

upstairs. He had several times offered to lend a paw with the decorating, but for some reason or other Mr Brown had put his foot down on the idea and hadn't even allowed him in the room while work was in progress. Paddington couldn't quite understand why. He was sure he would be very good at it.

The room in question was an old box-room which had been out of use for a number of years, and when he entered it, Paddington found it was even more interesting than he had expected.

He closed the door carefully behind him and sniffed. There was an exciting smell of paint and whitewash in the air. Not only that, but there were some steps, a trestle table, several brushes, a number of rolls of wallpaper, and a big pail of whitewash.

The room had a lovely echo as well, and he spent a long time sitting in the middle of the floor while he was stirring the paint, just listening to his new voice.

There were so many different and interesting things around that it was a job to know what to do first. Eventually Paddington decided on the painting. Choosing one of Mr Brown's best brushes, he dipped it into the pot of paint and then looked round the room

for something to dab it on.

It wasn't until he had been working on the window-frame for several minutes that he began to wish he had started on something else. The brush made his arm ache, and when he tried dipping his paw in the paint pot instead and rubbing it on, more paint seemed to go on to the glass than the wooden part, so that the room became quite dark.



“Perhaps,” said Paddington, waving the brush in the air and addressing the room in general, “perhaps if I do the ceiling first with the whitewash I can cover all the drips on the wall with the wallpaper.”

before in a shop window. Although seven pounds seemed an awful lot of money to pay for anything – especially when you only get one pound a week pocket money – Paddington felt very pleased with himself as he emptied the contents on to the floor. There was a long black beard, some dark glasses, a police whistle, several bottles of



chemicals marked 'Handle with Care' – which Paddington hurriedly put back in the box – a finger-print pad, a small bottle of invisible ink, and a book of instructions.

It seemed a very good disguise outfit. Paddington tried writing his name on the lid of the box with the invisible ink and he couldn't see it at all. Then he tested the finger-print pad with his paw and blew several blasts on the police whistle under the bedclothes. He rather wished he'd thought of doing it the

other way round as a lot of the ink came off on the sheets, which was going to be difficult to explain.

But he liked the beard best of all. It had two pieces of wire for fitting over the ears, and when he turned and suddenly caught sight of himself in the mirror it quite made him jump. With his hat on, and an old raincoat of Jonathan's which Mrs Brown had put out for the jumble sale, he could hardly recognise himself. After studying the effect in



the mirror from all possible angles, Paddington decided to try it out downstairs. It was difficult to walk properly; Jonathan's old coat was too long for him and he kept treading on it. Apart from that, his ears didn't seem to fit the beard as well as he would have liked, so that he had to hang on to it with one

And underneath that was an even larger notice saying:

GET YOUR FIREWORKS HERE!

Paddington studied it all carefully for a few moments and then hurried on to Mr Gruber's, pausing only to pick up his morning supply of buns at the bakery, where he had a standing order.

Now that the cold weather had set in, Mr Gruber no longer sat on the pavement in front of his shop in the morning. Instead, he had arranged a sofa by the stove in the back of the shop. It was a cosy corner, surrounded by books, but Paddington didn't like it quite so much as being outside. For one thing, the sofa was an old one and some of the horsehairs poked through, but he quickly forgot about this as he handed Mr Gruber his share of buns and began telling him of the morning's happenings.

"Gunpowder, treason and plot?" said Mr Gruber, as he handed Paddington a large mug of steaming cocoa. "Why, that's to do with Guy Fawkes' Day."

He smiled apologetically and rubbed the steam from his glasses when he saw that



Paddington still looked puzzled.

"I always forget, Mr Brown," he said, "that you come from Darkest Peru. I don't suppose you know about Guy Fawkes."

Paddington wiped the cocoa from his whiskers with the back of his paw in case it left a stain and shook his head.

"Well," continued Mr Gruber. "I expect you've seen fireworks before. I seem to remember when I was in South America many years ago they always had them on fête days."

Paddington nodded. Now that Mr Gruber mentioned it, he did remember his