QADIMS LUMIÈRE
Montessori to Matric O & A Level
School & College

Class 5 English summer vactions homework

INTRODUCTION OF WRITER:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1849–1924) was born in Manchester, England, but moved to America as a teenager. A gifted writer from childhood, Burnett took to writing as a means of supporting her family, creating stories for Lady's Book, Harper's Bazaar, and other magazines. The Secret Garden, novel for children was published in book form in 1911 (having previously been serialized in The American Magazine). The pastoral story of self-healing became a classic of children's literature and is considered to be among Burnett's best work.

What is the Story about?

The Secret Garden tells the story of Mary Lennox, a spoiled young English girl being raised in India. After the death of her parents, she is sent to live at her mysterious uncle's Yorkshire estate, Misselthwaite Manor. Mary is disagreeable, used to being waited on, and initially does not even know how to dress herself.

THE SECRET GARDEN CHAPTER 1

THERE IS NO ONE LEFT

When Mary Lennox was sent to Misselthwaite Manor to live with her uncle everybody said she was the most disagreeable-looking child ever seen. It was true, too. She had a little thin face and a little thin body, thin light hair and a sour expression. Her hair was yellow, and her face was yellow because she had been born in India and had always been ill in one way or another. Her father had held a position under the English Government and had always been busy and her mother had been a great beauty who cared only to go to parties and amuse herself. She had not wanted a little girl at all, and when Mary was born she handed her over to the care of an Ayah, who was made to understand that if she wished to please the Mem Sahib she must keep the child out of sight as much as possible. So when she was a sickly, fretful, ugly little baby she was kept out of the way, and when she became a sickly, fretful, toddling thing she was kept out of the way also. She never remembered seeing familiarly anything but the dark faces of her Ayah and the other native servants, and as they always obeyed her and gave her her own way in everything, because the Mem Sahib would be angry if she was disturbed by her crying, by the time she was six years old she was as tyrannical and selfish a little pig as ever lived. The young English governess who came to teach her to read and write disliked her so much that she gave up her place in three months, and when other governesses came to try to fill it they always went away in a shorter time than the first one. So if Mary had not chosen to really want to know how to read books she would never have learned her letters at all. One frightfully hot morning, when she was about nine years old, she awakened feeling very cross, and she became crosser still when she saw that the servant who stood by her bedside was not her Ayah. "Why did you come?" she said to the strange woman. "I will not let you stay. Send my Ayah to me." "How queer and quiet it is," she said. "It sounds as if there were no one in the bungalow but me and the snake." Almost the next minute she heard footsteps in the compound, and then on the veranda. They were men's footsteps, and the men entered the bungalow and talked in low voices. No one went to meet or speak to them and they seemed to open doors and look into rooms. "What desolation!" she heard one voice say. "That pretty, pretty woman! I suppose the child, too. I heard there was a child, though no one ever saw her."

Mary was standing in the middle of the nursery when they opened the door a few minutes later. She looked an ugly, cross little thing and was frowning because she was beginning to be hungry and feel disgracefully neglected. The first man who came in was a large officer she had once seen talking to her father. He looked tired and troubled, but when he saw her he was so startled that he almost jumped back. "Barney!" he cried out. "There is a child here! A child alone! In a place like this! Mercy on us, who is she!" "I am Mary Lennox," the little girl said, drawing herself up stiffly. She thought the man was very rude to call her father's bungalow "A place like this!" "I fell asleep when everyone had the cholera and I have only just wakened up. Why does nobody come?" "It is the child no one ever saw!" exclaimed the man, turning to his companions. "She has actually been forgotten!" "Why was I forgotten?" Mary said, stamping her foot. "Why does nobody come?" The young man whose name was Barney looked at her very sadly. Mary even thought she saw him wink his eyes as if to wink tears away. "Poor little kid!" he said. "There is nobody left to come." It was in that strange and sudden way that Mary found out that she had neither father nor mother left; that they had died and been carried away in the night, and that the few native servants who had not died also

had left the house as quickly as they could get out of it, none of them even remembering that there was a Missie Sahib. That was why the place was so quiet. It was true that there was no one in the bungalow but herself and the little rustling snake.

CHAPTER 2

MISTRESS MARY QUITE CONTRARY "Oh! did she die!" she exclaimed, quite without meaning to. She had just remembered a French fairy story she had once read called "Riquet of the Tuft" It had been about a poor hunchback and a beautiful princess and it had made her suddenly sorry for Mr. Archibald Craven. "Yes, she died," Mrs. Medlock answered. "And it made him queerer than ever. He cares about nobody. He won't see people. Most of the time he goes away, and when he is at Misselthwaite he shuts himself up in the West Wing and won't let any one but Pitcher see him. Pitcher's an old fellow, but he took care of him when he was a child and he knows his ways."

It sounded like something in a book and it did not make Mary feel cheerful. A house with a hundred rooms, nearly all shut up and with their doors locked—a house on the edge of a moor—whatsoever a moor was—sounded dreary. A man with a crooked back who shut himself up also! She stared out of the window with her lips pinched together, and it seemed quite natural that the rain should have begun to pour down in gray slanting lines and splash and stream down the window-panes. If the pretty wife had been alive she might have made things cheerful by being something like her own mother and by running in and out and going to parties as she had done in frocks "full of lace." But she was not there any more. "You needn't expect to see him, because ten to one you won't," said Mrs. Medlock. "And you mustn't expect that there will be people to talk to you. You'll have to play about and look after yourself. You'll be told what rooms you can go into and what rooms you're to keep out of. There's gardens enough. But when you're in the house don't go wandering and poking about. Mr. Craven won't have it." "I shall not want to go poking about," said sour little Mary and just as suddenly as she had begun to be rather sorry for Mr. Archibald Craven she began to cease to be sorry and to think he was unpleasant enough to deserve all that had happened to him. And she turned her face toward the streaming panes of the window of the railway carriage and gazed out at the gray rain-storm which looked as if it would go on forever and ever. She watched it so long and steadily that the grayness grew heavier and heavier before her eyes and

CHAPTER 3 ACROSS THE MOOR

She slept a long time, and when she awakened Mrs. Medlock had bought a lunchbasket at one of the stations and they had some chicken and cold beef and bread and butter and some hot tea. The rain seemed to be streaming down more heavily than ever and everybody in the station wore wet and glistening waterproofs. The guard lighted the lamps in the carriage, and Mrs. Medlock cheered up very much over her tea and chicken and beef. She ate a great deal and afterward fell asleep herself, and Mary sat and stared at her and watched her fine bonnet slip on one side until she herself fell asleep once more in the corner of the carriage, lulled by the splashing of the rain against the windows. It was quite dark when she awakened

again. The train had stopped at a station and Mrs. Medlock was shaking her. "You have had a sleep!" she said. "It's time to open your eyes! We're at Thwaite Station and we've got a long drive before us."

