeds then looks at the bowl.)

Ramsey: Better keep mine separate, don't want them spoilt by the wretched, red roses.

(Ramsey's face then lights up, he rams his weeds into a glass then exits downstage left. Katie then slowly approaches the table and sits down, reaching for the remaining glass.)

Katie: Are you...? I mean...can I...?

(Webster looks wearily at Katie)

Katie: Who are you?

Webster: I wish I knew.

Katie: **(Looking at glass.)** May I? I like to keep mine separate you see.

(Webster just studies the wallet again. Katie gently puts her rose in the glass.)

Katie: Ooh...robbed a bank have you?

(Webster ponders this seriously.)

Katie: How exciting if you have. Are you anyone well known...with 'the' in your name?

Webster: Eh?

Katie: You know...like Billy the Burglar, or Robert the Robber?

Webster: **(Looking at ID.)** According to this...my name is Trevor Maxwell.

(Katie nervously knocks over her glass and stands shaking.)

Katie: Oh, **(backing away.)** oh dear, **(backing upstage left.)** oh dear, oh dear.

(Katie quickly exits upstage left. Webster looks again at the card then drops it onto the table and stands too quickly. He holds his head then gingerly exits upstage left. Ramsey enters downstage left carrying an antiquated typewriter. He eagerly puts it on the table and sits down.)

Ramsey: Right, **(typing.)** The Wretched Red Roses, by Ramsey Wimsey. The wretched red roses rested tranquilly in a transparent tumbler of...of...

(Ramsey immediately blocks. He puts his elbows on the table and rests his head in his hands. Hilda and Hortense, followed by Minnie, are then shepherded in upstage left by Philomena.)

Philomena: Come on you three...get out, I've just tidied up in here.

Hilda: But it's our room...

Hortense: And we want to get in it.

Philomena: And you will...but not at the moment.

Minnie: Huh. You don't want us in there, don't want us out there, what do you want us to do...disappear up our own arseholes?

(Philomena cringes.)

Hortense: **(Quietly.)** Not up yours we don't.

Minnie: **(Retorting.)** What's that?

Hortense: Nothing, Minnie.

(Minnie glares at Hortense then turns back to face Philomena.)

Minnie: Well, just where *do* we go, Miss Crump?

Philomena: Stay in *here* all day...and look after our...**(looking for Webster.)** where's he gone? Where's that young man gone? And where's the other reprobate come to think of it? Don't say she's scared him off.

Minnie: Ah...she couldn't hurt a flea. Why not ask Dickens here?

Philomena: Ramsey, did you see what happened to Potts and -?

Ramsey: I'm blocked.

Philomena: Never mind *that*...it's prunes for lunch, did you see what happened to -?

Ramsey: In the literal sense I am blocked, my juices aren't flowing.

Philomena: But they do in bed at night, don't they? Now, for the third time of asking... did you see -?

Ramsey: You are a philistine woman...with not one iota of creativity in your body. A more naive, ignorant person I have never before encountered.

Philomena: **(Unaffected.)** You didn't see them then? Great, so I've got an amnesiac and a geriatric roaming around somewhere with an important delegation due to arrive soon. **(Walking downstage right.)** I suppose I'll have to go and look for them. **(In downstage right doorway.)** What would happen to this place without me?

(Philomena exits and Minnie walks across the room. Hortense moves to Hilda.)

Hortense: That's one-one by the way.

Hilda: I know, I know.

Hortense: And *mine* was more physically personal.

Hilda: You don't get extra points for *that* you know.

(Hilda and Hortense sit at the table. Minnie stands in downstage right doorway.)

Minnie: Look at her, the silly cow. I'm sick of *her*, I'm sick of *this* place, I'm sick of *everything*. Probably the hottest day of the year and we have to stay in here...just because she's got the hots for a bloke who doesn't even know she exists. I give up, I really do.

Ramsey: I remember it was a day as hot this when Larry, Ralph, Johnny and I were at The Garrick. Larry said...

Minnie: **(Sighing.)** Oh here we bloody go...

Ramsey: Larry said...(in bad 'Olivier' voice.) the weather is very hot today, and Johnny...(stifling laugh.) Johnny said...(in bad 'Gielgud' voice.) no no Larry...you said it wrong, you should have said..."the weather is *frightfully* hot today".

(Ramsey laughs out loud and long. Hilda and Hortense look perplexed. Minnie storms over to the table.)

Minnie: That's crap.

(Ramsey laughs regardless.)

Hilda: But...what about Ralph?

Hortense: I was going to ask him that...you cow.

Hilda: Well, I beat you to it...you mare.

Hortense: **(Jumping up.)** I'm going to scratch your eyes out.

Hilda: **(Jumping up.)** And I'm going to pull your hair out.

(Hilda and Hortense sneer at each other, roll up their sleeves then exit angrily downstage right, still bickering. Minnie approaches Ramsey.)

Minnie: You're full of crap, Wimsey.

(Ramsey still keeps on laughing.)

Minnie: Keep laughing like that and your teeth'll fly out, either that or I'll ram them down your throat. Capiche?

Ramsey: **(Subsiding laughter.)** What's wrong, McGee...wrong time of the month? **(laughing again.)**

Minnie: Very funny, you need a new script. I'd say write it yourself if you ever remembered to put paper in your typewriter...you senile, old fart.

(Ramsey realises this and saddens.)

Ramsey: Drop dead.

Minnie: I would if I could, anything to get away from you lot. Let's face it...you're an old, third-rate ham actor who's now an older, has-been failure of a writer.

Ramsey: And you're like you are because your husband blew his balls off.

(Minnie bites her lip and walks away.)

Ramsey: Always shuts you up, doesn't it? A useful weapon to have that is...like a rifle, a...a machete,...a...a...teaspoon.

(Lucy enters upstage right carrying a tray with a teapot, mugs, jug, bowl and spoons on and puts it on the table.)

Lucy: What's happened in here? Where's our guest?

(Neither Minnie or Ramsey answer.)

Lucy: He was here when I went out...where did he go?

Ramsey: Oh I can't stand it any longer...the noise is unbearable. How can an artiste perform in such stifling conditions as these? **(Picking up typewriter.)** A trench is no place for prose...unless you're Wilfred Owen...or Siegfried Sassoon of course, **(walking downstage right with typewriter.)** I'm going over the top.

Minnie: **(Under breath.)** Nothing new there then.

Ramsey: It's make or break time for me...and I've only got *one* thing to say to you all... and that's...

(SFX. Flatulence. Ramsey then exits downstage right. Lucy sits at the table with Minnie.)

Lucy: What's wrong with him?

Minnie: The usual: his mental mix-up, wars he didn't fight in, his acting, his writing, his incontinence, his farting...and that he's basically lost control of it all again.

Lucy: Oh, nothing new then.

Minnie: He mentioned Cyril again.

Lucy: Oh, I see...and you didn't goad him at all?

Minnie: No, he was unprovoked.

Lucy: **(Knowingly.)** Mmm. Tea?

(Minnie walks downstage. Lucy starts pouring two mugs of tea.)

