

# WILLIE, THE ANGELIC CHILD

A monologue by Walter Ben Hare

Good afternoon, Mrs. Boyer. How do you do, ladies! Isn't it a lovely day. I saw some cars out in front, Mrs. Boyer, and I thought Willie and I would just drop over and spend the afternoon with you. Willie is so fond of company. Say "How do you do" to the ladies, Willie. No, no, now, mamma's baby mustn't be so bashful. Speak up like a little man and say "How do you do!" No, you can't have a piece of cake. The very idea. Mrs. Boyer isn't going to give you any cake, and I'm sure I haven't any. Just sit on that little chair over there and be a good boy. He's such an interesting child! Oh, you're going to play auction? Go right ahead with your game, don't mind us. Willie just adores to see ladies play auction. We'll just sit here and talk to you while you play. Willie, you mustn't touch that vase, you're liable to break it. Vases weren't made for little boys to play with. Don't you just adore children, Mrs. Boyer? I think they're so interesting when they're Willie's age. It's a real charm and education to watch the development of their little minds, the unfolding of the bud, as it were. Yes, he'll be five in January. Isn't he remarkable for his age? No, Willie, no! Mamma says no. That's the dummy, you mustn't touch the cards. Oh, he's got them all mixed up. Naughty, naughty Willie. But doesn't it show just how rapidly his mind is developing? He just adores auctions. Willie, Willie, put that cushion down. Put that cushion right back in the chair. Mrs. Boyer doesn't like little boys who pull cushions out of chairs. No, no, sonny, you mustn't talk to the ladies when they are playing auction. It's so hard to keep him quiet. He talks and talks and talks! He has a positive genius for oratory. Why, only last month he recited a selection at the Sunday school entertainment. His father heard him, and he was the proudest man in town. Right then and there we decided that Willie should be a lawyer, or a statesman. He recited "Little Robin

Redbreast" and it would have brought tears to your eyes. He's so emotional. He feels every word he utters. Willie, suppose you recite "Little Robin Redbreast" for the ladies. Stand right out here in front now. Toes out. Shoulders back. Now, make your bow. Just a moment, Miss Steel, surely you wouldn't care to go on playing auction when Willie is about to recite! Now, Willie, begin! "I'm a little robin redbreast, sir!" Go on, petty, speak it out nice and loud. "My nest is in the tree," that's right. Now make your gesture. There's the tree. Your nest is way up in the tree. Now, go on-- "My nest is in the tree!" That's right, "If you look up in yonder elm" -- don't forget the gesture there, Willie. "My pleasant home you'll see!" Now, imitate the little bird. That's right--skip over there. Willie, look out for the lamp! Now skip back again. Isn't he a darling? I taught him that skip myself. Now the second verse, Willie. "I have a secret I would like the little girls to know." Point to the little girls, Willie. There, isn't that funny, he pointed right at you, Miss Steel. He thinks you are a little girl. Isn't he precocious? Go on, now. "But I won't tell a single boy, they rob the poor birds so!" Now act pathetic when you say that. Isn't it wonderful the facial expression he has when he says "they rob the poor birds so!" Say it over again, Willie, and let Mrs. Boyer see your expression. She was dealing the cards and didn't see the full emotion in your face. Yes, start from the very first. "I'm a little robin redbreast." That's right. Gesture to the right. Isn't he graceful? Now the skip! Skip fast, Willie. Lift up your feet. Oh, the vase! He's broken it. Willie, aren't you ashamed to break Mrs. Boyer's nice big vase? Come right over here to mamma, she's got to kiss the naughty hand. You know, Mrs. Boyer, I always kiss his hands when he's naughty and then he never forgets it. He really has a remarkable memory. He can recite several other pieces just as well as he can "Little Robin Redbreast." Suppose you recite "Little Orphant Annie" for the pretty ladies, Willie. Oh, are you going, Miss Steel? I thought you always played auction all afternoon. Willie, Willie, put that hat down. You're tearing it. You mustn't mind him, Miss Steel. He's only in innocent little baby. I don't think it is hurt very

much. Send it around to the Model and they'll fix it just as good as new. Good-bye, Miss Steel. Come over and spend the afternoon with me some day. I'll have Willie dance for you. He can dance the highland fling, and he gives the cutest movie imitations. Good-bye. *[Pause]* She's gone! Now three of you can't play auction. We'll just sit here and let Willie entertain us the rest of the afternoon. He's better than a play!