Mary stood up and tried to keep her eyes open while Mrs. Medlock collected her parcels. The little girl did not offer to help her, because in India native servants always picked up or carried things and it seemed quite proper that other people should wait on one. The station was a small one and nobody but themselves seemed to be getting out of the train. The station-master spoke to Mrs. Medlock in a rough, good-natured way, pronouncing his words in a queer broad fashion which Mary found out afterward was Yorkshire. "I see tha's got back," he said. "An' tha's browt th' young 'un with thee." "Aye, that's her," answered Mrs. Medlock, speaking with a Yorkshire accent herself and jerking her head over her shoulder toward Mary. "How's thy Missus?" Well enow. Th' carriage is waitin' outside for thee." A brougham stood on the road before the little outside platform. Mary saw that it was a smart carriage and that it was a smart footman who helped her in. His long waterproof coat and the waterproof covering of his hat were shining and dripping with rain as everything was, the burly station-master included. When he shut the door, mounted the box with the coachman, and they drove off, the little girl found herself seated in a comfortably cushioned corner, but she was not inclined to go to sleep again. She sat and looked out of the window, curious to see something of the road over which she was being driven to the queer place Mrs. Medlock had spoken of. She was not at all a timid child and she was not exactly frightened, but she felt that there was no knowing what might happen in a house with a hundred rooms nearly all shut up—a house standing on the edge of a moor. "What is a moor?" she said suddenly to Mrs. Medlock. "Look out of the window in about ten minutes and you'll see," the woman answered. "We've got to drive five miles across Missel Moor before we get to the Manor. You won't see much because it's a dark night, but you can see something." Mary asked no more questions but waited in the darkness of her corner, keeping her eyes on the window. The carriage lamps cast rays of light a little distance ahead of them and she caught glimpses of the things they passed. After they had left the station they had driven through a tiny village and she had seen whitewashed cottages and the lights of a public house. Then they had passed a church and a vicarage and a little shop-window or so in a cottage with toys and sweets and odd things set out for sale. Then they were on the highroad and she saw hedges and trees. After that there seemed nothing different for a long time—or at least it seemed a long time to her.

At last the horses began to go more slowly, as if they were climbing up-hill, and presently there seemed to be no more hedges and no more trees. She could see nothing, in fact, but a dense darkness on either side. She leaned forward and pressed her face against the window just as the carriage gave a big jolt. "Eh! We're on the moor now sure enough," said Mrs. Medlock. The carriage lamps shed a yellow light on a rough-looking road which seemed to be cut through bushes and low-growing things which ended in the great expanse of dark apparently spread out before and around them. A wind was rising and making a singular, wild, low, rushing sound. "It's—it's not the sea, is it?" said Mary, looking round at her companion. "No, not it," answered Mrs. Medlock. "Nor it isn't fields nor mountains, it's just miles and miles and miles of wild land that nothing grows on but heather and gorse and broom, and nothing lives on but wild ponies and sheep." "I feel as if it might be the sea, if there were water on it," said Mary. "It sounds like the sea just now." "That's the wind blowing through the bushes," Mrs. Medlock said. "It's a wild, dreary enough place to my mind, though there's plenty that likes it—particularly when the heather's in bloom." On and on they drove through the darkness, and though the rain stopped, the wind rushed by and whistled and made

strange sounds. The road went up and down, and several times the carriage passed over a little bridge beneath which water rushed very fast with a great deal of noise. Mary felt as if the drive would never come to an end and that the wide, bleak moor was a wide expanse of black ocean through which she was passing on a strip of dry land. "I don't like it," she said to herself. "I don't like it," and she pinched her thin lips more tightly together. The horses were climbing up a hilly piece of road when she first caught sight of a light. Mrs. Medlock saw it as soon as she did and drew a long sigh of relief. "Eh, I am glad to see that bit o' light twinkling," she exclaimed. "It's the light in the lodge window. We shall get a good cup of tea after a bit, at all events." It was "after a bit," as she said, for when the carriage passed through the park gates there was still two miles of avenue to drive through and the trees (which nearly met overhead) made it seem as if they were driving through a long dark vault.

They drove out of the vault into a clear space and stopped before an immensely long but low-built house which seemed to ramble round a stone court. At first Mary thought that there were no lights at all in the windows, but as she got out of the carriage she saw that one room in a corner upstairs showed a dull glow. The entrance door was a huge one made of massive, curiously shaped panels of oak studded with big iron nails and bound with great iron bars. It opened into an enormous hall, which was so dimly lighted that the faces in the portraits on the walls and the figures in the suits of armor made Mary feel that she did not want to look at them. As she stood on the stone floor she looked a very small, odd little black figure, and she felt as small and lost and odd as she looked. A neat, thin old man stood near the manservant who opened the door for them. "You are to take her to her room," he said in a husky voice. "He doesn't want to see her. He's going to London in the morning." "Very well, Mr. Pitcher," Mrs. Medlock answered. "So long as I know what's expected of me, I can manage." "What's expected of you, Mrs. Medlock," Mr. Pitcher said, "is that you make sure that he's not disturbed and that he doesn't see what he doesn't want to see." And then Mary Lennox was led up a broad staircase and down a long corridor and up a short flight of steps and through another corridor and another, until a door opened in a wall and she found herself in a room with a fire in it and a supper on a table. Mrs. Medlock said unceremoniously: "Well, here you are! This room and the next are where you'll live—and you must keep to them. Don't you forget that!" It was in this way Mistress Mary arrived at Misselthwaite Manor and she had perhaps never felt quite so contrary in all her life.

CHAPTER 4 MARTHA

When she opened her eyes in the morning it was because a young housemaid had come into her room to light the fire and was kneeling on the hearth-rug raking out the cinders noisily. Mary lay and watched her for a few moments and then began to look about the room. She had never seen a room at all like it and thought it curious and gloomy. The walls were covered with

tapestry with a forest scene embroidered on it. There were fantastically dressed people under the trees and in the distance there was a glimpse of the turrets of a castle. There were hunters and horses and dogs and ladies. Mary felt as if she were in the forest with them. Out of a deep window she could see a great climbing stretch of land which seemed to have no trees on it, and to look rather like an endless, dull, purplish sea. "What is that?" she said, pointing out of the window. Martha, the young housemaid, who had just risen to

her feet, looked and pointed also. “That there?” she said. “Yes.” “That’s the moor,” with a good-natured grin. “Does they like it?” “No,” answered Mary. “I hate it.” “That’s because they’re not used to it,” Martha said, going back to her hearth. “They thinks it’s too big an’ bare now. But they will like it.” “Do you?” inquired Mary. “Aye, that I do,” answered Martha, cheerfully polishing away at the grate. “I just love it. It’s none bare. It’s covered with growing things as smells sweet. It’s fair lovely in spring an’ summer when the gorse an’ broom an’ heather’s in flower. It smells o’ honey an’ there’s such a lot o’ fresh air—an’ the sky looks so high an’ the bees an’ skylarks makes such a nice noise humming an’ singing. Eh! I wouldn’t live away from the moor for anything.” Mary listened to her with a grave, puzzled expression. The native servants she had been used to in India were not in the least like this. They were obsequious and servile and did not presume to talk to their masters as if they were their equals. They made salaams and called them “protector of the poor” and names of that sort. Indian servants were commanded to do things, not asked. It was not the custom to say “please” and “thank you” and Mary had always slapped her Ayah in the face when she was angry. She wondered a little what this girl would do if one slapped her in the face. She was a round, rosy, good-natured-looking creature, but she had a sturdy way which made Mistress Mary wonder if she might not even slap back—if the person who slapped her was only a little girl. “You are a strange servant,” she said from her pillows, rather haughtily. Martha sat up on her heels, with her blacking-brush in her hand, and laughed, without seeming the least out of temper.

