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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

MICHAEL MORPURGO'S

THE SLEEPING SWORD

Adapted by Tatty Hennessy

SAMUEL FRENCH

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CAST

KIRSTY FERRIGGI | VIV
Kirsty is a visually impaired actress and recent graduate of Drama Studio London. *The Sleeping Sword* marks Kirsty's professional debut. Theatre credits while training include: *The Illusion of Time*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Tartuffe*, *Enemy of the People*, *The One* and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*.

AARIAN MEHRABANI | BUN
Aarian graduated from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 2020.
Theatre credits include: *Guy: A New Musical* (UK Tour); *BRINK* and *Nothing* (Royal Exchange Theatre).
Aarian also works as a deviser and facilitator, as well as writing and performing his own music under the name 'Aarian'. His debut single *Five Yard Line* was released on all streaming services in May 2022. In 2021 he co-founded the award-winning theatre company FlawBored who are currently developing their debut show.

TIKA MU'TAMIR | ANNA
Tika is a graduate from East 15 Acting School and Middlesex University and performs between the UK and Malaysia.
Theatre credits include: *The Tempest* (The Handlebards UK Tour); *Me & My Bee* (National Theatre: River Stage) and a range of Shakespeare plays travelling to theatres and schools across South East Asia.
Tika predominantly and passionately involves herself in educational and community theatre – her skills and true joy lie in movement, devising and heart-led projects.

DANIEL RYAN | AUDIOBOOK NARRATOR
Daniel is a stage and screen actor, recognisable from his roles on some of the nation's best loved TV shows, such as Detective Inspector Tony Manning on ITV's *The Bay* and Dan Johnson on Sky's *Mount Pleasant*.
Theatre credits include: *Middle* and *Gethsemane* (National Theatre); *The Mouse and His Child* (RSC); *Inadmissible Evidence* (Donmar Warehouse); *Posh* (Royal Court Theatre); *The House They Grew Up In* (Chichester Festival) and *Glengarry Glen Ross* (West End).
TV credits include: *Crossfire*, *Four Lives*, *Just William* and *Death in Paradise* (BBC); *Litvinenko*, *Innocent*, *Vera*, *Doc Martin* and *Home Fires* (ITV) and *Cold Call* (Channel 5).
Film credits include: *The Government Inspector* (Channel 4); *Pirates of the Caribbean: Stranger Tides* (Walt Disney Pictures) and *Black Sea* (Universal Pictures).

CREATIVE TEAM

MICHAEL MORPURGO OBE | AUTHOR
Michael Morpurgo OBE is one of Britain's best loved writers for children, with sales of over 35 million copies. He has written over 150 books, has served as Children's Laureate and has won many prizes, including the Smarties Prize, the Writers Guild Award, the Whitbread Award, the Blue Peter Book Award and the Eleanor Farjeon Lifetime Achievement Award. With his wife, Clare, he is the co-founder of Farms for City Children. Michael was knighted in 2018 for services to literature and charity.

TATTY HENNESSY | PLAYWRIGHT
Tatty is a playwright, screenwriter and graduate of the Royal Court Playwrighting course and the Channel 4 Screenwriting Programme. Her play *A Hundred Words for Snow* was nominated for four Off West End Awards, has been translated into several languages and performed around the world. Other work includes: *Animal Farm* and *F Off* (National Youth Theatre); *Something Awful* (Vault Festival) and *a great big wooly mammoth thawing from the ice* (Burning Coal, North Carolina). She is a recipient of the Writers Guild of Great Britain New Play Commission scheme.

LUCY JANE ATKINSON | DIRECTOR
Lucy Jane Atkinson is an award-winning director of new writing. A graduate of LAMDA's Post Graduate Director's course and a member of the National Theatre's Directors course 2021. Her work focusses on new writing, and in 2018 she was named as number 1 on The Stage's Top Talents To Watch, which stated "her direction is acutely sensitive to the shifting energy of the writing. Evident but never overbearing."
Selected credits include: *Barriers* (National Theatre); *Girls & Boys* (Here For Now, Ontario); *A Great Big Wooly Mammoth Thawing From The Ice* and *I And You* (Burning Coal, North Carolina); *Testament* (Via Brooklyn, New York, Winner: BroadwayWorld Best Director 2022); *The Snow Queen* (Brighton Open Air Theatre); *Meat* (Theatre503); *Anguis*, *Phoenix*, *Joshua (& Me)* (Edinburgh Fringe); *A Hundred Words For Snow* (Trafalgar Studios, Winner: Offie Best Actress. Nominated: Offie Best Director, Best New Play); *Something Awful*, *Vespertilio*, *A Hundred Words For Snow*, *Cause*, *Secondbests* and *Testament* (VAULT Festival); *Oil And Matter* (Bunker Theatre) and *The Enchantment* (HERE Arts Centre, New York).
As Staff Director: *Middle* (National Theatre)

