

THE WHITEHORSE HILL PLAY

Text by Grace Swordy and Mark Beeson (song by Gillian Webster)

Characters:

- ANYA: *21st century, teenage girl, , determined, passionate, looking for direction*
- STORYTELLER: *Timeless, kind, mysterious, gentle and engaging*
- MARWEN: *Bronze Age, high status young woman, calm, confident and knowledgeable*
- GYNNY: *Bronze Age, Marwen's young girl cousin, eager and brave beyond her years*
- AGGER: *Bronze Age, Marwen's uncle, stubborn and forceful*
- DUYTE: *Bronze Age, Marwen's aunt, matriarchal and diplomatic*
- ENID: *Romano-British, older teenage girl, with Celtic sympathies*
- GALFRED: *Romano-British, older teenage boy, with Roman sympathies*
- ARTORIUS: *Romano-British chieftain*
- CANTISENNA: *Romano-British - a watcher (woman)*
- ENNIS: *Romano-British - a watcher (man)*
- LEOFE: *Anglo-Saxon, teenage Buttergirl. Confident, forward, innocent*
- ALTA: *Anglo-Saxon, teenage Buttergirl. Mature, intelligent, sarcastic*
- WULFWYN: *Anglo-Saxon, teenage Buttergirl. Witty, free spirited*
- GALAN: *Anglo-Saxon, teenage boy. Bitter about Vikings but trying not to admit it*
- BRON: *Anglo-Saxon, teenage boy. Honest and loyal, trying to do right*
- ALICE: *Medieval, sparky young woman, sarcastic sense of humour*
- JONAS: *Medieval, yeoman farmer, used to giving orders to servants*
- BISHOP BRONESCOMBE: *Medieval, Bishop of Exeter, a good and energetic Bishop, prone to temptation*
- CHAPLAIN: *Medieval, sharp, clerical, doesn't suffer fools gladly*
- MARY: *Elizabethan, sensitive to the world, heartfelt, impetuous.*
- SIR WALTER RALEIGH: *Elizabethan, ladies' man, poetic and with a grand manner, but a kind heart*
- HENRY: *Elizabethan, older brother, adventurous*
- HERBERT: *Elizabethan, younger brother, fun and enthusiastic*
- JOANNA: *Late Victorian, intelligent, unassuming, canny*
- BURNARD: *Late Victorian, authoritative, slightly over-sure of himself, interested in local people*

PROLOGUE

LANTERNBEARERS:

Song

Passing, passing knowing
Passing, passing knowing
Oh, oh, oh

Play begins as audience are led by music and LANTERNBEARERS to meet ANYA

Anya in forest looking confused and angry. She paces and talks loudly to the audience.

ANYA: Push back gently, yet not too hard.
Fight the hand; don't bite the one that feeds you.
Play to your strengths, never stop gathering more.
Boxes and packages will not contain you;
Be true to your roots. (Be distinct!)
Grip on hard to every leg up given;
Take a hard look at the legless.
You can be great now, you have so many choices! You can do anything you want. What on earth do I want? Who am I? I mean it's great. I get to decide but there are an awful lot of paths to forge and I am expected to find the perfect one?

If I'm honest the future thing has always been there, worrying about it. Wondering, seeing more than I should. It's just - recently, I'm getting lost in the past more. I can't stop thinking about Bronze-Age women. It's no wonder I have no friends.

What about this girl? Who was she? Was she strong? I bet she had blonde hair too. I bet no one ever told her what to do, or expected her to know what to do.

Though really, I know those things didn't even matter. I need to know what did matter to her. If she knew what to do, I can learn from her. I don't know why, but she must be....

Looks up and sees the Storyteller

Sorry, I'm talking to myself in a forest.

STORYTELLER: No need to apologise, my friend. Are you alright? You look distressed.

ANYA: I suppose I am. I am lost in thoughts about strange things. I need to understand them... but I think it's impossible.

STORYTELLER: You were talking about Bronze Age women?

ANYA: You heard that? Oh. Well, yeah I was thinking about the girl they found on Whitehorse Hill. There is something important about her.

STORYTELLER: Yes, they think there is.

ANYA: No, I mean there is something important for me.

STORYTELLER: For you? Now, in this day and age?

ANYA: Oh, don't worry about it. No one gets it. Of course, the archaeology is much more important.

STORYTELLER: I am not saying that. Let me try to understand. You think you have a connection to this story?

ANYA: I know I do. I just don't know how.

STORYTELLER: Would it help you to know?

ANYA: Yeah. But I can't explain why to you. Because I don't know why.

STORYTELLER: That's okay. Let's see if we can find out.

ANYA: See?

STORYTELLER: If you want to see the past, I can show you a weave of truth and magic.

ANYA: I have nothing to lose...

STORYTELLER, lantern-bearers and musicians gather audience, leading them up path.

