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SF PERUSALS

Goodnight Mister Tom

a play by David Wood

from the novel
by Michelle Magorian

samuelfrench.co.uk

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IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

If you have obtained performance rights to this title, please refer to your licensing agreement for important billing and credit requirements.

It is a condition of the issue of an amateur performing licence for this play that the following billing must be used in all advertising in connection with the play

GOODNIGHT MISTER TOM
a play by DAVID WOOD
from the novel by MICHELLE MAGORIAN

and that both names shall appear in the same size type and neither name shall be mentioned without the other.

GOODNIGHT MISTER TOM was commissioned by Chichester Festival Theatre and first performed there on 2nd February 2011 and on tour in association with the Children's Touring Partnership, with the following cast:

ZACH ..... Ethan Beer
Emilio Crescenzo
Max Longmuir
WILLIAM BEECH ..... Jack Butcher
Toby Prynne
Oliver Tritton Wheeler
GINNIE/NURSE ..... Louise Collins
SAMMY/PUPPETEER ..... Laura Cubitt
GEORGE/POLICEMAN ..... Kamran Darabi-Ford
ENSEMBLE ..... Emma Drysdale
TOM OAKLEY ..... Oliver Ford Davies
MRS FLETCHER/GLAD/SOCIAL WORKER ..... Joanne Howarth
DR LITTLE/MRS MILLER ..... Anne Kavanagh
MRS ANNIE HARTRIDGE/MRS BEECH ..... Aoife McMahon
CARRIE/SISTER ..... Freya Parker
BILLETING OFFICER/MISS THORNE ..... Georgina Sutton
MR MILLER/ARP WARDEN ..... Alan Vicary
CHARLIE RUDDLES/DAVID HARTRIDGE/VICAR/ TICKET COLLECTOR/MR STELTON ..... Jonathan Warde

DIRECTOR ..... Angus Jackson
SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER ..... Robert Innes Hopkins
LIGHTING DESIGNER ..... Tim Mitchell
MUSIC ..... Matthew Scott
SOUND DESIGNER ..... Gregory Clarke
PUPPETS AND PUPPETRY ..... Toby Olié
CHOREOGRAPHER ..... Lizzie Gee
CASTING DIRECTOR ..... Marc Frankum
CHILDREN'S CASTING DIRECTOR ..... Joanne Hawes

Subsequently performed at the Phoenix Theatre, London on 22nd November, 2012 for a season and a second tour. Fiery Angel, Ambassador Theatre Group, Fiery Dragons and the Children's Touring Partnership presented the Chichester Festival Theatre production, with the same production team and the following cast:

DR LITTLE/TICKET COLLECTOR ..... Osmund Bullock
GINNIE/NURSE/SQUIRREL ..... Louise Collins
SAMMY/PUPPETEER..... Elisa De Grey
ENSEMBLE/MISS MILLER ..... Emma Drysdale
TOM OAKLEY.....Oliver Ford Davies
GEORGE/POLICEMAN ..... Bradley Hall
MRS FLETCHER/GLAD/SOCIAL WORKER ..... Joanne Howarth
ANNIE HARTRIDGE/MRS BEECH.....Aoife McMahon
CARRIE/SISTER/SPARROW ..... Freya Parker
BILLETING OFFICER/MISS THORNE.....Georgina Sutton
MR MILLER/ARP OFFICER..... Alan Vicary
CHARLIE RUDDLES/DAVID HARTRIDGE/ VICAR/MR STELTON ..... Jonathan Warde

ALL OTHER ROLES PLAYED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY, WITH

WILLIAM BEECH ..... Arthur Gledhill-Franks
WILLIAM BEECH ..... Jamie Goldberg
WILLIAM BEECH ..... Ewan Harris
ZACH.....Joseph Holgate
ZACH.....Thiago Los
ZACH..... William Price

MEMBERS OF THE CHILDREN'S ENSEMBLE

Liam Balfour, Denny Barwick, Jamie Crowfoot, Harry Demmon, Luca Dixon, Liam Farr, Jake Fazzio, Edward French, Ashley Hillier, Joss Littler, George O'Keefe, Issac Zahra

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

BILLETING OFFICER – efficient, no-nonsense female

TOM OAKLEY – mid-to-late 60s, loner

WILLIAM BEECH – 10, deprived evacuee

SAMMY – a black and white collie dog

CHARLIE RUDDLES – ARP Warden

MRS FLETCHER – housewife and mother

DOCTOR LITTLE – the local doctor (could be male or female)

