The Original Script

Babes in the Wood

as presented at

The Pavilion, Worthing

Saturday 23rd February, 1957

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The Cast

 Friar Tuck Derek Bell	 Robin Hood Josephine Tedder	Main Marian Pamela Armitage
Smashem Tom Scott	Grabbem Jack Clffton	 Nursie Tony Stead
Will Scarlett Maureen Phipps		

The Script

B A B E S I N T H E W O O D

A Children's Pantomime by Jack Edwardes.

CHARACTERS

The Storyteller - An old man.
A young boy.
A young girl.

Robin Hood.
Maid Marion.
Uncle Silas.
Mary & John - his niece and nephew.
Sarah - the cook.
Smashem & Grabem - two wicked robbers.
Fairy.
Dancing Chorus of Robins.
Robin Hood's Men.

Old Man: Tell you a story - I don't know many stories, my dears.

Boy: Oh yes you do - ~~you've told us lots before and we like them so much.~~

Girl: Yes - please tell us one.

Boy: I know - what about "Babes in the Wood"?

Old Man: Alright. Now lean back against my knee and make yourself comfortable and I will tell you about the Babes in the Wood.

Many years ago there were two little children - a boy and a girl.

~~Girl: What were their names?~~

~~Old Man: Just a minute, my dear - I'm coming to that.....there was a boy and a girl~~ and their names were John and Mary. They lived with their Uncle Silas.

~~Boy: Why didn't they live with their mother and father?~~

~~Old Man: They hadn't got a mother or a father~~, the poor dears.

~~Girl:~~ Why?

Old Man: ~~Because when the children~~ were very young their mother and father were eaten by a wicked dragon; and if it hadn't been for a kind fairy that flew in at just the right moment the children would have been eaten as well.

Boy: Was it a jet-propelled fairy?

Old Man: Certainly not. Now the children were left a lot of money by their parents, but were not allowed to spend it until they became twenty-one years of age. Uncle Silas took the children to his Castle, and promised to look after them and their money. Alas, he was a very wicked uncle and didn't like children; but he liked their money, and after a year had nearly spent all on himself.

Girl: Oh, the wicked man.

Old Man: Yes, he was very wicked and he decided that the children couldn't live any longer, in case they found out that he had been spending their money.

Boy: What did he do?

Old Man: He asked two bad robbers to call on him.....

(Fade out and bring up on stage)

Silas: Ha, ha, ha! It won't be very long before my two robber friends, Smashem and Grabem, arrive and then we'll hatch a pretty plot. I hate those two children John and Mary, and I'm going to get all their money. He, he, he! And when I've got it I can marry Sarah the Cook, and if she doesn't cook nice cakes for me I'll bump her off as well. Ho, ho, ho! (Knock at door.) Who is it?

Robbers: (off) Smashem and Grabem.

Silas: Come in, my friends - come in. (Enter robbers.) My, my, you are a pretty pair.....indeed you make me feel quite proud of you....he! he!, he!....you will frighten the children alright. (To Smashem) And when did you wash your neck last, eh?

Smashem: Now let me see.....I think it was about twenty-seven years ago.

Grabem: Huh - you're too good. I haven't washed mine for forty years.

Silas: Ah, well - never mind. Now listen.....you know my little niece and nephew, Mary and John?

Robbers: Yis.

Silas: And you know the big wood over the hill?

Robbers: Yis, yis.

Silas: And you know how dark it gets if you go right inside?

Robbers: Yis, yis, yis.

Silas: Well, I.....

Robbers: Yis, yis, yis, yis.

Silas: Well, I want you to .....

Robbers: Yis, yis, yis, yis, yis, yis.

Silas: Stop 'Yissing' at me, will you?

Robbers: Yis.

Silas: (roars) What?

Robbers: Yis, we mean nos.

Silas: That's better. Well I want you to take those two little dears for a walk into the woods.

Smashem: Can we stop and pick flowers and have a picnic?

Silas: (roars) NO - of course you can't.

Smashem: Not one little flower?

Grabem: NO.

Smashem: Well, I won't go.

Silas: You must.

Smashem: I won't. (Stamps foot on Silas's toe. Silas roars with pain and frightens Grabem, who jumps up into Smashem's arms.)

Silas: Come here ..... now listen.

Smashem: (starting to cry) I won't go if I can't pick one little flower.

~~Smashem xxx Can~~

Silas: Alright - just one little flower.

Smashem: Can it be a violet?

Silas: (roars again) It can be any blinkin' flower you like as long as we get on with the plot.

Grabem: The plot?

Smashem: Yis, yis.

Silas: Don't you start that again. Now, after tea you will take the children out for a walk ..... right into the woods ...

Smashem: .... pick just one little flower .....

Silas: BE QUIET ..... then when you have got them into the woods - you know what to do?

Robbers: (drawing hands across their throats) We bump them off.

Silas: That's right - you just bump them off ..... and then when you get home I shall give you both a nice little present. He, he, he! (They exit saying "Bump 'em off," etc.)

(Fade out and bring up on narrator.)

