

(COMPO and the FLASHER eye each other's dress dubiously for a split second before diving to share the space under the table. CLEGG begins whistling innocently as FOGGY enters, left.)

FOGGY Will you get a move on. I'm fed up of talking wallpaper.

CLEGG There's a bit of a snag come up, Foggy.

FOGGY Isn't he dressed yet?

(COMPO emerges from under the table.)

COMPO No. And he's not going to flaming be in these.

(He holds up the carrier.)

FOGGY He's got no choice. Leave him to it. Come upstairs and give me a hand with these women. They're moving your furniture about. They feel sure you'll like the change.

CLEGG Oh God! Listen Foggy. I can't come up just yet.

FOGGY Why ever not?

(With quiet satisfaction at the idea of disconcerting FOGGY, COMPO lifts up the tablecloth.)

COMPO This is why not.

(The FLASHER smiles sheepishly.)

FOGGY Oh my God! How did he get in?

CLEGG You left the door wide open.

FOGGY           Get rid of him.

CLEGG           They're looking for him out there.

FOGGY           I'm not surprised. (*Sees COMPO about to eat something from the table, snarls.*) What's he got, that man?

(*FOGGY's snarl brings the FLASHER out apologetically from his hiding place.*)

FLASHER        Nothing special, bless your heart, I'd be the first to admit.

COMPO           (*with his mouth full*) It's just a morsel.

FLASHER        (*to COMPO*) I'd don't know that I'd quite go that far.

FOGGY           He'll have to go.

FLASHER        Agh wall. I suppose it's inevitable.

(*The FLASHER puts on a hangdog expression and summons a brief but hacking cough from his very depths.*)

FLASHER        Thank you for your kindness.

(*From his huge raincoat pocket he produces a pair of gloves which he begins to pull on rather fussily and delicately.*)

FLASHER        Thank you for a moment's warmth and shelter. Thank you for opening to me, however temporarily, the welcome of your fireside.

COMPO           What fireside?

CLEGG           Be quiet. You know what he means.

*(CLEGG is falling for the FLASHER's plucking at the heart-strings. FOGGY is merely desperate to get rid of the man and is pacing nervously and groaning cynically just outside the FLASHER's eyeline and trying to prevent COMPO from making further inroads into the goodies on the table.)*

FOGGY            Be sensible. Don't start weakening. We can't keep him here. Just give me one good reason for not throwing him out.

CLEGG            *(thinks desperately)* He hasn't finished his celery.

*(FOGGY groans. The FLASHER snatches another piece of celery, and taken a loud bite. FOGGY removes it from him and points him towards the door, right.)*

FOGGY            Out!

*(The FLASHER goes quietly.)*

FLASHER          *(despondently)* Well thanks anyway. You've been kindness itself. A little oasis of warmth.

*(He looks round the room and his chest heaves a huge sigh.)*

FLASHER          Think of me sometimes when I've gone.

CLEGG            I feel terrible now.

FOGGY            Out!

*(As FOGGY tries to propel the FLASHER through the door, the FLASHER gives him a loud kiss.)*

FLASHER I'll be off then.

*(FOGGY leaps back as if stung, wiping his cheek.)*

FLASHER I know you must be wondering why does he run about the streets. Dressed only in two raincoats and a balaclava.

CLEGG Two raincoats?

FLASHER It gets bloody nippy in one.

COMPO Tha's in the wrong profession if tha can't stand a bit a weather.

FOGGY Why do you run about the streets dressed in only . . . ?

FLASHER Advertising.

ALL THREE Advertising?

FLASHER You have to advertise. It's no good having a product if the public never sees it.

*(Our three exchange an incredulous glance. The FLASHER reaches inside his huge raincoat.)*

FLASHER Listen – Can I show you something?

*(Our three hastily turn their backs and cover their eyes.)*

FLASHER It won't take a minute.

*(Our three avert their eyes even further. From inside his coats the FLASHER produces a slender telescopic device. He demonstrates it proudly.)*