MRS ANNIE HARTRIDGE – school teacher

DAVID HARTRIDGE – her husband, trainee RAF pilot

CARRIE
GINNIE } redheaded twins, 11, **CARRIE** is academic, **GINNIE** is practical

GEORGE FLETCHER – 10, youngest son of Mrs Fletcher

MISS THORNE – local librarian and amateur dramatics producer

ZACH – 11, Jewish evacuee, from a theatrical family

MR MILLER – proprietor of the post office/stores (could be Mrs Miller)

MISS MILLER – who helps her father in the shop. Late teens, early 20s (could be Mr Miller, husband of Mrs Miller)

VICAR – young, enthusiastic

MRS BEECH – William's mother, strict, prim, mentally disturbed

TICKET-COLLECTOR (London)

ARP WARDEN (London)

GLAD – warm-hearted Londoner

POLICEMAN – solid and strong

NURSE – young and sympathetic

SISTER – stands no nonsense

MR STELTON – a psychiatrist

EVACUEES

VILLAGERS

LONDONERS

MEDICAL STAFF

PUPPETEER (Sammy)

PUPPETEERS (Squirrel and Hedge Sparrow)

OPTIONAL EXTRA CHILDREN

SUGGESTED DOUBLING FOR A CAST OF 14

M **TOM** 1
WILLIAM 2
CHARLIE RUDDLES/DAVID HARTRIDGE/
VICAR /MR STELTON 3
DR LITTLE/TICKET COLLECTOR 4
GEORGE FLETCHER/POLICEMAN 5
MR. MILLER/ARP WARDEN(LONDON) 6
ZACH 7

F **BILLETING OFFICER/MISS THORNE** 8
MRS FLETCHER/GLAD/SOCIAL WORKER 9
MISS MILLER/UNDERSTUDY 10
MRS ANNIE HARTRIDGE/MRS BEECH 11
CARRIE/SISTER 12
GINNIE/NURSE 13

PUPPETEER (**SAMMY**) 14

Please see the Chichester Festival Theatre cast list for the original doubling, when **DOCTOR LITTLE** was female and **MRS MILLER** ran the post office, helped by **MR MILLER**.

The actors playing **TOM**, **WILLIAM** and **ZACH** only play the one role.

The others form an ensemble, who also play:

EVACUEES
VILLAGERS
LONDONERS
NURSING STAFF
PUPPETEERS (**HEDGE-SPARROW** and **SQUIRREL**)

Optional extra members of the ensemble, including **CHILDREN**.

SETTING

The action starts in September 1939 and takes place.....

Outside and inside **TOM OAKLEY**'s church-side cottage in the West Country of England

A corner of the graveyard, with the headstone of **TOM OAKLEY**'s wife, **RACHEL**

In the village - the library
- the post office/stores
- the church hall
- outside the school

A London railway station

Outside and inside **MRS BEECH**'s London house

London street

Air raid shelter interior

Hospital corridor and section of ward

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to Jonathan Church of Chichester Festival Theatre for commissioning this play and for giving it a splendid first production, also to Edward Snape, of the Children's Touring Partnership, for making the production its inaugural tour; also to Fiery Angel, the Ambassador Theatre Group, and Fiery Dragons for the West End transfer.

Working with the director Angus Jackson was an invigorating experience and a real pleasure; his intelligence and sensitivity led to many discussions, script refinements and positive rethinks.

My first choice to play Mister Tom was always Oliver Ford Davies. To secure his services and to witness his care and thoughtfulness in rehearsal and his brilliant and moving portrayal of the character in performance has been a privilege indeed.

Admiration and thanks, too, to all the young actors who brought William and Zach so skilfully to life, in Chichester, London and on tour.

Sammy, the dog, was, for me, a vitally important character in the play. Thank you, Toby Olié, Laura Cubitt and Elisa de Grey for demonstrating triumphantly the power of puppetry.

Most importantly I want to thank Michelle Magorian most warmly for allowing me to adapt her classic novel, which I have hugely admired

INCIDENTAL MUSIC AND RECORDINGS

Snatches of unaccompanied songs are used – *Let's Face the Music and Dance*, *Jolly Good Company*, *(There'll Be Bluebirds Over) The White Cliffs of Dover* and the tune of *Bless This House* (with the words of *G.A.S.M.A.S.K.*)

An extract is played from the recorded song, *Wish Me Luck (As You Wave Me Goodbye)* by Harry Parr-Davies, sung by Gracie Fields.

