**Extract from Script - What about the Children**

By Ann Dalton

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**Episode 1 (Scene 3)**

**SFX – sounds of running footsteps and outdoor sounds (excluding stream)**

**Peggy (humming)**

Frankie, What the divil are you running from?

**Frankie**

Just nearly knocked Mrs. Daly over and her carrying a bucket of water on her head. She said if she caught me she’d take a broom to me.

**Peggy**

Her and Master Madden, if we don’t hurry.

**SFX - Bicycle Bell**

Hello, Mr. Connolly. (*pause)* How’s your Ma today, Frankie?

**Frankie**

She just got a letter from our Uncle Billy in Pennysylvania. Wrote to say he was sorry that little May had been taken by the Scarlet Fever.

**Peggy**

I never got a letter from no one

**Frankie**

A letter is only good if there’s a bit of money in it, Peggy. Paper never fed no one.

I don’t want to go to school.

**Peggy**

You never want to go to school Frankie Donovan, but if we don’t go we’ll never learn anything.

**Frankie**

I know. I like the learning, its Madden I can’t stand, and since I broke all them pencils he has it in for me.

**SFX – advert jingle**

**Advert – Hardmuth’s PENCILS**

**Episode 1 (Scene 4)**

**Master Madden**

**SFX – school sounds, running in, sitting on chairs (not too loud) chalk on blackboard**

***Pickup 3 – Kids whispering to each other***

Quiet! Frankie Donovan, get yourself up here in front of me.

What’s in that bucket over there?

**Frankie**

Water, Sir.

**Master Madden**

What do ye think of that, class. Isn’t he the genius now? Is that what you are Frankie Donovan?

Speak when you’re spoken to, you filthy little gurrier! Just like the rest of the Donovan’s.

**SFX Whack!**

You come back here again with that filthy face, it will be the stick will be scraping the dirt off ya. Not me hand! Get down to the door. You’re not fit to sit next to any decent child.

**‘SFX – signature tune ‘Aids for the busy teacher’**

**Insert – ‘Aids for the busy teacher’ (Irish School Weekly Journal) ‘ Moderation and Censure)**

**SFX – music under above – (music box or light tinkle)**

**SFX – school room sounds – chairs scraping**

Where’s Sheila Donnelly.

**Child (Mary McCarthy)**

She’s gone Sir.

**Master Madden**

Gone where

**Child (Mary McCarthy)**

Sent away, Sir.

**Master Madden**

*They’re would be a few more of you I wouldn’t mind seeing the back of!*

Peggy Doherty

**Peggy**

Yes, Sir.

**Master Madden**

Stand up there and read this out for the class. And the rest of ye better listen carefully, or it won’t be just Frankie Donovan getting the stick!

***Pick up 15 -* SFX – Mary McCarthy coughing gently throughout**

**SFX – chair scraping back as Peggy stands up**

**Peggy**

The Eagle and the Child.

An eagle flew down upon a baby sleeping near a cottage door, and bore it off. The mother ran to the eagle’s nest, and got there almost as soon as the eagle. She climbed up the rock, and tried to snatch her child; but the eagle struck at her with it’s wings and beak. She held the baby with one hand and grasped the nest with the other, and threw the nest and young eagles into the valley below. The eagle at once flew to the help of it’s young ones and the mother clasped her child to her breast and got back safely to her cottage.

**Master Madden**

Mary Josephine McCarthy, if you don’t stop that coughing, I’ll give you something to cough about!

*Slates up! Now who can answer this for me? Where was the baby sleeping when the eagle flew down? And I don’t want ‘one word’ answers. Proper sentences and proper grammar…..if I’ve managed to drill anything into your…..*

*Mary McCarthy! Was that another cough I heard?*

**Child (Mary McCarthy)**

*Sorry, Sir. ‘Tis the chalk dust.*

**Master Madden**

*Chalk dust! Stand in the corner. It’s already got your footprints there. What do ye think, class? Wasn’t that corner made for Mary?* ***Kids giggle out of fear*** *And take that cough with you. ‘Tis the only friend you’ll ever have!*

**SFX – Advert jingle**

**Insert - -Advert – Venoe’s cough mixture**