

The Railway Children Audition piece

Perks catches the children stealing coal

PERKS

Bobbie, Peter, Phyllis

PERKS But then came the dreadful night when Perks the porter pit on an old pair of sand shoes that I had worn at the seaside in my summer holidays.

I crept out very quietly to the yard where the coal heap with the whitewashed line stood. I crept out there and waited like a cat at a mouse hole,

PETER creeps along and takes some pieces of coal.

PERKS jumps out and catches PETER.

So I've caught you at last, have I, you young thief.

PETER I'm not a thief. I'm a coal miner.

PERKS, 'Tell that to the Marines.

PETER, I'll tell it to anybody, It would be just as true.

PERKS You're right there. Stow your Jaw, you young rip and come along to the station, BOBBIE (who has been hiding). Oh no!

PHYLLIS (ditto), Not the police station.

PERKS, What the...? No, the railway station first. Why, it's a regular gang, Any more of you?

BOBBIE, Only us,

PETER. What are you doing here? Spying on me?

PERKS It's about time somebody did spy on you I think. Come along to the station

Bobbie Oh don't. Can't you decide now what you'll do to us? It's our fault as much as Peter's. We knew where he got to

Peter No you didn't

Bobbie Yes, we did. We knew all the time

P HYLLIS. We only pretended we didn't just to humour you

PETER. Humour me?! Humour me?! Oh, doesn't that just take the biscuit. You were humouring me? Not only have I been caught, my sisters were humouring me.

PERKS. Now then, young man. Don't take on so.

PETER. You can let go. ] won't run away.

PERKS. Let's have a look at you. Why, you're the children from Three Chimneys. What made you do such a thing? Don't you know it's wicked to steal?

PETER. I didn't think it was stealing. I was almost sure it wasn't. I thought if I took it from the outside perhaps it would be. But in the middle, I thought it might fairly count as mining. It would take thousands of years for you to get to the middle.

PERKS. Not quite. Did you do it for a lark, or what?

PHYLLIS. No, because it was cold and we're poor.

BOBBIE. Phyllis. Ssssh! Don't.

PERKS. Well, [I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll overlook it this once. But you remember, stealing is stealing, and what's mine isn't yours, whether you call it mining; or whether you don't. Run along home.

PETER. You aren't going to do anything? Well, you are a brick

BOBBIE. You are a dear.

PHYLLIS. You're a darling.

PERKS It's all right. Everyone deserves a chance, But never again. Right