Time travel music

STORYTELLER talks of:

Travelling into the past, and the evoking of the magic needed to do this. Refers to the Bronze Age and the part magic played at that time on Dartmoor

EPISODE 1: BRONZE AGE

STORYTELLER and ANYA walk together towards first scene – early Bronze Age

They approach MARWEN, who is kneeling alone on the floor humming a chant. Audience watches her pouring water and brewing meadowsweet

Enter GYNNY, who watches from the side until MARWEN notices her

MARWEN: Gynny how long have you been there?

GYNNY : I arrived just now Marwen. You asked me to come to you before dusk.

MARWEN: I did, yes, my gentle cousin, I did not hear you approach. *(Pause)* I have one last thing to show you.

GYNNY: Last thing? But Marwen?

MARWEN: Hush, dear Gynny. Now, come, do you remember the tin? What did I teach you?

GYNNY: The smelting? That was hard work, with the bellows. And with the tin, you showed me how to change it...I understand the dark into the light and how to do it.

MARWEN: *(Smiles gently)* That's good Gynny.

GYNNY: But...I...*(Stops herself again)* Marwen, there is more for you to show me isn't there?

MARWEN: Gynny, you will have everything you need to know. This is important. I poured smelted tin into this cold bucket of water. When the steam stops, you can take out the tin. *(She reaches into the cooled bucket and takes out blob of metal.)*

GYNNY: MARWEN! Don't touch it!

MARWEN: Gynny, you know that water is how we see; now we have used it so the tin will help us see a world beyond. Look closely now.

GYNNY: I just see the tin, Marwen. I can't see these things like you do.

MARWEN: I know that is not true. Now tell me, what shapes do you see?

GYNNY: *(Settles, looks at MARWEN and back to the tin, squeezes eyes)* It looks like a feather?

MARWEN: Mmm...

GYNNY: Or it could be a bird?

MARWEN: Yes. Very interesting. Now think, what could that mean?

GYNNY: Flight? Maybe leaving? But I sense something beyond leaving... but...

Suddenly in rush AGGER and DUYTE

AGGER: Stop!

DUYTE: *(Shouts in disbelief)* What is this? What are you doing?

AGGER: *(Too angry to speak)* MARWEN! GYNNY!

DUYTE: MARWEN, step back from our daughter!

GYNNY: Mother...I

AGGER: DON'T YOU SPEAK CHILD!

DUYTE: Marwen! If your father wasn't a chieftain...All this time you've been showing Gynny... these things are... you are playing with things you shouldn't!

MARWEN: Duyte, you don't understand.

DUYTE: No we don't!

AGGER: ARRRRGH! (*Shouts in anger*)

DUYTE: Wait here Marwen, come with us Gynny. We will meet with your father and the other chieftains and discuss what to do!

GYNNY: Mother you can't, this is Marwen.

AGGER: A meeting?

DUYTE: We must follow our laws!

AGGER: Ha! You women are stepping outside our laws.

DUYTE: Husband, I have never...

AGGER: The respect for our ways is being lost!

DUYTE: Agger, we must act together.

AGGER: You have too long acted beyond what is expected of women! Marwen is not worshipping our monuments... she practices her own magic! I will sort this! (*To DUYTE and GYNNY*)
Follow me now!

AGGER, DUYTE and GYNNY exit up path, audience wait with MARWEN

STORYTELLER instructs to follow MARWEN, and audience follow

TRIN crosses audience towards MARWEN roughly holding a bag.

TRIN: You'll be best to take the path alongside over the river. Your way will be well hidden when you pass it and you won't get lost if you use the water as a guide. (*Points up path toward forest.*)

MARWEN: I'm not going, Trin.

TRIN: You had better wait until the sun goes down. You can make good tracks before it rises again and no one will be looking until then. As my sister, you should know the route as well as me, stick to it -

MARWEN: Trin, I am staying.

TRIN: - and you'll be out of the boundaries in two days, from there you keep heading south-

MARWEN: Trin.

TRIN: Get moving, sister, get your stuff together, now. Listen to me, for once in your life. As your brother, I am telling you what is best for you. No, I am just telling you what to do. Make the preparations.

MARWEN: I'm not running away. I have made the preparations I need to here.

TRIN: I want to know you are safe.

MARWEN: I should never have told you that something was coming.

TRIN: Well you did, and now I am telling you not to face it!

MARWEN: Stop fighting for a moment.

TRIN: I can't.

MARWEN: You can.

TRIN stops and looks at MARWEN.

TRIN: *(Calmly)* You are the one who can see these things Marwen.

MARWEN: Tomorrow is an important day for you, in your honour. Let's think about that. You are a strong warrior.

TRIN: I don't care about my day. Anyone could have killed the bear.

MARWEN: Possibly. But you did.

TRIN: Is that it? I face a ceremony tomorrow and you expect me not to think about what you might face?

MARWEN: Now, you must be the protector they need. There are more trials coming for you, Trin.

TRIN: And I am to fight these trials without you?

MARWEN: You will always protect me.

Exit MARWEN, TRIN watches her leave and looks forlorn

TRIN continues up path, halts further on

Eerie song plays - Bronze Age magic

STORYTELLER: Touches on theme of accepting fate

AGGER and DUYTE - walk forward and bless bear pelt. TRIN has pelt placed on his shoulders.

