

THE SECRET GARDEN

by Thomas Hischak

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THE SECRET GARDEN

A Full Length Adaptation from the book by Frances Hodgson Burnett
by Thomas Hischak

SYNOPSIS: Frances Hodgson Burnett's beloved classic is brought to the stage faithfully and in a theatrical manner. The orphaned Mary Lennox is sent to live at her Uncle Archibald's Yorkshire estate where she grows from a sour and bitter girl to a caring and selfless young woman by discovering and, with the help of others, bringing back to life an abandoned secret garden. The tale is told years later by the aged Dickon, who lives with nature and recounts how he met and helped Mary bring life to the garden. As in the young adult novel, the dramatization is filled with colorful characters and incidents that are humorous as well as heart-warming.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(8 females, 6-7 males, 2-10 extras; doubling possible)

- MARY LENNOX (f) A sullen ten year-old who gradually warms up to people. *(257 lines)*
- OLD DICKON SOWERBY (m)..... A crusty but likable old man who is still lively. *(80 lines)*
- YOUNG DICKON SOWERBY (m)..... A youth between the ages of twelve and sixteen with a magical touch with people and animals. *(84 lines)*
- ARCHIBALD CRAVEN (m) A morose man in his late thirties. Also plays Ghost of Craven. *(65 lines)*
- MARTHA SOWERBY (f)..... Dickon's sister, a bright and cheerful housemaid in her twenties. *(57 lines)*
- COLIN CRAVEN (m) Archibald's son, a sickly and temperamental ten-year-old boy. *(109 lines)*
- MRS. MEDLOCK (f) A cold and efficient middle-aged housekeeper. *(65 lines)*

BEN WEATHERSTAFF (m)	A rustic and rough-edged gardener in his sixties. <i>(45 lines)</i>
DR. MILES CRAVEN (m).....	Archibald's cousin, a chilly and efficient physician in his thirties. <i>(26 lines)</i>
MRS. LENNOX (f).....	A lovely but vain woman in her late thirties. <i>(10 lines)</i>
AYAH (f).....	A subservient Indian servant, most any age. <i>(14 lines)</i>
LOUISA (f).....	An adventurous girl in her late teens. <i>(42 lines)</i>
SARAH (f).....	A curious girl in her late teens. <i>(34 lines)</i>
BERTHA (f).....	Sarah's sister, a cautious girl, in her early teens. <i>(32 lines)</i>
BRITISH OFFICER (m).....	An experienced officer, most any age. <i>(8 lines)</i>
GHOST OF LILY CRAVEN (f).....	Beautiful and gracious, in her late twenties. <i>(Non-Speaking)</i>
EXTRAS:	
SERVANTS (m/f).....	Minimum of two. <i>(Non-Speaking)</i>

CAST NOTE: British Officer can be played by the actor who plays Dr. Craven or Ben Weatherstaff. Ghost of Lily can be played by the actress who plays Ayah. Various actors can play the Servants when not playing other characters. Mary, Archibald, Colin, Dr. Craven, and British Officer have upper-class British accents. Ayah has an Indian dialect. The rest of the characters have Yorkshire accents. A true Yorkshire dialect is very difficult for American audiences to understand. It is recommended that the actors allow the unusual word order in their speeches provide the Yorkshire flavor.

DURATION: 90 minutes.

TIME: Around 1911.

SETTING: Yorkshire, England and India.

SET

Although the action of the play takes place in various interiors and exteriors, the audience should always be aware that the location is the wild, rural countryside of Yorkshire. It is suggested that the only permanent scenic pieces be some trees and bushes on both sides of the stage and the background be the rolling moors which stretch across the back wall of the stage. Select furniture and scenery pieces can be added for individual scenes but the landscape should always remain in view. It is suggested that servants change these pieces.

Regardless of how much time and money one spends on creating a realistic garden on stage, it cannot match the descriptions and visions of the characters. It is best to have an empty and open stage and leave the garden to the imagination of the audience. This is also true of the Misselthwaite Manor house rooms.

SOUND EFFECTS

- Indian Music
- Train Station Sounds
- Train in Motion
- Carriage in Motion
- Single Bird Chirping
- Nest of Young Birds Chirping
- Wind Howling
- Distant Thunder
- Loud Thunder Claps

In addition to listed sound effects, music can be used at certain points in the production. The traditional music from ancient India near the beginning of the play is one example. A specific piece of romantic music can be used as Lily's theme and played each time Ghost of Lily Craven appears. Old English folk tunes are ideal for scenes in the garden or there can be a rustic piece of folk music played under Old Dickon's narration.

PROPS

- Conjuring Stick
- Large Floor Pillow
- Bench
- 3 Suitcases
- Large Trunk
- Child's bed with Pillow and Blankets
- Tray with Bowl and Mug
- Bedside Table
- Wheelbarrow with Garden Tools
- Table and Chair
- Tray with Plate and Mug
- Large Sack of Mulch
- Key
- Music Pipe
- Knife
- Garden Wall Unit with Door
- Armchair
- Letter and Pen
- Wheelchair
- Ladder
- Trowel
- Rake
- Hoe
- Watering Can
- Rose Bush in a Pot
- Envelope and Letter
- Candlestick
- Bell
- Blindfold

COSTUMES

MARY – A dark unadorned dress for India; a black dress, coat, and hat for the journey; a white nightgown when indicated; two or three dresses for life at the manor. The dresses should be plain with autumnal colors at first then white and yellow by the last scene.

MARTHA – A blue and white Edwardian servant's uniform with white apron and cap.

MRS. MEDLOCK – A grey coat and bonnet for the journey; a dark maroon dress with black trim for the manor.

LOUISA – A blue and white pinafore.

SARAH – A brown and white pinafore.

BERTHA – A dark green pinafore.

MRS. LENNOX – An elegant Edwardian gown in dark red with gold trim.

AYAH – A multi-colored sari and veil.