“Eh! I know that,” she said. “If there was a grand Missus at Misselthwaite I should never have been even one of the under house-maids. I might have been let to be scullery maid but I’d never have been let upstairs. I’m too common an’ I talk too much Yorkshire. But this is a funny house for all it’s so grand. Seems like there’s neither Master nor Mistress except Mr. Pitcher an’ Mrs. Medlock. Mr. Craven, he won’t be troubled about anything when he’s here, an’ he’s nearly always away. Mrs. Medlock gave me the place out o’ kindness. She told me she could never have done it if Misselthwaite had been like other big houses.” “Are you going to be my servant?” Mary asked, still in her imperious little Indian way. Martha began to rub her grate again. “I’m Mrs. Medlock’s servant,” she said stoutly. “An’ she’s Mr. Craven’s—but I’m to do the housemaid’s work up here an’ wait on you a bit. But you won’t need much waiting on.” “Who is going to dress me?” demanded Mary. Martha sat up on her heels again and stared. She spoke in broad Yorkshire in her amazement. “Can’t they dress themselves!” she said. “What do you mean? I don’t understand your language,” said Mary. “Eh! I forgot,” Martha said. “Mrs. Medlock told me I’d have to be careful or you wouldn’t know what I was saying. I mean can’t you put on your own clothes?” “No,” answered Mary, quite indignantly. “I never did in my life. My Ayah dressed me, of course.” “Well,” said Martha, evidently not in the least aware that she was impudent, “it’s time they should learn. They cannot begin younger. It’ll do thee good to wait on thysen a bit. My mother always said she couldn’t see why grand people’s children didn’t turn out fair fools—what with nurses an’ being’ washed an’ dressed an’ took out to walk as if they was puppies!” “It is different in India,” said Mistress Mary disdainfully. She could scarcely stand this. “You know nothing about India. You know nothing about anything!” She was in such a rage and felt so helpless before the girl’s simple stare, and somehow she suddenly felt so horribly lonely and far away from everything she understood and which understood her, that she threw herself face downward on the pillows and burst into passionate sobbing. She sobbed so unrestrainedly that good-natured Yorkshire Martha was a little frightened and quite sorry for her. She went to the bed and bent over her.

“Eh! you mustn’t cry like that there!” she begged. “You mustn’t for sure. I didn’t know you’d be vexed. I don’t know anything’ about anything—just like you said. I beg your pardon, Miss. Do stop crying.” There was something comforting and really friendly in her queer Yorkshire speech and sturdy way which had a good effect on Mary. She gradually ceased crying and became quiet. Martha looked relieved. “It’s time for thee to get up now,” she said. “Mrs. Medlock said I was to carry they breakfast an’ tea an’ dinner into the’ room next to this. It’s been made into a nursery for thee. I’ll help thee on with thy clothes if they’ll get out o’ bed. If the buttons are at they back they cannot button them up themselves.” When Mary at last decided to get up, the clothes Martha took from the wardrobe were not the ones she had worn when she arrived the night before with Mrs. Medlock. “Those are not mine,” she said. “Mine are black.” She looked the thick white wool coat and dress over, and added with cool approval: “Those are nicer than mine.” “These are the ones they must put on,” Martha answered. “Mr. Craven ordered Mrs. Medlock to get ’em in London. He said ‘I won’t have a child dressed in black wandering’ about like a lost soul,’ he said. ‘It’d make the place sadder than it is. Put color on her.’ Mother she said she knew what he meant. Mother always knows what a body means. She doesn’t hold with black herself’.” “I hate black things,” said Mary. The dressing process was one which taught them both something. Martha had “buttoned up” her little sisters and brothers but she had never seen a child who stood still and waited for another person to do things for her as if she had neither hands nor feet of her own. “Why doesn’t they put on their own shoes?” she said when Mary quietly held out her foot. “My Ayah did it,” answered Mary, staring. “It was the custom.” She said that very often—”It was the custom.” The native servants were always saying it. If one told them to do a thing their ancestors had not done for a thousand years they gazed at one mildly and said, “It is not the custom” and one knew that was the end of the matter. It had not been the custom that Mistress Mary should do anything but stand and allow herself to be dressed like a doll, but before she was ready for breakfast she began to suspect that her

life at Misselthwaite Manor would end by teaching her a number of things quite new to her—things such as putting on her own shoes and stockings, and picking up things she let fall. If Martha had been a well-trained fine young lady’s maid she would have been more subservient and respectful and would have known that it was her business to brush hair, and button boots, and pick things up and lay them away. She was, however, only an untrained Yorkshire rustic who had been brought up in a moorland cottage with a swarm of little brothers and sisters who had never dreamed of doing anything but waiting on themselves and on the younger ones who were either babies in arms or just learning to totter about and tumble over things. If Mary Lennox had been a child who was ready to be amused she would perhaps have laughed at Martha’s readiness to talk, but Mary only listened to her coldly and wondered at her freedom of manner. At first she was not at all interested, but gradually, as the girl rattled on in her good-tempered, homely way, Mary began to notice what she was saying. “Eh! you should see ’em all,” she said. “There’s twelve of us an’ my father only gets sixteen shilling a week. I can tell you my mother’s put to it to get porridge for ’em all. They tumble about on the moor an’ play there all day an’ mother says the air of the moor fattens ’em. She says she believes they eat the grass same as the wild ponies do. Our Dickon, he’s twelve years old and he’s got a young pony he calls his own.” “Where did he get it?” asked Mary. “He found it on the moor with its mother when it was a little one an’ he began to make friends with it an’ give it bits o’ bread an’ pluck young grass for it. And it got to like him so it follows him about an’ it lets him get on its back. Dickon’s a kind lad an’ animals likes him.” Mary had never possessed an animal pet of her own and had always thought she should like one. So she began to feel a slight interest in Dickon, and as she had never before been interested in any

one but herself, it was the dawning of a healthy sentiment. When she went into the room which had been made into a nursery for her, she found that it was rather like the one she had slept in. It was not a child's room, but a grown-up person's room, with gloomy old pictures on the walls and heavy old oak chairs. A table in the center was set with a good substantial breakfast. But she had always had a very small appetite, and she looked with something more than indifference at the first plate Martha set before her. "I don't want it," she said. "They doesn't want thy porridge!" Martha exclaimed incredulously. "No." "They doesn't know how good it is. Put a bit o' treacle on it or a bit o' sugar." "I don't want it," repeated Mary.

"Eh!" said Martha. "I can't abide to see good victuals go to waste. If our children was at this table they'd clean it bare in five minutes." "Why?" said Mary coldly. "If they goes round that way they'll come to the' gardens," she said, pointing to a gate in a wall of shrubbery. "There's lots o' flowers in summer-time, but there's nothing' blooming' now." She seemed to hesitate a second before she added, "One of the gardens is locked up. No one has been in it for ten years." "Why?" asked Mary in spite of herself. Here was another locked door added to the hundred in the strange house. "Mr. Craven had it shut when his wife died so sudden. He won't let no one go inside. It was her garden. He locked the' door an' dug a hole and buried the' key. There's Mrs. Medlock's bell ringing—I must run." After she was gone Mary turned down the walk which led to the door in the shrubbery. She could not help thinking about the garden which no one had been into for ten years. She wondered what it would look like and whether there were any flowers still alive in it. When she had passed through the shrubbery gate she found herself in great gardens, with wide lawns and winding walks with clipped borders. There were trees, and flower-beds, and evergreens clipped into strange shapes, and a large pool with an old gray fountain in its midst. But the flower-beds were bare and wintry and the fountain was not playing. This was not the garden which was shut up. How could a garden be shut up? You could always walk into a garden. She was just thinking this when she saw that, at the end of the path she was following, there seemed to be a long wall, with ivy growing over it. She was not familiar enough with England to know that she was coming upon the kitchen-gardens where the vegetables and fruit were growing. She went toward the wall and found that there was a green door in the ivy, and that it stood open. This was not the closed garden, evidently, and she could go into it. She went through the door and found that it was a garden with walls all round it and that it was only one of several walled gardens which seemed to open into one another. She saw another open green door, revealing bushes and pathways between beds containing winter vegetables. Fruit-trees were trained flat against the wall, and over some of the beds there were glass frames. The place was bare and ugly enough, Mary thought, as she stood and stared about her. It might be nicer in summer when things were green, but there was nothing pretty about it now. Presently an old man with a spade over his shoulder walked through the door leading from the second garden. He looked startled when he saw Mary, and then touched his cap. He had a surly old face, and did not seem at all pleased to see her—but then she was displeased with his

garden and wore her "quite contrary" expression, and certainly did not seem at all pleased to see him. "What is this place?" she asked. "One o' the' kitchen-gardens," he answered. "What is that?" said Mary, pointing through the other green door. "Another of 'em," shortly. "There's another on the other side of the wall an' there's the orchard to the other side of that." "Can I go in them?" asked Mary. "If they likes. But there's no one to see." Mary made no response. She went down the path and through the second green door. There, she found more walls and winter vegetables and glass frames, but in the second wall there was another green door and it was not open. Perhaps it led into the garden which no one had seen for ten years.