DUYTE: A monument will be created, to celebrate your strength in protecting our farm.

Enter GYNNY

GYNNY: MOTHER! FATHER!

AGGER: Gynny, what are you doing?

DUYTE: What is wrong?

GYNNY: It is Marwen, she is... dead.

TRIN: No...

DUYTE: OH! Gynny!

TRIN: NO!

DUYTE: Trin, you must be calm.

TRIN: Calm? This cannot be!

AGGER: It was the will of the gods, Trin!

TRIN: How do you even dare to speak to me?!

AGGER: The gods decide our fate.

TRIN: This fate was decided by you! You took this into your own hands.

AGGER: You boy! You dare to say such things!

DUYTE: That is a very serious accusation to make, Trin.

TRIN: Then I will make it, seriously. To the clan.

AGGER: She was always facing her end, with the dangerous craft she played with!

TRIN launches at AGGER. GYNNY and DUYTE leap between them

GYNNY: NOOO!

TRIN: Gynny! Stay out of this!

DUYTE: Trin, you must stop, it was not Agger!

TRIN: Why should I believe you woman!

AGGER: AHFFF (AGGER launches at TRIN but DUYTE and GYNNY keep between them)

GYNNY: Stop! All of you. *(All fall quiet at her voice)* It was not by human hand that Marwen left us.

TRIN: Gynny, what are you saying?

AGGER: What do you know, girl?

DUYTE: Gynny, child. Hush.

GYNNY: No! I will not hush. You cannot blame each other or Marwen's craft! Her soul will live!

GYNNY runs out

Exit TRIN, DUYTE AND AGGER in a different direction

Audience are taken away from scene by STORYTELLER

Romano-British music

STORYTELLER talks of the passing of knowledge from one person to another, how this helps us move forward. He reveals the story we saw was that of MARWEN in the Bronze Age - the girl found in the cist on Whitehorse Hill. However we don't know how she died. STORYTELLER takes us onward to the Romano-British period, just after the Romans have left British shores for the last time. This is era of Artorius, the Romano-British leader who will later be known as King Arthur.

EPISODE 2: ROMANO-BRITISH

440 AD

ENID and GALFRED are on a track

ENID: Are you sure we'll get the best view from here?

GALFRED: If he's on his way to Isca, he'll pass this way. Hey!

He notices something in a crevice

GALFRED: Look Enid.

ENID: What is it?

GALFRED: An omen. I've found a Roman coin! Look - silver denarius. It'll be my talisman.

ENID: I don't want to look. Where did you find it?

GALFRED: Half-hidden beside a stone, where the rains last winter have washed the soil away. A Roman must have dropped it there before they left the country, and it lay buried until I noticed it.

ENID: Good riddance to the Romans.

GALFRED: Why do you say that? My grandfather was a Roman soldier.

ENID: Our oppressors.

GALFRED: They guarded the coast against Saxon pirates, they built straight roads.

ENID: Oh yes, and they kept the local population enslaved to an emperor we never even saw, who spent all his time and our taxes fighting wars on the other side of the world.

GALFRED: The Romans made us part of civilisation.

ENID: Part of militarization you mean.

GALFRED: They gave us peace. Now we have the Saxons threatening to burn our homesteads and destroy the British way of life.

We arrive with ENID and GALFRED at point 6

ENID: Maybe if we hadn't grown soft under the Romans we would have been in a better position to defend ourselves when they went back to Rome and left us in the lurch. If you want a talisman, an amulet, look at my tin bead.

CANTISENNA: Someone's coming.

ENNIS: Who is it?

CANTISENNA: Our great leader. This way.

ENNIS: Is it him? I can't see.

CANTISENNA: It's Artorius. Hard to believe.

ENNIS: They say he wants to inspect the Roman mine, and strike a deal with the miners.

CANTISENNA: Where the Wallabrook rises?

ENNIS: That's the one. He wants to be sure the tin's getting to his armourers to make greaves.

CANTISENNA: He's dismounted from his horse.

ENNIS: He's coming on foot. What is he doing?

CANTISENNA: He's stopping in front of Enid, daughter of Imogen.

ARTORIUS: Young woman, with a face as pale as meadowsweet, where did you obtain that tin bead you wear round your neck? We need all the tin we can get to make armour to defend our men's bodies against the battle axes of the Saxons.

ENID: *(Trembling)* I was given this barrel-shaped bead by my mother, Imogen, daughter of Agnes. It has been handed down in my family through the generations. It has magical power. Its sacred nature as jewellery will be far more useful at keeping us safe from the Saxons than if it were to become diluted in a piece of armour.

ARTORIUS: It's tin nevertheless.

GALFRED: *(Stepping forward)* Don't take her bead from her. Take this coin instead.

GALFRED hands the coin to ARTORIUS

ARTORIUS: *(Inspecting)* A Roman coin, silver! But keep it, young man. *(He hands it back)* And let the girl keep her bead too. I like her spirit and your generosity. I believe I'm going to need magic to protect our people.