GHOST OF LILY CRAVEN – A white summer dress from the turn of the 19th century.

FEMALE SERVANTS – A black dress with white trim and white apron and cap.

OLD DICKON – A worn brown jacket, dark brown trousers, boots, a wide-brimmed hat with a pheasant's feather stuck in it.

COLIN – A white, full-length nightgown in bedroom; a dark green jacket and breeches with a white shirt for the first outings; a light blue jacket and breeches with a white shirt for final scenes.

BRITISH OFFICER – A red and white British uniform, black belt, with helmet and boots.

YOUNG DICKON – A light brown jacket, dark brown trousers, boots, and a hat with a pheasant's feather in it.

MR. CRAVEN – A dark purple and black smoking jacket, black trousers and tie for study; dark brown suit with vest and tie for London; off-white suit with vest, tie, and hat for final scene.

BEN WEATHERSTAFF – A charcoal grey heavy jacket, off-white shirt, black work pants, boots, cap; remove jacket for later scenes and replace with a grey vest.

DR. CRAVEN – A light grey suit with vest and tie.

MALE SERVANTS – A black and maroon livery with tie, white gloves.

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

AT START: *Only the Yorkshire landscape is seen, if possible with fog or mist. MARY is seen far upstage in the mist walking across the moors.*

MARY: *(Chants in a monotonous and haunting manner.)*

"Mistress Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells, and cockle shells,
And marigolds all in a row."

MARY exits and the lights grow brighter as LOUISE, SARAH, and BERTHA enter running.

SARAH: Not so fast, Louisa!

BERTHA: Wait for me!

LOUISA: *(Stops running.)* This be the place!

BERTHA: I'll go no further! *(Plops down on the ground.)*

LOUISA: *(To SARAH.)* I told you we shouldn't have brought your sister along!

SARAH: Where is he? I don't see anyone.

LOUISA: He won't show his face if he sees us here sitting in the open like a trio of ducks! *(Crosses to the side of the stage.)* Come over to here and we'll hide ourselves in this heather brush.

SARAH: *(Follows LOUISA.)* I don't think he'll come in any case, Louisa. Ye just be telling foolish, made-up stories again.

LOUISA: He'll come. Bertha! Get ye over here now before he sees us!

BERTHA: *(Begrudgingly rises and joins them.)* I think my sister's right. You're just playing a joke on us!

LOUISA: You'll see with your own eyes. I did on Tuesday last.

SARAH: What brought ye to such a forsaken place?

LOUISA: I heard Old Martha talking to cook. "Whatever become of your brother Dickon Sowerby?", cook asks her when Old Martha come to deliver the onions. "He still be about," Old Martha says. "Walking the moors and conversing with the birds."

BERTHA: He talks to birds?

LOUISA: And they talk to him!

SARAH: Sounds balmy to me.

LOUISA: Dickon Sowerby understands their language. That's what Old Martha says.

SARAH: Then she be balmy too.

LOUISA: So last Tuesday, I come out to this place when Miss Carmichael thinks I'm studying my French and I seen him with my own eyes!

BERTHA: Did he look like a crazy man? I don't want to be caught on the moors with a crazy man!

LOUISA: I only saw him from afar. He didn't look dangerous. More gentle like.

SARAH: I don't think a body would come out on these moors unless he was a crazy person. *(Rises.)* Let's go back to the village. Come on, Bertha.

BERTHA: Aye. *(Rises.)* Before mother finds out what we've been up to.

LOUISA: *(Sees someone in the distance.)* Get ye down, both of you! I see him coming!

SARAH and BERTHA sit.

BERTHA: Where?

LOUISA: *(Points to opposite side of the stage.)* There yonder!

SARAH: I see him!

BERTHA: He's heading this way. We're done for now!

LOUISA: Hush, Bertha! Hold your tongues and we'll get a good look at him as he passes.

OLD DICKON enters from the opposite side of the stage, carrying a walking stick but doesn't need it to walk. He stops center stage and listens. SFX: Robin bird chirping.

OLD DICKON: *(Speaking upwards to the unseen bird.)* Ye don't say? Three of them?

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

OLD DICKON: Oh, I don't think they mean any harm.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

OLD DICKON: Well, best to make sure.

OLD DICKON crosses over to SARAH, BERTHA, and LOUISA who let out a little scream.

OLD DICKON: Good afternoon to ye, young ladies.

SARAH: We mean no harm!

BERTHA: Don't hit us with your cane!

OLD DICKON: This be not a cane, young one. It be a conjuring stick.

BERTHA: Whatever it be, don't hurt us!

LOUISA: You'll be Dickon Sowerby?

OLD DICKON: That I cannot deny. And who are ye three?

LOUISA: *(Rises.)* I'm Louisa Gordon. This is my friend Sarah and her sister Bertha.

OLD DICKON: A pleasure to know ye. I would not bother ye but yon robin tells me that you three is uncomfortable close to his nest in that heather bush and it has him worried something terrible.

LOUISA: Oh!

SARAH and BERTHA rise and all three girls move away from the bush.

LOUISA: So sorry. We didn't know.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

OLD DICKON: *(Looks up.)* Aye. It's like I said. They meant no harm. *(To the girls.)* He believes you. *(To LOUISA.)* I knew a Louisa Gordon once up at the village. It was many years ago. I used to tend her rabbit hutch.

LOUISA: That must be my grandmother! She often tells me about the rabbits she had when she was a little girl.

OLD DICKON: It's the same Louisa Gordon then. You ask her about Dickon Sowerby who took care of her rabbits. She'll remember me.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

OLD DICKON: *(To the bird.)* Oh, long before your time.

SARAH: Can you really talk to birds?

OLD DICKON: Aye. But anyone can talk to birds. It's getting them to talk back is the tricky part.

LOUISA: Cook says ye know stories. And Old Martha says –

OLD DICKON: Ye know my sister Martha, do ye?

LOUISA: A little. She comes to our house with the onions. She says ye know all kinds of stories about the moors.