A sung chorus from *Toad of Toad Hall* is used.

A BBC News announcement about evacuation is played.

The voice of Neville Chamberlain announcing the declaration of war on Germany is used.

The voice of Churchill speaking after Dunkirk is used.

The use of the song *Winter Wonderland* is suggested, though it wasn't used in the original production. Other songs of the period could be interpolated, if relevant, to link scenes.

NB. permission to use incidental music and recordings must be sought. (Please see music use note on page 3.) Some spoken-word recordings can be found on the internet.

ORIGINAL MUSIC

The original production used specially composed and recorded music by Matthew Scott.This music is non-mandatory, but available to customers for use in performance. Please contact Samuel French for more information.

Goodnight Mister Tom, the novel by Michelle Magorian, was first published by Kestrel Books, 1981, and then in paperback by Puffin Books

INTRODUCTION

THE SET

Part of me envisages an abstract set, featuring iconic wartime objects such as sandbags, suitcases, posters etc. And some locations could be created using such objects.

But the cottage, with its living room and attic bedroom, seem to cry out for naturalism! Similarly, the post office/stores and the church hall and the library (only one scene) feel as though they need a certain authenticity. Maybe small trucks might be appropriate. Maybe they turn around and become other locations, or are disguised as parts of the basic set.

An important element of the story is the difference between town and country. **WILLIAM** comes from the 'darkness' of London to the light and open air of the country, and then goes back to London. The contrast might well best be served by almost moving from colour to black and white. Certainly we occasionally would benefit from a virtually open stage with a sky cyc.

Another important element in the book is the value of the arts – the transforming possibilities of painting and drawing as well as performing arts and reading/books. Maybe symbols of these activities could be incorporated into an abstract set?

CHARACTERS

I originally wanted to make sure that it was possible to do the play with a cast of 12. In fact I have suggested 14, to include a puppeteer (to operate **SAMMY**, the dog). The ensemble, apart from **TOM** and **WILLIAM**, can play several parts and keep the action moving by helping to create locations and change the scenes.

Hopefully this will help create a sense of community. The book brilliantly depicts a village community, with everyone supporting everyone else, as well as knowing everybody's business. Inevitably on stage the canvas must be narrower, but peopling the stage with villagers, even when they are not directly involved in a scene, will create the right atmosphere in which to tell the story.

MUSIC AND SOUND

Time passing will also be helped by an incidental music score and by sound effects, steam train noises etc. I have also introduced real songs from the period. And, in Act 2, a complex nightmare sequence uses distorted effects and recorded voices.

PUPPETRY

I thought long and hard about **SAMMY**. **TOM**'s dog, in the book, plays a vital role. He is **TOM**'s best friend. He introduces **WILLIAM** to animals, nature etc., and his sense of smell helps **TOM** find **WILLIAM** in London. It seemed right to include him in the play. I decided the best way of doing this would be to have a puppeteer operating an endearing, naturalistic-looking puppet. A bird and a squirrel can also be puppets, operated by members of the ensemble.

CHILDREN

WILLIAM and **ZACH** should ideally be played by boys with unbroken voices. The other three 'children' in my adaptation would probably best be played by young adults, as part of the ensemble, also playing adult roles. A larger company might be able to accommodate more real children, as evacuees, schoolchildren and villagers.

Post-production Postscript

Theatre is a collaborative medium. It is always interesting to compare the original production notes with what actually happened when the play was first produced, with the input of the creative team. I was indeed fortunate to work with 'the best', with the result that the production won the 2013 Olivier Award for Best Entertainment and Family.

The original concept of an ensemble production was maintained. Fluidity was achieved by speedy scene changes carried out by the actors. The stunning set was even more abstract than I had imagined. A large central platform was the setting for most of the action, using the stage-level surrounding area for entrances and exits, plus the representation of the graveyard. Wartime posters were visible, and two backcloths suggested the rural countryside and the city of London. We never saw the exterior of the cottage, and walls were not visible, only, in the first scene, the cottage door. There was no bedroom door – it was imagined. Only the most basic furniture, necessary to the action, was employed. In the library and post office, a simple desk and a shelving unit, and a counter and orange boxes proved necessary.