Minnie: Cyril wasn't mad you know, and he didn't mean to blow them off. He genuinely believed in that invention...and if it had worked on *him* he was going to patent it.

Lucy: I know.

Minnie: The public weren't ready for his ideas, he was years ahead of his time, but all they could call him was Madcap McGee.

Lucy: People are cruel, Minnie. Tea up.

Minnie: **(Returning to table.)** Why do you stay, Lucy? You're wasted here.

Lucy: I wonder myself sometimes.

Minnie: I mean *us* five have no choice. Crump *has* to because nowhere else would employ someone so lazy, besides she'll never leave as long as Trumball breathes...and Buggis will always be here for solace when Trumball continually ignores her, but you...

Lucy: I know, I guess it's because I care. I seem to be the only one here who does.

(They sip their tea. Minnie looks through the wallet's items.)

Minnie: Is *this* who you were looking for?

Lucy: Yes, have you seen him?

Minnie: He was here when we came back in. He's a bit strange, spaced out.

Lucy: He's slightly concussed.

Minnie: **(Seeing money.)** What happened...did his wallet fall on his head?

Lucy: So, **(clasping wallet shut.)** you don't know where he is now then?

Minnie: Well, he must've been left out here with Katie...so I reckon they've gone off somewhere, to be alone.

Lucy: Why do you say that?

Minnie: Well, Trevor Maxwell...that's the name of her grandson she's never seen...and he'd be about that age now. He must've come looking for her at last.

Lucy: But...her name's Potts.

Minnie: *Her* name is...yes, but the bloke her daughter married was Maxwell... and through letters she's had from Canada her grandson's name is Trevor.

Lucy: So, she'll be hogging him while he's here.

Minnie: **(Knowingly.)** Mmm...and you wouldn't want that, would you?

Lucy: No, **(realising.)** eh? No I...I mean he...he shouldn't be roaming around or...or being bothered, **(quickly.)** nor Katie of course. I must find him, **(going downstage right.)** them.

Minnie: I'll join you **(following.)** anything to annoy Crumpy.

(Lucy then Minnie exit downstage right. Katie enters upstage left eagerly leading the still vacant-looking Webster by the arm.)

Katie: ...and that was *my* room. We're not meant to use that door we just came in as Miss Crump doesn't like it, **(giggling impishly.)** that's why we do it.

Webster: So, Katie...

Katie: Please, call me nan, I've waited so long to hear it.

Webster: **(Unsurely.)** So...nan, why are you in here?

Katie: They've never *told* you?

Webster: Who?

Katie: Your mum and dad of course. *I'm* the reason they emigrated.

(Webster holds his head and slumps at the table.)

Katie: No, that's not strictly true...but I *am* the reason they've never come back to stay, just because I wet the bed occasionally...and uptip things regularly...and spill things frequently...and let things overflow all the time. Does that make me a liability?

Webster: I...I really don't know what to...

Katie: I mean, basically, what it boils down to is that your parents love their life in Canada without me so much that when they knew I couldn't look after myself safely anymore they wanted me to sell my house to fund my stay at this godforsaken place rather than go and live with them, in their massive house, with all that money to help finance my stay.

Webster: I'm sorry...nan, I wish I could remember something about them to offer an explanation.

Katie: I mean...it's so unfair. Yes...I was always making things wet, and yes...I always felt guilty as a result, but I always dried things off afterwards, **(producing lighter from pocket.)** perhaps it was my way of doing it they didn't like.

(Katie flicks a massive flame and stares maniacally into it.)

Katie: Look at it. A flame's a thing of beauty...and it's so useful too, but they didn't see it like that.

(Webster looks up and is about to speak but double-takes when he sees Katie.)

Katie: They just saw it as an element of destruction, especially when it came into contact with things, but the fire brigade always got there before too much damage was done. **(Releasing flame.)** What do you think?

Webster: Um, well, like I said...

Katie: I've just been labelled with this tag of 'elderly arsonist'...and it's stuck with me, that's why I'm set aside in this 'special wing', so that I don't spook the 'non flame-obsessed' residents in the main Home. What do you think to that?

Webster: I don't know, I'm really just trying to...

Katie: **(Eagerly.)** Have they sent you over to collect me? Have they realised the error of their ways at last? If they have, looking at your wallet it can't be because they're short of money and only want me for what's left of mine. Which can only mean that...that they want me there for myself. Is that right Trevor? Is that money to pay for my air fare?

Webster: I don't know anything at this particular moment in time.

(Katie walks behind Webster.)

Katie: I understand, you're mixed up...just like your dad. I guess he was just lucky that he had my loving, **(grimacing.)** strong-willed daughter to make the decision to move for him, **(flicking flame.)** the bitch.

(Ramsey enters from downstage right and runs across the room.)

Ramsey: Paper...paper...paper...paper...

(Katie doesn't react. Ramsey exits downstage left.)

Katie: I mean...have they got a fireproofed room for me there, or do they think I've grown out of my little habit?

(Ramsey re-enters from downstage left and runs across the room, with a handful of paper, then stops downstage right.)

Ramsey: I am unblocked, like a sink cleared by a plunger. It's all to do with conflict you know, between people, countries, sardines...which then creates conflict on the page. Now I must go with my creative juices.

(SFX. Flatulence. Ramsey then exits downstage right.)

Webster: What was *that*?

Katie: He always does that when he's excited. Never mind *him*, tell me what's happened in all the years I've been forgotten.

Webster: I wish I knew.

(Hortense enters from downstage right and runs across the room then exits upstage left, screaming. Webster looks around, but Katie doesn't react.)

Katie: It's funny that their obligatory letters – when they could be bothered to send them of course – never said anything about you coming over.

(Hilda enters from downstage right and runs across the room and exits upstage left, yelling and snapping a pair of shears.)

Hilda: I'll cut your ruddy legs off...you mare.

(Webster again looks around, Katie still doesn't react.)

Katie: I mean...why wasn't I told? There's so much I have to get ready, like...

(Hilda re-enters from upstage left screaming, with the shears hanging loose in her hand, and runs across the room then exits back out downstage right. Webster again looks around and is steadied by the still unfazed Katie.)

Katie: My passport, plus do you still need a visa these days?

(Hortense re-enters from upstage left and runs back across the room yelling, with a litter pole held out, like a lance.)

Hortense: I'll lance your ruddy heart out, you sow.

(Hortense exits downstage right. Webster holds his head. Katie calmly pats his shoulder.)

Katie: I know, so many questions...so little time.

Webster: **(Standing up.)** But I don't know the answers, or the time.

(Webster holds his head then totters towards downstage right. Katie follows him.)

Katie: Back outside is it? Ah well...if it gets too cold I can always light us a fire.

(Webster exits downstage right followed by Katie flicking a flame. Philomena enters from downstage right backwards, in shock at the mayhem.)

Philomena: What have I done to deserve this? *Look* at them all, like naughty kids. On the very day I wanted them inside and out the way they've defied me and are running amok. **(Onto middle table.)** I don't think I can take it anymore. What else can go wrong?

(Buggis enters downstage right doorway grinning.)

Buggis: 'Ow bis Philly?

Philomena: **(Slumping into chair.)** Oh...