AMY BETHAN EVANS | DRAMATURG AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED CREATIVE CONSULTANT

Amy is a playwright, dramaturg and disability activist, originally from Bristol, where she instigated the new writing platforms at the Bierkeller. She has lived in London for five years, where her work includes: *Libby's Eyes* (Bunker Theatre) and *Tinted* (Edinburgh Fringe) which was shortlisted for the Birds-Of-Paradise Excellence in Theatre Award. Amy has mentored and facilitated workshops with Theatre 503 and Extant and is an alumnus of Graeae Write to Play, Soho Writers' Lab, English Touring Theatre's Nationwide Voices and BBC Writers' Access Room. She is currently on commission to the Royal Court and Bristol Old Vic, and on attachment at the National Theatre.

LOUISE WORRALL | DESIGN CONSULTANT

Louise Worrall is a performance designer based in Leyton, East London. Through collaboration with a myriad of artists and communities, Louise intends to create work that is relevant, thought-provoking and exciting. She is particularly interested in inclusive work that is both accessible for diverse audiences and for theatre-makers. Louise is excited by the prospect of enabling people who may not usually engage with performance projects and creating multi-sensory, memorable experiences that have a lasting legacy. Louise has a degree in Fine Art from Glasgow School of Art and an MA in Performance Design from Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.
Credits include: Lead Designer for *Abundance* (an outdoor play space in Birmingham); Set & Costume Designer for *Anansi's Big Big Adventure* (Bristol Old Vic) and Design Assistant for Coventry City of Culture's Opening Event.

ALEX MUSGRAVE | LIGHTING DESIGNER

Alex was the recipient of the Association of Lighting Designers Lumiere Scheme and has been nominated for an Off West End Award for Best Lighting Design (*You Are Here*, Southwark Playhouse).
Design credits include: *Home* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Tasting Notes*, *Anyone Can Whistle*, *You Are Here* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Southwark Playhouse); *Company* and *Oppenheimer* (Mountview); *13* and *Days of Significance* (ArtsEd); *Widows*, *Sweet Smell of Success* and *Bells are Ringing* (Guildford School of Acting).
Upcoming design credits include: *The Chronicles of Atom and Luna* (National Tour), *Tales of Acorn Wood* (National Tour) and *Alice in Wonderland* (Mountview).

XAVIER VELASTIN | SOUND DESIGNER

Xavier is a sound designer, composer and audio technologist who collaborates with theatres to develop innovative approaches to using sound onstage. His work ranges from immersive soundscapes to complex musical scores to precisely designed sound effects. Xavier also develops and produces his own performance work (usually about whales, for some reason) in close collaboration with other designers, performers and writers.

Offstage, Xavier has created sound installations, scored short films and designed sound for video games. In 2022, Xavier is co-delivering *Organism*, a project funded by Arts Council England, bringing together multidisciplinary artists in an online space to create a digital exhibition. Xavier's work has been presented at many established arts organisations such as the Barbican Centre, the Southbank Centre, The Place, the Royal Exchange Theatre, Leeds Playhouse, Cambridge Arts Centre, VAULT Festival and Homotopia Liverpool. He is a permanent resident of the Pervasive Media Studio in Watershed, Bristol.

DOUGLAS BAKER | CREATIVE CAPTIONS DESIGNER

Douglas is a disabled, multi-award nominated, interdisciplinary theatre director. He blends live performance with video and interactive animation under the name So It Goes. Douglas also works as a video and creative captions designer.

Credits include: *The Prince* by Abigail Thorn (Southwark Playhouse); *The Woman Who Amuses Herself*, *Holst: The Music in the Spheres* and *Ten Days in a Madhouse* (Jack Studio Theatre); *Faust* (Lazarus Theatre and Southwark Playhouse); *Moby Dick* (Jack Studio Theatre); *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Richard III* (Pendley Shakespeare Festival); *Castles Palaces Castles* (Prague Quadrennial) and *Dante's Divine Comedy* (Barons Court Theatre).