However, the second act revealed a sophisticated secret, when the entire platform, hinged at the back, was raised to reveal the interior of Mrs Beech's living room. The cupboard in which the baby is hidden was incorporated in the low back wall.

Trap doors in the platform opened to suggest the entrance to the attic bedroom and also the trench being dug for the Anderson shelter.

The platform also served as the air-raid shelter and the village hall and other locations, needing the minimum of other scenery. Lighting helped define areas as required.

Sammy, our puppet dog, proved a major success. He was operated by a female actor dressed as a boy. She vocalized Sammy's barking, whining and other doggy sounds. Her presence on stage very quickly became almost invisible, thanks to the appeal of watching the puppet.

For logistical reasons, when we transferred to the West End, Dr Little changed from female to male – Aunt Nance became Uncle Ozzie. Similarly, Mr Miller rather than Mrs Miller ran the post office. Both versions worked equally well, in my view. However, it is true that during the war women were taking the place of men who had been called up.

Specially composed incidental music by Matthew Scott augmented the occasional use of authentic period songs.

We used actual radio broadcasts when appropriate.

Doubling and trebling made it possible, as planned, to perform the play with a cast of fourteen, but I can certainly envisage productions using a larger cast, including several children, as suggested in the script.

David Wood

OTHER PLAYS AND MUSICALS BY DAVID WOOD

Aladdin
The BFG (based on the book by Roald Dahl)
Babe, the Sheep-Pig (based on the book by Dick King-Smith)
Babes in the Magic Wood
Cinderella
Danny the Champion of the World (based on the book by Roald Dahl)
Dick Whittington and Wondercat
Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish (based on the book by Michael Foreman)
Fantastic Mr Fox (based on the book by Roald Dahl)
Flibberty and the Penguin
The Gingerbread Man
George's Marvellous Medicine (based on the book by Roald Dahl)
Hijack Over Hygenia
The Ideal Gnome Expedition
Jack and the Giant
Jack the Lad (co-written with Dave and Toni Arthur)
James and the Giant Peach (based on the book by Roald Dahl)
Larry the Lamb in Toytown (co-written with Sheila Ruskin, adapted from the stories of S.G. Hulme-Beaman)
Meg and Mog Show (from the books by Helen Nicoll and Jan Pieńkowski)
More Adventures of Noddy (based on the stories by Enid Blyton)
Mother Goose's Golden Christmas
Noddy (based on the stories by Enid Blyton)
Nutcracker Sweet
Old Father Time
The Old Man of Lochnagar
(based on the book by HRH The Prince of Wales)
Old Mother Hubbard
The Owl and the Pussycat went to See... (co-written with Sheila Ruskin)
The Papertown Paperchase
The Pied Piper (co-written with Dave and Toni Arthur)
The Plotters of Cabbage Patch Corner
Tom's Midnight Garden (based on the book by Philippa Pearce)
Robin Hood (co-written with Dave and Toni Arthur)
Rupert and the Green Dragon (based on the Rupert stories and characters by Mary Tourtel and Alfred Bestall)
Save the Human (based on the story by Tony Husband and David Wood)
The See-Saw Tree
The Selfish Shellfish
Spot's Birthday Party (based on the books by Eric Hill)
There Was an Old Woman...
Tickle (one act)
The Twits (based on the book by Roald Dahl)
The Witches (based on the book by Roald Dahl)

Theatre for Children – Guide to Writing, Adapting, Directing and Acting
(written with Janet Grant, published by Faber and Faber)

ACT ONE

(As the house lights dim, we hear the sound of Gracie Fields singing ***WISH ME LUCK (AS YOU WAVE ME GOODBYE)****. Then a radio news broadcast.)*

NEWSREADER'S VOICE. There is no question of compulsory evacuation of school children, but it is highly desirable from the point of view of their own safety that as many as possible of these children should be evacuated at an early date. We ask parents to play their part and help the authorities. The move is to start next Sunday.