Old Man: Well, the Wicked Uncle and the Robbers went off down to the Tavern to have a drink and talk about their plot. They also told Sarah the Cook what they had fixed and to get the children ready after tea for a nice summer's evening walk.

Girl: Didn't John and Mary know that their Uncle was so wicked?

Boy: Yes - and didn't the good fairy warn them of what was going to happen?

Old Man: Now, now, let me tell the story. ~~We can't have fairies rushing in and out all the time putting everything right - else there would be no story.~~ Well, now - the children had their tea and were just going out to play with their other young friends .....

(Fade out and bring up on stage)

John: Come on, Mary - let's go and play with our friends down at the pond.

Mary: Oh, yes. Can I sail your boat on the pond?

John: Well, I don't know.

Mary: Why not?

John: Well girls aren't sailors. You should sit and watch, and play with your dolls.

Mary: Oh, yes, we are good sailors. Bet I can sail your silly old boat better than you can.

John: Bet you can't.

Mary: Oh yes I can ..... (Enter Sarah the Cook.)

Sarah: Ah! there you are, my little dears. I was looking for you.

John: We were just going down to the pond to play, and Mary says she .....

Sarah: Never mind what Mary says. Get your hats and coats on - you are going for a walk.

Mary: We don't want to go for a walk, Cooky. We went for one this afternoon.

Sarah: Never mind. Another one won't do you any harm. Now just go and get your coats on.

John: Who's taking us for a walk, Cooky?

Sarah: Oh, just two old friends of your uncle's.

Mary: Not those two horrid men we saw down in the village?

Sarah: Don't keep on asking questions, child, go and get dressed. They are very nice gentlemen, and are interested in your health.

John: I bet they are, too. We don't want to go, Cooky.

Sarah: Don't argue with me, Master John. If you don't get along I'll give you dry bread for supper. Go along.

(Fade out and bring up on Narrator.)

Old Man: John and Mary got dressed and waited for their Uncle and his friends to come back from the village. When they arrived and the children saw the robbers they were terrified and said they didn't want to go for a walk with such horrid-looking men. Uncle Silas told them not to be so silly, and Sarah the Cook threatened to give them a good hiding if they didn't stop making such a fuss. In the end their uncle got so cross that they started to walk to the woods. Poor little children, they were very, very frightened, and the robbers had to drag them along by the hand. Mary got away once and started to run for home, but the robber caught her and dragged her back.

Girl: Poor Mary.

Old Man: Yes. Well, just as they got near to the woods a very nice girl, whose name was Maid Marion, met them as she came down the woodland path. She was a very great friend of John and Mary and went up to the wicked robbers and told them to let the children free, ~~and asked them what they thought they were doing~~.

Boy: (excitedly) Did they let them go?

Old Man: No, I'm afraid they didn't. The robbers told Maid Marion a wicked story, saying that the children had been naughty and stopped in bed all day. Their uncle was so cross that they had not been out in the fresh air that he had asked the robbers to take them for a nice walk, and said that they would not have any supper as a punishment.

Girl: Oh! but surely she didn't believe them?

Old Man: Oh, no; but she couldn't fight such,big, wicked men herself, and then she had an idea and ran off as fast as she could.

Boy: What was the idea?

Old Man: Now you must wait a minute. In the meantime the robbers had got right into the thick, dark part of the wood.

(Fade out and bring up on stage.)

Grabem: Come on you little brats.

Mary: Oh, I can't. I'm tired and I want to go home.

Smashem: You can't go home....

Grabem: Shut up, you fool.

Mary: Why can't I go home .... I'm tired and we've walked far too much.

Grabem: Quiet. I think this spot will do, Smashem?

Smashem: Yes, we can have a nice picnic here and I must just pick one little flower.

Grabem: This is no picnic, and you can't pick your cursed flower. Now to business. (They throw John and Mary to the ground.)

John: Oh, what are you going to do to us ....

Mary: John, John, they are going to kill us ....

Grabem: How did you guess, he! he! he!...

John: (putting arm round Mary) Oh no you won't, you cowards ... if only I had a sword I would kill you, you wicked robbers.

Mary: (sobbing) I think you're hateful and mean and dirty and cowards and everything horrid I can think of.

Smashem: Oh please don't say that. I'm not a bad sort of a robber..

Mary: Oh yes you are .....

Smashem: Honestly I'm not. As a matter of fact I'm quite a decent sort of robber.

John: Then why don't you rescue us and take us home?

Grabem: Stop. Stop. Smashem, don't be a fool. Get out your dagger and let's finish off the job. (Sharpens dagger on sole of boot.) Come on, get yours sharpened.

Smashem: (drawing dagger and looking at children) I can't do it. I don't want their uncle's filthy money.

Grabem: Well I do - and if necessary I shall kill you as well.

Smashem: Can't we just let them go and let the fairies help them?

Grabem: Fairies - bah! - come on (starts to creep towards the children)

(Smashem starts to cry.)

Grabem: Now what's the matter?