Buggis: Dissn't know I 'ad that effect an thee. **(Creeping in gingerly.)** Wot, s'nat gonna bollock I fer walkin' in?

Philomena: **(Wearily.)** I really couldn't care less.

Buggis: **(Approaching table.)** Don't care wuz made to care.

Philomena: I'm *past* caring...I really am. I mean...how can I ever wish to impress myself upon Mr Trumball when *they*, or indeed everyone, just flout what little authority I have?

Buggis: Thy authority impresses / Philly, in fact...I cassn't get enuff af it.

Philomena: I despair, I really do. You have the skin of a rhinoceros...and you don't look much better than one either.

Buggis: Sweet talkin' I again...I reckons thee's starting ta melt all right..

(Philomena goes to respond.)

Buggis: An' the only thing I gat like a rhino 'angs between me legs.

(Philomena goes to respond again.)

Buggis: An' the 'orn of course..which I'd like ta giv thee powdered, just ta get thee juices flowin' a bit, **(leering.)** know wot I mean?

Philomena: **(Sighing.)** Buggis, subtlety and you are strange bedfellows, so yes...I know what you mean, I always do.

Buggis: Never mind gettin' in bed with subtlety, it's thee I want to-

Philomena: I get it Buggis, **(head in hands.)** I get it.

Buggis: Aw, thee looks tired Philly...an' 'ot. I know, I'll fan thee a bit, **(seeing knickers on easy chair.)** s'least I can do **(picking up knickers.)** as it's I that gat thee in this state.

(Philomena, not seeing what Buggis has picked up, reluctantly nods and leans back in the chair. Buggis stands behind her.)

Buggis: Now, close thee eyes Philly, ta get the full effect.

(Philomena closes her eyes. Buggis then starts fanning the knickers over her face.)

Buggis: Nice?

Philomena: Surprisingly...yes.

Buggis: Good. Now thee just relax an' ferget all about the rest: the gang a five, the young 'uns, Trumball.

(Philomena's eyes open in anger then horror on seeing the knickers.)

Philomena: What the –

Buggis: They wuz the only fing I could find.

Philomena: Really. **(Jumping up.)** I *thought* I could smell something a bit... **(shaking head.)** and you did it just to try and replace Mr Trumball in my affections with yourself, yes?

Buggis: 'E's nat good enuff fer thee Philly.

Philomena: Do you *seriously* think there is anything you can possibly say or do that will lessen my love for him in any way?

(Buggis produces a scrap of paper from his pocket and throws it onto the table.)

Buggis: Read it an' weep.

(Philomena gingerly picks it up and reads perplexed.)

Philomena: But...but...

Buggis: Thee soun's like a conked out motor.

Philomena: Where did you come by this?

Buggis: I foun' it, up at the 'ouse.

Philomena: You mean you stole it.

Buggis: Dussn't matter d'ust? I jus' 'appened ta see it sat on Trumball's desk.

Philomena: By his conveniently open window...no doubt.

(Buggis grins. Philomena breaks away and re-reads it)

Philomena: This just can't be right, it must be relating to somewhere else, not here.

Buggis: **(Aghast.)** Condoms in The Vatican Philly...it's *this* place, an' they blokes comin' s'atnoon aren't investors...they'm praperty developers, an' they prabably wanna smash this place ta smithereens then build a complex or summat. Prime site apparently.

Philomena: I'm surprised you haven't discussed it with him as well.

Buggis: I gat nuthin' ta say ta 'e, nar should thee if thee's gat any sense.

Philomena: Well, I clearly haven't got any then as I actually feel the need to ask him quite a few things...amongst many are why is the plan to demolish the home instead of expand it and, more importantly, what is to become of me?

Buggis: Wot about I...an' Lucy...an' the inmates?

Philomena: Oh, I don't care what the rest of you do, it's *more* than a home with me, isn't it?

(Buggis shakes his head disappointedly.)

Philomena: What a day, it promised so much...now look at it...just falling apart around my ears. What else can possibly go wrong?

(SFX: Offstage right is then heard the sound of smashing glass, spraying water and screaming. Next, the sound of combusting flames, more screaming then Minnie maniacally laughing is heard. Philomena holds her head, wanes then slumps onto the sofa, closing her eyes on impact and sighing wearily. Buggis goes to her then resumes fanning her with the knickers.)

(Lights off)

ACT I Scene 2 - Common room of the Biddies' Borstal

(Philomena is lying on the sofa. Buggis is sitting in the back easy-chair, knickers still in his hand, looking admiringly at her. SFX: The distant sound of shouting and arguing getting closer on the right, followed by the jostling entrance of Ramsey, Hilda, Hortense and Katie downstage right.)

Buggis: **(Aghast.)** Ian Paisley in a library, wha's happened?

(Ramsey, Hilda, Hortense and Katie all talk at once, each blaming the others. Buggis stands and shouts.)

Buggis: Quiet. Cassn't thee see Philly's resting? She's gat a 'ead like a bucket she 'as. Now, one at a time.

(There is a pause while Ramsey, Hilda, Hortense and Katie look at each other then start quarrelling again. Buggis shakes his head, sits back down and resumes fanning Philomena. Minnie and Lucy enter downstage right.)

Minnie: **(Announcing.)** I'll explain what happened.

(The noise subsides as Minnie walks amongst the four then signals to Ramsey.)

Minnie: Shakespeare here rolled the paper into his typewriter...then forgot what he was going to write, so promptly lobbed it through the greenhouse.

Buggis: **(Aghast.)** Darwin in a church, you mean he...?

Minnie: *This* fractured the sprinkler pipe and sent water spraying everywhere, then **(to Hilda and Hortense.)** the dynamic duo here fought over the metal piping to club each other with...whilst **(to Katie.)** Sparky here lit up and started drying out the tent.

Hortense: **(Under breath.)** It's a marquee, stupid.

Minnie: **(Retorting.)** What's that?

Hortense: Nothing, Minnie.

Buggis: Bugger I...tent...marquee, who cares?

Hilda: And it looks like being a big, posh affair.

Minnie: It will be when they clear up the broken glass, bent metal and put out the fire.

Ramsey: It won't take them long...not with that martinet Trumball at the helm, barking orders like some over-zealous theatre director.

Philomena: **(Stirring.)** What? What was that? Zach...I mean Mr Trumball, did you say that Mr Trumball is...? Are you telling me that a marquee is being erected... and Mr Trumball is with them?

Minnie: Throw her a fish, someone.

Philomena: **(Standing up.)** Why wasn't I told when they arrived? **(Straightening hair.)** How must it look when I'm not present at an event...**(taking lipstick from pocket.)** that is to take place...**(applying lipstick.)** in

the grounds of the home...(pocketing lipstick.) of which I'm a warden? **(Straightening attire.)** How do I look?

Buggis: Dazzlin' as ever Philly...but wot about wot I just told thee?

Philomena: Oh...*that* nonsense. Well, you were clearly deluded and, as usual, were aiming for my weak spot, **(walking downstage right then stopping.)** oh...and the name's Miss Crump, not Philly, I keep telling you...I'm not a horse, **(walking further then stopping again.)** oh...and try making this place look tidy and presentable...which will entail *you* getting out of it Buggis. Now, I must go where I am needed.

