**EVERYONE**

**Scene 23** *The Old Barn.*

**DONALD DUCK** *stooping down, a small pile of burnt-out matches beside him, strikes yet another, cups his hand to shield the flame, and tries to light the hay. It seems this is not the first attempt: some of the dampish hay is charred. And the flame flickers, flares, dies.*

**DONALD** *(intense)* Aw, come on. Come on.*(He strikes another "England's Glory")* If it don't take this time, the Japs have won. The bloody flaming buggering flaming bloody buggering Japs have won! *(He holds it to the hay. A small flame flutters, almost dies, then very slowly curls and licks along the edge of the hay. Crackle-crackle-crackle. Excited now, jigging a bit, sucking on his fingers, he watches it. Then, with cupped hands, he feeds the little fire with some of the drier hay. Trance-like)* Come on, come on, come, come on, come.

*And it is coming on.*

**Scene 24** *Open Ground, and Field.*

**JOHN, PETER, WILLIE, RAYMOND, ANGELA** *and* **AUDREY** *out of breath, have run from the woods, across the common, into the field. The barn is up ahead.* **JOHN** *slows.*

**JOHN** Oof! I be puffed!

**PETER** *(gasping)* I could keep going for another hundred miles.

**WILLIE** *(panting)* Oy, I'll bet.

**ANGELA** *(gasping)* We kept up, didn't us?

**AUDREY** *(panting)* My glasses is all steamed over.

**RAYMOND** *(gasping)* F-Fuf-Foureyes.

**AUDREY** *(singing)*

WHEN THE MUM-MOON SHINES

OVER THE CUE-COW SHED—

**JOHN** Oh, stop arguing for God's sake. We be safe now, ben us? Too fast for thik bloody Itie any road!

**PETER** Wonder if Donald Duck is still hiding in the barn?

**WILLIE** Poor old Quack Quack.

*They laugh.*

**RAYMOND** Let's p-pup-pretend t-to...

**JOHN** Be the I-talian. Oy. That's a good gun!

**PETER** It have come off twice!

**JOHN** Three times lucky!

**PETER** *(chortling)* Frighten him to death.

**WILLIE** *(putting on a deep voice, mimics)* Who is-a da there! I gotta da knife-a!

*They laugh in delight.*

**PETER** *(impressed)* That's good that is, Willie.

**WILLIE** *(pleased)* You know, like Musso the Wop in the comic.

**JOHN** Creep up on him—eh? That's a good `un.

**PETER** Last one tothe barn is a cissy!

*And away he scampers.*

**Scene 25** *The Old Bam.*

**DONALD,** *eyes smarting, stands back in awe at the size of the fire he has created.*

*The flames are engulfing the greater mass of hay in about a quarter of the barn, and a few tongues of fire are stretching towards the roof*

*Eyes wide, mouth open,* **DONALD** *begins to back towards the door, which is kept half open by a large stone.*

**DONALD** *(with hate)* Burn you bugger! Burn! Burn!

*The flames seem to swell and belly out suddenly.* **DONALD,** *in alarm, scurries for the door. And it slams shut—bang!*

**Scene 26** *Outside the barn*

*Giggling with excitement, the other six have slammed shut the door, putting the stone back against it, and further holding it shut with six pairs of hands.*

**WILLIE** *(shouting)* Who—is—a—there! I gott-a da knife-a to slit-a da throat-a!

*From inside,* DONALD *is pushing against the door until it rattles.*

**DONALD** *(screaming, from inside)* Open the door! Help! Help!

**PETER** *(delighted)* Hark at him!

*Rattle—thump—scream.*

**WILLIE** *(shouting)* Igott-a da knife-a. DONALD *(screaming, from, inside)* Help! Help!

*Smoke is seeping under the door.*

**JOHN** Him have got a fire going, the devil.

**PETER** And him told me him didn't have no matches! Hark at him, though. Good, ennit?

*They are all laughing.*

**DONALD** *(screaming inside)* Open the door! Please! Please! Open the door! Plea-ea-ease!

**Scene 27** *The Old Barn.*

*In a dreadful panic, and unable to think,* DONALD *retreats from the door to try to get out of the window, trapping himself*

*The flames drive in a leaping crackle towards the door.*

*As* DONALD, *wildly dashing about, screams, a roof timber collapses beside him in a shower of sparks.*

**Scene 28** *Outside the barn*

*Looks of consternation on six faces.* **WILLIE** *is the first to realize fully.*

**WILLIE** Quick! Quick!

**JOHN** What? Wha—?

**WILLIE** *(sobbing)* Open the door! Open it!

**ANGELA** *(screaming)* Open it!

*In a flustered frenzy they drag open the barn door. Flames leap out towards the air. They recoil in terror and horror, screaming and shouting.*

**WILLIE *(sobbing)*** Donald! Donald! Oh Donald!

**PETER** *(crying)* Come on out! Donald! Come on, old pal!

**JOHN** I shall tell his mam! I shall! Silly great fool!

**WILLIE** Oh don't do that! No!

**JOHN** *(yelling)* I shall! I shall tell his mam!

**ALL** Donald! Donald...!

**DONALD** *is briefly glimpsed through the flames, gesticulating, then wholly engulfed. The barn is being gutted, and the tiles slide off the roof*

*In terror, the six run away as the inside of the barn implodes into flame. They run, run, back into the tall grass of the field.*

*They sit, obscured by long grass, curiously apart, badly shaken.*

**RAYMOND** P-poor old Donald!

**ANGELA** He should've—he should've come out...!

**AUDREY** ‘Twasn't our fault!

**JOHN** We'll be sure to get the blame though. You can bank on it.

**PETER** I byunt going to get the blame for it. I never did anything. I wasn't even holding the door.

**ANGELA** Yes you were!

**PETER** No I wasn't! I was bloody miles away!

**AUDREY** You was with *me,* Peter. Wasn't you with me? *Pause.*

**WILLIE** We was all together. **ANGELA** Miles away!

*Pause.*

**WILLIE** What?

**ANGELA** Well, we were! Hiding in the trees, weren't we?

**JOHN** That's right. We didn't see nothing.

**PETER** *(eagerly)* We don't know nothing about it, do us?

*But they start to cry, overwhelmed.*

**RAYMOND** Poor old Quack Quack.