OLD DICKON: Aye. Martha tells the truth. But I tell only true stories.

BERTHA: True stories are not so fun as made-up ones. My grandpa always tells true stories about growing up in Grimsby and they be boring.

OLD DICKON: I cannot speak for your granddad or for Grimsby but there be plenty of true stories from these parts that are worth telling. *(To LOUISA.)* And since ye be the granddaughter of Louisa Gordon with the rabbits and ye knows my sister Martha, I best prove her right and tell ye a true story.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

OLD DICKON: *(Looks up.)* What's that?

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

OLD DICKON: That be too long a story for three young ones lost on the moor.

LOUISA: We're not lost! We came here looking for ye.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

SARAH: What's he saying?

OLD DICKON: Yon Robin wonders if ye know the story of Mary Lennox.

BERTHA: Mary who?

OLD DICKON: Mary Lennox. She come halfway round the world to this land to find a secret garden and save a boy's life.

SARAH: That sounds like a made-up story to me.

OLD DICKON: It be true all the same.

LOUISA: Tell it to us, Mr. Sowerby. Please!

BERTHA: Yes, please do!

OLD DICKON: I'll do ye better than tell you. Since I have my conjuring stick with me, I can show ye the story.

LOUISA: Can ye do that?

OLD DICKON: Look over yonder.

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

AT START: OLD DICKON raises his stick and points to the opposite side of the stage. The lights change and SFX: traditional music from India. Into the light; MRS. LENNOX enters.

SARAH: I see it!

LOUISA: Me too! Is that Mary Lennox?

OLD DICKON: That be her mother, Mrs. Lennox, far away in India.

BERTHA: But she's right there!

OLD DICKON: Far away in place and in time. Look...

OLD DICKON points his stick again and then AYAH enters and joins MRS. LENNOX.

SARAH: Is that Mary Lennox?

OLD DICKON: Her servant. Her Ayah, as they be called in India. Listen... (*Points his stick again.*)

MRS. LENNOX: You are the third Ayah we have employed since Christmas. My daughter Mary is a very disagreeable child. She drives everyone away.

AYAH: I will do my best, Mem Sahib.

MRS. LENNOX: You must take charge of the child and handle things without bothering me about it all. As the wife of Major Lennox, I have social obligations that come first. I cannot be distracted by the misbehavior of an impossible young girl. Your job is to see that Mary is taken care of and kept away from the Major and myself.

AYAH: I understand, Mem Sahib.

MRS. LENNOX: I have always been known as a gracious woman who might be considered beautiful as well as charming. I will never

understand how a daughter of mine could be so plain and sour looking and with such an unpleasant disposition.

MARY enters. She wears a simple, unadorned dark dress and her hair falls carelessly down onto her shoulders. She circles around MRS. LENNOX and AYAH without looking at them.

MARY: *(Chanting.)*

"Mistress Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?"

LOUISA: *(To OLD DICKON overlapping MARY'S chant.)* Is that...?

OLD DICKON: Aye. That be Mary Lennox.

Lights dim on OLD DICKON, LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA, all who sit and watch.

MRS. LENNOX: Mary, this is your new Ayah.

MARY stops and looks at AYAH.

AYAH: Good day, Missie Sahib.

MARY: *(Continues to chant and circle them.)*

"With silver bells, and cockle shells,
And marigolds all in a row." *(Exits.)*

MRS. LENNOX: As I say, she is to be kept away from the Major and myself. Is that understood?

AYAH: Yes, Mem Sahib.

MRS. LENNOX: Good.

MRS. LENNOX exits and the lights fade on the scene, then AYAH exits.

LOUISA: Was Mary Lennox really as disagreeable as her mother said?

OLD DICKON: In India, little Mary did not like anyone. And she not be liked by anyone. Hard to say which caused which.

BERTHA: What about the new servant?

SARAH: The Ayah!

OLD DICKON: Ye might say they tolerated each other well enough.

A SERVANT enters with a large pillow and places it on the floor and then exits. MARY enters and sits on the pillow. OLD DICKON points his stick at MARY; the lights rise on MARY.

MARY: Ayah! Ayah!

AYAH: *(Enters quickly.)* Yes, Missie Sahib?

MARY: *(Demanding.)* How come my breakfast is late?

AYAH: The cook... he run away.

MARY: *(Angry.)* Why did he run away?

AYAH: There is cholera in the town. He afraid. Fateh is now the cook.
But he is slow.

MARY: I'm hungry! Tell him to hurry.

AYAH: Yes, Missie Sahib. *(Exits quickly.)*

OLD DICKON: The next morning things be worse.

MARY: *(Shouting.)* Ayah! Ayah!

AYAH: *(Enters quickly.)* Yes, Missie Sahib?

MARY: Where is my breakfast?

AYAH: Fateh sick with the cholera. So is the Major. And your mother.

MARY: I'm hungry!

AYAH: I make something. You see.

MARY: Hurry then!

AYAH: Yes, Missie Sahib. *(Exits quickly.)*

OLD DICKON: The next morning there be no answer at all.

MARY: *(Shouting.)* Ayah! Ayah! Ayah! *(To self.)* Stupid lazy Ayah.
When she comes, I shall call her names. I will say she is a pig. That is the worst insult for a Hindu. A pig! A daughter of a pig! *(Laughs then calls again.)* Ayah! Ayah!

BRITISH OFFICER: *(Offstage.)* Is someone in there? Did I hear a voice?

BRITISH OFFICER enters, holding a white handkerchief across his mouth and nose.

MARY: You heard me.

BRITISH OFFICER: What are you doing here? Who are you?

MARY: *(Rising.)* I live here. My name is Mary Lennox and I want my Ayah.

BRITISH OFFICER: Lennox?

MARY: *(Haughtily.)* Send for my Ayah at once or I will report you to my father, Major Lennox.

BRITISH OFFICER: I... I... *(Removes handkerchief.)* She's dead. So is the Major. And your mother. The cholera...

