

“Oh no man! it’s some guy who’s not so well off” ——”a, course
it’s me dick- brain! where the hell are we at anyway?”

During this polite early morning chit-chat,

The pair,

became aware

of someone else there

oh yeah!

so let's shut the rap crap and get on with the mishap eh?

There was a sort of encircling and surrounding feeling going on, and sure enough, some nearby bushes rustled as Simon Digby-Smythe and Eustace (who was still wearing the haddock costume) respectively slithered and stepped out into the clearing.



”Er hi there Eu man”; Alphonse’s shifty gaze traversed the scene. “Hey I never knew you were into jelly babies this much”.

A certain ripple of unrest from the gathering glups greeted this remark, but Simon made no comment except to stretch up and bite through an overhanging branch as if he had suddenly realised that it was in the way.

Alphonse tried again.

“I don’t know yer friend there Eu” He ventured, “but I guess we can get all you guys on the bike if you want a lift back”

Eustace shifted his gaze to Herbert, who was still trying to focus his eyes, and Simon spat a piece of bark. There was about 30 seconds silence, and then Alphonse made a last attempt with the classic

“You spikka English?”.

When the laughter had died down, Simon finally spoke. His voice held more than a hint of menace, well practiced through the previous days events.

”Good morning; let’s get straight down to business shall we?
No doubt you two are wondering why you have been brought here?”

”Mumble”

.....

“Grunt”

”Hmm! thought so!” Simon continued.

Y’see, my colleague here (indicating Eustace) seems to think that you may be able and even (dare I say) eager to help us all with a little project that we have had in mind for some time now.

”Ah! But...”

Alphonse started to say only to be interrupted by a disapproving head shake from Eustace.

”Don’t worry!” Simon remarked with a wicked sort of grin (all glup grins are like that actually) “it’s nothing illegal, not by *your*

standards at least —

do you understand what we are saying? Getting through is it?"

"I er I mean we er...."

"I'm so glad that's agreed then" Simon concluded, "you see, we know quite enough about your business to create a very interesting situation for you." Then, (looking at Herbert now) "we also have some idea of the sort of things that you know, things which might turn out to be *very useful*".

Alphonse tried for a sickly grin and failed. "Can't write no cheques" He whined with the maximum pathos that he could muster "We're at level zilch credit-wise, and business don't look like gettin' any better for sometime now". "Just so indeed" - Simon sounded almost sympathetic now. "We are all in more or less the same state over here. for some considerable time, we have been finding that our trading methods are not yielding us either the turnover or the profit that we would like. As a matter of fact, we think the time has come for some kind of advanced technological solution." Herbert, who had listened so far without comment spoke now. "And what is your business then sir? does it consist entirely of altruistic acts like coshing unsuspecting folks in the dark?" "Well, no, that was a little deal with your friend Eustace here, who, you may be interested to know, is responsible for both the idea that you might help us and also the lead pipe art-work which you are no doubt appreciating to the full right at this minute". Herbert gave a side-glance to Alphonse, who didn't seem to be able to speak. After a visible attempt to control his temper, Herbert returned a rather fixed stare to Eustace. "Thought it was you behind this" and then resignedly "I suppose you had better explain the deal then". "Ok then here's what we think":

A) We know too much for your good, and we intend to use it if need be. That includes wrecking your business, and also some certain matters with the village hall and the fair. —— "Gulp" from both Alphonse and