

ARCHIE/HARRY SIDE

Two young boys, HARRY & ARCHIE, run on. HARRY throws a snowball at ARCHIE but it hits EBENEZER. The boys freeze in terror. They both have cockney accents.

EBENEZER

Blasted urchins! Where are your parents!?

HARRY

Sir! We're sorry, Sir!

EBENEZER pauses, looks at the boys and immediately softens.

ARCHIE

Sorry Gov'nor. We didn't mean to smack you right in the gob.

EBENEZER

Quite alright. This could be a very fortuitous chance encounter. Might you be able to direct me to a man, a person, a shop? Some place where I might find some items, things, for people -

HARRY

What? You mean presents?

EBENEZER

Yes! Presents! Gifts, for children, things that they can play with and such?

ARCHIE

Like the toymaker's?

EBENEZER

Oh yes. Yes! Quite right. That's exactly it. Where might I find one?

HARRY

Van Dyke's is right down there. Just head that way -

EBENEZER

Excellent!

(He goes to leave)

Oh! Also, I need a goose! And someplace I might buy some flowers or something nice for a - for my niece.

ARCHIE

Not much of a planner are ya, Gov?

HARRY

You need all this today?

EBENEZER

Would you two be willing to help out an old man? I will pay you handsomely.

ARCHIE

(full negotiation mode)

Seems like you could use a few extra hands and legs to get your work done and it just so happens, my friend and I are free to help you out.

EBENEZER

Free?

ARCHIE

As in time, Gov, but you look like the type of bloke that could make it worth our while.

EBENEZER

You're quite the enterprising young lad, aren't you?

HARRY

Archie's got a head for business he does!

EBENEZER takes out a sack and counts some coins.

EBENEZER

So be it. Here's some silver. I'd like you to head to the poulterer's and buy the biggest goose they have.

HARRY

The prize goose?

EBENEZER

If that's the biggest goose then that's the one I want!

ARCHIE

It's gone, Gov. Someone beat you to it.

EBENEZER

Blast.

ARCHIE

How many at this soiree (SWA-RAY), Gov?

EBENEZER

Excellent question! I'm not sure. Just get the largest goose they have. If they have a bigger turkey, get that or you know what, just get both! Take them as quickly as you can, to this address in Camdentown.

ARCHIE

You want us to carry a goose and a turkey all the way to Camdentown?

EBENEZER

Quite right. You'll need a cab.

EBENEZER goes to the sack for more coins.

ARCHIE

And then a cab back.

EBENEZER stops counting coins and stares at ARCHIE.

ARCHIE

(Laying it on thick)
You don't want our dear mum wondering
where we are on Christmas Day! Not
knowing what mischief we're getting
into.

EBENEZER gives the side-eye to ARCHIE but also very much
appreciates the negotiation.

EBENEZER

(As he counts out coins)
Done and done. There's silver for the
goose, turkey and cab and oh of course,
a crown for each of you, for the
trouble.

HARRY

Blimey!

EBENEZER

And if you two are ever looking to get
into some legitimate business, come and
see me in a week or two. As it so
happens I've got opportunities at my
company that could use such eager,
clever young men! Now, off with you
both and a Merry Christmas!

ARCHIE

A pleasure doin' business with ya,
Gov'nor! Merry Christmas!

EBENEZER hurries off leaving the two boys.

ARCHIE

Now that's what I call "legitimate
business"!

The boys run off to complete their duties.