MARY: I must have a new Ayah then.

BRITISH OFFICER: There's no one in the house. They are all dead. You are the only one to survive.

MARY: *(Angry.)* You must send for someone –!

BRITISH OFFICER: Miss Lennox, there is no one –

MARY: *(Covers her ears with her hands and shouts.)*

"Mistress Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow . . . !

The lights fade out on the scene as SFX: Indian music stops. MARY and BRITISH OFFICER exit taking the pillow with him.

ACT ONE, SCENE 3

AT START: *Lights rise on OLD DICKON, LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA.*

LOUISA: Was there indeed no one, Mr. Sowerby?

OLD DICKON: No. No family left. Not in India. Her only living relative was an uncle. Archibald Craven who lived here in Yorkshire. His sister be Mrs. Lennox. Know ye a place called Misselthwaite Manor?

LOUISA: Yes!

BERTHA: I've seen it!

SARAH: So have I!

OLD DICKON: That be the place her uncle lived. So Mary was sent to Misselthwaite. *(Rises with the help of his stick.)* As I told ye, she come halfway around the world. And as I tells you before, it be a true story.

OLD DICKON starts to walk away. LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA stand up quickly.

LOUISA: But what about the garden?

SARAH: Ye said she found a secret garden.

BERTHA: And what of the boy she saved?

OLD DICKON: But ye told me that all sounded like a made-up story.
(*Looking up.*) That be what they said, is it not, robin?

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

SARAH: Now we believe ye, Mr. Sowerby!

LOUISA and BERTHA: We do!

OLD DICKON: Robin says now ye do heed what Old Dickon says. So ye wants to see more?

LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA: Yes!

OLD DICKON crosses to the other side of the stage, LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA follow.

OLD DICKON: It be a long story. And you'll not wanting to be left out here on the moors come nightfall. But I can conjure up the important parts of the tale. If that will please ye.

LOUISA: It would very much indeed, Mr. Sowerby.

OLD DICKON: Then we best sit here in the shade and I'll do my best.

OLD DICKON sits and LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA sit near him.

OLD DICKON: I did not see Mary Lennox till she be at Misselthwaite Manor for three days but she later told me all about what happened in India. And how she come to this country.

SARAH: How did she come?

OLD DICKON: First by train then boat and then another boat then train to London where she was met by Mrs. Medlock.

BERTHA: Who was Mrs. Medlock?

OLD DICKON: I'll show ye.

ACT ONE, SCENE 4

AT START: *MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK enter. MARY, wears a heavy black coat and hat, and MRS. MEDLOCK is dressed all in dark colors with a dark bonnet which makes her look even more severe. OLD DICKON points his stick to the other side of the stage where the lights rise on SFX: The sounds of a busy train station are heard.*

MRS. MEDLOCK: You'll be Mary Lennox then?

MARY: *(Coldly.)* Yes.

MRS. MEDLOCK: You're surely Mr. Craven's niece by the looks of you. My, but you have his sour look and his sad eyes. How old are ye?

MARY: I was ten years old last August.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Ten years old. And looking like an old woman with such a scowling face.

MRS. LENNOX enters unseen, spotlight on her.

MRS. LENNOX: I will never understand how a daughter of mine could be so plain and sour looking and with such an unpleasant disposition.

The spotlight goes out and MRS. LENNOX exits.

MRS. MEDLOCK: You'll be wondering who I am.

MARY: *(Defiantly.)* I don't care.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Spoken like your uncle too. Well, I be Mrs. Medlock, the housekeeper of Misselthwaite Manor. That's where you're going. Or don't you care about that neither?

MARY: I'm cold. London is a terrible cold place.

MRS. MEDLOCK: You'll not know the meaning of cold till we get to Yorkshire. Come and get something warm to eat. We have an hour before the train leaves.

The lights fade on MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK as SERVANTS enter and set a padded bench center stage and exit. MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK then cross and sit on it facing the audience.

OLD DICKON: It be a long train journey from London to Yorkshire. And for much of the time Mary spoke not a word. But she was curious, no doubt. Just too proud to ask questions.

The lights rise on MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK sitting on the bench; SFX: Train sounds. MARY looks out the window. Pause.

MRS. MEDLOCK: England is not looking a bit like India, I dare say. There be no tigers or temples or whatnot here. This be a civilized country. Though I must admit nature runs wild in parts of Yorkshire.

MARY: *(Still looking out the window.)* Would that be Yorkshire?

MRS. MEDLOCK: No. We've hours to go before we reach Yorkshire. But before we get there I best tell ye some things about your uncle and Misselthwaite, be ye interested or not. Did not your parents ever tell you about your uncle?

MARY: No.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Then I better prepare ye about him. And the place ye are going to. Misselthwaite be a large house but gloomy and old. There be a hundred rooms in it but most of them's shut up and locked. The place is over six hundred years old and is filled with old pictures and furniture and such. There's a large garden and plenty of grounds sitting at the edge of the moor. Misselthwaite is no place for a young girl but that's where ye be going all the same.

MARY: Why does my uncle live in such a place?

MRS. MEDLOCK: Oh, he's very proud of it. He was born there, you see. And was happy there. For a time.

MARY: But no more?

MRS. MEDLOCK: Now he be happy no place he goes. But he has fond memories of Misselthwaite. You see, your uncle has a crooked back. Was born that way. It made him a surly and bitter youth, as ye can guess. All his money but still angry and lonely. Then he met her. A pretty little thing. Maybe she took pity on him. Maybe she loved him. Cannot say. So she went and married him. Some said it was for his money but that not be true at all. And he loved her and became a new kind a person. Misselthwaite was not so gloomy then. But she died and he was worse than before.

MARY: What was her name?

MRS. MEDLOCK: Lily. The sweetest thing ye can imagine. When he lost her he gave up on life. He is away most of the time. Travels the world over. But it brings him no relief. So he returns home and shuts himself up until he can't stand it and he's off again.