(Philomena exits downstage right. Buggis slumps onto the sofa, wiping his brow with the knickers then disdainfully throws them onto the corner beanbags. Minnie looks out the window and shakes her head.)

Minnie: *Look* at her, it's pathetic, that bloke doesn't give a flying fart about her.

Lucy: Look, what about Trevor, is no-one giving a... thought about him?

Minnie: And here's the other one wearing her heart on her sleeve.

Lucy: It's not that, it's just that I hate to think of him wandering around out there, he...he...

Buggis: **(Jumping up.)** - Tha's it, I gat it.

Minnie: We know...and you're welcome to it.

Buggis: No, that young 'un, I reckon 'e's bin sent 'ere early ta gather info an this dump, 'e's come ta spy an this Borstal in particular so if people starts kickin' up a fuss about it goin' under...'e'll 'ave loads of facts about wot goes an in 'ere.

Ramsey: Dossier.

Buggis: It's true...I'm tellin' thee, **(picking up scrap of paper.)** *this* is wot it's all about ...an' 'e's the bloke ta dish the dirt. I gatta find 'im, then when I does maybe Philly'll believe I...an' then I can get in 'er good books, **(hobbling downstage right.)** then inta 'er bed...instead a that rat Trumball.

(Buggis exits downstage right.)

Minnie: I think he's been sniffing the weedkiller fumes again.

Lucy: Whatever he was talking about had something to do with *this*.

(Lucy picks up the paper.)

Ramsey: Well, don't keep us waiting girl, impart to us the parchment's findings.

Minnie: He means...tell us what it says.

Lucy: It says this place...is to be demolished.

(Lucy drops the paper on the table. Hilda, Hortense then Ramsey sit at the table. Katie sits on the sofa. Lucy picks up the tea-tray then walks away upstage right.)

Lucy: I'll make some tea **(exiting upstage left.)**

(Minnie picks up the paper.)

Hilda: Is it true, Minnie?

Minnie: Sure is.

Hortense: What will happen to us?

Minnie: The scrapheap.

Ramsey: I thought that's what *this* place was.

(Minnie walks to Katie with the paper.)

Minnie: Heh, Firebird, this is all your grandson's doing. I know this place is the pits...but it's all we've got.

Katie: *You* maybe...but I'm going back to Canada with him, to be with my family again.

Ramsey: There's a word for an attitude like that...but I can't for the life of me think what it is.

Minnie: *I* can...it's selfish, that's what you are...a selfish, old woman.

Hilda: **(Quietly.)** Look who's talking.

Minnie: **(Retorting.)** What's that?

Hilda: Nothing Minnie. **(To Hortense.)** That's two-two.

Minnie: Ah...I don't know though, it mightn't be that bad after all. We're all sick of the sight of each other anyway, well...*I* am of you lot at least.

(Minnie throws the paper at Katie then exits upstage left.)

Hortense: **(Calling out weakly.)** No, and I won't miss *you* either.

Hilda: That one doesn't count.

Hortense: Why not?

Hilda: Because (a) she's not in the room, (b) you said it too quiet, and (c)...

Ramsey: **(Exasperated.)** Oh...will you two listen to yourselves?

(Ramsey stands up and walks downstage right.)

Ramsey: It's pathetic. You prattle on like two rapacious harpies, arguing about every little thing that has no bearing on life, the reality of which is that we are to be evicted from this cesspit – albeit a homely one – in the very near future, and need I remind you of the housing alternatives open to you two?

Hilda: Or *you*...you dodder, old fool.

Ramsey: Any of us for that matter, the whole entourage. This is, after all, an ensemble production.

Hortense: He's right...and it's all because of *your* husband.

Hilda: *And yours.*

Hortense: It was yours that turned gay first.

Hilda: But it was yours that ran off with him.

Hortense: It's because of yours that my son scrapped the idea of the granny annexe.

Hilda: But it was my daughter who told him to build it for me in the first place.

Hortense: He would never have had you living there with them.

Hilda: Nor her you.

Ramsey: Oh...in the name of God will you two please just shut up. I'm not surprised that your husbands turned into raving queens and ran away together, or that neither of your offspring wanted either of you with them, after all...who would want two bitter and twisted, griping grannies under the same roof?

Hilda: The same children who wouldn't want a father staying with them who had left their mother and ran off with his best friend's wife, no doubt.

(Ramsey nods sadly. Hortense nods admiringly at the tirade, holds up her hand and heartily high fives Hilda. Katie jumps up and flicks a flame on her lighter.)

Katie: Shut up all of you...or I'll burn the place down and everyone in it.

(Minnie enters in the upstage left doorway.)

Minnie: Now *that's* an idea, a solution to all our problems. However, when I was in *there* - letting the air circulate around my vitals - guess who strolled in, as bold as brass, through our forbidden door? **(Leading in the bemused Webster.)** Now, before we all end up killing each other

- or go up in flames - why don't we ask *this* young man a few pertinent questions?

(Minnie pinches Webster's arm. Katie jumps up, nudges Minnie out of the way then nuzzles into him. Webster, in puzzlement, holds her back.)

Katie: You leave my grandson alone...you horrible woman. He's already in shock...and seeing your wrinkly, old private parts might've scarred him for life.

Minnie: Why you-

(Webster splits them up.)

Webster: Look, exactly what is going on here...and what am I meant to have done?

Minnie: Listen to him...like butter wouldn't melt.

Hilda: **(Nearing Webster.)** Yes, staggering around the place...with a pretend head injury no doubt.

Hortense: **(Nearing Webster.)** Making out you don't know why you're here, or what's happening.

Ramsey: **(Completing circle around Webster.)** When all the time you're here to glean damning information on us. It's nothing short of geriatric espionage.

Katie: It's not true, he's here to find *me*, his long-lost grandmother, to take her back to the bosom of her family.

(A melee ensues. Lucy enters upstage right with a fresh tray full of tea items which she hurriedly puts on the table then jumps into the melee.)

Lucy: Stop it, all of you, leave this poor man alone. He *has* been injured and is still in shock, also his wallet identity clearly shows that he is a salesman, not a spy.

Minnie: That could be false. A front.

Lucy: But it isn't, **(looking at Webster.)** is it?

Webster: **(Breaking away)** I was brought in here - concussed - by a grubby gardener... where I've met quite a variety of people who have told me that I'm Trevor Maxwell, that I am either a travelling salesman or a spy...or that I've just come to collect the grandmother I never knew I had and take her to a country I never knew I'd even been to...let alone

lived my life in, but the only thing I can honestly remember about anything...is a tree.

(Everyone looks at each other askance. Lucy runs to Webster's side and holds him. Minnie looks to Katie, spinning a finger around her temple.)

Minnie: It must run in the family.

(Minnie exits upstage left. Hilda and Hortense walk haughtily past Katie and also exit upstage left.)

Ramsey: Ah well, it's the beginning of the end.

(Katie looks jealously at Webster and Lucy together so walks over to join them.)

Ramsey: My typewriter is no longer functional...