GALFRED: Why do say that, sir? A mighty warrior like you.

ARTORIUS: These are dark times, too dark for us to shed light on without help from power beyond our understanding. I am gathering a band of warriors to fight, because that is my destiny, that is what the time demands of me. But in the end it is knowledge of mind, rather than force of hand, that will win out - small acts of courage and integrity rather than great battles. Ave atque vale.

ENID: Hail and farewell.

ARTORIUS begins to leave along the road

GALFRED: Why did you say goodbye to him so abruptly, Enid?

ENID: That's what he said to me – ave atque vale means 'hail and farewell' in Latin.

GALFRED: I didn't know you knew Latin. I thought you hated the Romans.

ENID: Just goes to show you don't know everything, doesn't it.

GALFRED: Goodbye, sir!

ENNIS: He's going now.

CANTISENNA: He'll cross the dark pools of the river.

ENNIS: By nightfall he'll be in Isca.

CANTISENNA: Artorius, our Romano-British leader. I can't believe we've seen him.

ENNIS: King Artorius.

CANTISENNA: He spoke to Enid, daughter of Imogen, one of us.

STORYTELLER tells how Artorius becomes England's most famous mythical King – King Arthur. He tells the story of Chaw Gully. If anyone tries to reach the gold hidden at the foot of Chaw Gully, and goes down on a rope, at the croak of a raven an unseen hand cuts the rope, sending the person on the rope to their death. The following morning a body is found stretched out on the heather beside the gully. Chaw Gully is also known as the Roman Mine. STORYTELLER mentions King Arthur's smelting house: King's Oven, and talks about the importance of tin on Dartmoor.

STORYTELLER then takes us onward to the Saxon era, and introduces the Buttergirls – girls who are pasturing their cattle in summer on Dartmoor's uplands and making butter and cheese from the milk.

EPISODE 3: ANGLO-SAXON

Party music

Around 1000 AD

LEOFE, is talking to WULFWYN while Alta offers mead around BRON and GALAN are standing close by, chatting intensely

GALAN: I can't stand this.

BRON: You have to stop complaining!

GALAN: How can I? And how can you just stand there, Bron? And act like nothing has happened?

BRON: I'm not.

GALAN: You are! Are you forgetting what we fought for?

BRON: The war is over, Galan. We need to move on.

GALAN: I know it is, but this is madness! They want us to be at peace?

BRON: What choice do we have? Why can't you just try and be nice? There are no Vikings here.

GALAN: I... *(interrupted by ALTA's presence)*

ALTA: *(Approaches boys with mead)* Would you like some mead?

BRON: Yes please...

GALAN: Of course.

BRON: Are you uhm... enjoying the party?

ALTA: Ha! Yes, sure... better than being up on the hill sides with the cows.

BRON: That is important work you are doing...

GALAN: But of course it is better being down here with us.

ALTA: Wow. I'm going to leave you to your mead. *(Walks off)*

BRON: Well done!

GALAN: I'm just trying to be nice, like you said!

BRON: Nice? Oh... they are never going to talk to us now.

Boys argue quietly as attentions turns to the Butter girls

LEOFE: Who is that you were giving mead to? *(nods towards GALAN)*

ALTA: Oh no.

LEOFE: What do you mean, oh no?

ALTA: I mean, I think you have spied another boy to keep your eye on.

LEOFE: And why is that so bad?

ALTA: Well let me guess. You are going to try and find out who he is?

LEOFE: Yes.

ALTA: Then everything about him?

LEOFE: YES...

ALTA: Then make a plan to go and speak to him?

LEOFE: Yes... so...

ALTA: And then make me come with you.

LEOFE: Because you are my friend.

ALTA: And then you fall, and we clean up the mess!

LEOFE: You have no idea that will happen this time. Come on, don't spoil my fun.

ALTA: At least he is a Saxon this time.

WULFWYN returns

WULFWYN: What's this about a Saxon?

LEOFE: We are just talking about my cows, one of them has produced lots of milk this week, but this butter is taking ages!

WULFWYN: You are not talking about the butter! You are talking about one of those Saxon boys!

LEOFE: You stay away from him, Wulfwyn!

WULFWYN: What? Good looking is he? At least he isn't a Viking this time, Leofe!

LEOFE: Oh for goodness sake...

WULFWYN: Well, let's be honest now. You were after at least two Vikings, being a good girl, doing what you are supposed to do; integrating with them. Then they leave you high and dry!

ALTA : HAHA.

LEOFE: They did not leave me high and dry! I'll have you know, one Viking took a lot of interest in me, and he left me the luck of the land!

WULFWYN: Well if that is all he left you, we should go talk to those Saxon boys, much better looking and will leave you with more than luck!

ALTA: Oh here you go...

LEOFE: Come with us!

ALTA: No, you go ahead. I'll stay churning.

WULFWYN and LEOFE approach the two boys talking beside them

Audience listen to ALTA while they watch WULFWYN and LEOFE introduce themselves to the Saxon boys.

ALTA: Good on them for going for it I suppose. I'll just talk to my cows again tomorrow....