MARY: Does he know I am coming?

MRS. MEDLOCK: It was his wish. The lawyers and such wanted to send you to boarding school but he said you are his niece and he is your guardian and your place is at Misselthwaite. You needn't expect to see him because ten to one you won't. And he'll not want to see you.

MRS. LENNOX enters unseen, spotlight on her.

MRS. LENNOX: As I say, she is to be kept away from the Major and myself. Is that understood?

Lights fade on MRS. LENNOX, MARY, and MRS. MEDLOCK. SERVANTS move the bench further downstage and MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK sit again, this time on opposite sides of the bench.

AT ONE, SCENE 5

OLD DICKON: When they finally got off the train at Thwaite, it be a long carriage ride to Misselthwaite Manor and with each mile it got darker and darker.

Lights up on MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK and SFX: A horse and carriage and wind blowing.

MARY: What is a moor?

MRS. MEDLOCK: Look out the window and in about ten minutes you'll see for yourself. You can hear it already.

MARY: That wind? Is it the sea?

MRS. MEDLOCK: It be wind but no sea. Nor mountains or proper fields. The moor be miles and miles of rough land that grows nothing on it but heather and gorse, and nothing lives on it but wild ponies and sheep. When the wind blows through the bushes it makes that

hollowing sound. We call it wuthering. There be some who like the moor, particularly when the heather is in bloom. But it's a wild and dreary place to my mind.

MARY: I never heard of such a place.

MRS. MEDLOCK: It be getting dark but keep looking and ye shall see it soon enough.

MARY looks out the window and the lights on them and the SFX: sounds fade out. MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK exit and SERVANTS move the bench to one side of the stage while a large armchair is set up on the opposite side, its back to the audience. CRAVEN enters and sits in the armchair, unseen by the audience as well.

OLD DICKON: It be very dark when they arrived at Misselthwaite Manor and Mrs. Medlock brought Mary into the great front hall. It was cold and empty and she could see little with so many dark shadows all about.

Dim lights up on half of the stage as SERVANTS enter with trunks and suitcases, cross the stage, then exit on the opposite side. They are followed by MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK still wearing their coats and hats.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Sit ye there on this bench and do not wander off. I have to tell your uncle that we have arrived.

MARY sits and MRS. MEDLOCK crosses to the armchair as some lights rise on that area of the stage.

CRAVEN: *(Unseen in the armchair.)* Is she here?

MRS. MEDLOCK: Yes, Mr. Craven.

CRAVEN: *(More weary than angry.)* I'll not see her.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Of course, sir.

CRAVEN: Did you buy her new clothes in London?

MRS. MEDLOCK: Yes, sir.

CRAVEN: I won't have her going about the place wearing black.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Certainly not, Mr. Craven.

CRAVEN: I leave tomorrow for London. I don't know when I shall return.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Very good, sir.

CRAVEN: My cousin comes on Thursday. You know what to do.

MRS. MEDLOCK: I'll take care of everything.

CRAVEN: Then good night to you, Mrs. Medlock.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Good night, Mr. Craven.

Lights fade out on both sides of the stage as SERVANTS remove the bench and armchair and CRAVEN exits. They then set up a small bed center stage with a small bedside table with a lit candle on it.

OLD DICKON: Mrs. Medlock led Mary up different staircases and down long hallways. She could see that Misselthwaite was a large house indeed. And as gloomy as she had been told. Finally they stopped at a door and went inside.

MRS. MEDLOCK and MARY cross to center and stand on either side of the bed and the lights rise on MARY'S bedroom.

MRS. MEDLOCK: This and the room next door be where you'll live. And you must keep to them and not be going off on your own. The stairway at the end of this hall leads down to the garden. You can go out anytime if the weather be fitting. Otherwise stick to these rooms. Your meals will be brought to you. You are not to wear that dress no more. Your new clothes be in the cabinet in the next room. Now get some sleep. You must be weary from the long journey.

MRS. MEDLOCK exits as the lights fade out. MARY gets in bed and pulls the covers over her.

OLD DICKON: Mary was indeed weary. And more lonely than she ever felt a person could be. She fell asleep quick enough but soon had nightmares that returned over and over again.

MRS. LENNOX, AYAH, BRITISH OFFICER, and MRS. MEDLOCK enter and form a half circle around the bed. Dim lights rise on them and the bed.

MRS. LENNOX: I will never understand how a daughter of mine could be so plain and sour looking and with such an unpleasant disposition.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Ten years old. And looking like an old woman with such a scowling face.

AYAH: There is cholera in the town. He afraid. Fateh is now the cook. But he is slow.

BRITISH OFFICER: There's no one in the house. They are all dead. You are the only one to survive.

MRS. LENNOX: Your job is to see that Mary is taken care of and kept away from the Major and myself. Is that understood?

MRS. MEDLOCK: You needn't expect to see him because ten to one you won't. And he'll not want to see you.

AYAH: Fateh sick with the cholera. So is the Major. And your mother.

BRITISH OFFICER: She's dead. So is the Major. And your mother. The cholera...

MRS. LENNOX, AYAH, BRITISH OFFICER, and MRS. MEDLOCK:
(*Chanting, getting louder and louder.*)

"Mistress Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells, and cockle shells,
And marigolds all in a row!"

MRS. LENNOX, AYAH, BRITISH OFFICER, and MRS. MEDLOCK exit, the lights change, and MARY suddenly sits up in bed. COLIN is heard crying offstage.

MARY: Who's there . . . ?

COLIN is heard crying offstage.

MARY: Is someone there?

SFX: Wind, which overpowers the crying then blackout. MARY exits.

ACT ONE, SCENE 6

AT START: *Lights up on OLD DICKON and LOUISE, SARAH, and BERTHA.*

LOUISA: Who was crying?

BERTHA: It was just the wind.

SARAH: No, it sounded more like crying.