(Katie goes the opposite side of Webster to Lucy.)

Ramsey: My creative juices have dried up...

(Katie squeezes her arm between Webster's spare arm and side, holding him tight.)

Ramsey: And now *this*, eviction at my age.

(Katie, still not happy at having Lucy holding Webster, switches sides and squeezes in between them, prising them apart.)

Ramsey: All of these disappointments can only result in **one** thing...

(SFX. Flatulence. Lucy blushes and, while Katie reels from the noise, she re-grabs Webster's arm and starts leading him away to the right.)

Lucy: Um, let's get some ai-, let's go for a walk...and a talk...ha-ha. I know...let's go looking at trees, **(yanking Webster from Katie.)** who knows, maybe we'll see *yours*.

(Webster, still confused, goes with Lucy and they exit quickly downstage right. Katie starts to walk after them but stops and turns angrily towards Ramsey.)

Katie: *Now* look what you've done.

Ramsey: You can't blame me for the youngsters' behaviour.

Katie: I've got to blame someone.

(Katie produces her lighter.)

Ramsey: I shouldn't light up quite yet. Aside from that one registering on The Richter Scale...it could have been piped straight from The North Sea.

(Katie's turns from angry to dejected.)

Katie: Oh, what am I going to do, Ramsey? He doesn't know, or even *want* to know me.

(Ramsey leans forward and holds Katie's hand.)

Ramsey: Please, call me Ram.

Katie: Oh no, not *that* again.

Ramsey: But...it makes me feel virile, **(tightening grip.)** like a man.

Katie: Please Ramsey...don't do this.

Ramsey: Dame Judi used to call me it.

Katie: Yes, you keep saying you were known as the 'Lyceum Lothario'.

Ramsey: And the fire still burns.

Katie: **(Flicking flame.)** So it does.

Ramsey: **(Recoiling.)** No-one cares anymore. **(Standing and walking downstage left.)** Equity doesn't want to know me. My kids hate me. I never see my grandchildren...and now *this*. There is quite literally... nothing left for me.

Katie: **(Guiltily)** Oh Ramsey, **(walking to Ramsey.)** I'm sorry, **(holding his arm.)** I'm so sorry. Perhaps this place won't be knocked down, perhaps they won't be allowed to, or maybe they'll have to find an alternative, maybe in a better place. Just try and stay positive... because you never know, **(re-assuringly hugging him.)** Ram.

(Buggis runs in downstage right with a pair of binoculars and a plan.)

Buggis: Where bis she? Where bis the light of me life? **(Noticing hug.)** Oh-arr... wha's goin' an 'ere then? I've seen that glint in thee cataracts before.

(Ramsey grins and Katie pulls away disgusted.)

Buggis: Anyway, where wuz I before thee interrupted I? **(Looking at his hands.)** Oh-ah, tha's right, **(sniffing.)** blige, wha's that funny pong?

Katie: Try looking on your boots.

Buggis: B'ain't me boots. **(Grinning.)** I know, ole Ramsey's gan an' drapped 'un, assn't?

Katie: Really Mr Buggis...have you no feelings?

Buggis: I 'ave but Philly dussn't wanna know, **(holding up items.)** but she'll wanna know about *these* all right.

Katie: Where did you get these?

Buggis: Down by the boundary fence...where I foun' that young 'un. I'm tellin' thee...'e's up ta summat.

Katie: But...

Buggis: Yer see...it's just all too coincidental.

Katie: But he's...

Buggis: I mean...summan sniffin' aroun' 'ere...an taday af all days, well...

Katie: But he's...my grandson.

Buggis: **(Aghast.)** Rasputin in a convent...this *is* a day fer surprises...an' it all started off so normal. Ah well...if Philly b'ain't aroun' I'd better wait fer 'er, **(walking to table.)** an' while I'm 'ere...

(Philomena enters unseen downstage right and watches Buggis.)

Buggis: I may as well pour meself a cuppa.

(Buggis puts the binoculars and plan down then picks up the teapot and stuffs a whole biscuit in his mouth. Philomena then approaches him.)

Philomena: On the scrounge again Buggis?

(Buggis plonks the teapot back down.)

Buggis: **(Spitting crumbs.)** Ah Philly, I bin lookin' fer thee.

Philomena: **(Disgusted.)** In the teapot? You must think I was born...**(sniffing.)** what's that horrible smell?

Buggis: **(Spitting crumbs again.)** It b'ain't me boots, if that's wot you'm thinkin'.

Philomena: Oh, do you have to be so disgusting?

Buggis: **(Swallowing.)** No, but it 'elps.

(Buggis wipes his mouth, picks up the found items then holds them proudly aloft.)

Buggis: I'm 'ere cuz I just 'ad ta show these ta thee.

Philomena: Well? What about them?

Buggis: Well, just atter thee ran aff ta see that scumbag Trumball...

(Philomena winces.)

Buggis: I 'ad this brainwave. I reckons that young 'un is a spy, getting' info an this dump, usin' **(holding up plan.)** a plan a this place, **(holding up binoculars.)** through these. An' I bet if I 'ad a bit more of a rummage aroun' down by that boundary fence I'd find more items af skulduggery an' sabertage.

(Buggis grins proudly. Philomena shakes her head.)

Philomena: Firstly, to have a brainwave one would need a brain in the first place, which I seriously doubt you have, but accepting there is something lurking in the murky recesses of that filthy mind of yours - besides smutty innuendoes and the like – this is probably the most moronic, outlandish, idiotic notion you have ever had.

Buggis: **(Unaffected.)** More sweet-talk, eh Philly?

Katie: **(Approaching them.)** Besides all that...lest we forget he is my grandson...and is here to save me from the clutches of this place, in the nick of time I might add, **(walking downstage right.)** and now I must go and save *him* from the clutches of Lucy, otherwise he'll get deflected from his original purpose.

(Katie exits downstage right, popping her head back inside.)

Katie: And I'll be left to fester and rot...like all the others...and *you* even **(exiting.)**

Philomena: Huh, what's wrong with *her*?

Buggis: Search I.

Philomena: I'd rather not.

Ramsey: I'll tell you what's wrong with her: she's realised that the bulk - if not all - of the cherries in the bowl of life are sour, nay rancid, turned that way by the downward spiral of events and the trials and tribulations therein. Wish I had my typewriter...I might like to use that speech in a future opus, ah well...

(Ramsey exits downstage left. SFX. Flatulence.)

Philomena: I despair sometimes...I really do, **(touching foliage on the table.)** is *this* what it's come to?

Buggis: I dunno Philly, all I knows is...I just wanna look atter thee when you'm like this.

Philomena: What do you mean?

Buggis: Thee know, sensitive, vulnerable...a bit 'elpless praps...
(Philomena unwittingly agrees but snaps out of it and walks downstage.)

Philomena: Huh, *me*? All those things? Never. I'm the mainstay of this place, the only *normal* one here...around whom all the other oddball characters revolve...including *you*.

Buggis: Wha's mean?

Philomena: You...with all your crackpot ideas, saying that the young man is a spy... when he's a concussed salesman, and that this place is to be demolished and replaced by a complex when...