Attention switches to group

BRON: So tell me, if you are not interested in Saxon boys, why are you talking to us?

LEOFE: I always enjoy hearing tales of battle. Do you have any?

GALAN: Battle? A gruesome affair. The tales would be too much for your gentle heart.

WULFWYN: You speak with too much care for gentle ladies! Tell us about the bloodshed!

GALAN: Bloodshed? I would rather not remember those times.

BRON: We now have a peaceful land, where we should be trying to live with the Vikings and understand them.

WULFWYN: You sound like you have been brainwashed. The Vikings will never live in peace with me!

GALAN: Do you feel the same, Leofe?

LEOFE: No, I agree, we should try to get along with them.

WULFWYN: You got along with them far too well!

LEOFE: Wulfwyn! Hush!

BRON: What does she mean?

LEOFE: Nothing, a Viking gave me a good luck charm that is all. A token to show the peace, just as you said.

BRON: Well that's good, isn't it Galan?

GALAN: Yes of course. You should be proud.

WULFWYN: Well go on then, show them the 'charm!'

LEOFE: I don't know...

WULFWYN: Leofe, you can't tell them you have a Viking good luck charm and not show it to them!

LEOFE: Alright... *(Slowly takes out a bead from around her neck)*

GALAN: That was given to you by the Viking? Where did he say he got it from?

BRON: A piece of tin?

LEOFE: It was from his land.

GALAN: And where did you meet this Viking?

LEOFE: Here.

GALAN: Where did he do battle?

LEOFE: Lydford! Why all the questions? You were just happy about keeping the peace a moment ago.

GALAN: LYING VIKING! That tin bead is from our land! OURS!

WULFWYN: Hold on a minute!

GALAN: I lost my sister's talisman in battle, and now a Viking dares to give it away as a good luck charm?

BRON: This can't be! Are you sure?

GALAN: The magic is trying to find its way back to me!

LEOFE: It's a good luck charm. And it is my good luck charm.

BRON: We should trust her Galan, and the Viking.

GALAN: Never! These Vikings are not to be trusted. My sister's talisman has been passed...

WULFWYN: Well you had better let her keep it then!

LEOFE: It's mine to keep. We should leave.

GALAN: **ARRGH!**

Exit all

Audience are taken by STORYTELLER towards the old clapper bridge where the ancient funeral path – the lych way – crosses the River Dart

Medieval music

STORYTELLER tells the story of the Temptation of Bishop Bronescombe, how he and his chaplain got lost in the mist on the high moor when they were trying to cross from Widcombe to Sourton, and wandered for three days, and then at last when they were starving hungry they came across a moorman who offered the Bishop bread and cheese if he would bow down and worship him. The Bishop was just about to oblige when his chaplain saw hooves and horns poking out from under his cloak and alerted Bronescombe, who immediately made the sign of the cross. At which, the moorman vanished along with the mist, and the Bishop and his chaplain could see their way down to safety.

EPISODE 4: MEDIEVAL

The pestilence and death of medieval period - 1260 AD

Enter ALICE dragging a sledge, followed by JONAS with a whip

JONAS: On, on! You're lagging. On girl! (*Cracking the whip*)

ALICE: I'm exhausted. I can't go any further.

JONAS: Nonsense. You're young and healthy. In my mother's day girls could really work.

ALICE: Maybe that day was a long time ago.

JONAS: *(Cracks his whip)* I'll have less of that lip from you, Don't insult my mother. In her day girls did what's regarded as a man's work now.

ALICE: A man's work perhaps, but not the work of a packhorse.

JONAS: Watch it, Alice.

ALICE: Is life for women nothing but work?

JONAS: We should have had a proper funeral procession, with the conductor calling out 'First Six' at each pause, and the followers taking the bier in turn, but the pestilence has decimated the hamlets. You don't expect me to drag a sledge with a corpse on it, do you, all by myself. I'm the farmer, you're the servant.

ALICE: Why should I be the servant? I know the moor far better than you do. I could have been born a fine lady, then I'd make you work until you dropped and begged me for mercy, Jonas of Pizwell.

JONAS: Cut it out, cheeky hussy!

ALICE: It won't budge. I can't do it. I haven't got an ounce of strength left in me.

JONAS: So how is brother Edward going to get to Lydford Church, with half the hamlet sick from pestilence, unless you drag him? Do you want him to rot at home without a decent Christian burial?

ALICE: You may well be dealing with another corpse if you push me any harder.

ALICE sits and plays with a tin bead on a string that she takes from her pocket

JONAS: What's that?

ALICE: It's an amulet – to protect me from cruel slave-drivers like you. For the love of heaven, let me rest a while

JONAS cracks the whip. ALICE wails

Enter BISHOP BRONESCOMBE with his CHAPLAIN

BRONESCOMBE: Who's invoking the love of heaven?

JONAS: Who are you?

CHAPLAIN: He is Walter Bronescombe, Bishop of Exeter, and I am his chaplain.

BRONESCOMBE: What's going on here?