OLD DICKON: Mary be just as confused. There seemed to be all kinds of sounds in the old manor. By the next morning Mary be not sure it wasn't all a dream.

SARAH: A nightmare! Like ye said.

OLD DICKON: With the morning come a warm light into Mary's life.

BERTHA: The sun!

OLD DICKON: Aye. That and my sister, Martha. *(Points his stick toward the bed.)* Look . . .

MARY enters in nightgown and gets into bed. Lights rise on MARY'S bedroom as MARY sits up and MARTHA enters with a tray with a bowl and mug on it.

MARTHA: You be up then? That's good. It be a beautiful day to be out and about. I brought ye your breakfast. Will ye have it in here or the other room?

MARY: I'm not hungry.

MARTHA: And you being such a thin and pale little thing! It be nice hot porridge and some strong tea. You'll need it if ye want to go outside and take a look around.

MARY: I don't like porridge.

MARTHA: You'll learn to like it in time. I'll put the tray on the table in the next room.

MARTHA exits with tray. MARY gets out of bed and crosses downstage a few steps facing the audience and looking out the window. MARTHA enters.

MARY: Is that the moor?

MARTHA: It is. Does ye like it?

MARY: No. I hate it.

MARTHA: That's because you're not used to it yet. Ye think it's big and bare now. But once spring comes and the heather and the gorse be in flower and the bees and skylarks return it be a wondrous place. I wouldn't live away from the moor for anything.

MARY: Mrs. Medlock says only wild ponies and sheep can live there.

MARTHA: That be true enough. But there's many who like to explore the moor. Like my brother, Dickon. He be out there all the time, searching out birds' nests and foxholes and such.

MARY: Dickon. What a funny name. Is he a hunter?

MARTHA: Oh, not a bit of it. Dickon could not hurt any animal of any kind. He just likes to search them out. And he talks to them and rescues eggs what fall from nests and lambs what lost their mothers. And don't think me daft, but sometimes Dickon can understand what the creatures be saying.

MARY: I should like to meet your brother, with the funny name.

MARTHA: Ye will sometime. When Ben needs an extra hand in the garden, he hires Dickon for a day or two.

MARY: Who's Ben?

MARTHA: That be Ben Weatherstaff. The gardener at Misselthwaite. Ye will find him out there most every day.

MARY: I think I should like that. What is your name?

MARTHA: Martha.

MARY: Martha, send for someone to dress me.

MARTHA: What? Ye cannot dress yourself?

MARY: In India my Ayah dressed me.

MARTHA: There be no Ayah here. You'll have to put your own clothes on. They be hanging in the next room.

MARY: But in India –

MARTHA: Ye not be in India no more. If you need a back button done I can help ye but I've got more trays to fetch and rooms to clean and can't be spending my morning putting clothes on a girl who ought to know how to take care of herself.

MARY: You are not at all like the servants in India.

MARTHA: I daresay I'm not. And a good thing too, I'm thinking. Now go eat that porridge while it be hot and get yourself dressed. It be a nice crisp and clear day out and not to be wasted inside.

MARTHA exits and MARY looks out the window again and exits.

ACT ONE, SCENE 7

AT START: *The lights fade on MARY'S bedroom and rise on OLD DICKON, LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA. The bed and table are removed by SERVANTS.*

LOUISA: I like your sister, Martha. I wish Mary treated her better.

OLD DICKON: In time they became good friends. Mary even got along with the grumpy old gardener, Ben Weatherstaff. *(Points stick.)* Look and see how they first met.

Lights dim on OLD DICKON and up on center stage where BEN enters pushing a wheelbarrow filled with garden tools. He is wearing a heavy work jacket and hat. He stops center, stretches his sore back.

BEN: *(Calls offstage gruffly.)* What ye be up to! Get away from them bean stakes! I just put them up yesterday!

MARY: *(Enters wearing a heavy coat, hat, and boots.)* I wasn't touching your silly old stakes!

BEN: *(Suspiciously.)* What ye be doing here?

MARY: *(Boldly.)* My name is Mary Lennox and I live here.

BEN: Live at Misselthwaite? Ah, the little thing come all the way from India. Well, live here you might but you watch yourself in my garden.

MARY: You must be Ben Weatherstaff. Martha told me about you.

BEN: Did she tell ye I likes no one and no one likes me?

MARY: No. But I believe it. I am the same. Nobody likes me and I don't like anyone. I have no friends at all. My Ayah didn't like me, nor my parents.

BEN: It sounds like we got a good bit in common. We was wove out of the same cloth.

MARY: What does a gardener do here?

BEN: I makes things grow.

MARY: That's silly. Things grow by themselves. In India it is so hot and wet that the gardeners are always cutting and trimming plants because they get too big.

BEN: That not be the case here in Yorkshire. In winter most things die off and ye got to cut away the dead parts so there be new growth in the spring. And when it be warm enough and the frost be gone, you can plant seeds for them plants that don't come back on their own.

MARY: Like those beans?

BEN: Aye. And the other vegetables. This here be the kitchen garden.

MARY: (*Pointing.*) And what is that section over there beyond the wall?

BEN: That be the orchard. And beyond that the rose bushes which needs the most care.

MARY: Why so many walls?

BEN: They cut down on the wind. And some is useful for keeping critters out.

MARY: Like wild ponies and sheep from the moor?

BEN: Them and many others.

MARY: Do you know Dickon?

BEN: Everybody in these parts knows Dickon. Not just folks but every bush and bramble and critter knows him as well.

MARY: I want to see him.

BEN: Ye will soon enough. He be wandering the moors most days.

MARY: (*Looks up.*) Look there! A robin with a twig in its beak!

BEN: Aye. That fellow comes back early every year. He be building a nest for his mate in yon garden.

MARY: The one with the high wall?

BEN: Aye. There be a tall oak tree in there he prefers for nesting.

MARY: I want to see it. (*Starts to exit.*)

BEN: Ye cannot. That garden be closed for ten year. No one goes in there.

MARY: Why not?