Buggis: - *Thee* saw the outline plan.

Philomena: And I also know that *you'd* do almost anything to...to...

Buggis: - Go on Philly..say it, I bissn't ashamed, ta 'ave thee all ta meself, ta look after thee, ta...

Philomena: Stop it, you know there's only one man for me.

Buggis: An' wot did 'e say when yer just saw 'im?

Philomena: Um...he...um...well, he was a bit busy so I...

Buggis: Arr, I saw 'ow busy 'e wuz, busy chattin' up that young, blonde bint in charge a the marquee.

Philomena: **(Holding head.)** Oh...go away...and leave me alone.
(Buggis goes to comfort Philomena but stops.)

Buggis: All right Philly...I'm goin', I'll leave thee alone, **(walking downstage right.)** but I'll be back...an' when I do I'll 'ave more evidence ...an' it'll show thee wot 'e's like...
(Minnie enters upstage left unseen.)

Buggis: An' that I bissn't mad.
(Buggis exits downstage right. Minnie enters.)

Minnie: Huh...he'll be hard pushed to prove *that*.
(Whispering is heard off behind Minnie.)

Minnie: **(Retorting.)** What's that?
(Minnie shakes her head and walks in. Hilda and Hortense enter upstage left behind her.)

Hilda: **(Whispering to Hortense.)** That's three-two.

Hortense: Even if it was a bit rude.

Minnie: What's Buggis been up to now?

Philomena: He's been telling me a few home truths, **(realising vulnerability.)** well...*trying* to, but obviously I didn't listen to him. I mean...*who* does?

Minnie: Whatever you say. So, what's the lowdown on this place?

Philomena: In what way?

Minnie: We saw that plan so know about the development.

Philomena: Oh, *that*. That's just something Buggis concocted. You know how he is.

Minnie: I know he wants to get into your drawers.

(Philomena winces.)

Minnie: I also know he hasn't got a devious brain cell in his head, just a load of filthy ones.

Philomena: Unlike yourself of course.

Minnie: *I'm* not the problem here.

Hortense: **(Quietly.)** *That's* a matter of opinion.

Minnie: **(Retorting.)** What's that?

Hortense: Nothing, Minnie.

(Hortense shows three fingers on each hand to Hilda.)

Minnie: We heard Buggis ranting on earlier, after you'd ran off to see lover boy, and we thought he may have been too near the weedkiller fumes again, but we've just been thinking that, perhaps, he's *got* something after all, aside from the mange that is.

Hilda: Yes, perhaps that young man isn't a salesman after all and *is* here to collect information on us.

Hortense: Yes, to make us look bad.

Minnie: Well, worse than we are. For all we know...he might already have a dossier and is just completing it by getting the final 'evidence' on us.

Hilda: Perhaps he's been doing surveillance on us for days, weeks, months...

Hortense: And perhaps he's just pretending to be concussed as a ruse, so that he could get in here and get inside information on us.

Philomena: Perhaps, perhaps, perhaps.

Minnie: Yes...and perhaps it's true, and as well as *us* being out of a home *you'll* be out of a job.

(Philomena ponders.)

Minnie: If you're so close to your precious Mr Trumball then why don't you go out there now and demand to know what's going on here?

Hilda: Yes, go out there now...

Hortense: And demand to know.

Minnie: All right you pair of parrots...*I'm* the enforcer around here, capiche?

(Hilda and Hortense shrug at each other.)

Minnie: So, *Ms* Crump, what are you going to do about it? I mean...I know you don't care a fig about us...but I presume you care about your own welfare, eh?

(Philomena sighs then Minnie and slaps her on the back.)

Minnie: Go get him, girl.

Philomena: **(Trudging downstage right.)** I'll see him...just for your sakes, to satisfy your morbid curiosities, but I don't – for one minute – believe that that beautiful, kind, caring, generous man out there could do anything to...to...**(exiting downstage right.)**

Minnie: It really *is* pathetic, all she is to him is a dog turd he can't shake off his shoe.

Hilda: What charming terminology you have Minnie.

Hortense: Yes, really charming.

Hilda: Use your own words.

Hortense: You don't own them.

Hilda: I do when they're in *that* order.

Hortense: I can use them in whatever order I want.

(Minnie angrily grabs their heads.)

Minnie: Will you two shut up? I'm sick to death of listening to you. You're either arguing with each other, or together against someone else.

You're like some demented double-act...and you're driving me mad, **(banging heads together.)** now, just grow up. Capiche?

(Minnie releases their heads and sits at the table. Hilda and Hortense go downstage left and right respectively, rubbing their heads.)

Minnie: I don't believe I just said that. I actually told two fellow old codgers to grow up. What's happening here today?

Hilda: We're not *that* old.

Hortense: No, we're not...**(realising her parroting and slowing down.)** *that...* old.

Minnie: Course you're not, you're spring chickens, we're all nubile in the first flush of youth.

(Hilda and Hortense muster mischievously, at a safe distance from Minnie.)

Hilda: You're just in a worse mood than usual because...because...

Hortense: Because Ramsey brought up about your Cyril's accident again.

Minnie: **(Snapping.)** How do you know about that?

Hilda: We hear things.

Hortense: Yes, we hear things.

Minnie: **(Menacingly.)** So do I, **(sadly.)** so do I.

(Hilda and Hortense look perplexed by Minnie's response.)

Minnie: Let's face it...it's the end for us. We've all been shunted from pillar to post by our families, and now we've finally settled somewhere – irrespective of how we get on – the goalposts are being moved further away again. **(Pausing.)** We live all our lives and get told that we'll be respected when we're older. What a load of bollocks.

(Hilda and Hortense stifle sniggers. Minnie reacts and they go straight-faced again.)

Minnie: Well, I've had enough of it, I want to hear something good around here, *now*.

(SFX. Long and loud flatulence is heard off downstage left then Ramsey enters, now in a long-sleeved vest and long-johns, rubbing his stomach with his left hand and scratching his privates with his right hand.)

Ramsey: I can't sleep.

(Minnie seethes and exits downstage right. Ramsey trudges to the table, yawning, then slumps into the left chair.)

Ramsey: What's wrong with the wicked witch?

Hilda: Oh you know, the usual.

Hortense: Yes, you know, the usual.

(Hortense looks at Hilda and, realising she has parroted again, sits quickly in the middle chair, to take the initiative for once. Hilda then sits in the right chair.)

Hortense: Everything in fact...that's what's wrong with her, just everything.

Ramsey: Everything. Nothing. Two sides of the same coin.

Hilda: I thought that was love and hate.

Ramsey: Same thing, **(solemnly.)** same damn thing. **(Merrily.)** So, are you girls up for a game of strip draughts? **(Winking.)** Old Ram's in the mood now.

(Hilda and Hortense look at each other.)

Ramsey: I'll play you both at once, double your chances of winning, **(creakily standing up.)** and look what I'm wearing, I've given you a head start...but old Ram doesn't mind. In for a farthing...in for a guinea, that's my motto. **(Strutting downstage left.)** Come on girls...throw caution to the wind, it's nothing to lose time **(exiting downstage left.)**.

