

# SHARPE

LAMDA ACTING PROGRAMME 2020

GRADE FOUR or FIVE – GIRLS OPTIONAL CHOICE 2

## Six Primroses Each

by Ellen Dryden

*ANGELA:* Oh, hello! I didn't know there was anybody in here! They must have forgotten about you . . . I don't think you ought to sit on the chairs. Not till you've been disinfected!

No! I'm not an *evacuee!* I'm here with my Auntie Joan to pick out a couple of you. She's in there talking to Miss Deacon. They probably put you in here 'cos they think you've got nits. Or fleas Or ringworm or something like that!... It's something dirty people get. Your hair all comes out in little round patches. A lot of the scruffy lot from London get it. They paint your head purple ...

I expect they're saving you for Mrs Fitz-Hughes at the Manor. She always takes a load of scruffy ones. They never stay long though! She's got a row of little camp beds in the stables and she makes the evacuees do all the work. Scrub the floors, clean out the pigsties, muck out the hens and black-lead all the grates. And if she has Catholics she makes them eat meat on Fridays, and she made David Goldberg eat a pig's brains - and he was sick all over and she sent him back.

And she gives you bread and milk all the time. With stale bread, and she waters the milk. And no sugar. And the Major - that's her husband - he's too old to be a proper soldier - he lets us go on nature walks on his land. And he said we could pick primroses. *children can pick six each with one leaf and teachers can pick twelve with two leaves.* And it's freezing...

And you have to go to church on Sunday. Or Chapel . . . It's dead funny in Chapel. My Auntie Joan goes. And the man next door hates the Chapel, and *he* killed his pig on a Sunday morning! We were just singing the first hymn when it started squealing its head off 'cos it knew what he was going to do, and he chased it all round the garden and it squealed and squealed and then it was quiet - and everybody looked at each other 'cos they knew he'd cut its throat and it was bleeding to death. . .

Oh that's my Auntie Joan! I shouldn't think I'll see you lot again. And it just so happens that Manchester is a very important industrial city, - with Docks and the Ship Canal. It's just as important as rotten old London!