BEN: It be Miss Lily's garden. When she died, Mr. Craven locked it up and buried the key. So don't you go poking yer nose around there. It be locked up tight and it's gonna stay that way. Wander about as ye like but keep away from Miss Lily's garden, ye understand?

MARY: I suppose so.

BEN: Good. I've work to do. There be plenty of grounds for you to explore. Just keep an eye out for my stakes. And mind ye don't fall into the pond. The water be icy cold still.

BEN exits, pushing wheelbarrow offstage. Lights rise on OLD DICKON, LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA. MARY walks about the stage following the unseen walls of the garden.

LOUISA: So there was a secret garden!

BERTHA: Just like ye said!

SARAH: Did she ever find it?

OLD DICKON: Mary was an obstinate little thing and she heeded not Ben Weatherstaff's warning. She spent the rest of the morning circling that walled garden. But it be over six feet tall and covered thick with ivy and thorn branches.

MARY: *(Aloud to herself.)* There must be a door somewhere if there was a key. He said my uncle buried the key!

SERVANTS bring out a chair and table with a plate and a mug on a tray. MARY takes off her coat and hat and gives it to ones of SERVANTS who exit. She sits and eats her lunch as MARTHA enters.

OLD DICKON: When Mary went back to the Manor for her lunch, she told Martha all about the secret garden.

MARY: But I couldn't find a door anywhere. Don't you think there must be a door, Martha?

MARTHA: We're not to talk about that garden. At least not in front of Mrs. Medlock. And never in earshot of Mr. Craven. Ben Weatherstaff had no business telling ye about it.

MARY: *(Defiantly.)* I'm glad he did!

MARTHA: Ben be a sour old man, no question of it.

MARY: He said we were woven from the same cloth, he and I.

MARTHA: Aye. There might be some truth in that.

MARY: Why does my uncle hate the secret garden so much?

MARTHA: I shouldn't be talking of it but I do know this much. He built that garden for her when they was married and she loved it so. There was a swing in there hanging from the oak tree and he would push her on the swing and they'd both laugh so!

MARY: Then my uncle should have happy memories of that garden.

MARTHA: Not a bit of it. One day the branch broke and the swing fell to the ground and she was badly hurt. She died the next day.

MARY: Died from such a short fall as that?

MARTHA: (*Evasively.*) Well... there be complications. So she died. Everyone thought Mr. Craven would go out of his mind with grief. That's why he locked up the garden, buried the key, and will not hear no one even speak of it.

MARY: Oh...

Awkward silence then COLIN is heard crying offstage.

MARY: There it is again! Someone is crying!

MARTHA: It just be the wind.

MARY: There is no wind today. I was just out there. It's perfectly calm outside.

MARTHA: (*Uneasy.*) Then... it must be little Betty, the scullery maid. She's had a toothache all morning and she does carry on so. (*Picks up the tray of food.*) I see the fresh air has given ye a good appetite. Before you know it you'll have some color in your cheeks and some muscle on your bones! (*Exits.*)

COLIN is heard crying offstage. MARY hears the crying and listens to it as the lights fade out and she exits. SERVANTS remove the table and chair.

ACT ONE, SCENE 8

AT START: *OLD DICKON* crosses to the center of the stage. *LOUISA*, *SARAH*, and *BERTHA* follow him as the lights rise on them.

LOUISA: Where are ye going, Mr. Sowerby?

SARAH: What happened next?

BERTHA: It was crying and not the wind, was it not?

OLD DICKON: I'll not need a conjuring stick to show ye the next part of the story. He ought to be coming along any moment now.

SARAH: Who?

LOUISA: The boy! The one Mary saves!

OLD DICKON: Not quite. Ah, here he be now.

YOUNG DICKON enters and crosses downstage in front of them to the other side, playing a simple wooden pipe as he walks.

LOUISA: Why, it must be – !

OLD DICKON: That be right. It's me. Young as spring as just as happy.

BERTHA: I should have recognized him right away!

SARAH: The same kind of feather!

YOUNG DICKON sits and continues playing the pipe as OLD DICKON moves to the opposite side of the stage.

OLD DICKON: Get not too close or my memory will fade away. We best hide in these grouse bushes. I think Mary be coming.

LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA join OLD DICKON on the side of the stage; DICKON stops playing the pipe and speaks to some unseen rabbits downstage.

DICKON: The music need not frighten ye. Your babies be safe in that burrow. I'll watch over them if ye need to look for fresh grass. I know it be scarce this early in the year. But I know ye are a clever one by the way ye sniffs the air.

BERTHA: *(To OLD DICKON.)* Who's he talking to?

OLD DICKON: Yon rabbit, of course. I be talking to animals even back then.

SARAH: I thought you just talked to birds!

OLD DICKON: Hush! Mary be coming this way.

MARY enters from the opposite side of the stage, sees DICKON, and starts toward him.

DICKON: *(To MARY in a loud whisper.)* Don't move a step closer.

MARY stops center stage.

DICKON: Ye will frighten her away.

MARY: Who?

DICKON: Mother rabbit, of course. (*Watches.*) Ah, there she goes. (*Calls offstage to rabbit.*) Try the sunny side of the mulberry lane. There be grass there! (*To MARY.*) She knows her babies be safe with me. I'm Dickon. I know ye are Mary Lennox. My sister, Martha described ye well.

MARY: Was that you playing that pipe?

DICKON: This pipe? (*Holds up pipe then plays a few notes.*) That be me.

MARY: I followed the sound. I've never been on the moor before.

DICKON: There is naught to be afraid of. All kinds of wild things live here on the moor. But none to be feared of if ye talk to them proper and nice. Be ye on speaking terms with any of our critters?

MARY: Well . . . I sort of talk to a robin up at the Manor. He lives in the secret garden and I've seen him going back and forth building his nest. (*Crosses the rest of the way to DICKON.*) Did Martha tell you about the secret garden?