SAMUEL BREWER | AUDIO DESCRIPTION CONSULTANT

Samuel is an actor and theatre-maker who graduated from BA Acting CDT at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 2020. He is co-founder of FlawBored theatre company, winners of the Les Enfants Terribles x Greenwich Theatre Award for their upcoming debut show. As an actor and theatre-maker, he has worked with numerous companies including the Barbican, Asylum Arts, Complicité and The Watermill Theatre.

He is also an ambassador for the Disability Artist Network Collective. He runs workshops focusing on access tools in the rehearsal room – skill-building with practitioners to make their methodologies more accessible. These workshops are designed to be active, engaging and cheeky. Samuel describes the way he works as "take the work seriously, don't take yourself seriously."

THE SLEEPING SWORD was first produced at The Watermill Theatre between Thursday 27 October and Saturday 5 November 2022 The cast was as follows:

BUN ..... Aarian Mehrabani
ANNA..... Tika Mu'tamir
VIV ..... Kirsty Ferriggi
AUDIOBOOK NARRATOR ..... Daniel Ryan

PLAYWRIGHT ..... Tatty Hennessy
DIRECTOR ..... Lucy Jane Atkinson
DRAMATURG AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED CREATIVE CONSULTANT...
..... Amy Bethan Evans
DESIGN CONSULTANT ..... Louise Worrall
LIGHTING DESIGNER ..... Alex Musgrave
SOUND DESIGNER ..... Xavier Velastin
CREATIVE CAPTIONS DESIGNER..... Douglas Baker
AUDIO DESCRIPTION CONSULTANT ..... Samuel Brewer

PRODUCER ..... Lucy Rahim
TOUR PRODUCTION MANAGERS .....
..... Matt Britton and Alice Reddick
COMPANY STAGE MANAGER..... Emily Stedman
WATERMILL STAGE MANAGER ..... Cat Pewsey
HEAD OF WARDROBE ..... Emily Barratt
THEATRE TECHNICIANS ..... Thom Townsend, Chris Parker
DEPUTY STAGE MANGER ..... Caitlin Ravenscroft
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER ..... Amelia Costello
ACCESS SUPPORT WORKER..... Chloe Palmer
REHEARSAL AND PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHER.... Mark Senior

With thanks to:
Tracy Fletcher at Mary Hare School, Newbury, the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), Chaddleworth St Andrew's & Shefford CE Federated Primary Schools and Mark Bothwick at Bryher Sound Recording Workshop.

CHARACTERS

VIV
BUN
ANNA
LUKE
DAD
MRS PARSONS
SIR BEDEVERE
KING ARTHUR
MORGANA LE FEY
HIPPY DUDE

NOTES ON THE PLAY

The audio description for The Watermill production is integrated into this script. If you need to make adjustments to the text so that it better describes your production, please go ahead.

NOTES ON CHARACTERS

These are to be split between a cast of three, including at least two visually impaired actors.
You cannot perform this play with sighted actors pretending to be visually impaired.

In The Watermill production, lines in this text were amended to give Mrs Parsons and Bun visual impairments that more closely reflected those of the actors playing them. Future productions are warmly welcomed to do the same.

NOTES ON SOUND EFFECTS

In The Watermill Theatre's production, the characters use a wide range of objects to make sounds in front of a microphone, creating some of the environments and sound effects live. Here are some of the sounds they discovered:

• Gusts of wind: An old leather jacket held out in front and then flapped around in an irregular fashion.
• Boat flagpoles gently knocking against each other as they move on the water: Two short aluminium poles lightly touching each other and ringing out.
• Water sloshing around a wooden dock: Two plastic bottles without their lids being moved around in a tub of water.
• Waves crashing onto rocks: One person emptying a small bucket of water into a tub of water (creating the wave crash), with another person moving pebbles in a wave motion to create the sound of the water receding over rocks or a pebble beach.
• Boat ropes stretching on a harbour: a leather belt twisted around a few times then squeezed and released.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

This play was over two years in the making, and could not exist at all without the sensitive, playful and generous work of an awful lot of people.

I am utterly indebted to the careful and rigorous dramaturgy of Amy Bethan Evans, whose knowledge of Arthurian legend and willingness to cancel me were both invaluable. Not only is the play a better play, but I think I'm a better artist for our time together.

This script was made what it is through a research and development process involving Samuel Brewer, Ben Wilson, Georgie Morrell and Tika Mu'tamir; you couldn't ask for a better round table. Much of what was said is unrepeatable; but all of it was illuminating. Their fingerprints are all over this play, and it is better, richer, more nuanced, stranger, sadder, funnier and more truthful because of them. It was a galvanising week, inspiring us to dream bigger about the ways access and collaboration could influence the form of the story, and the process of staging it. We wanted the creation of this show to enact the principals of the show. I hope we've succeeded.

