

(MRS FLETCHER enters with a basket of clothes.)

MRS FLETCHER. You ent gotta clothe 'em, Mr Oakley.

TOM. Can you 'elp or can't you?

MRS FLETCHER. Didn't he bring anything?

TOM. What he stood up in.

MRS FLETCHER. (*showing him the contents of her basket*)

Hand-me-downs, I'm afraid. Underclothes, pie-jamas, balaclava for when it's colder. Knitted it meself. My Michael's first, then my David wore 'em, then my George, till he grew out of 'em.

TOM. (*taking the basket*) Very kind, Mrs Fletcher.

MRS FLETCHER. Fancy you takin' one in.

TOM. Duty ent it?

MRS FLETCHER. I ent got room meself, but Mrs Butcher got two to contend with. Regular tearaways.

TOM. Boots. Where can I get some good stout boots?

Small, like. And I don't want no commentary, just want to know.

MRS FLETCHER. I'll see what I can do. (*Taking the basket*) I'll bring everything round later, Mr Oakley. Bloomin' Hitler. Our Michael's been called up. (*Meaningfully*) Good luck, Mr Oakley.

(She bustles off.)

(TOM crosses to the other side.)

(DR LITTLE enters. TOM meets him. He has a cigarette in his mouth.)

DR LITTLE. What's the problem?

TOM. 'E's had a bit of a whippin' like, Doctor Little. Wi' a belt. They's all over 'im. Nasty old bruises and sores.

DR LITTLE. (*handing TOM a bottle*) Witch-hazel. Dab it on gently with cotton wool.

TOM. He's wetting the bed too.

DR LITTLE. Quite common. Till they settle.

TOM. Can't keep his food down, neither.

DR LITTLE. Malnutrition. Probably used to nothing but chips. Clear broth, rest, exercise and milk to begin with. Try some Virol and cod liver oil.

(**TOM** nods.)

TOM. Like a frightened rabbit he is mostly, Doctor.

DR LITTLE. Give him time. (*Smiles*) He'd better meet Zach.

TOM. Who?

DR LITTLE. Zach. Our evacuee. He'll brighten him up. Real livewire is Zach, and no mistake!

(*He laughs, has a coughing spasm, and starts to go.*)

TOM. Thanks, Doctor. (*Holding up the bottle*) How much do I owe you?

DR LITTLE. On the house!

(*He leaves.*)

(**TOM** and **SAMMY** head back to the cottage as **WILLIAM** comes out of the door, dressed in his original clothes, plus boots and balaclava. The boots slow him down a little and the balaclava nearly covers his face. **SAMMY** greets him.)

TOM. Ha! Where's yer face gone?

(**WILLIAM** adjusts the balaclava.)

Take it off, boy. You'll boil alive! You've still got your bedsocks on!

WILLIAM. I can't go out without them.

TOM. Why?

(**WILLIAM** looks uncomfortable.)

Yer bruises?

(**WILLIAM** nods.)

TOM. Ah. Get your postcard and pencil out. Boots are fine!

(**WILLIAM** finds his postcard and pencil in a pocket or a bag.)