(The lights come up to reveal the living room of a cottage in the shadow of a church tower. **TOM OAKLEY** *sits at the table.)*

(It is evening. Through the gathering gloom a tired line of **EVACUEES** *shuffle into view, in contrast to the jaunty song they sing, led by the* **BILLETING OFFICER**.*)*

CHILDREN & BILLETING OFFICER. *(singing)*

WISH ME LUCK AS YOU WAVE ME GOODBYE,
CHEERIO, HERE I GO, ON MY WAY.
WISH ME LUCK AS YOU WAVE ME GOODBYE,
NOT A TEAR BUT A CHEER, MAKE IT GAY.
GIVE ME A SMILE
I CAN KEEP ALL THE WHILE
IN MY HEART WHILE I'M AWAY.
TILL WE MEET ONCE AGAIN YOU AND I,
WISH ME LUCK AS YOU WAVE ME GOODBYE.

(The **BILLETING OFFICER** *signals the* **CHILDREN** *to stop, approaches the cottage door and knocks.)*

(Pause)

TOM. Yes.

BILLETING OFFICER. *(opening the door and looking in)* Good evening. I'm the billeting officer for this area…

TOM. What's that got to do wi' me?

BILLETING OFFICER. Well, Mr… Mr…

TOM. Oakley.

BILLETING OFFICER. Ah, thank you, Mr Oakley. Well, with the declaration of war imminent…

TOM. I knows all that. Git to the point.

(The **BILLETING OFFICER** *returns to the* **EVACUEES** *and pushes forward a small boy,* **WILLIAM**, *who shyly looks down at his feet. He carries a brown carrier bag and, around his neck, a gasmask.)*

BILLETING OFFICER. You see…

TOM. Don't tell me. It's obligatory and it's for the war effort.

BILLETING OFFICER. You are entitled to choose your child, I know…

TOM. Huh!

BILLETING OFFICER. But his mother wants him to be with someone who's religious or near a church. She was quite adamant. Said she'd only let him be evacuated if he was.

TOM. Was what?

BILLETING OFFICER. Near a church. And as you are…

*(***TOM** *glares at* **WILLIAM**.*)*

TOM. *(eventually)* You'd best come in.

BILLETING OFFICER. Thank you so much. *(Handing* **TOM** *an addressed postcard)* That's his postcard to send home. *(Quickly making off with the other evacuees)* Quick march, everyone. To the church hall.

(They shuffle off, singing. **WILLIAM** *watches them go.)*

CHILDREN & BILLETING OFFICER. *(singing)*

WISH ME LUCK AS YOU WAVE ME GOODBYE,
CHEERIO, HERE I GO, ON MY WAY.
WISH ME LUCK AS YOU WAVE ME GOODBYE,
NOT A TEAR BUT A CHEER, MAKE IT GAY…

TOM. Come on in. I ent got all day.

*(***WILLIAM** *follows* **TOM** *inside. The comfortable small room is lit by a ceiling gas lamp and an oil lamp on the table. A large black cooking range is in an alcove, fire burning. A table, two chairs, some books on shelves. A picture on the wall.)*

*(***WILLIAM** *stands nervously.* **TOM** *looks at the label on a string round his neck.)*

TOM. William Beech, eh?

(He removes the label, then puts it down with the postcard.)

S'pose William Beech'll be wantin' something to eat.

(He goes to the range and starts cooking bacon and boiling the kettle.)

You can put that ole bag down. And your gas mask. You ent goin' no place else.

*(***WILLIAM** *does so, and stands rooted awkwardly to the spot.)*

Get your mackintosh off, boy.

(Slowly **WILLIAM** *undoes his belt and buttons, then removes his mackintosh. He holds it. He wears a thin grey jersey, shorts and long socks.)*

Hang it up.

*(***WILLIAM** *looks around.)*

Put it on top of mine. *(Indicating)* Back of door.

*(***WILLIAM** *finds the hook, but can't reach.)*

Little chap ent yer! Try standin' on a chair.

*(***WILLIAM** *looks around helplessly.)*

Come on, you got wax in your ears? *(Indicating)* Use the chair.

*(***WILLIAM** *fetches a chair from the table and climbs up to reach the hook.* **TOM** *views a large multi-coloured bruise on his leg.)*

TOM. That's a nasty old bruise. What give you that?

(Suddenly there are agitated scratching noises from the door to **TOM***'s bedroom. Then barking)*

*(***WILLIAM***, getting off the chair, reacts alarmed.)*

TOM. *(letting him in)* In yer come, Sammy. Say 'ello.

(A small black-and-white collie scampers in and eagerly bounds towards **WILLIAM***, who, terrified, gets back on the chair.)*

WILLIAM. You go away!