I'm deeply grateful to The Watermill Theatre, firstly for entrusting me with this commission and continuing to support its development throughout the pandemic. Walking around Victoria Park with a cassette player, listening to Morpurgo read to me about King Arthur, kept me a particular sort of sane in a difficult time. Secondly, I am grateful to them for their spirit and openness, for throwing themselves behind the way we wanted to work and what we wanted to achieve, especially when that was difficult. I am so glad this was the sword's first home.

Our premiere cast, Tika Mu'tamir, Aarian Mehrabani and Kirsty Ferriggi, were smart, irreverent, playful brave magicians. It's a privilege to have my words brought to life with their skills. We auditioned a wide range of utterly wonderful people for this production, it felt criminal we could only cast three of them, so I would also like to thank everyone who gave their time and put themselves through a dreaded Zoom audition to meet with us.

We were brilliantly lucky to have Xavier Velastin and his big yellow suitcase of foley tricks to bring the sound world of this play alive. He's a bit of a mad genius. Louise Worrall created a set in which every element had to do about three things at a time, while fitting in a van to be reassembled in a school hall. Thanks as well to Samuel Brewer and Douglas Baker who innovatively and creatively supported our ambition to make every single performance of this show an accessible performance through integrated audio description and creative captioning.

For a brave and careful custodian of the text, you can't do much better than my long-suffering collaborator, director Lucy Jane Atkinson. So far, I've forced her to figure out how to fly a helicopter, skin a deer and capsize a fishing boat, and those are only the onstage ways that I've made her life difficult. I am, as always, grateful to entrust her with my words.

I'd also love to thank Michael Morpurgo for his extraordinary generosity with his story. *The Sleeping Sword* is, among other things, about the power of stories to show us new ways of living, to make us feel brave, to rethink what we thought we knew and empower us to make our lives bigger. Bun tells a story to change his world. You couldn't ask for much better inspiration than that.

Tatty Hennessy

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I grew up obsessed with Michael Morpurgo. I would read and re-read my copies of *The Ghost of Grania O'Malley*, *The King In The Forest* and *The Wreck of the Zanzibar* until the pages fell out. I loved his sense of adventure and the kindness, bravery and ingenuity of his characters, but most of all, I loved the fact that his stories don't talk down to the reader. Morpurgo treats children as fully formed people with complex, difficult, confusing and exciting lives of their own. I also love how storytelling is such an important part of his characters' lives, how they use stories to understand and process their experiences and make their worlds better.

In developing this adaptation, our mission was to stay true to that spirit. To treat our audiences with respect as we lead them through the highs and lows of Bun's story, as he learns to live with and embrace his blindness. During our workshops last year, and in rehearsal, our cast and company have been incredibly generous in sharing their own experiences of blindness and visual impairment. In doing so they have provided us with valuable insight into a wide variety of visually impaired experiences. This has allowed us to create a show which feels at once faithful to Morpurgo's original novel while also reflecting contemporary conversations around blindness and visual impairment, which have changed a lot since the novel's original publication.

As a director, so much of your job is visual; you tell stories through pictures, tableau and blocking. The most challenging and exciting aspect of directing this piece has been thinking about staging a play in which sight is not the most important thing. Like the characters in the play, we've had to figure out new methods of storytelling. I've been lucky enough to work with an incredibly talented, playful and curious group of cast and creatives willing to think outside the box and find innovative, imaginative ways to make a show that is equally exciting whether you can see it or not.

My hope is that this show inspires a new generation of theatre-makers to think about integrated access not as a burden or a problem to overcome, but as an opportunity for theatrical innovation. Storytelling is an inherent part of being human, and theatre is the oldest medium we have for telling stories. It is our responsibility as theatre-makers to find ways to make sure the stories we tell are as accessible as possible to anyone who wants to hear them.

Lucy Jane Atkinson

THE WATERMILL THEATRE

'A tiny Berkshire village producing world-class theatre' – *BBC South*

There has always been a water mill in Bagnor. Its existence was first recorded in the Doomsday Book. Over time, it has served as a corn mill, paper mill and fuller mill – if you come to the theatre, you can still see the original wheel!

In the early 1960s, the mill was bought by David and Judy Gollins, originally intending that it would become a cathedral, before David changed his mind and turned it into the beautiful intimate theatre we have today (though the seats did come from Winchester Cathedral).

