

PETER and JOYCE put the gas masks away.

PETER: Can I go and knock on for Billy, Mum?

MRS WILSON: No, I need you to go to Mr Jessop's for me. Mrs Collins says that he's had some meat come in.

PETER: Is Joyce coming with me?

MRS WILSON: Not this time. I've cut the coupons out of the ration books for you to save time.

PETER: *(Standing up)* What shall I get? *(Hopefully)* Sausages?

MRS WILSON: Just get what you can, here you are. *(She hands PETER the coupons)* Hurry up or he won't have anything left, and don't forget to put your coat on!

PETER: All right, Mum.

PETER exits quickly.

JOYCE: Mum, do you think Mary wears her gas mask on the lav?

MRS WILSON: Honestly, Joyce, such questions! I don't know where you get them from. Hush up and go and put those masks back in the hall.

JOYCE exits, taking the gas masks with her.

MRS WILSON: *(Shaking her head)* Honestly.

MRS WILSON exits, taking the ration book with her.

SCENE TWO: *Mr Jessop's Shop. Slightly Later.*

MR JESSOP and MR HODGES are talking in the butcher's shop.

MR HODGES: Do you have any pork chops?

MR JESSOP: *(Nodding)* I've three small ones left.

MR HODGES: Just the one, then. Here's my ration book. I didn't have time to cut out the coupon, sorry.

MR JESSOP: That's all right, Mr Hodges. I know it hasn't been easy since you've been on your own. *(He takes the ration book and stamps it to show that the coupons have been used then hands it back)* How are things going?

MR HODGES: Oh, mustn't grumble. I'm keeping busy. They've had us painting white lines around the lampposts all day today.

MR JESSOP: Why?

MR HODGES: So that people can see them in the dark.

MR JESSOP: Does it work?

MR HODGES: Not really, but it's better than nothing. Orders is as orders does. Who am I to ask questions? Mind you, it gets dark very early now and there have been lots of accidents so hopefully it'll help.

MR JESSOP: Do you think we'll have an air raid tonight?

MR HODGES: I couldn't possibly say, Mr Jessop, but we're prepared if we do. Jerry won't catch us napping. Not on my watch.

MR JESSOP: You're doing a very good job, Mr Hodges.

MR HODGES: *(Importantly)* I do my best. *(Pause)* Well, I'd better get this home and cooked. I'm on duty again at 6 o'clock. Goodbye.

MR JESSOP: Cheerio for now.

MR HODGES exits. Another customer steps forward.

MR JESSOP: Yes, Mrs Hanshaw, what can I get you?

MR JESSOP and CUSTOMERS all exit.