

The Creature points to the pan of food hanging over the fire.

Klaus Run! Quick!

Gustav But the food –

Klaus Leave it, Gustav! Run!

Gustav A monster! Piss off! Bugger off!

Klaus Look at the state of him!

Gustav Run!

The beggars run away. The Creature tries to pick up the pan, but it's hot and burns his hand. He yelps with pain. But he wants the food. He experiments with the wooden spoon. He finds that with it he can bring food to his mouth. He eats. Now he examines the fire. It's nice. But when he puts his hand in it, it's not nice.

He sees that the beggars have left their knapsacks behind. He pulls out the contents – tattered clothes, a ball of string, a pipe, a Bible. None of these mean much to him.

He lies down by the fire and goes to sleep.

SCENE TEN

Later that night. The Beggars creep up on the sleeping Creature, brandishing sticks.

Klaus There he is! Get him!

They attack the Creature and beat him savagely.

Creature Waaagh!

Gustav I'll teach you to scare us!

Klaus Eat our supper!

SIDE #1

Gustav Now piss off, you ugly bastard!

Klaus And don't come back!

They drive the Creature away. The beggars collect up their belongings and exit hurriedly.

SCENE ELEVEN

Deep in the woods, the Creature howls with pain. He is angry and confused. He spins round and round, shrieking in anguish. He has in his hands a pair of trousers.

SCENE TWELVE

De Lacey's cottage. Felix, his son, guides blind De Lacey to his chair, as his daughter-in-law Agatha places food on the table.

START Agatha I'm leaving your food on the table. And there's some milk.

De Lacey Thank you, my dear. You treat me well.

Felix We're going to work, Father. We'll be back at nightfall.

Agatha (to De Lacey) And you, behave yourself while we're gone.

De Lacey (chuckles) I'll try. – Have you managed to clear the top field?

Felix No. It's slow progress.

Agatha Harder than we thought. (Cheerily.) But we'll win in the end!

De Lacey We have to grow something or we'll starve.

Agatha We'll get faster when we know what we're doing. In a year or two, we'll be fine. We'll be farmers!

De Lacey (*laughs*) I never thought I'd be a farmer . . . !

Felix (*to Agatha*) Are you ready?

Agatha For the cold and the mud? Can't wait!

She laughs, and kisses De Lacey affectionately.

Bye, old man!

Felix Goodbye, Father.

De Lacey Goodbye, Felix. You married a lovely girl.

Felix I know.

Agatha Bye!

Agatha and Felix exit the hut. De Lacey reaches behind him and takes up a guitar. He puts it across his knee and begins to play.

Felix and Agatha come outside. The Creature looks on from a distance. He now wears ragged clothes under his cloak. He watches intently.

Felix How do you manage to stay so cheerful?

Agatha What choice is there? This is where we've ended up, this is what we have to do. Come on!

Felix Agatha. Do you know how beautiful you are? I swear I will love you for ever.

Agatha You'd better!

Felix (*kisses her, strokes her hair*) When will you give me a son, beautiful wife?

Agatha (*laughs and pulls away*) Come! We've work to do! |

END
Felix and Agatha exit, hand in hand.

The Creature watches them go. Very cautiously he makes his way to the hut. He hovers in the doorway, captivated by the guitar music. De Lacey, hearing something, stops playing.

De Lacey Take the food if you want it. There's nothing else worth taking. Oh, there are books, I suppose. At least they have left me my books.

De Lacey leans his guitar against the wall. The Creature seems to grasp that he's not in danger.

You've no reason to harm me. I won't hurt you. I can't see you. I don't fight on any side. Go on, citizen, take the food.

Creature Hnnargh?

De Lacey indicates the table. The Creature stuffs food in his mouth.

De Lacey Can't you talk? Maybe you can't. It's nothing to be ashamed of. Look at me – I'm blind. There was a cannonball and I – I went blind. Now my son looks after me. You look after them when they're little, they look after you when you're old. That's the way it is. But we fell on hard times, when the soldiers came through. When people are not oppressed, they're full of brotherly love; but when times are hard . . . well, then you find out who your friends are, don't you?

The Creature, having finished the food, picks up the guitar. He tries clumsily to strum it, but just makes a horrible noise. He claws hopelessly at the strings, then cries out in frustration.

Creature Waaarh! Pissoff buggeroff!

De Lacey I beg your pardon?

Creature Pissoff buggeroff!