As she was not at all a timid child and always did what she wanted to do, Mary went to the green door and turned the handle. She hoped the door would not open because she wanted to be sure she had found the mysterious garden—but it did open quite easily and she walked through it and found herself in an orchard. There were walls all round it also and trees trained against them, and there were bare fruit-trees growing in the winter-browned grass—but there was no green door to be seen anywhere. Mary looked for it, and yet when she had entered the upper end of the garden she had noticed that the wall did not seem to end with the orchard but to extend beyond it as if it enclosed a place at the other side. She could see the tops of trees above the wall, and when she stood still she saw a bird with a bright red breast sitting on the topmost branch of one of them, and suddenly he burst into his winter song—almost as if he had caught sight of her and was calling to her. She stopped and listened to him and somehow his cheerful, friendly little whistle gave her a pleased feeling—even a disagreeable little girl may be lonely, and the big closed house and big bare moor and big bare gardens had made this one feel as if there was no one left in the world but herself. If she had been an affectionate child, who had been used to being loved, she would have broken her heart, but even though she was "Mistress Mary Quite Contrary" she was desolate, and the bright-breasted little bird brought a look into her sour little face which was almost a smile. She listened to him until he flew away. He was not like an Indian bird and she liked him and wondered if she should ever see him again. Perhaps he lived in the mysterious garden and knew all about it.

Perhaps it was because she had nothing whatever to do that she thought so much of the deserted garden. She was curious about it and wanted to see what it was like. Why had Mr. Archibald Craven buried the key? If he had liked his wife so much why did he hate her garden? She wondered if she should ever see him, but she knew that if she did she should not like him, and he would not like her, and that she should only stand and stare at him and say nothing, though she should be wanting dreadfully to ask him why he had done such a queer thing. "People never like me and I never like people," she thought. "And I never can talk as the Crawford children could. They were always talking and laughing and making noises." She thought of the robin and of the way he seemed to sing his song at her, and as she remembered the tree-top he perched on she stopped rather suddenly on the path. "I believe that tree was in the secret garden—I feel sure it was," she said. "There was a wall round the place and there was no door." She walked back into the first kitchen-garden she had entered and found the old man digging there. She went and stood beside him and watched him a few moments in her cold little way. He took no notice of her and so at last she spoke to him. "I have been into the other gardens," she said. "There was nothing' to prevent thee," he answered crustily. "I went into the orchard." "There was no dog at the door to bite thee," he answered. "There was no door there into the other garden," said Mary. "What garden?" he said in a rough voice, stopping his digging for a moment. "The one on the other side of the wall," answered Mistress Mary. "There are trees there—I saw the tops of them. A bird with a red breast was sitting on one of them and he sang." To her surprise the surly old weather-beaten face actually changed its expression. A slow smile spread over it and the gardener looked quite different. It made her think that it was curious how much nicer a person looked when he smiled. She had not thought of it before. He turned about to the orchard side of his garden and began to whistle—a low soft whistle. She could not understand how such a surly man could make such a coaxing sound. Almost the next moment a wonderful thing happened. She heard a soft little rushing flight through the air—and it was the bird with the red breast flying to them, and he actually alighted on the big clod of earth quite near to the gardener's foot.

“Here he is,” chuckled the old man, and then he spoke to the bird as if he were speaking to a child. “Where has they been, they cheeky little beggar?” he said. “I’ve not seen thee before today. Has they, begun the courting’ this early in the season? They are too forrad.” The bird put his tiny head on one side and looked up at him with his soft bright eye which was like a black dewdrop. He seemed quite familiar and not the least afraid. He hopped about and pecked the earth briskly, looking for seeds and insects. It actually gave Mary a queer feeling in her heart, because he was so pretty and cheerful and seemed so like a person. He had a tiny plump body and a delicate beak, and slender delicate legs. “Will he always come when you call him?” she asked almost in a whisper. “Aye, that he will. I’ve known him ever since he was a fledgling. He come out of the’ nest in the’ other garden an’ when first he flew over the’ wall he was too weak to fly back for a few days an’ we got friendly. When he went over the’ wall again the’ rest of the’ brood was gone an’ he was lonely an’ he come back to me.” “What kind of a bird is he?” Mary asked. “Doesn’t they know? He’s a robin redbreast an’ they’re the’ friendliest, curious birds alive. They’re almost as friendly as dogs—if you know how to get on with ’em. Watch him pecking’ about there an’ looking’ round at us now an’ again. He knows we’re talking’ about him.” It was the queerest thing in the world to see the old fellow. He looked at the plump little scarlet-waist coated bird as if he were both proud and fond of him. “He’s a conceited one,” he chuckled. “He likes to hear folk talk about him. An’ curious—bless me, there never was his like for curiosity an’ meddling’. He’s always coming’ to see what I’m planting’. He knows all the’ things Master Craven never troubles hissel’ to find out. He’s the’ head gardener, he is.” The robin hopped about busily pecking the soil and now and then stopped and looked at them a little. Mary thought his black dewdrop eyes gazed at her with great curiosity. It really seemed as if he were finding out all about her. The queer feeling in her heart increased. “Where did the rest of the brood fly to?” she asked. “There’s no knowing’. The old ones turn ’em out o’ their nest an’ make ’em fly an’ they’re scattered before you know it. This one was a knowing’ one an’ he knew he was lonely.” Mistress Mary went a step nearer to the robin and looked at him very hard. “I’m lonely,” she said.

She had not known before that this was one of the things which made her feel sour and cross. She seemed to find it out when the robin looked at her and she looked at the robin. The old gardener pushed his cap back on his bald head and stared at her a minute. “Art that the little wench from India?” he asked. Mary nodded. “Then no wonder they’re lonely. They’ll be lonelier before that’s done,” he said. He began to dig again, driving his spade deep into the rich black garden soil while the robin hopped about very busily employed. “What is your name?” Mary inquired. He stood up to answer her. “Ben Weather staff,” he answered, and then he added with a surly chuckle, “I’m lonely myself’ except when he’s with me,” and he jerked his thumb toward the robin. “He’s the’ only friend I’ve got.” “I have no friends at all,” said Mary. “I never had. My Ayah didn’t like me and I never played with any one.” It is a Yorkshire habit to say what you think with blunt frankness, and old Ben Weather staff was a Yorkshire moor man. “Then me are a good bit alike,” he said. “We was wove out of the’ same cloth. We’re neither of us good looking’ an’ we’re both of us as sour as we look. We’ve got the same nasty tempers, both of us, I’ll warrant.” This was plain speaking, and Mary Lennox had never heard the truth about herself in her life. Native servants always salaamed and submitted to you, whatever you did. She had never thought much about her looks, but she wondered if she was as unattractive as Ben Weather staff and she also wondered if she looked as sour as he had looked before the robin came. She actually began to wonder also if she was “nasty tempered.” She felt uncomfortable. Suddenly a clear rippling little sound broke out near her and she turned round. She was

standing a few feet from a young apple-tree and the robin had flown on to one of its branches and had burst out into a scrap of a song. Ben Weather staff laughed outright. “What did he do that for?” asked Mary.

