

Scene 5**One Year Earlier. Nesting. Early Morning**

BILLY *is throwing stones at the window of MACDOWALL's house. A dog barks some way off.*

BILLY (*calling*). Mac. Mac.

MRS MACDOWALL *comes to the window and leans out. She pulls her dressing-gown tight against the cold.*

BILLY. Is he up?

MRS MACDOWALL. What the bloody hell do you want at this time of t' morning? It's before seven.

BILLY. Is your Mac up?

MRS MACDOWALL. Of course he's not up. This time on a Saturday?

BILLY. Isn't he getting up?

MRS MACDOWALL. Not that I know of. He's fast asleep.

BILLY. He's a right 'un. We're going bird nesting. Tibby, Mac and me. It was his idea. It was him that planned it an' all. Tibby's cried off an' all. Don't say your Mac's . . .

MRS MACDOWALL. Stop shouting will you? Do you want all t' neighbours up?

BILLY. He's not coming then?

MRS MACDOWALL. No, he's not. You'd better come back after breakfast if you want to see him. Now bugger off.

She closes the window. BILLY throws a handful of dirt at it and MRS MACDOWALL reappears.

Bugger off you little sod!

BILLY *goes bird nesting alone. He continues climbing up over and round the classroom desks. The PUPILS watch with interest as a covey of partridges flies up nearby.*

BILLY *throws stones after them. He startles a blackbird. The sun begins to rise and there is soon the continuous relay of birdsong. BILLY plunges into the undergrowth and*

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