ALICE : I'm being treated like an animal. That's what's going on.

JONAS: Don't take any notice of her, Bishop.

BRONESCOMBE: Where have you come from?

JONAS: I've come from Pizwell and she's come from Babeny. She's my brother's servant, or was before he died.

BRONSCOMBE: So what's on the sledge?

CHAPLAIN lifts up the shroud and starts back

CHAPLAIN: A corpse!

BRONSCOMBE: What's your explanation, man? It had better be good or...

JONAS: It's Edward Rede, my brother, making his last journey to burial at Lydford across the high moor.

BRONSCOMBE: Ah! A terrible place, the high moor. I was lost there just the other day in the fog.

ALICE: I heard you were tempted by the devil in the guise of a moorman, offering to turn the rocks into bread when you were starving hungry, and had to be restrained by your chaplain, who could see horns under his hood and hooves beneath his cloak.

BRONSCOMBE: Where did you hear that? Insolent girl. Preposterous. It's nothing but... fabrication got up by my enemies to discredit me. Isn't that so, John?

CHAPLAIN: Oh... yes... definitely, my lord. She relates the fabrication well, however. I couldn't have told the story better myself.

BRONSCOMBE: John! *(He controls himself)* As I said, the high moor is a terrible place. How far do you have to travel to take this dead man to his grave at Lydford?

JONAS: The route is eight miles from Pizwell in fair weather, but fifteen in foul.

BRONSCOMBE: How so?

JONAS: On account of the streams being too swollen to cross.

BRONSCOMBE: And you have to make this journey every time one of your fellows dies? Isn't there a church nearer?

CHAPLAIN: There's Widecombe of course, only three miles off. But if they're in the parish of Lydford, burial in Lydford churchyard is what the Church has decreed for its parishioners.

BRONSCOMBE: Roping in anyone available to do the donkey work – like this young woman?

JONAS: Alice loves it really, don't you Alice: a day out on the moor in the fresh air.

ALICE growls and touches the tin bead on her necklace

BRONSCOMBE: What's that you're wearing round your neck, Alice?

ALICE: A tin bead.

JONAS: Which she probably stole from my brother.

ALICE: Liar. My mother gave it to me. She told me it was special. I wear it to keep me safe from the likes of him. (*Pointing at Jonas*) Are you sure it wasn't him you saw up in the mist, Bishop? He's a devil.

BRONESCOMBE: Nonsense. I never saw anybody up in the mist.

CHAPLAIN: What? (*Splutters*)

BRONESCOMBE: Listen. The thought of this girl dragging a corpse fifteen miles across the terrible tracts of the high moor is more than I can bear.

CHAPLAIN: (*Aside*) I'm sure it is.

BRONESCOMBE: (*Stares at John then proceeds*) Here and now I give the inhabitants of Pizwell and Babeny special dispensation to bury their dead at Widecombe Church.

CHAPLAIN: What about Brimpts? If you exempt two of the new tenements, you have to exempt the others surely, in the name of justice.

BRONESCOMBE: Alright then, all of them.

ALICE: Thank you, your lordship.

JONAS: Back we go then, Alice. Back, back, and to Widecombe! On! *Cracking his whip*

Out Alice dragging sledge, followed by Jonas

BRONESCOMBE: Unbelievable!

CHAPLAIN: Well, let's just say it has to be seen to be believed, like one or two other things round here.

BRONESCOMBE: I don't know what you mean, John. Come on let's get back to Exeter, and enact my decree.

Out Bronescombe and Chaplain

STORYTELLER takes us away to the Elizabethan age

Elizabethan music

STORYTELLER introduces Sir Walter Raleigh, and makes audience aware that Sir Walter was Lord Warden of the Stannaries, and within a few years would be imprisoned

EPISODE 5: ELIZABETHAN

27 October 1600. STORYTELLER announces that SIR WALTER RALEIGH is on his way to the Tinnners' Great Court at Crockern Tor, in his capacity as Lord Warden of the Stannaries.

We see SIR WALTER RALEIGH walking along River, MARY running from behind audience

MARY: WAIT! WAIT!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH walks on

MARY: Please SIR! Master Walter Raleigh Sir, wait!

SIR WALTER: *(To himself)* A woman calls, she cries, I walk...

MARY: Sir? Can you hear me? Wait!

SIR WALTER: Do I have the ears to hear? Of course. Do I have the patience to listen to a woman battling through the ether of an autumn Dartmoor? I do not.

MARY: WAIT! Stop! Please! *(She has caught up with him)*

SIR WALTER: She commands a man to pause his journey? Be careful, were you not woman, I would not ignore you with such grace...

MARY: What?

SIR WALTER: *(Stops)* Do you in truth, speak to me thus?

MARY: I am speaking to you!

SIR WALTER: It appears that you have made me listen. What on this green and fruitful earth can be important enough to have done such a thing? It had better have strength of reason beyond which your sex allows...

MARY: I hope you are saying nice things Sir, I understand little. I have run after you since the sun came up, you are the only one who can help me.