“He’s made up his mind to make friends with thee,” replied Ben. “Dang me if he hasn’t took a fancy to thee.” “To me?” said Mary, and she moved toward the little tree softly and looked up. “Would you make friends with me?” she said to the robin just as if she was speaking to a person. “Would you?” And she did not say it either in her hard little voice or in her imperious Indian voice, but in a tone so soft and eager and coaxing that Ben Weather staff was as surprised as she had been when she heard him whistle. “Why,” he cried out, “they said that as nice an’ human as if that was a real child instead of a sharp old woman. They said it almost like Dickon talks to his wild things on the moor.” “Do you know Dickon?” Mary asked, turning round rather in a hurry. “Everybody knows him. Dickon’s wandering’ about everywhere. The very blackberries and heather-bells knows him. I warrant the’ foxes shows him where their cubs lies an’ the’ skylarks doesn’t hide their nests from him.” Mary would have liked to ask some more questions. She was almost as curious about Dickon as she was about the deserted garden. But just that moment the robin, who had ended his song, gave a little shake of his wings, spread them and flew away. He had made his visit and had other things to do. “He has flown over the wall!” Mary cried out, watching him. “He has flown into the orchard—he has flown across the other wall—into the garden where there is no door!” “He lives there,” said old Ben. “He came out o’ the’ egg there. If he’s courting’, he’s making’ up to some young madam of a robin that lives among the’ old rose-trees there.” “Rose-trees,” said Mary. “Are there rose-trees?” Ben Weather staff took up his spade again and began to dig. “There was ten year’ ago,” he mumbled. “I should like to see them,” said Mary. “Where is the green door? There must be a door somewhere.” Ben drove his spade deep and looked as uncompanionable as he had looked when she first saw him. “There was ten year’ ago, but there isn’t now,” he said.

“No door!” cried Mary. “There must be.” “None as any one can find, an’ none as is any one’s business. Don’t you be a meddlesome wench an’ poke your nose where it’s no cause to go. Here, I must go on with my work. Get you gone an’ play you. I’ve no more time.” And he actually stopped digging, threw his spade over his shoulder and walked off, without even glancing at her or saying good-by. CHAPTER 5 THE CRY IN THE CORRIDOR At first each day which passed by for Mary Lennox was exactly like the others. Every morning she awoke in her tapestried room and found Martha kneeling upon the hearth building her fire; every morning she ate her breakfast in the nursery which had nothing amusing in it; and after each breakfast she gazed out of the window across to the huge moor which seemed to spread out on all sides and climb up to the sky, and after she had stared for a while she realized that if she did not go out she would have to stay in and do nothing—and so she went out. She did not know that this was the best thing she could have done, and she did not know that, when she began to walk quickly or even run along the paths and down the avenue, she was stirring her slow blood and making herself stronger by fighting with the wind which swept down from the moor. She ran only to make herself warm, and she hated the wind which rushed at her face and roared and held her back as if it were some giant she could not see. But the big breaths of rough fresh air blown over the heather filled her lungs with something which was good for her whole thin body and whipped some red color into her cheeks and brightened her dull eyes when she did not know anything about it. But after a few days spent almost entirely out of doors she wakened one morning knowing what it was to be hungry, and when she sat down to her breakfast she did not glance disdainfully at her porridge and push it away, but took up her spoon and began to eat it and went on eating it until her bowl was empty. “They got

on well enough with that this morning', didn't they?" said Martha. "It tastes nice today," said Mary, feeling a little surprised her self. "It's the' air of the' moor that's giving their stomach for that victuals," answered Martha. "It's lucky for thee that that's got victuals as well as appetite. There's been twelve in our cottage as had the stomach an' nothing' to put in it. You go on playing' you out o' doors every day an' you'll get some flesh on your bones an' you won't be so yeller." "I"I don't play," said Mary. "I have nothing to play with."

"Nothing' to play with!" exclaimed Martha. "Our children plays with sticks and stones. They just runs about an' shouts an' looks at things." Mary did not shout, but she looked at things. There was nothing else to do. She walked round and round the gardens and wandered about the paths in the park. Sometimes she looked for Ben Weather staff, but though several times she saw him at work he was too busy to look at her or was too surly. Once when she was walking toward him he picked up his spade and turned away as if he did it on purpose. One place she went to oftener than to any other. It was the long walk outside the gardens with the walls round them. There were bare flower-beds on either side of it and against the walls ivy grew thickly. There was one part of the wall where the creeping dark green leaves were more bushy than elsewhere. It seemed as if for a long time that part had been neglected. The rest of it had been clipped and made to look neat, but at this lower end of the walk it had not been trimmed at all. A few days after she had talked to Ben Weather staff, Mary stopped to notice this and wondered why it was so. She had just paused and was looking up at a long spray of ivy swinging in the wind when she saw a gleam of scarlet and heard a brilliant chirp, and there, on the top of the wall, forward perched Ben Weather staff's robin redbreast, tilting forward to look at her with his small head on one side. "Oh!" she cried out, "is it you—is it you?" And it did not seem at all queer to her that she spoke to him as if she were sure that he would understand and answer her. He did answer. He twittered and chirped and hopped along the wall as if he were telling her all sorts of things. It seemed to Mistress Mary as if she understood him, too, though he was not speaking in words. It was as if he said: "Good morning! Isn't the wind nice? Isn't the sun nice? Isn't everything nice? Let us both chirp and hop and twitter. Come on! Come on!" Mary began to laugh, and as he hopped and took little flights along the wall she ran after him. Poor little thin, sallow, ugly Mary—she actually looked almost pretty for a moment. "I like you! I like you!" she cried out, pattering down the walk; and she chirped and tried to whistle, which last she did not know how to do in the least. But the robin seemed to be quite satisfied and chirped and whistled back at her. At last he spread his wings and made a darting flight to the top of a tree, where he perched and sang loudly. That reminded Mary of the first time she had seen him. He had been swinging on a tree-top then and she had been standing in the orchard. Now she was on the other side of the orchard and standing in the path outside a wall—much lower down—and there was the same tree inside. "It's in the garden no one can go into," she said to herself. "It's the garden without a door. He lives in there. How I wish I could see what it is like!"