The Watermill's first professional season opened in 1967, with local actors performing two plays in the summer. Since then, it has produced award-winning work that has been recognised throughout the UK and abroad. We are a regional powerhouse, consistently making an innovative contribution to the vibrant and diverse landscape of UK theatre, reaching far beyond our auditorium's 220 seats.

The very best artists and creative teams – both established and in the early stages of their careers – are our lifeblood, earning The Watermill a reputation as one of the best producing theatres in the country. We continually aim to present a programme of inspiring and thought-provoking live performances and outreach opportunities that have lasting impact. Our artistic ambition is clear in our range of work, from new writing and musicals to Shakespeare and classic plays. Our pioneering approach has made us renowned for our actor-musician productions, which bring new dimensions to well-known titles and new writing: The Watermill's actor-musician production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Whistle Down the Wind* in 2022 was nominated for the UK Theatre Best Musical award, and our 2019 production of *Amélie* embarked on a UK tour before taking up West End residence at The Other Palace and picking up nominations for three Olivier awards and a GRAMMY.

Alongside our shows on The Watermill stage, we enjoy touring work around the country to a wide range of communities. We have secured numerous West End and national transfers, as well as touring internationally to places such as Nepal, New York, Bombay and Barbados. As part of our commitment to the community, every year we take a show to local villages, providing access to professional theatre in rural areas. We also visit schools, taking scaled-down, vibrant new adaptations of classic texts — like *The Sleeping Sword* — into classrooms to support students'

learning. We believe that everyone deserves access to a rich education and the chance to participate in top-quality theatre, and we work with around 19,000 people every year at The Watermill and in the wider community.

We would love to welcome you to The Watermill soon! For more information about our upcoming productions, please visit our website or social media pages: watermill.org.uk

"What a location! Forget the glitz of the West End: try walking up a country lane, past waddling ducks, to this lovely little theatre in a converted mill." – *The Mail on Sunday*

Artistic Director: Paul Hart
Executive Director: Claire Murray

PROLOGUE

(We hear the overblown, exciting music of a 90s audiobook. Trumpets, drums, the works. Sound effects of a baying crowd, the sound of metal on stone etc...)

AUDIOBOOK. "Whosoever pulls this sword from the stone is the rightful King of Britain!" The Kingdom of Britain was in darkness. War and famine ravaged the land, families divided. The people were desperate for a leader to guide them, but nobody could decide who that leader should be.

And so they turned to the great wise wizard Merlin for aid, and Merlin devised a test. He summoned all the knights and squires of the realm to the great castle courtyard, and there he took a shining sword and plunged the blade deep into a great rock.

"Whosoever pulls this sword from the stone is the rightful King of Britain!" he declared.

BUN. This is my favourite book of all time. *The Legend of King Arthur*.

AUDIOBOOK. A great crowd gathered. Every man wanted to be the chosen one, the man destined for power.

BUN. Some of you might know the story already? About the sword in the stone? Yeah? It's pretty famous. Merlin's set this test, yeah, to see who should be king of England. Pull the sword out of the stone and boom. Crown, sceptre, castle. Done. And all these massive knights line up and try it...

AUDIOBOOK. One by one the men approached and gripped the golden hilt. One by one they heaved, but not a single one could move the sword an inch.

BUN. But then.

AUDIOBOOK. A boy stepped forward.

BUN. This kid steps up.

AUDIOBOOK. He was small and slight, still a child. A stable boy, no more. The crowd laughed.

BUN. They all laugh at him.

AUDIOBOOK. "Look at that welp! Him, King of England!"

BUN. But Merlin shuts them up.

AUDIOBOOK. "Let him try." Merlin said.

BUN. So he does.

AUDIOBOOK. The boy approached the sword. He reached out his hand.

AUDIOBOOK & BUN. The hilt fit his fingers as if it had been built for him.

BUN. I like that bit.

AUDIOBOOK. A hush fell.

BUN. Sssh.

AUDIOBOOK. And he pulled. The sword slipped through the rock easily, as if the stone were butter. He turned and brandished the blade above his head.

BUN. He's done it!

AUDIOBOOK. A gasp echoed across the courtyard. Merlin spoke;

"This boy before you is Arthur Pendragon, the rightful King of Britain. Destined for greatness. He is your one true king!"

