

cuts and trims a sapling to use as a stick and a sword and walks on to the woods. He sees a kestrel fly out from a crevice in the old monastery wall. He follows the progress of the bird as do all the PUPILS. BILLY starts to climb a wall. When he is a good way up a FARMER enters with his six-year-old DAUGHTER. They see BILLY.

FARMER. What are you doing?

BILLY. Nowt.

FARMER. Well bugger off then, don't you know this is private property?

BILLY. Can I get up to that kestrel's nest?

FARMER. What kestrel's nest?

BILLY. Up that wall.

FARMER. There's no nest up there so off you go.

BILLY. There is, I've seen it fly in and come out.

FARMER. And what are you going to do when you get up to it, take all its eggs?

BILLY. There's no eggs in it, they're young-uns.

FARMER. Well there's nowt to go up for then, is there?

BILLY. I just wanted to look, that's all.

FARMER. Yes, and you'll be looking from six feet under if you tried to climb up there.

BILLY. Has anybody ever been up that wall to look?

FARMER. Not that I know of. It's dangerous. That's why I won't let her play here. They've been going to pull it down for ages.

BILLY. I bet I could get up there.

FARMER. You're not going to have the chance though.

BILLY. I just want to look that's all. *(Pause.)* Can I have a look from t' bottom then? Go on, I've never found a kestrel's nest before. That's where it is look, in that hole in t' side of that window. I've been watching it from across in t' wood. You ought to have seen it, mister, it was smashing.

FARMER (*softening*). Come on, then.

BILLY *and the FARMER address the nest.*

BILLY. That's where it is.

FARMER. I know it is. It's nested here for donkey's years now.

BILLY. Just think, and I never knew.

FARMER. There's not many that does. I see her every day. She'll fly out and then always sit there on that post.

BILLY. Her?

FARMER. That kestrel's a she. Her young 'uns are in t' nest. She collects food for 'em.

BILLY. She's a beauty. I wish I could see her every day. If I lived here I'd get a young 'un and train it.

FARMER. Would you?

BILLY. You can train 'em, you know.

FARMER. And how would you go about that?

BILLY. Do you know?

FARMER. No. And there's not many that *does*. If they can't be kept properly it's criminal.

BILLY. Do you know anyone what's kept 'em?

FARMER. One or two but they've always let 'em go because they couldn't do owt with 'em. They *never* seemed to get tame like other birds.

BILLY. Where could I find out about 'em then?

FARMER. I don't know. Books I suppose. I should think there are books on falconry.

The LIBRARIAN enters. The desks of the classroom become the library tables. The PUPILS take out books and become the READERS in the library.

LIBRARIAN. Can I help you?

BILLY. Books on hawks?

LIBRARIAN. Hawks?

BILLY.

LIBRARIAN

FARMER

Libra

BILLY.

FARMER

Scene 6

Flashback

The Librarian

LIBRARIAN

BILLY.

LIBRARIAN

The Librarian's struggle

BILLY.

Peregrine

Lady

Priest

Knight

BILLY

LIBRARIAN

BILLY.

LIBRARIAN

BILLY

on f

LIBRARIAN

mer

BILLY

LIBRARIAN

BILLY. Where would I get one?

LIBRARIAN. Hawks?

FARMER. You could try Prior's Bookshop or there's the City Library.

BILLY. Yeah, I want a book on falconry.

FARMER. They've books on everything there.

Scene 6

Flashback. The Library. Afternoon

The Library is filled with avid READERS.

LIBRARIAN. I'm not really sure. You'd better try Ornithology.

BILLY. What's that?

LIBRARIAN. In the factual section under Zoology.

The LIBRARIAN points the way. BILLY finds the book and struggles to read.

BILLY. An Eagle for an Emperor, a Gryfalcon for a King; a Peregrine for a Prince, a Saker for a Knight, a Merlin for a Lady; a Goshawk for a Yeoman, a Sparrowhawk for a Priest, a Musket for a Holy-Water Clerk, a Kestrel for a Knave.

BILLY returns to the desk.

LIBRARIAN. Are you a member?

BILLY. What do you mean?

LIBRARIAN. Are you a member of the Library?

BILLY. I don't know about that. I just want to lend this book on falconry that's all.

LIBRARIAN. You can't *borrow* a book unless you're a member. You have to be a member to take a book out.

BILLY. I only want one.

LIBRARIAN. Have you ever filled out one of these forms?