

FRANCIS. I have to EAT EVERY DAY!

STANLEY. I shall pay you five pounds per day.

FRANCIS. *(To Stanley.)* Alright, guv, you're on.

STANLEY. Do you know where the main post office is in Brighton?

FRANCIS. *(Aside.)* I have absolutely no idea. *(To Stanley.)* Oh yeah, it's next door to my gran's.

STANLEY. There should be some post for me. You'll need this letter of authorisation. *(Stanley gives Francis a letter.)*

FRANCIS. *(Reading.)* To whom it may concern, the bearer is an authorised agent of Stanley Stubbers.

STANLEY. Shhh!

FRANCIS. Who's Stanley Stubbers?

STANLEY. *(Whisper.)* Me! But don't call me Stanley Stubbers. I'm going to have to make up a new name for the pub.

FRANCIS. *(Whisper.)* What's wrong with "The Cricketers' Arms"?

STANLEY. *(Whisper.)* You're not exactly a Swiss watch, are you? A false name for me, because I'm lying low. What do I call you? I don't do first names. First names are for girls and Norwegians.

FRANCIS. *(Whisper.)* Henshall.

STANLEY. Like it! *(Whisper.)* Get my trunk indoors, Henshall, collect my letters Henshall. I'll be in my room. *(Exit Stanley into the pub. Francis attempts to move the trunk, it is too heavy. He requests help from the audience. Two male volunteers are brought up onto the stage and are taught correct trunk lifting technique. Under instruction from Francis they carry the trunk off into the pub, and remain backstage until next required. Opportunity for improv comedy around hometown, occupation, dress sense, etc., always respecting the audience members. Francis remains in character.)*

FRANCIS. Post office. *(Enter Rachel and Lloyd.)*

RACHEL. Oi! Francis! Where are you going mate?

FRANCIS. I'm walking round and round in circles to ward off the hunger pangs.

LLOYD. I will cook you the lunch of a lifetime.

FRANCIS. Lunch?! I haven't had breakfast yet.

RACHEL. Have you got my trunk out of the motor yet?

FRANCIS. I've just done the trunk. *(Aside.)* Ah! — Concentrate, Francis! *(To Rachel.)* Don't worry, Roscoe, I'll get your trunk from the motor, now.

LLOYD. I'll get one of the bar staff to give you a hand. *(Exit Lloyd into the pub. He sees the two volunteers standing offstage.)* What! You two

again! I've told you before, it's not that kind of pub! *(The volunteers return to the audience with applause.)*

RACHEL. I need you to go to the post office, and —

FRANCIS. — Alright guv, stop going on about it. You only have to tell me once.

RACHEL. I haven't asked you to go to the post office at all, yet.

FRANCIS. *(Aside.)* Oh shit!

RACHEL. Lloyd tells me it is just around the corner.

FRANCIS. *(Aside.)* That's handy.

RACHEL. Collect any letters for me or my sister, Rachel Crabbe. This is a letter of authorisation.

FRANCIS. I've got one of those already. I don't need two do I?

RACHEL. How come you already have a letter of authorisation?

FRANCIS. *(Aside.)* This is trickier than I thought. *(Francis takes the letter.)* You're right. I'm gonna need that.

RACHEL. And any letters you collect are private. Is that clear?

FRANCIS. Don't worry, guvnor, I won't even read them myself.

RACHEL. I'm gonna sink a couple of beers, and a lie down in my room. *(Rachel goes in.)*

FRANCIS. *(Aside.)* You got to concentrate, ain't ya, with two jobs. Kaw! I can do it, long as I don't get confused. But I get confused easily. I don't get confused that easily. Yes I do. I'm my own worst enemy. Stop being negative. I'm not being negative. I'm being realistic. I'll screw it up. I always do. Who screws it up? You, you're the role model for village idiots everywhere. Me?! You're nothing without me. You're the cock up! Don't call me a cock-up, you cock-up! *(He slaps himself.)* You slapped me?! Yeah, I did. And I'm glad I did. *(He punches himself back.)* That hurt. Good. You started it. *(A fight breaks out, finally he attacks himself with the dustbin lid and renders himself unconscious. Enter Alan.)*

ALAN. *(Aside.)* What is my life? Am I to eat, drink, sleep, get a good job, marry, honeymoon, have kids, watch them grow up and have kids of their own, divorce, meet someone else, get old, and die happy in my sleep like every other inhabitant of Brighton and Hove? What kind of a life is that? No. I am an artist. Character is action. I cannot allow this late suitor to come along and end my beautiful dream, like a dead, discarded Russian astronaut dog landing on my head. *(He notices Francis.)* My rival's lackey. This will be the beginning of the end. *(To Francis.)* Where is the dog, your guvnor? He will die today. *(Alan takes his jacket off, rolls his sleeves up, takes his watch off as if preparing for a fist fight.)*