(The crowd roars. **BUN** *makes crowd noises.)*

BUN. All hail King Arthur! Oh, uh, Hi. I'm Ben, by the way. Ben Bundle. But everyone calls me Bun, for short. I'm… *(The actor playing* **BUN** *describes themselves.)* And I'm blind. And right now you're here with me, in my bedroom *(The actor playing* **BUN** *describes the set for us.)* We're listening to my favourite book and also the absolute number one best book of all time, *The Legend of King Arthur*.

AUDIOBOOK. And so Arthur was crowned King, and went with all his knights to Camelot, to rule over the Kingdom of Britain and bring her back to glory.

BUN. And that's just like, Chapter *One*. There's so much stuff that happens. Battles and dragons and magic. Arthur lives in this huge castle called Camelot with all his mates who are knights, right, like Lancelot, and Bedevere, and they go on adventures and quests. And he's best mates with an actual *wizard* called Merlin and Merlin is super powerful and he can fly and shapeshift and see the future. Oh OK there's this one bit, right, where a guy's head gets chopped off and he just picks it up and carries it away under his arm like it's a football. And there's another bit where a guy makes a coat out of people's faces. And there's another bit where a guy stabs a dragon-man right in the mouth like – aaaaghgghh!!

*(***BUN** *stabs a dragon-man right in the mouth.)*

But mostly it's about Arthur, becoming king, fulfilling his destiny. It's mint. I used to read the book so much the pages were falling out. Then when I had my accident and lost my sight my friend Anna got me an audiobook of it, and a tape player. Here –

*(***BUN** *shows us the tape player, describes it to us, and talks us through the noises it can make. Oooo.)*

We looked everywhere for a download but it's such an old book they didn't have it, we could only find it on this weird old thing called a *cassette.* Here, listen

*(***BUN** *holds up the tape and presses play and we hear, through its tinny speakers a version of the music we just heard.)*

It's pretty ancient *but* it's great, I can listen to *The Legend of King Arthur,* every day whenever I like. And that got me thinking. Maybe I could even record my *own* tape. My own legend, about everything that happened to me. The Legend of Ben Bundle. So yeah. That's what we're here to do, right now.

*(***ANNA** *coughs.)*

Oh, right. I'm not doing it alone. My friends Anna and Viv are here helping me.

ANNA. Alright? This is Anna.

VIV. And hello! I'm Viv.

BUN. We're gonna make the number two absolute best audiobook of all time, it's gonna have fights and magic and music and sound effects and everything. Anna and Viv are gonna play themselves, and the other characters, and help me make the sounds. This is Anna

ANNA. Hi, I'm Anna, I'm Bun's friend, I'm much cooler than him.

BUN. Hey, do it properly.

ANNA. I am!

BUN. Like we / practised it.

ANNA. Fine OK, hi, I'm Anna, I'm eleven, *(***ANNA** *describes herself.)*

BUN. Say who you're / being

ANNA. What?

BUN. Say who you're being in the play.

ANNA. I'm being myself, Anna.

BUN. Great, OK, and this is Viv.

VIV. Hello, I'm Viv. *(***VIV** *describes herself.)* I'm visually impaired. I'm going to be performing myself and, well, everybody else. Shall I say who?

BUN. Let's tell them as we go, no spoilers.

ANNA. Wait, she gets to play more characters than me?

BUN. Yes.

ANNA. That's unfair.

BUN. She's reliable.

ANNA. That's fair.

BUN. I've never made an audiobook before but I've listened to loads of them so how hard can it be? The best ones have sound effects, so we've got to have those. We've got some stuff here we're gonna use to make noises.

> *(***BUN**, **ANNA** *and* **VIV** *talk us through the set and props that make noises, and what noises they might make. Maybe there's a loop pedal and they explain that. Sometimes they enlist the audience, teaching us sounds that we'll be called upon to make later. It's super exciting. We're having a lot of fun.)*

VIV. I think we have everything we need, Bun. Shall we start?

BUN. Yeah. Yeah I guess we should. OK. This is my story. It's called *The Sleeping Sword*. It's about what happened to me. My accident, losing my sight, and everything that happened after.

It's about a boy.

ANNA. And a girl.

BUN. And a girl, and a sword, and an adventure at sea. It's about magic, mystery, hope, triumph and disaster. There's danger, despair and a happy ending. And it's all true. Well. Mostly.

So. Here we go. Are you ready?

ANNA. Absolutely.

VIV. Ready.

BUN. And you out there, are you ready?

(We're ready.)

OK, here goes. Quiet please. Recording in 3, 2, 1...

*(***BUN** *presses record.)*

The Sleeping Sword. Side One. Chapter 1. The Island.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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