



swineherd

Scene 1 – *Back drop: trees in wood, huge oak, Tom's house
– a small shack or cabin (2 pupils)
Puppets: Tom, 15 pigs, acorns, (2 pupils)*

Narrator 1

"In Smannell was an oak wood, thick with mighty trees laden with acorns, but there was one tree more magnificent than all the rest. The Old Oak towered over the other trees and bore its fruit on vast, gnarled branches. Deep in its heart, the Old Oak held the secrets of the wood and all who lived there.

Tom was a swineherd who lived in the wood. But he too stood apart, for unlike the other men who tended pigs, Tom never had cause to strike the branches of the Old Oak, for the tree seemed to sense his arrival and tumbled its acorns gladly to the floor as his pigs snuffled through the clearing. As they fed, Tom would rest his heavy limbs upon the warm roots of the Old Oak and the Old Oak would cradle Tom's lonely heart to sleep whilst his golden hair shone like a halo in the weak autumn sun."

Scene 2 – *Back drop: Inn by wood, oak trees with no leaves or acorns, (2 pupils)
Puppets: Rose, evil innkeeper, (2 pupils)*

Narrator 2

"Such radiance rarely goes unnoticed and to Rose (a captive of the innkeeper who owned the Inn beside the wood) Tom was a beacon of freedom. But she was blind to the innkeeper's silent scrutiny, who in seeing her so enraptured felt a burning ember of hatred stir within his belly. He had long proposed to keep Rose for himself. He did not intend for her to fall in love with a lowly swineherd."

Narrator 3

"As the year passed and the Old Oak's last leaf fell crisply to the stone cold earth, Tom continued to make his daily pilgrimage to the Old Oak and although he convinced himself that he did so because of his pigs, the acorns had long been eaten. He had seen Rose and he had fallen deeply in love."

Scene 3 - *Back drop: Inside inn, fire, looking through window, Snow outside, oak tree with snow on branches., (2 pupils)*
Puppet: Worried Rose (1 pupil)

Narrator 4

"Rose herself was fearful of the innkeeper's quick temper and she was careful not to linger at the windows of the Inn but she tended to each single pane of glass every late afternoon until she satisfied herself that Tom was outside."

Narrator 5

"But one winter's day however often she looked, Tom was not outside. Small motes of snow flurried above the wood and the Old Oak seemed to stoop lower than the day before.

The golden boy and his pigs were missing and as Rose hurried from window to window a sense of dread came over her. Smoke from the fire billowed back into the Inn as a horrific squealing tore through the smog.

She walked through the dense grey cloud and found herself at the door to the scullery tightly grasping the handle. Three more screams sliced through her before she had courage enough to throw back the door and step through."

Scene 4 - *Back drop: A room in the inn, mincer - pile of pigs, Tom at bottom of pile in cage. Steaming Cauldron, table (2 pupils)*
Puppets: Terrified Rose, Evil innkeeper - sausages?? Could handle of mincer turn? Could sausages come out of end of mincer? (3 pupils)

Narrator 6

"The innkeeper stood at the mincer, as he fed it whole pigs, working his fingers to the bone. Rose was engulfed in the smell of cooked meat. As she reeled, her eyes took in the steaming cauldron, the innkeeper's cleaver sunk deep into the table, his blood stained arms and him, stirring the pot with an oak club."

Narrator 7

"She stood statue-still as he towered over her, "Do you see the swineherd now?" he breathed into her ear, clasping a handful of hair at the nape of her

neck. He wrenched her head around to see a rusty cage filled with pigs and there, amongst them, her beloved Tom. "I do," she said. "Do you see *her* now?" he hissed at the cage and Tom said, "I do". "Will you stop me?" he said, "Speak now or forever hold your peace" and there was silence."

Narrator 8

"He put her to work at the mincer but she struggled with meat and machine for so long that he lost his patience. "Now you watch me", he growled as he pushed her aside and cranked the mincer's handle. He turned the handle slowly at first but got faster and faster and faster until in his frenzy he slipped, just a little, on the sodden floor and Rose seized her chance. One shove was all it took and he was gone. The mincer swallowed him down and the Inn needed a new innkeeper."

Scene 5 - *Back drop - church: (1 pupil)*

Puppets: Tom and Rose getting married, bridesmaids, flowers etc (2 pupils)

Narrator 9

"Tom and Rose were married the next spring."

Scene 6 - *(Use scene 2 Back drop)*

*Puppets: bench made from branch, initials "T&R
happy Tom and Rose together lots of children,
lots more pigs!
(3 or 4 pupils)*

Narrator 10

"Tom made Rose a loveseat from a branch that the Old Oak had laid down for them as a wedding gift. They carved their initials into the seat, which you can find if you look hard enough and they watched many happy summers go by beneath the Old Oak, alongside their children and the very many pigs that they raised there.

Narrator 11

"From tiny acorns grow majestic oaks and from stolen glances can grow an invincible love, and so it was with Tom and Rose."