Hortense: He's got that look in his eye again.

Hilda: Who cares? He's too old to do anything about it anyway.

Hortense: We're no whippersnappers ourselves, mind.

Hilda: Up to *him* we are, besides...**(dreamily.)** it's so long since I've seen a man's body, with muscles...and hair...

Hortense: Buggis has clumps of it up his nose.

Hilda: You know what I mean. **(Standing.)** Well, I'm game for a laugh...as they say. **(Drifting downstage left.)** You coming?

Hortense: I suppose so, **(standing.)** besides, we never do anything alone, do we?

(Hilda and Hortense exit downstage left. SFX: Bickering is heard off downstage right then Lucy and Katie, enter pulling Webster in with them, holding a hand each.)

Lucy: And I tell you I was just looking for the tree he keeps on about.

Katie: Well...you won't find it deep in his eyes, will you?

Lucy: *That* was done purely in a nursing capacity.

Katie: And by holding his hand you were taking his pulse, I suppose.

Lucy: Oh...I give up.

Katie: I wish you would, he's here to collect *me*, not get involved with a...a lowly wench like you.

Lucy: Why you...

Webster: **(Retracting hands.)** Will the pair of you just...just please...be quiet, **(holding head.)** as if I haven't got enough of a headache.

(Lucy and Katie drop their heads then trudge to the table where they sit and purposely avoid eye-contact. Webster walks around the room, trying to remember anything.)

Webster: We've got the tree...right...and that was a hard enough job just trying to remember th- **(stopping in tracks.)** job. That's it, a tree, a job...

Lucy: Are you really a tree surgeon?

Katie: A grandson of mine would operate on people, not trees.

Lucy: And I don't suppose he'd be a salesman either?

Katie: Only of the best products...to the best people.

Lucy: If he's come from Canada perhaps he's a timber salesman.

Katie: **(Simmering.)** All this talk about trees...and wood, it's only good for one thing.

(Katie flicks a flame. Lucy holds her hand and Katie, realising her mood, nods and douses the flame.)

Lucy: We're letting this get to us.

Katie: **(Sniffing.)** I just want to get out of here, with my grandson, before they tear it down.

Lucy: **(Under breath.)** So do I Katie, so do I.

Webster: I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree, dum-de-dum, de-dum...I talk to the trees...but they don't listen to me, dum-dum-de-dum-dum...dum...

(Lucy signals his head wound to Katie, who nods in agreement.)

Webster: You're once, twice, tree times a lady, dum-de...I must get back out there... **(running downstage right.)** and look for more clues to my identity.

(Webster exits downstage right. Lucy and Katie go to follow him but stop at the doorway. They turn back into the room and Lucy puts her arm around Katie.)

Katie: He's my last hope Lucy, my last chance to find love back in the bosom of my family. I'd even give up my lighter to make amends and escape. I just *don't* fit in here.

Lucy: None of us do Katie, we're all misfits, every single one of us.

(SFX: Bickering is heard off downstage right then Philomena enters, pursued by Minnie.)

Minnie: And I'm telling you that was *him*...just ran out, *he's* the one.

Philomena: The one *what?* Nothing's going on here.

Minnie: He said that, did he? Trumball actually told you that?

Philomena: Well I...I didn't actually...I mean I didn't get to...um...

Minnie: Oh, I give up with you. Call yourself a woman in love...you can't even drag your man away from the young, busty blonde, whose ass he can't keep his hands off?

(Minnie walks downstage left. Philomena stays central. Lucy and Katie stay huddled downstage right.)

Minnie: It's all over anyway, my mate Marge up at the house has heard rumblings, so she just said.

Philomena: Mate? Oh, *she's* the one is she? Perhaps we ought to have her stuffed and mounted: 'The Lesser Spotted Mate of Minnie McGee, the only one in existence in fact.

Minnie: Ah...go starch your knickers.

Philomena: And the only rumblings she's heard are those of her fat stomach for more food. Look, **(looking around.)** I've been *up* at the House and I've heard nothing to suggest that this place is to be demolished and replaced by something else, so why don't we all start again, get the place tidied up, and stay out of harm's way for the rest of the day?

(Hilda and Hortense enter downstage left, wearing only their antiquated underwear, being pursued round and around by an excited Ramsey, still in his vest and long johns.)

Hortense: You said we'd have him naked in no time.

Hilda: I didn't account for *you* not knowing how to play draughts.

Hortense: That's it, put the blame back on me again.

Hilda: That's because it's *your* fault. Everyone knows that checkmate is in chess.

(Hilda and Hortense see the others and cover themselves up.)

Ramsey: I see we have an audience. **(Bowing.)** Good day all, you have just missed the best performance of yours-truly's career to- **(wincing trying to straighten back up.)** aagh, I've been stricken down **(stumbling around, doubled up.)** by my old affliction. Why could I never get it for Richard the Third? Think of the realism I could have achieved...

Ramsey: **(Pausing.)** I hope no-one gets trampled in the rush to come to my assistance.

(Lucy eventually walks to Ramsey, stands behind him and holds his sides.)

Philomena: **(Sighing.)** What else can possibly go wrong?

(Buggis enters downstage right with a case in his hand. He stops by the table, surveys all in the room then leers.)

Buggis: Oh arr...wha's bis goin' an 'ere then, an orgy? **(Dropping case.)** Well, **(loosening neck scarf.)** thee can count I in fer a bit a the action. **(Opening out arms.)** Come yer Philly...let's get down ta it, the time 'as finally arrived.

Philomena: Oh really Buggis.

Buggis: Ah, I gets it...thee'd prefer it somewhere quieter, we can go ta thy room, ar me shed...I b'ain't fussy, just as lang as I gets me 'ands an yer glands...

Philomena: **(Firmly.)** Just deliver your piece...and make it succinct.

Buggis: Arr...well perhaps later then. Now, regardin' that brainwave I 'ad earlier, I went back ta the boundary fence, 'ad a sniff aroun'...and guess what?

Minnie: You smelt yourself and passed out?

Buggis: Good 'un Minnie. No, I 'ad a rummage...an' foun' *this* **(holding up the case.)**

Katie: Have you taken up an instrument Mr Buggis?

Minnie: With *those* sausage-like fingers...don't make me laugh.

Buggis: Now we all knows that's impassible, don't we Minnie?

(Buggis lies the case in front of the table then kneels with a wince.)

Buggis: Oooh...bugger I, me joints needs oilin' summat rotten.

Philomena: Yes, thank you for that technical diagnosis of your physical condition...now open the case.

Buggis: Anythin' thee says Philly, **(trying lock.)** I loves it when thee gets dominant. **(Looking up.)** It's locked.

Philomena: Brilliant, yet another of your crackpot ideas bites the dust.

Ramsey: Got any gelignite?

Katie: I could light the fuse.

Hilda: Why don't you just ask the young stranger to open it?

Lucy: You don't know it's his.

Hortense: Oh really Lucy...it's a bit coincidental, don't you think?

(Squabbling develops between all but Minnie.)

Minnie: Will everyone just shut up.

(The squabbling stops. Minnie reaches into her hair.)