She ran up the walk to the green door she had entered the first morning. Then she ran down the path through the other door and then into the orchard, and when she stood and looked up there was the tree on the other side of the wall, and there was the robin just finishing his song and, beginning to preen his feathers with his beak. "It is the garden," she said. "I am sure it is." She walked round and looked closely at that side of the orchard wall, but she only found what she had found before—that there was no door in it. Then she ran through the kitchen-gardens again and out into the walk outside the long ivy-covered wall, and she walked to the end of it and looked at it, but there was no door; and then she walked to the other end, looking again, but there was no door. "It's very queer," she said. "Ben Weather staff said there was no

door and there is no door. But there must have been one ten years ago, because Mr. Craven buried the key." This gave her so much to think of that she began to be quite interested and feel that she was not sorry that she had come to Misselthwaite Manor. In India she had always felt hot and too languid to care much about anything. The fact was that the fresh wind from the moor had begun to blow the cobwebs out of her young brain and to waken her up a little. She stayed out of doors nearly all day, and when she sat down to her supper at night she felt hungry and drowsy and comfortable. She did not feel cross when Martha chattered away. She felt as if she rather liked to hear her, and at last she thought she would ask her a question. She asked it after she had finished her supper and had sat down on the hearth-rug before the fire. "Why did Mr. Craven hate the garden?" she said. She had made Martha stay with her and Martha had not objected at all. She was very young, and used to a crowded cottage full of brothers and sisters, and she found it dull in the great servants' hall downstairs where the footman and upper-housemaids made fun of her Yorkshire speech and looked upon her as a common little thing, and sat and whispered among themselves. Martha liked to talk, and the strange child who had lived in India, was novelty enough to attract her. She sat down on the hearth herself without waiting to be asked. "Are they thinking about that garden yet?" she said. "I knew they would. That was just the way with me when I first heard about it." "Why did he hate it?" Mary persisted. Martha tucked her feet under her and made herself quite comfortable.

"Listen to the' wind wuthering' round the house," she said. "You could bare stand up on the moor if you was out on it tonight." Mary did not know what "wuthering'" meant until she listened, and then she understood. It must mean that hollow shuddering sort of roar which rushed round and round the house as if the giant no one could see were buffeting it and beating at the walls and windows to try to break in. But one knew he could not get in, and somehow it made one feel very safe and warm inside a room with a red coal fire. "But why did he hate it so?" she asked, after she had listened. She intended to know if Martha did. Then Martha gave up her store of knowledge. "Mind," she said, "Mrs. Medlock said it's not to be talked about. There's lots o' things in this place that's not to be talked over. That's Mr. Craven's orders. His troubles are none servants' business, he says. But for the' garden he wouldn't be like he is. It was Mrs. Craven's garden that she had made when first they were married an' she just loved it, an' they used to 'tend the flowers themselves. An' none o' the' gardeners was ever let to go in. Him an' her used to go in an' shut the' door an' stay there hours an' hours, reading' and talking'. An' she was just a bit of a girl an' there was an old tree with a branch bent like a seat on it. An' she made roses grow over it an' she used to sit there. But one day when she was sitting' there the' branch broke an' she fell on the' ground an' was hurt so bad that next day she died. The' doctors thought he'd go out o' his mind an' die, too. That's why he hates it. No one's never gone in since, an' he won't let any one talk about it." Mary did not ask any more questions. She looked at the red fire and listened to the wind "wuthering'." It seemed to be "wuthering'" louder than ever. At that moment a very good thing was happening to her. Four good things had happened to her, in fact, since she came to Misselthwaite Manor. She had felt as if she had understood a robin and that he had understood her; she had run in the wind until her blood had grown warm; she had been healthily hungry for the first time in her life; and she had found out what it was to be sorry for some one. But as she was listening to the wind she began to listen to something else. She did not know what it was, because at first she could scarcely distinguish it from the wind itself. It was a curious sound—it seemed almost as if a child were crying somewhere. Sometimes the wind sounded rather like a child crying, but presently Mistress Mary felt quite sure this sound was inside the house, not outside it. It was far away, but it was inside. She

turned round and looked at Martha. “Do you hear any one crying?” she said. Martha suddenly looked confused.

“No,” she answered. “It’s the’ wind. Sometimes it sounds like as if some one was lost on the’ moor an’ wailing’. It’s got all sorts o’ sounds.” “But listen,” said Mary. “It’s in the house—down one of those long corridors.” And at that very moment a door must have been opened somewhere downstairs; for a great rushing draft blew along the passage and the door of the room they sat in was blown open with a crash, and as they both jumped to their feet the light was blown out and the crying sound was swept down the far corridor so that it was to be heard more plainly than ever. “There!” said Mary. “I told you so! It is some one crying—and it isn’t a grown-up person.” Martha ran and shut the door and turned the key, but before she did it they both heard the sound of a door in some far passage shutting with a bang, and then everything was quiet, for even the wind ceased “wuthering’” for a few moments. “It was the’ wind,” said Martha stubbornly. “An’ if it wasn’t, it was little Betty Butterworth, the’ scullery-maid. She’s had the’ toothache all day.” But something troubled and awkward in her manner made Mistress Mary stare very hard at her. She did not believe she was speaking the truth.

CHAPTER 6

“THERE WAS SOME ONE CRYING—THERE WAS!” The next day the rain poured down in torrents again, and when Mary looked out of her window the moor was almost hidden by gray mist and cloud. There could be no going out today. “What do you do in your cottage when it rains like this?” she asked Martha. “Try to keep from under each other’s feet mostly,” Martha answered. “Eh! there does seem a lot of us then. Mother’s a good-tempered woman but she gets fair moithered. The biggest ones goes out in the’ cow-shed and plays there. Dickon he doesn’t mind the’ wet. He goes out just the’ same as if the’ sun was shining’. He says he sees things on rainy days as doesn’t show when it’s fair weather. He once found a little fox cub half drowned in its hole and he brought it home in the’ bosom of his shirt to keep it warm. Its mother had been killed nearby an’ the’ hole was swum out an’ the’ rest o’ the’ litter was dead. He’s got it at home now. He found a half-drowned young crow another time an’ he brought it home, too, an’ tamed it. It’s named Soot because it’s so black, an’ it hops an’ flies about with him everywhere.” The time had come when Mary had forgotten to resent Martha’s familiar talk. She had even begun to find it interesting and to be sorry when she stopped or went away. The stories she had

been told by her Ayah when she lived in India had been quite unlike those Martha had to tell about the moorland cottage which held fourteen people who lived in four little rooms and never had quite enough to eat. The children seemed to tumble about and amuse themselves like a litter of rough, good-natured collie puppies. Mary was most attracted by the mother and Dickon. When Martha told stories of what “mother” said or did they always sounded comfortable. “If I had a raven or a fox cub I could play with it,” said Mary. “But I have nothing.” Martha looked perplexed. “Can they knit?” she asked. “No,” answered Mary. “Can they sew?” “No.” “Can they read?” “Yes.” “Then why doesn’t they, read something’, or learn a bit o’ spelling’? That’s old enough to be learning the book a good bit now.” “I haven’t any books,” said Mary. “Those I had were left in India.” “That’s a pity,” said Martha. “If Mrs. Medlock’d let thee go into the’ library, there’s thousands o’ books there.” Mary did not ask where the library was, because she was suddenly inspired by a new idea. She made up her mind to go and find it herself. She was not troubled about Mrs. Medlock. Mrs. Medlock seemed always to be in her comfortable housekeeper’s sitting-room downstairs. In

this queer place one scarcely ever saw any one at all. In fact, there was no one to see but the servants, and when their master was away they lived a luxurious life below stairs, where there was a huge kitchen hung about with shining brass and pewter, and a large servants' hall where there were four or five abundant meals eaten every day, and where a great deal of lively romping went on when Mrs. Medlock was out of the way. Mary's meals were served regularly, and Martha waited on her, but no one troubled themselves about her in the least. Mrs. Medlock came and looked at her every day or two, but no one inquired what she did or told her what to do. She supposed that perhaps this was the English way of treating children. In India she had always been attended by her Ayah, who had