Smashem: (sobbing) I can't do it. I can't kill those poor little children. (Grabem is furious, and rushes forward and sticks his dagger in Smashem's bottom.) (Smashem screams) Oh! - how dare you.

Grabem: I'll do it again if you don't pull yourself together.

Smashem: (with dignity) I am together, and don't you dare take such liberties again.

Grabem: If you don't come along and help me I'll kill you first.

Smashem: Oh no you won't, and don't you dare touch those children.

Grabem: Ah! - so you're yellah. (Comedy fight and Grabem is killed.)

John & Mary: Oh look, Smashem's killed him.

John: Can you take us home now?

Smashem: No, I daren't.

Mary: Why not?

Smashem: Well your uncle would kill me. I'll tell you what I'll do - take Grabem away, and after I have gone - you run along home .....

(Fade out and up on narrator.)

Old Man: Smashem picked up Grabem and buried him in the woods. Smashem wasn't a bad sort of robber, but had mixed with all the wrong sort of friends when he was young. He lost all his money drinking and playing cards, and in the end turned into a robber. After he had gone John and Mary started to walk home through the woods. They were tired, it was getting dark, and after wandering around and around they lost their way. John was very brave and tried to cheer his sister. Presently .....

(Fade out and up on stage.)

Mary: Oh, John, I can't walk any more - my feet do ache so.

John: Poor Mary ... yes, my feet ache as well ... let's sit down and rest.

Mary: Do you think we shall ever get home? I feel so frightened.

John: Yes, we shall get home alright. Isn't this a horrid wood?

(Mary sobs and puts her head on John's shoulder.)

Never mind, Mary - it will be alright. Let's have a little sleep, and then when we feel better we can walk home. (They nestle down and go to sleep.)

(Enter Fairy)

Fairy: Sleep on, sweet babes,
And ere the morning light
You shall be saved. SO DREAM SWEET DREAMS TONIGHT
A magic spell I'll weave
To protect you from this night.
And robins shall cover you with leaves,
Guard and keep you safe
Till help shall come.
Sleep tight, sweet babes, -
Sleep tight.

(Enter robins who do a little dance and cover the children with leaves.)

(Fade out and up on narrator.)

Old Man: Well, the children slept ~~and no harm befell them. In the meantime~~, Maid Marion ~~had not gone home - instead she~~ went and found brave Robin Hood and told him what she had seen. Robin ~~Hood~~ was very angry - especially as the wicked Uncle Silas was an enemy of his. Robin Hood summoned his men and they all rushed down to the village, grabbed Uncle Silas, tied him to a tree and made him tell them the truth. ~~Uncle Silas gave way and told Robin Hood everything. Of course~~ Robin ~~Hood~~ was very cross and gave the wicked uncle a jolly good beating, then they all went off into the woods to find the children. They searched all night without finding them - and just as it was getting light .....

(Fade out and up on stage.)

R. Hood: I don't know what has happened to those poor children .... where can they be?

Marion: Oh dear, Robin Hood, we have searched the woods from end to end. I am sure we are too late, and the robbers have killed them.

(Enter Smashem, creeping backwards.)

R. Hood: Ho! varlet.

Smashem: (not turning round) What ho!

R. Hood: (spinning him round) This is one of the robbers. Tell me, where are the children? (puts his foot on his chest) Tell me - before I cut your ears off.

Smashem: Please, sir - I don't know ... I was looking for them myself.

R. Hood: Don't tell stories - where are the children?

Smashem: Honestly - I left them around here somewhere ....

Marion: Just a minute, Robin - those leaves moved ....

R. Hood: Oh - probably only a rabbit or something ... now then, my man ...

Marion: Robin - Robin - look .. (the children sit up and rub their eyes. Marion rushes to them) John - Mary - thank goodness you are safe.

John: Hullo, Maid Marion - and look, there's Robin Hood.

Robin: Hullo, young man - hullo, Mary.

Mary: Oh, thank you so much for finding us. We've had a lovely sleep.

Robin: Well, you must come along with us now. (to Smashem, who is still flat on the floor with his eyes closed) Hey, you - get up - we'll deal with you later.

Mary: Oh don't hurt him - he saved us, and killed the other robber.

Marion: Did he - oh, how nice of him. I say - get up.

Smashem: I can't.

Marion: Why not?

Smashem: I'm dead.

John: Don't be so silly. Robin Hood hasn't killed you.

Smashem: (sitting up) Oh dear - I was quite sure he had.

Robin: Come along .....

(Fade out and up on narrator.)

Boy: And then what happened?

Old Man: Well, they lived happily ever after. Robin Hood and Maid Marion were married, and they looked after John and Mary until they got older. Smashem joined Robin Hood's men and behaved himself - he had to, 'cause he married Sarah the Cook, and every time he was naughty she beat him with the frying pan. As for the wicked uncle, he became a beggar and had to tramp the roads, which just served him right for being wicked. Well, my dears, there you are - that's the story of the Babes in the Wood.

Girl: What a lovely story, too - thank you very much. Will you come and join in our party now?

BLACKOUT.

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