Minnie: I've got something **(producing a pin.)** for just such an occasion.

(Minnie strolls around towards the front of the case.)

Minnie: You never know when you'll need to break into something in this place.

(The rest look at each other sheepishly. Minnie kneels down, nudges Buggis out of the way then picks the lock, which clicks open immediately. She opens the lid and all are taken aback, including Lucy who, in the process, straightens Ramsey up.)

Buggis: **(Aghast.)** Eskimos on the equator, **(clambering back to feet.)** well, there it be, in black n'white if yer like, e b'ain't a spy...ar a travellin' folk singer...but...

Philomena: A gun salesman...and he's around here trying to sell gun parts.

(Buggis sighs in disbelief.)

Minnie: Sure he is, this place must be full of people clamouring to buy firearms.

Hortense: (Quietly.) I would...to shoot *you*.

Minnie: (Retorting.) What's that?

Hortense: Nothing, Minnie.

(Minnie narrows her eyes. Hortense signifies four fingers on one hand to herself and points the other with three fingers up to Hilda. Minnie doesn't see this.)

Minnie: No...it's *gun* in the singular...and all its parts are laid out, for easy assembly. I think it's gone further than we think. The homework's already been done...and it's just *this* place that'll have to go. They've probably realised it's not going to be easy knocking it down, or getting us out...so what's the only alternative?

Lucy: You can't be serious, Minnie?

Hilda: (Quietly.) Is she ever anything else?

Minnie: (Retorting.) What's that?

Hilda: Nothing, Minnie.

(Hilda signifies four fingers on each hand to Hortense.)

Katie: But...he's my grandson, he'd never do anything like *that*, he's here to collect me.

Minnie: Oh, look at the evidence Sparky. He's found by the boundary fence, so are binoculars and a plan of this place...and now *this* is unearthed. How much more evidence do you need?

Lucy: But...he's such a nice, quiet, unassuming, **(drifting away.)** tender, loving-

Minnie: - Oh wise up...all of you. 'Nice', 'quiet', 'unassuming', tender', 'grandson'...butter wouldn't melt, it's all an act. This is big business we're talking about here, killers never look like what they are, they don't walk around with ID tags on.

Ramsey: Cracking melodrama this, it reminds me of the time I was appearing as the Squire in an Old Time Music Hall at the...

Minnie: **(Snapping.)** *Can* it Wimsey, this is real life. It's *this* place, it's standing in the way of progress...and so are we, so to close down the former...the latter have to be gotten rid of. Disposing of us – us resource-wasting, old fogies – is going to mean nothing...to him.

Hilda: And he's out there *now*, prowling around.

Hortense: Probably waiting for the right moment.

Ramsey: Just like a cat...getting ready to pounce.

Philomena: Well, if it's only *you* lot he's after...

(Philomena starts to walk away but Minnie grabs her arm.)

Minnie: Oh no you don't. Think about it, it won't just be *us* he hits, it'll have to be everyone here...otherwise it'll look too organised, too clinical, like it's been done purely to get rid of us. No, it's all been timed to tie in with this bash. Trumball's got a lot of enemies, right? So, it'll be made to look like a madman running amok, **(building suspense.)** but the only ones he'll kill...**(building suspense further.)** his only victims... **(adding fear.)** will be us, **(pointing to everyone.)** each and every one of us. What have you got to say about that, eh?

(SFX. Long flatulence from Ramsey.)

(Lights off)

ACT 2 Scene I - Common room of the Biddies' Borstal

(The room is empty. The items now on the table are the wallet, plan and binoculars. The gun-case is open down front. Katie wanders in upstage left, dejectedly flicking her lighter. Lucy enters upstage right.)

Lucy: Oh...where's everyone else?

Katie: Eh? Oh, the old witches are in with Ramsey, discussing what to do about *my* grandson. I couldn't bear to be any part of it.

Lucy: I know what you mean, I was ironing when Miss Crump came out, followed by Buggis of course, talking about exactly the same thing.

Katie: My grandson's not a thing.

Lucy: I know he's not. Here, let's sit down and talk about him in our way.

(Katie sits uneasily at the table.)

Katie: I know what you're after...but you can't have him, he's here for me... not you.

Lucy: That's beside the point, Katie.

Katie: It's not beside the point...it *is* the point.

Lucy: Look, I won't deny I feel something for him...but at the moment it's concern, not just about his health but because I don't believe he's a killer, or here to bump us all off, but the others have got him tried, convicted and hanged already.

Katie: Yes, **(flicking flame angrily.)** they have, haven't they?

Lucy: **(Holding Katie's arm.)** But we've got to stay cool, calm and collected...agreed?

(Katie nods and subsides flame.)

Lucy: Right, now he's out there, doing something, God knows what, and the thing is...I don't think *he* knows what he's doing, even.

Katie: So...his concussion's for real then?

Lucy: I saw the wound, he'd have to be some sort of madman to do that to himself.

Katie: Unless...

Lucy: Katie, what are you saying?

Katie: His father had a mad streak in him, he must've done to marry my daughter.

Lucy: Don't get as bitter as the rest, Katie. When you get over to Canada all will be forgotten...and you'll all live happily ever after.

Katie: Do you really think so?

Lucy: **(Through gritted teeth.)** Yes, of course I do, now...I suggest we get out there and find him before anyone does, do you agree?

Katie: Okay...but when we find him...you take a back seat while I hog him.

(Katie and Lucy exit downstage right. Philomena, followed by Buggis, enters upstage right down to the table.)

Philomena: Buggis...will you please, please stop haranguing me.

Buggis: Thee 'eard wot Minnie said...we'm all far it.

Philomena: Oh really, you don't honestly believe anything that embittered, old crone says, do you?

Buggis: Thee know Philly... when I an' thee finally gets it together I'm gonna 'ave ta relieve thee a that sceptic attitude a thine...cuz summat 'as ta creep up an' thee an' slap thee an' the arse before thee believes it.

Philomena: **(Sighing deeply.)** Buggis, I pride myself on my knowledge of the English language, of most words and their meanings, of jargon and phraseology...but sometimes, when confronted with you, I am absolutely lost for words.

Buggis: **(Grinning.)** I leaves thee speechless, eh Philly?

Philomena: That's it, I give up, **(sitting on right table.)** I'm finished, **(crossing legs.)** I've got nothing left to offer.

Buggis: **(Walking downstage right.)** Okay Philly...thee just sit there, take it easy an' listen ta what I gat ta say. **(Stopping and turning.)** Caw, thee gat a luvly pair a pins Philly, when thee gonna let I get between 'em?

(Philomena ignores Buggis.)

Buggis: Right, we'll leave 'e an' ice fer the time bein' then. **(Theorising.)** So, what 'ave we gat 'ere then? A gun, we'll call it Exhibit A, **(holding lapels.)** the passible weapon. **(Pointing to items on table.)** An' 'ere we 'ave a plan a this place, binocliers ta view it with...an' a wallet, **(opening wallet.)** a very full 'un at that.

Philomena: So, what are you saying, Perry bloody Mason?

Buggis:

The young 'un, I suggest we kill 'im...befare 'e kills us.