SIR WALTER: I doubt the like. However, that a woman is using her legs so, after me or no, deserves a hearing. Now you have my patience as well as my ears.

MARY: *(Desperate)* You must help me. I know you are powerful sir! You have to let my Timothy out of jail, it wasn't his fault, I've heard of you, and I know you wouldn't let injustice pass...

SIR WALTER: You speak some truth, though where you see injustice, I may not.

MARY: You do! I mean, you will!

SIR WALTER: Shall I regret giving you my patience? A woman speaking to me with such force... it is not like me to allow this...

MARY: They locked my Timothy away, for cheating the coinage. You have to release him. He did nothing wrong.

SIR WALTER: Nothing wrong? On the contrary. Cheating the coinage, a crime of the greatest effect.

MARY: But...we have done more than most around here for England!

SIR WALTER: Considering oneself above one's fellow countrymen should not be undertaken lightly.

MARY: Sir, if you knew how we've been helping out with the tin!

SIR WALTER: Dangling a claim so obtusely is an ugly act.

MARY: I'm not dangling nothing. It's just... it's too hard for me to tell you what the truth is, but you must believe me Sir. My Timothy is innocent.

SIR WALTER: An impassioned plea from one who cannot speak the truth. I leave you, and consider that your gentleman has found his rightful place in jail. *(Goes to leave)*

MARY: NO! NO PLEASE WAIT! *(She runs madly)*

Enter HENRY and HERBERT

HENRY: There she is!

HERBERT: Mistress Mary, Mistress Mary!

HENRY: Please Mistress Mary, tell us where the dragons are!

MARY: Boys, not now!

HENRY: Oh go on Mistress Mary...

HERBERT: Just tell us where they were, so we can search.

MARY: Henry, Herbert, you should go home.

SIR WALTER: *(Notices the boys and turns back)* These boys command something of you...

MARY: It's nothing, Sir Walter, it is just a game I play with some farmer's children about dragons.

HENRY: We ain't farmers!

HERBERT: We're tanners. My dad's a tanner!

MARY: Hush!

SIR WALTER: If you wish to continue to convince me of your honesty, you must not hide what is going on here.

MARY: You wouldn't believe me, it sounds mad.

HENRY: You ain't mad Mistress Mary, you is brilliant!

MARY: Henry!

SIR WALTER: I promise you, Mistress Mary, you have done nothing less than convince me of your insanity so far. However what you may consider mad, may be your salvation.

MARY: Thing is, sir, that I see things. Things which help us, mind.

SIR WALTER: A beautiful idea, tell me more.

MARY: They show us where the tin is, beneath the ground.

SIR WALTER: How bountiful! What form do these 'things' take?

MARY: Well they are, fiery...uhm....

HERERT: Dragons!

MARY looks shocked

SIR WALTER: Dragons? You tell me you see dragons?

HENRY: She does, she does, she helps us find treasure!

HERBERT: She's magic!

SIR WALTER: Do these children speak of some kind of witchcraft?

MARY: No, I promise, it's no witchcraft... I told you I wouldn't be able to explain it.

SIR WALTER: Well now you must try.

MARY: My mother could do it too, and some other women, Cornish women. We don't know why or wherefore, but we see these fiery dragons, they fly over the land. And they show us, where there are rich lodes of tin.

SIR WALTER: And for this, they thought your husband was a cheat?

MARY: No, not exactly...

SIR WALTER: He is a cheat?

MARY: He brought them lots of tin, they gave him nothing for it. All he did was make what he had go a little further.

HENRY: Oh sir! You have to help Mary, she's magic and she's brought us all treasure!

SIR WALTER: I have the measure. Magic or no, it seems you have a gift.

MARY: Oh!

SIR WALTER: Whether I can say the same for the one you call husband is another matter.

MARY: Oh Sir, I promise, I do, that I will find more tin and it will all go to England, and Timothy will never cheat again and he will... I mean I will.. I mean it is really for England anyway, and it is good, and I am good and he is good and...

SIR WALTER: Hush! *(Drawing his sword)* The fates may turn...

Exit all

STORYTELLER tells of Fiery Dragons as signs of the whereabouts of tin lodes, and the Fiery Dragon sighting at Evil Coombe marked on an old map of Dartmoor

Victorian music

STORYTELLER tells of the River Dart - history has been carried along the river. The source of the river is near Whitehorse Hill.

EPISODE 6: VICTORIAN

Around 1895

BURNARD from one direction and JOANNA from another

JOANNA: Hello Mr Burnard.

BURNARD: Hello Joanna. How are you? How's your daughter?

JOANNA: We're all fine, sir.

BURNARD: I thought you'd like to know the photograph I took of you both has come out very well.

JOANNA: And I see you've got the photographing machine over your shoulder. Are you taking pictures of Dartmoor folk again today or are you off to dig up another Bronze Age hut circle?

BURNARD: As a matter of fact I am indeed off to excavate another Bronze Age hut circle, and record it with the aforementioned 'photographing machine' – my camera.

JOANNA: Have you ever thought of digging on Whitehorse Hill?

