

Reg            Look - Hitler didn't get me at Dunkirk- and the bugger tried hard enough. He ain't going to get me here in me own High Street.

Florence      Just as long as he remembers that. I'll get you a cup of tea. I've just made one here. There you go, get that interyer.

Reg            Thanks Luv. Now, what's the village news? How's Ruby and that young'un?

Florence      It still hasn't come the poor girl is suffering with it though. Honestly some people think a midwife is a magician. She was asking me if I could give her something to make the baby come quicker! Of all the things.! Babies come when they come, and not a moment sooner. Young girls of today. I don't know where they get their ideas from - She says she was talking to an American newspaper woman. Right here in the village. I ask you. Talking to strange foreign women about such things. No good will come of it. Imagine if you could choose when to have your babies. Shocking. And I know we have to have women doing men's work for the duration, but writing for the newspapers! Whatever next? Whatever next?

Reg            I see it's arrived in the front yard - the new Morrison shelter.

Florence      Not exactly elegant is it? But if it means I don't have to go creeping into that hole in the back yard they call an Anderson shelter, I'll be happy. And I'll be very happy not to use those public shelters again. The smell is awful and I won't name names, but when the lights go dim certain men take certain liberties, if you know what I mean.

Reg            Yes er well... You think the three of us will fit under there?

Florence      I was going to put Letty under the stair.

Reg            Not after the Ogdens love. Not now. We all go together or not at all.

Florence Together or not at all... Oh I meant to tell you. You remember Stan?

Reg Him that was going out with Vera?

Florence Yes that's him from over Twogate way. He's in bombers you know, he came home on a bit of leave as he got wounded. Well to hear him tell what happened, it wasn't much, but anyway, he was wounded and both pilots were badly wounded. So he pulls them out of their seats and he and the bombardier calmly take over the plane and land it safely back home. He was always the type that wants to know how things worked, so he always reckoned he watched the pilot land all the time, watching what he did when like. He just learned by watching.

Reg He never did!

Florence As I'm standing here, he flew that big bomber home and landed it safely. The next thing he knows he's up for a medal and he's lying in hospital and suddenly there's a big flurry of activity and who walks in to give it to him but the King himself!

Reg *(Stands up)* The King! Well I never!

Florence As I live and breathe. The King pins a medal on our Stan. And that's not all. When he finishes his leave, they are going to make him an officer and send him off for pilot training, they think he's a natural flyer.

Reg Well I never. The King himself. *(Enter Letty)*

Letty Hello Mummy, Daddy Oooh - I had a bath – just six inches of water, just as you said. Daddy you are dirty again – did they make you do a lot of digging?

Reg Yes dear, a lot of digging.

Letty Did I hear you say something about the King?

Florence Mr Blakemore from over in Twogate got a medal from the King himself!

Letty Ooh Mummy was there a photograph in the newspaper, perhaps I can get a copy for my scrap book? Ooh Daddy was Princess Elizabeth or Princess Margaret there? How exciting, The King himself!

Florence Now now, settle down Letty. I am sure if Mr Blakemore had his picture in the paper we will find out about it soon enough, and no one so far has mentioned anything about the princesses. Honestly you do tend to get ahead of yourself don't you?

Reg Now my girl. Your Royal scrapbook is already the best the world has ever seen, it can wait a little while for a picture of Mr Blakemore with his medal.

Florence Your Father's right Letty, now off you go, into that kitchen and peel the potatoes and carrots for dinner.

Letty Not carrots again Mummy, I hate carrots!

Reg Now you heard the Ministry of Food as well as I did the other night on the radio, carrots are very good for your eyes. You don't want to have to wear glasses and cover up those pretty eyes?

Letty Alright Daddy. Potatoes *and* carrots. (*exits*)

Florence Are we doing the right thing Reg?

Reg Keeping her here, you mean?

Florence Yes, she *would* be safer in the country.

Reg From Hitler, but what would we be sending her to. We would give her a bag, her gas mask, pin a label on her dress and take her to a railway station - and that may be the last we see of her. It just don't feel right. It don't.

Florence No it don't. But though there arn't so many bombing raids these days there are a lot of those buzz bombs and they give her the willies.

Reg They don't do much for me either. The way you can hear them come over, their engine making that sound they make and then when it suddenly stops and you know now it will dive. Dive down and ...