*(***SAMMY** *jumps up.* **WILLIAM** *grabs* **TOM***'s walking stick and brandishes it.)*

Get off! I'll kill you!

TOM. *(approaching with urgency)* I wouldn't do that. Sammy, down.

*(***SAMMY** *retreats a little.* **TOM** *takes the stick from* **WILLIAM** *and replaces it.)*

(To **WILLIAM***)* 'E won't harm you. Spry ole thing, but soft as butter, ent you, Sammy? *(To* **WILLIAM***)* Come down. 'E's very friendly. Come on.

*(***WILLIAM** *gingerly gets off the chair, as* **TOM** *holds* **SAMMY**.*)*

Hold yer hand out, palm up, like that.

*(***WILLIAM** *does so.)*

That's so he knows you ent going to harm him, see.

*(***SAMMY** *sniffs the hand and licks it.* **WILLIAM** *takes it away.)*

That's it. Now tickle his chest. *(He demonstrates.)*

*(***WILLIAM** *carefully does it.)*

That's the idea! Ooh, he says, I likes that. And I likes you.

*(***WILLIAM** *relaxes a little.* **SAMMY** *suddenly starts burying his nose in* **WILLIAM***'s crotch.)*

WILLIAM. *(squirming)* Stop it! Naughty dog!

*(***SAMMY** *starts barking.)*

TOM. *(with a smile)* You're gettin' over-excited, Sam!

(He pulls him off.)

Outside!

(He opens the door.)

Exercise!

*(***SAMMY** *dashes out, barking happily.* **TOM** *pulls the door to, but doesn't close it.)*

(To **WILLIAM***)* You'll get used to 'im.

(He returns to the range to finish preparing the food. **WILLIAM** *stands nervously.)*

Right, back you come, boy. Eat this up.

*(***WILLIAM** *starts back, as* **TOM** *brings bacon and bread to the table.)*

Don't forget the chair.

*(***WILLIAM** *returns for the chair. He brings it to the table, sits and starts to eat, with difficulty.* **TOM** *fetches a mug of tea and a sugar bowl.)*

You can put yer own sugar in.

*(***WILLIAM** *carefully takes a spoonful and stirs. He is still chewing hard.)*

(Picking up the carrier bag) What you got in 'ere, then?

WILLIAM. I dunno. Mum said I weren't to look in.

(He sips his tea, but the sound of **SAMMY** *barking nearly makes him spill it.)*

VOICE OFF. Mr Oakley!

(More barking. Enter **CHARLIE RUDDLES**, *the* **A.R.P. WARDEN**, *with* **SAMMY** *at his heels.)*

TOM. What the…

CHARLIE. Pipe down, Sammy, it's me, Charlie. Friend not foe!

*(***TOM** *goes to the door, as* **CHARLIE** *pops his head round.)*

Mr Oakley! Your front door was open. There was a definite chink of light! And now there's definitely more than a chink.

(He comes inside and closes the door.)

TOM. Keep your tin hat on, Charlie.

CHARLIE. It's not a time for feeble jokes, Mr Oakley. War is about to be declared and…

TOM. Don't I know it? Got me an evacuee to prove it.

(He indicates **WILLIAM**.*)*

CHARLIE. Oh. *(Seeing* **WILLIAM***)* How do. Don't reckon as how you's hit the jackpot, staying with this miserable old beggar!

TOM. William, this is Charlie Ruddles. He thinks he's goin' to win the war, single-'anded.

CHARLIE. I won't if you don't keep your flamin' door shut.

TOM. All right, all right. I'se put me blackouts up!

CHARLIE. Mark my words, William, them German bombers are like moths to the flame. One chink of light and BOOM! WAORRGGHH! BOOM!

(Dramatically waving his hands, **CHARLIE** *exits.* **SAMMY** *barks.)*

TOM. *(opening the door)* Better come in, Sammy.

*(***SAMMY** *comes back in.* **TOM** *leaves the door open a little.)*

*(***SAMMY** *settles down by the range.* **WILLIAM** *sits but doesn't eat.)*

TOM. Charlie's right, really. I just enjoys winding 'im up.

CHARLIE. *(off)* Shut it!

*(***TOM** *raises his eyebrows and shuts the door.)*

TOM. Ent you 'ungry?

WILLIAM. *(in a whisper)* Yes, mister.

TOM. Just a slow chewer, that it?

