

- BERNARD:** They've found out about you stealing apples from Mr Henshaw's orchard.
- SID:** Shut up, Bernard, or I'll belt yer.
- JOHN:** 'Wonder who they are, then.
- ROY:** Perhaps it's those people what go to homes and check them out.
- JOHN:** Oh, yeah.
- ROY:** Joan says that places like this have to be visited, to make sure the children are being looked after.
- TOM:** Bet that's it then.
- SID:** I'll tell them about Sister Angela always telling me off.
- TOM:** And I'll ask them for more food.
- BERNARD:** If you eat any more food, Tom, you'll explode - just go bang!
- TOM:** I can't help it if I have a healthy appetite.
- ROY:** Think I'll ask them to tell Joan to keep away from me.
- JOHN:** They won't do that, she's your sister!
- ROY:** She's always following me around, tidying my clothes up and bossing me about.
- BERNARD:** It's dead funny to watch! *(In a 'girlie' voice)* Come here, Roy, let me put your tie straight.
- TOM:** *(Also in a 'girlie' voice)* Roy! Pull your socks up and don't wipe your nose with your hand!

The BOYS all laugh, except ROY.

- ROY:** *(Muttering angrily)* I'm definitely going to get them visitors to keep Joan away now.
- SID:** *(To the others)* Come on, let's go and tell Joan!
- TOM:** Yeah!

SID, TOM, BERNARD and JOHN run off with ROY chasing them.

ROY: *(Shouting after the others)* No, don't tell her! She'll go mad at me.

They all exit. CATHY, MAVIS, LIZZIE, STELLA and JANE enter from a different direction.

CATHY: Who do you think the visitors are, then?

STELLA: I was hoping it might be my mam.

JANE: *(Sadly)* Me, too.

MAVIS: Do you think it might be someone coming to look at the home?

JANE: Who do you mean?

MAVIS: I mean like people wanting to send children here.

LIZZIE: *(Realizing)* Oh, you mean people wanting to send children here coming to have a look what it's like?

MAVIS: Yes.

CATHY: I bet it's new teachers or something like that.

JANE: But we don't need any new teachers.

CATHY: Oh. *(Pause)* No.

STELLA: I'm a little bit frightened.

JANE: *(Sympathetically)* Don't be scared. It's all right. *(Pause, then to STELLA)* Would you like me to read you a story?

STELLA: *(Cheering up)* Yes, please.

JANE: *(Begins to exit with her arm around STELLA)* Come on, then.

LIZZIE: *(Following)* Can we listen too?

JANE: Yes. Come on. I'll read some of Peter Pan.

CATHY: Oh, I like that! What's that fairy called?

MAVIS: Crystabell, no, Bluebell, no... *(She thinks)*

CATHY: *(Laughing)* Bluebell?! That's a cow's name!

They are all laughing as they start to exit.

MAVIS: *(With relief and pleasure)* Tinkerbell! That's it. The fairy's called Tinkerbell!

They all exit.

GEORGE and HENRY enter.

GEORGE: Do you think the Sunday uniforms will itch like these ones?

HENRY: I expect so.

GEORGE: *(Defiantly)* Then I don't want to wear it!

HENRY: We have to, for the visitors.

There is a pause.

GEORGE: How long have we been here now, Henry?

HENRY: Five days.

GEORGE: That's a long time. *(Pause)* Will Mam be coming for us soon?

HENRY: *(Shrugs)* Don't know. *(Pause, then with irritation)* Look, George, don't keep asking me! You ask me that every day. Mam promised that she'd fetch us back and she will.

GEORGE: I don't like it here, though.

HENRY: Me neither.

GEORGE: She won't forget us will she? We will go home again won't we?

HENRY: *(More sympathetically)* Of course we will. We've just got to be brave and wait for Mam to come.

There is a pause.

GEORGE: Bernard's nice, isn't he? And Roy's really funny, he makes me laugh ever so.

HENRY: Yeah. The others are all right, too. *(Pause)* I wish Fred was here, though.

GEORGE: Yeah, and I never did see Frankie's catapult.

HENRY: *(Trying to be brave)* Oh, well, not long now.

GEORGE: No. *(Thinks about asking how long and then thinks again)*

HENRY: Shall we go and see if John will let us look at his comics?

GEORGE: *(Happier)* Yeah!

A bell rings offstage.

HENRY: Oh no, that's the bell for supper. No comics, then. Come on.

*They both exit quickly.
The lights fade to blackout.*