

SAUL. Business as usual.

PERCHIK. Why don't you *do* something? You can't survive like this.

SAUL. I have fingers in many pies, Perchik. Only one of them is meat.

PERCHIK. Your fingers or the pies?

*Beat.*

SAUL. Both.

PERCHIK. Yeah, well, maybe if you worked on your customer service –

SAUL. And what would you know about my customer service?

PERCHIK. I know by looking at the state of these books!

SAUL. Don't you cheek me, ragamuffin! I treat every customer that walks through that door like I would a minor Royal!

*WINSTON enters. He's a flustered English gentleman. He wears a suit similar to SAUL's.*

What the hell do you want?

WINSTON. H-h-h-hullo. I was wondering if you had a spot of h-h-him?

SAUL. Him?

WINSTON. Yes. H-h-h-him. You know. *(Beat.)* As in 'him sandwiches'.

SAUL. Ohhhh! 'Aaaam! Sorry, no pig today. Goodbye.

*WINSTON starts to exit. PERCHIK rushes to block the doorway.*

PERCHIK. How about a lovely sausage, sir? I'll bet a man of your impeccable tastes would appreciate a good sausage, sir?

WINSTON. Well, that's very kind of you, but I don't think my tastes are especially –

PERCHIK. Oh, but look at your suit, sir! Look at the gentleman's suit, Mr Saul!

*PERCHIK violently nudges SAUL with his elbow and waves the ledger at him.*

WINSTON. This old thing? Do you like it, do you? It was my father's, h-h-h-actually. Terribly old now, I'm afraid. Practically an / antique.

SAUL. Not at all, sir! I admire a man who wears his inheritance on his back! Little hot spell like this is no excuse not to make an *effort*. My dad never went out with a bare head or an empty buttonhole. Immaculate, he was. Compare him to Perchik. Looks like a washing machine vomited, don't he? Do you remember, sir? / The old days?

WINSTON *(chuckles)*. Oh yes –

SAUL. When the summers went by in a golden haze –

WINSTON. Gorgeous summers –

SAUL. We never had it so good, did we, sir?

WINSTON. H-h-h-halcyon days.

SAUL. When you could leave your car keys in the ignition and your front door on the latch!

WINSTON. Well h-h-h-actually that's a bit / before my –

SAUL. Or take a girl to the pictures and get change for a thruppenny bit?

WINSTON. I really don't remember / that far...

SAUL. Cockles from the fishman's barrow on a Sunday night and Gracie Fields singing 'The Largest Aspidistra in the World' on the wireless –

WINSTON. I'm only forty-two!

*An icy pause.*

SAUL. Alright, sir. No need to get testy. I was only speaking *figuratively*.

WINSTON. I'm sorry, I didn't mean... Oh dear me, how embarrassing. You must excuse me, I'm just – I'm a little *fraught*. The thing is, I'm terribly worried about my sister.

PERCHIK. Your sister, sir?

WINSTON. We've just arrived in town, you see. And since we left the old pile of bricks –

PERCHIK. Old pile of bricks, sir?

WINSTON. Oh, er – Bootlebum Hall. In Gloucestershire.

PERCHIK. Bootlebum Hall, sir?

WINSTON. Yes.

PERCHIK. In Gloucestershire, sir?

WINSTON. Yes! Do you know it?

PERCHIK. No. Nice place, was it?

WINSTON. Oh yes. It broke poor Constance's heart to leave, but after we had to have the gamekeeper put down, well – there really wasn't h-h-any other option. Connie's been an absolute brick about it, only, since we arrived in Bradford, she's been... well, she's not been tickety-boo.

PERCHIK. Not tickety-boo, sir?

WINSTON. Not tickety-boo at *all*. Pale. Won't eat a scrap, though she says she might manage a little h-h-him, if it was very thinly sliced. I can't think what's caused it.

SAUL. Mark my words, it'll be the water, sir, did you boil it before you drank?

WINSTON. Boil it? Of course we didn't boil it, this isn't *Africa* for goodness' sakes!

SAUL. Ah.

WINSTON. You mean... you think it's – some sort of stomach bug? Delhi belly?

SAUL. I'd say so, sir. Something like that. A stomach bug. Delhi belly. Cholera.

WINSTON. Cholera!

SAUL. I don't mean to upset you, sir, that's merely a worst-case scenario.

PERCHIK. Probably just needs feeding up a wee bit. How about a nice sausage?

WINSTON. Well, that sounds –

SAUL. Put a bit of colour in her cheeks, will a nice sausage. Made fresh this month.

WINSTON. Pork or beef?

SAUL. Hard to say.

PERCHIK *whisks a sad little bird body from the counter.*

PERCHIK. Or what about this pigeon, sir?

SAUL. Oh, now you cannot underestimate the palliative power of a pigeon, sir!

WINSTON. What are those black marks?

SAUL. Don't worry about that! That's only tyre tracks, that'll come out in the cooking!

WINSTON. I'm not sure... I can't / risk –

WINSTON *starts to exit*. SAUL *shrugs*. *Quickly*, PERCHIK *calls after him*.

PERCHIK. Is she very pale, sir?

WINSTON *turns back, worried*.

WINSTON. I, er – Rather pale, yes. Except for a sort of... green tinge.

PERCHIK. Only, sounds like she's got what my poor sausage-starved Auntie Bernice had.

WINSTON. Really?

PERCHIK. Started off pale, she did, couldnay keep nuthin' down. Kept asking for 'him'. Then came the green tinge. Then the bloating.

WINSTON. The bloating?

PERCHIK. Ay. Round like a melon she was. Then the next day, she exploded.

*Beat.*

WINSTON. Exploded?

PERCHIK. Ay. Exploded. All over ma father's collection of pornographic films.

WINSTON. But... that's terrible.

PERCHIK. I know. Some of them were collector's items.

SAUL. And all for the want of a bit of protein, sir...