*(***WILLIAM** *nods.)*

Best finish your tea afore it gits cold.

*(***TOM** *returns to the carrier bag as* **WILLIAM** *sips his tea.)*

*(***TOM** *brings out a small towel. Inside it he finds a toothbrush and a piece of soap. Next he finds an old book.)*

WILLIAM. That's me Bible.

TOM. Ah.

(He finds a letter.)

(Reading the envelope) 'To whom it may concern.' S'pose it's from your mum and dad.

WILLIAM. Ain't got a dad, mister.

TOM. Ah.

(He opens the letter. **WILLIAM** *watches warily as he reads it.)*

(Frowning at what he reads) Tshh.

(He reaches in the bag and brings out a brown leather belt with a steel buckle. Seeing it, **WILLIAM***, terrrified, leaps up and hides under the table.* **SAMMY** *wakes.)*

TOM. *(angry)* Come out!

*(***WILLIAM***, shaking, stays where he is.)*

Out!

(Slowly **WILLIAM** *emerges, hands trying to shield his body.)*

(Voice choking) While you're in my house you'll live by my rules. I ent ever hit a child and if I ever do it'll be with the skin of me hand. You got that?

*(***WILLIAM** *nods.)*

So we can forget this.

(He replaces the belt in the bag.)

(Suddenly **WILLIAM** *retches, turns and is sick into his hands.* **TOM** *reacts silently and swiftly, mopping him up with a tea towel. He brushes off* **SAMMY**, *who tries to sniff the sick.)*

Best get some sleep.

(He puts **WILLIAM***'s bag in a drawer, from which he brings out a nightshirt and a pair of thick socks.)*

This'll do you for now. Come on. You ent afraid of heights are yer?

*(***WILLIAM** *doesn't move.)*

(Taking bacon from **WILLIAM***'s plate)* Bit of bacon, Sammy? Extra rations tonight.

(He takes an oil lamp. **SAMMY** *eats eagerly.* **WILLIAM**, *uncertain, follows as the lighting dims.)*

(Music as the scene changes to the attic bedroom. Dimly lit.)

*(***TOM** *leads the way from the top of the ladder stairs.)*

Up you come!

*(***SAMMY** *scrabbles.)*

Not you, yer daft dog. You! Watch out fer cobwebs. Dusty. *(To himself)* Never come up.

*(***WILLIAM** *arrives, nervous.* **SAMMY** *follows and settles, watching.)*

(A bed, a chair, and a dusty easel, canvases and artist's materials.)

Now then. Chair for clothes.

*(***WILLIAM** *nods.)*

Shoes and socks off. Sit if yer like. Then put these on. *(He hands him the woolly socks.)* Chilly in bare feet.

*(***WILLIAM** *nods. He sits and takes his shoes and socks off as* **TOM** *unfolds the nightshirt.)*

(Showing **WILLIAM** *a chamber-pot)* This is so's you don't have to go outside to go to the toilet. Right?

*(***WILLIAM** *looks across the room as he puts on the woolly socks.)*

WILLIAM. What's all that, mister?

TOM. Oh, jest things for paintin' pictures and such.

WILLIAM. You paint pictures?

TOM. *(sadly)* No, William. Not me. *(Forcing himself to be bright)* Do you?

WILLIAM. No. I done drawin'.

TOM. Stand up. Jersey off.

*(***WILLIAM** *hesitates.* **TOM** *puts down the nightshirt and helps* **WILLIAM** *take off his jersey.* **WILLIAM** *gasps in pain as his grubby vest is revealed, along with his bruised and sore arms and shoulders.)*

Sorry.

(Gently, **TOM** *helps* **WILLIAM** *put the nightshirt over his head. It falls to* **WILLIAM***'s ankles.)*

That'll do. There's your bed.

*(***WILLIAM** *crawls under it and curls up like a ball.)*

What you doin'? You gets into it, not under it.

WILLIAM. *(emerging)* Wot, right inside?

TOM. *(pulling the bedclothes a little)* Of course.

WILLIAM. *(climbing in)* Bed's for dead people, ain't it?

*(***TOM** *is bemused.)*

Layin' em out.

TOM. Sleep well, boy.

WILLIAM. *(sitting up)* What about me Bible, mister?

TOM. What about it?

WILLIAM. Mum reads it me.

TOM. Does she now?

WILLIAM. *(ruefully)* Every night.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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