followed her about and waited on her, hand and foot. She had often been tired of her company. Now she was followed by nobody and was learning to dress herself because Martha looked as though she thought she was silly and stupid when she wanted to have things handed to her and put on. "Hasn't they got good sense?" she said once, when Mary had stood waiting for her to put on her gloves for her. "Our Susan Ann is twice as sharp as thee an' she's only four year' old. Sometimes they looks fair soft in the head." Mary had worn her contrary scowl for an hour after that, but it made her think several entirely new things. She stood at the window for about ten minutes this morning after Martha had swept up the hearth for the last time and gone downstairs. She was thinking over the new idea which had come to her when she heard of the library. She did not care very much about the library itself, because she had read very few books; but to hear of it brought back to her mind the hundred rooms with closed doors. She wondered if they were all really locked and what she would find if she could get into any of them. Were there a hundred really? Why shouldn't she go and see how many doors she could count? It would be something to do on this morning when she could not go out. She had never been taught to ask permission to do things, and she knew nothing at all about authority, so she would not have thought it necessary to ask Mrs. Medlock if she might walk about the house, even if she had seen her. She opened the door of the room and went into the corridor, and then she began her wanderings. It was a long corridor and it branched into other corridors and it led her up short flights of steps which mounted to others again. There were doors and doors, and there were pictures on the walls. Sometimes they were pictures of dark, curious landscapes, but oftenest they were portraits of men and women in queer, grand costumes made of satin and velvet. She found herself in one long gallery whose walls were covered with these portraits. She had never thought there could be so many in any house. She walked slowly down this place and stared at the faces which also seemed to stare at her. She felt as if they were wondering what a little girl from India was doing in their house. Some were pictures of children—little girls in thick satin frocks which reached to their feet and stood out about them, and boys with puffed sleeves and lace collars and long hair, or with big ruffs around their necks. She always stopped to look at the children, and wonder what their names were, and where they had gone, and why they wore such odd clothes. There was a stiff, plain little girl rather like herself. She wore a green brocade dress and held a green parrot on her finger. Her eyes had a sharp, curious look. "Where do you live now?" said Mary aloud to her. "I wish you were here." Surely no other little girl ever spent such a queer morning. It seemed as if there was no one in all the huge rambling house but her own small self, wandering about upstairs and down, through narrow passages and wide ones, where it seemed to her that no one but herself had

ever walked. Since so many rooms had been built, people must have lived in them, but it all seemed so empty that she could not quite believe it true. It was not until she climbed to the second floor that she

thought of turning the handle of a door. All the doors were shut, as Mrs. Medlock had said they were, but at last she put her hand on the handle of one of them and turned it. She was almost frightened for a moment when she felt that it turned without difficulty and that when she pushed upon the door itself it slowly and heavily opened. It was a massive door and opened into a big bedroom. There were embroidered hangings on the wall, and inlaid furniture such as she had seen in India stood about the room. A broad window with leaded panes looked out upon the moor; and over the mantel was another portrait of the stiff, plain little girl who seemed to stare at her more curiously than ever. "Perhaps she slept here once," said Mary. "She stares at me so that she makes me feel queer." After that she opened more doors and more. She saw so many rooms that she became quite tired and began to think that there must be a hundred, though she had not counted them. In all of them there were old pictures or old tapestries with strange scenes worked on them. There were curious pieces of furniture and curious ornaments in nearly all of them. In one room, which looked like a lady's sitting-room, the hangings were all embroidered velvet, and in a cabinet were about a hundred little elephants made of ivory. They were of different sizes, and some had their mahouts or palanquins on their backs. Some were much bigger than the others and some were so tiny that they seemed only babies. Mary had seen carved ivory in India and she knew all about elephants. She opened the door of the cabinet and stood on a footstool and played with these for quite a long time. When she got tired she set the elephants in order and shut the door of the cabinet. In all her wanderings through the long corridors and the empty rooms, she had seen nothing alive; but in this room she saw something. Just after she had closed the cabinet door she heard a tiny rustling sound. It made her jump and look around at the sofa by the fireplace, from which it seemed to come. In the corner of the sofa there was a cushion, and in the velvet which covered it there was a hole, and out of the hole peeped a tiny head with a pair of frightened eyes in it. Mary crept softly across the room to look. The bright eyes belonged to a little gray mouse, and the mouse had eaten a hole into the cushion and made a comfortable nest there. Six baby mice were cuddled up asleep near her. If there was no one else alive in the hundred rooms there were seven mice who did not look lonely at all. "If they wouldn't be so frightened I would take them back with me," said Mary. She had wandered about long enough to feel too tired to wander any farther, and she turned back. Two or three times she lost her way by turning down the wrong corridor and was obliged

to ramble up and down until she found the right one; but at last she reached her own floor again, though she was some distance from her own room and did not know exactly where she was. "I believe I have taken a wrong turning again," she said, standing still at what seemed the end of a short passage with tapestry on the wall. "I don't know which way to go. How still everything is!" It was while she was standing here and just after she had said this that the stillness was broken by a sound. It was another cry, but not quite like the one she had heard last night; it was only a short one, a fretful childish whine muffled by passing through walls. "It's nearer than it was," said Mary, her heart beating rather faster. "And it is crying." She put her hand accidentally upon the tapestry near her, and then sprang back, feeling quite startled. The tapestry was the covering of a door which fell open and showed her that there was another part of the corridor behind it, and Mrs. Medlock was coming up it with her bunch of keys in her hand and a very cross look on her face. "What are you doing here?" she said, and she took Mary by the arm and pulled her away. "What did I tell you?" "I turned round the wrong corner," explained Mary. "I didn't know which way to go and I heard some one crying." She quite hated Mrs. Medlock at the moment, but she hated her more the next. "You didn't hear anything of the sort," said the housekeeper. "You come along back to your own nursery or I'll box your ears." And she took her by the arm and half pushed, half pulled her up one passage and down another until

she pushed her in at the door of her own room. “Now,” she said, “you stay where you’re told to stay or you’ll find yourself locked up. The master had better get you a governess, same as he said he would. You’re one that needs some one to look sharp after you. I’ve got enough to do.” She went out of the room and slammed the door after her, and Mary went and sat on the hearth-rug, pale with rage. She did not cry, but ground her teeth. “There was some one crying—there was—there was!” she said to herself. She had heard it twice now, and sometime she would find out. She had found out a great deal this morning. She felt as if she had been on a long journey, and at any rate she had had

something to amuse her all the time, and she had played with the ivory elephants and had seen the gray mouse and its babies in their nest in the velvet cushion.

CHAPTER 7 THE KEY TO THE GARDEN

Two days after this, when Mary opened her eyes she sat upright in bed immediately, and called to Martha. “Look at the moor! Look at the moor!” The rainstorm had ended and the gray mist and clouds had been swept away in the night by the wind. The wind itself had ceased and a brilliant, deep blue sky arched high over the moorland. Never, never had Mary dreamed of a sky so blue. In India skies were hot and blazing; this was of a deep cool blue which almost seemed to sparkle like the waters of some lovely bottomless lake, and here and there, high, high in the arched blueness floated small clouds of snow-white fleece. The far-reaching world of the moor itself looked softly blue instead of gloomy purple-black or awful dreary gray. “Aye,” said Martha with a cheerful grin. “The’ storm’s over for a bit. It does like this at this time o’ the’ year. It goes off in a night like it was pretending’ it had never been here an’ never meant to come again. That’s because the’ springtime’s on its way. It’s a long way off yet, but it’s coming’.” “I thought perhaps it always rained or looked dark in England,” Mary said. “Eh! no!” said Martha, sitting up on her heels among her black lead brushes. “Nowt of the’ soart!” “What does that mean?” asked Mary seriously. In India the natives spoke different dialects which only a few people understood, so she was not surprised when Martha used words she did not know. Martha laughed as she had done the first morning. “There now,” she said. “I’ve talked broad Yorkshire again like Mrs. Medlock said I mustn’t. ‘Nowt of the’ soart’ means ‘nothing’-of-the-sort,’” slowly and carefully, “but it takes so long to say it. Yorkshire’s the’ sunniest place on earth when it is sunny. I told thee they’d like the’ moor after a bit. Just you wait till you see the gold-colored gorse blossoms and the blossoms of the broom, and the heather flowering’, all purple bells, an’ hundreds o’ butterflies fluttering’ an’ bees humming’ an’ skylarks soaring’ up an’ singing’. You’ll want to get out on it as sunrise an’ live out on it all day like Dickon does.” “Could I ever get there?” asked Mary wistfully, looking