BURNARD: You mean up beyond Sandy Hole Pass? Right on the top? Why?

JOANNA: I don't know. I just like the name, and I have a feeling there might be something there.

BURNARD: I doubt it.

JOANNA: Isn't there a Bronze Age White Horse on a hill in Berkshire?

BURNARD: That's Berkshire. The blanket bog on Dartmoor seems to have been largely avoided by our ancestors on the moor, and with very good reason if you've ever tried to walk across it.

JOANNA: But why don't you at least have a look?

BURNARD: I tell you what. I'll take my camera one day and photograph the top of Whitehorse hill and its peat hags from every angle to prove to you there's nothing there.

JOANNA: But your 'camera' can't see under the surface. You need to dig into it if you want to find treasure.

BURNARD: I must say Joanna, I find your attitude rather trying. You don't expect me to waste the time of busy and important men like the Reverend Baring Gould and Mr Hansford Worth digging up a bog on a whim.

JOANNA: Why not? You're all gentlemen of private means and considerable leisure. It can't be any more of a wild goose chase than hunting traces of those elusive druids.

BURNARD: Hunting for druids is in the past – a romantic folly. There is no evidence of druids here. We're out to preserve Dartmoor for the furthering of scientific knowledge, not because of some ancient mumbo-jumbo and omne id genus.

JOANNA: Omne what?

BURNARD: Latin for 'all that sort of thing'. We're scientists now.

JOANNA: Really. I see. So what does a scientist think of this bead then?

BURNARD: *(Examining bead)* Unusual. Tin I would say. Yes, definitely tin. Where did you get it? You haven't been disturbing burial mounds and robbing tombs have you?

JOANNA: No - unlike you and your friends.

BURNARD: I beg your pardon.

JOANNA: *(Going on quickly)* Anyway this bead was handed down to me.

BURNARD: Really?

JOANNA: Yes, by my mother.

BURNARD: So it's modern, that's disappointing.

JOANNA: It gives me all the knowledge I need, disappointing or no.

BURNARD: How do you mean?

JOANNA: Have a look under the hags on Whitehorse hill and you'll see what I mean.

BURNARD: I think I've had enough of your entertaining nonsense. I'm off to dig at Broadun Ring.

Exit BURNARD one way and JOANNA another

STORYTELLER tells how Ernest Rutherford, famous physicist, stayed with tin miners at Temperance Hotel in Postbridge in 1911

Following Victorian scene, STORYTELLER approaches the fire

Music leads us back to the present

EPILOGUE

STORYTELLER returns to the present. ANYA appears from the crowd to join STORYTELLER

ANYA: I see. Joanna was trying to show him the bead.

ST: Yes, I suppose she was. Though see what little interest he showed.

ANYA: He didn't understand it.

ST: No, do you?

ANYA: I think so.

ST: So...

ANYA: So Marwen was important, I think even all of these women were important.

ST: Yes, I believe they were.

ANYA: But Marwen, she was the beginning. And then Gynny. And then... I'm not sure. Because Gynny was just one girl, there is no way she was enough to pass on all of Marwen's magic.

ST: Just one girl?

ANYA: Well we are all just one girl really, aren't we?

ST: You are...

ANYA: But I understand Marwen.

ST: It seems you do, but do you understand more?

ANYA: I understand Gynny, and the others. And they all understand more, these women. They possess something.

ST: Aha.

ANYA: I mean, they can't really possess something... more... but they do. Was what Marwen possessed really buried?

ST: What do you mean?

ANYA: You know, everything in the exhibition. Beads. Shale, amber, tin. Clothing. Bear pelt, baskets. Meadow sweet...a pin. A bracelet. Cow hair, or horse hair?

ST: You certainly know a lot about what was buried.

ANYA: Well it is important.

ST: Of course it is.

ANYA: And yet, it's not.

ST: What was buried with her isn't important?

ANYA: Not for me it's not. When I heard about it, it struck me. But really it's what you showed me that has importance. What Marwen passed to Gynny.

ST: The knowledge of interpreting tin?

ANYA: More than that. She taught her didn't she? She understood something about the future and she was strong and so was Gynny. And then so was Enid.

ST: And so were all the others.

ANYA: They were, they all saw something and people didn't always understand.

ST: What did they teach to their descendants?

ANYA: Well I don't know if they always taught it.

ST: They passed it somehow?

ANYA: Yeah. Maybe. They are connected to these women. And I am connected to them. Joanna was my great grandmother. And that means Mary was her ancestor. And all the way back to Marwen and Gynny.

ST: Your ancestors?

ANYA: Yeah. Because I have what they passed.

STORYTELLER nods

ANYA pulls out tin bead

From the distance (around the fire) ALL THE WOMEN who have held the bead approach silently

Music and song

LANTERN-BEARERS and WOMEN:

Tin bead, tin bead, tin bead
Oh, oh,oh
Tin bead through the ages passing
Through the mists of time
Tin bead holding all their stories
In our hearts to chime
Tin bead, tin bead, in our hearts to chime
Tin bead, tin bead in our hearts to chime.