through her window at the far-off blue. It was so new and big and wonderful and such a heavenly color. “I don’t know,” answered Martha. “That’s never used the’ legs since that was born, it seems to me. They couldn’t walk five mile. It’s five mile to our cottage.” “I should like to see your cottage.” Martha stared at her a moment curiously before she took up her polishing brush and began to rub the grate again. She was thinking that the small plain face did not look quite as sour at this moment as it had done the first morning she saw it. It looked just a trifle like little Susan Ann’s when she wanted something very much. “I’ll ask my mother about it,” she said. “She’s one o’ them that nearly always sees a way to do things. It’s my day out today an’ I’m going’ home. Eh! I am glad. Mrs. Medlock thinks a lot o’ mother. Perhaps she could talk to

her." "I like your mother," said Mary. "I should think they did," agreed Martha, polishing away. "I've never seen her," said Mary. "No, they hasn't," replied Martha. She sat up on her heels again and rubbed the end of her nose with the back of her hand as if puzzled for a moment, but she ended quite positively. "Well, she's that sensible an' hard working' an' good-natured an' clean that no one could help liking' her whether they'd seen her or not. When I'm going' home to her on my day out I just jump for joy when I'm crossing' the moor." "I like Dickon," added Mary. "And I've never seen him." "Well," said Martha stoutly, "I've told thee that the' very birds likes him and the rabbits an' wild sheep an' ponies, and the foxes themselves. I wonder," staring at her reflectively, "what Dickon would think of thee?" "He wouldn't like me," said Mary in her stiff, cold little way. "No one does." Martha looked reflective again. "How does they like themselves?" she inquired, really quite as if she were curious to know.

Mary hesitated a moment and thought it over. "Not at all—really," she answered. "But I never thought of that before." Martha grinned a little as if at some homely recollection. "Mother said that to me once," she said. "She was at her wash-tub an' I was in a bad temper an' talking' ill of folk, and she turns round on me an' says: 'That young vixen, that! There they stands saying that doesn't like this one and this doesn't like that one. How does they like themselves?' It made me laugh an' it brought me to my senses in a minute." She went away in high spirits as soon as she had given Mary her breakfast. She was going to walk five miles across the moor to the cottage, and she was going to help her mother with the washing and do the week's baking and enjoy herself thoroughly. Mary felt lonelier than ever when she knew she was no longer in the house. She went out into the garden as quickly as possible, and the first thing she did was to run round and round the fountain flower garden ten times. She counted the times carefully and when she had finished she felt in better spirits. The sunshine made the whole place look different. The high, deep, blue sky arched over Misselthwaite as well as over the moor, and she kept lifting her face and looking up into it, trying to imagine what it would be like to lie down on one of the little snow-white clouds and float about. She went into the first kitchen-garden and found Ben Weather staff working there with two other gardeners. The change in the weather seemed to have done him good. He spoke to her of his own accord. "Springtime's coming,'" he said. "Cannot they smell it?" Mary sniffed and thought she could. "I smell something nice and fresh and damp," she said. "That's the good rich earth," he answered, digging away. "It's in a good humor making' ready to grow things. It's glad when planting' time comes. It's dull in the' winter when it's got nowt to do. In the' flower gardens out there things will be stirring' down below in the' dark. The sun's warming' 'em. You'll see bits o' green spikes sticking' out of the black earth after a bit." "What will they be?" asked Mary. "Crocuses and snowdrops and daffy down dilly's. Has that never seen them?" "No. Everything is hot, and wet, and green after the rains in India," said Mary. "And I think things grow up in a night."

"These won't grow up in a night," said Weather staff. "They'll have to wait for 'em. They'll poke up a bit higher here, an' push out a spike more there, an' uncurl a leaf this day an' another that. You watch 'em." "I am going to," answered Mary. Very soon she heard the soft rustling flight of wings again and she knew at once that the robin had come again. He was very pert and lively, and hopped about so close to her feet, and put his head on one side and looked at her so slyly that she asked Ben Weatherstaff a question. "Do you think he remembers me?" she said. "Remembers thee!" said Weather staff indignantly. "He knows every cabbage stump in the' gardens, let alone the' people. He's never seen a little wench here before, an' he's bent on finding' out all about thee. There's no need to try to hide anything from him." "Are things stirring down below in the dark in that garden where he lives?" Mary inquired. "What garden?" grunted Weather

staff, becoming surly again. "The one where the old rose-trees are." She could not help asking, because she wanted so much to know. "Are all the flowers dead, or do some of them come again in the summer? Are there ever any roses?" "Ask him," said Ben Weather staff, hunching his shoulders toward the robin. "He's the only one as knows. No one else has seen inside it for ten year'." Ten years was a long time, Mary thought. She had been born ten years ago. She walked away, slowly thinking. She had begun to like the garden just as she had begun to like the robin and Dickon and Martha's mother. She was beginning to like Martha, too. That seemed a good many people to like—when you were not used to liking. She thought of the robin as one of the people. She went to her walk outside the long, ivy-covered wall over which she could see the tree-tops; and the second time she walked up and down the most interesting and exciting thing happened to her, and it was all through Ben Weather staff's robin. She heard a chirp and a twitter, and when she looked at the bare flower-bed at her left side there he was hopping about and pretending to peck things out of the earth to persuade her that he had not followed her. But she knew he had followed her and the surprise so filled her with delight that she almost trembled a little. "You do remember me!" she cried out. "You do! You are prettier than anything else in the world!"

She chirped, and talked, and coaxed and he hopped, and flirted his tail and twittered. It was as if he were talking. His red waistcoat was like satin and he puffed his tiny breast out and was so fine and so grand and so pretty that it was really as if he were showing her how important and like a human person a robin could be. Mistress Mary forgot that she had ever been contrary in her life when he allowed her to draw closer and closer to him, and bend down and talk and try to make something like robin sounds. Oh! to think that he should actually let her come as near to him as that! He knew nothing in the world would make her put out her hand toward him or startle him in the least tiniest way. He knew it because he was a real person—only nicer than any other person in the world. She was so happy that she scarcely dared to breathe. The flower-bed was not quite bare. It was bare of flowers because the perennial plants had been cut down for their winter rest, but there were tall shrubs and low ones which grew together at the back of the bed, and as the robin hopped about under them she saw him hop over a small pile of freshly turned up earth. He stopped on it to look for a worm. The earth had been turned up because a dog had been trying to dig up a mole and he had scratched quite a deep hole. Mary looked at it, not really knowing why the hole was there, and as she looked she saw something almost buried in the newly-turned soil. It was something like a ring of rusty iron or brass and when the robin flew up into a tree nearby she put out her hand and picked the ring up. It was more than a ring, however; it was an old key which looked as if it had been buried a long time. Mistress Mary stood up and looked at it with an almost frightened face as it hung from her finger. "Perhaps it has been buried for ten years," she said in a whisper. "Perhaps it is the key to the garden!"