DICKON: (*Rises.*) She did. And how it be locked up all these ten years. Plan ye to get inside?

MARY: Yes! Ben Weatherstaff says I shouldn't, and Martha says to keep away from it too but . . .

DICKON: But ye want to see it all the same.

MARY: Yes. But I can't find the doorway and the key is buried. I searched everywhere but no door and no key. So I guess it's hopeless.

DICKON: I think ye be going about it the wrong way, Mary.

MARY: I am?

DICKON: Ye not be asking the one who knows how to help ye.

MARY: I can't ask Ben. He'd just get angry.

DICKON: No, not him. But he what showed you where the garden was in the first place.

MARY: Robin?

DICKON: Aye! You say you be on speaking terms with robin?

MARY: Well . . . I wouldn't say speaking terms exactly.

DICKON: Ye go back where robin is flying into the secret garden to build his nest. He'll tell ye.

MARY: Maybe you can come with me! You seem to be on excellent speaking terms with all the animals.

DICKON: I cannot. I promised Mother Rabbit I'd keep watch over her young ones. Ye can do it. Robin knows you. And I'm thinking he knows ye want to see the secret garden. He'll help ye.

MARY: (*Uncertain.*) If you think so . . .

DICKON: And when ye get inside, will ye let Dickon come and see for himself?

MARY: (*Exited.*) Oh, yes! Certainly! (*Suddenly sad.*) But what if the garden is all dead?

DICKON: I think not. At least some of it will be wick.

MARY: Wick?

DICKON: Wick! It means alive!

MARY: Yes! Wick! I'm sure it will be wick! (*As she runs off.*) Goodbye, Dickon! And thank you! (*Exits.*)

DICKON: (*To the unseen young rabbits.*) No reason to come out of your burrows. It just be Mary Lennox trying to save Miss Lily's garden!

Lights fade out on DICKON and he exits.

ACT ONE, SCENE 9

SARAH: Did the robin help her?

BERTHA: Did Mary get inside the garden?

OLD DICKON: We best go and see.

OLD DICKON exits followed by LOUISA, SARAH, and BERTHA, as BEN enters from the other side of the stage carrying a heavy sack over his shoulder. He stops and puts the sack down with a heavy thump.

BEN: (*To himself.*) Blast this here rheumatism! There be a time I could heave two sacks of this size.

BEN stretches his sore back as MARY enters running.

MARY: (*Calling out.*) Robin! Robin! Where are you, robin?

BEN: What be all the shouting about, Mary Lennox?

MARY: Oh, Ben . . .

BEN: Yes, it be Ben. But that answers not my question.

MARY: I was looking for that robin. The one building his nest on the other side of that wall. Have you seen him today, Ben?

BEN: A couple of times. He be a busy one. (*Suspiciously.*) What want ye with the robin?

MARY: I met Dickon on the moor. He's teaching me how to talk to the birds.

BEN: It be a talent not for everyone. But if anybody can teach ye, Dickon be the one. (*Looks up at sky.*) It's clouding over. I think we be in for a storm. Ye best get back inside.

MARY: Yes, Ben.

BEN: (*To the sack.*) As for you, ye can sit there till to tomorrow. I'll not heave thee any further. (*Exits.*)

MARY: (*Calling out.*) Robin! Robin!

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: There you are! (*Looks out toward audience.*) Do you remember me?

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: You do! Oh, you are the prettiest robin in all the world!

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: Yes, you are! And I know you are building a nest inside the secret garden. That is very wise of you. I would love to see it!

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: Oh, but I can't get inside. It's locked and the key is buried.

SFX: Loud robin bird chirping, as the sound moves about the stage and MARY follows the bird's flight with the turn of her head.

MARY: Where are you going?

SFX: Loud robin bird chirping.

MARY: What are you trying to say? *(She crosses downstage then quickly turns upstage trying to follow the bird.)* Why do you keep pecking at that sack? *(She rushes up to the sack then looks up where the bird has stopped flying and perched above.)* What about this sack?

SFX: Robin bird chirping. MARY tries to open the sack.

MARY: It's tied shut tightly. *(Tries to move it.)* And it's heavy too!

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: Let me try to drag it a little.

MARY grabs the top of the sack and drags it a few feet then stops;
SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: I don't know what you want me to do with this big old sack – *(Looks at the ground where the sack was and stops suddenly.)* Wait! There's something shiny in the dirt!

SFX: Robin bird chirping as MARY kneels down and digs in the dirt with her hands.

MARY: Could it be . . . ? *(Stands up with a key in her hand.)* Robin!
The key!

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: The key to the secret garden! You knew where it was all the time!

SFX: Thunder.

MARY: Oh, thank you, robin!

SFX: Robin bird chirping fades away as the bird flies off and she watches it go.

MARY: Thank you! *(Looks at the key.)*

SFX: Thunder.

MARY: The key that Uncle Archibald buried ten years ago!

SFX: Louder thunder.

MARY: But where is the door?

SFX: Lightning and thunder then lights out.

ACT ONE, SCENE 10

AT START: *OLD DICKON enters alone and address the audience on one side of the stage as MARY exits and removes her coat. SFX: Distant thunder can be heard behind the following scene.*

OLD DICKON: It be quite a storm, I remember. For three days the wind blew fierce and the rain knocked on all the windows. Poor Mary was so anxious to find the door to the garden. Instead she be trapped inside and restless as a cat. So one day she set her mind to exploring Misselthwaite with its many hallways and staircases and its one hundred rooms, most of which be shut up tight.

MARY enters and moves across the stage at a diagonal, stopping and trying a series of invisible doors.

MARY: Locked . . . *(Tries another door.)* Locked . . . *(Tries another.)* Locked . . . *(Tries another.)* Locked . . . *(Tries another.)* Locked. All locked. *(Crosses to the other side of the stage and tries a door.)* Locked . . . *(Tries another.)* Locked . . . *(Tries another and pantomimes opening it slowly and sticking her head in.)*

OLD DICKON: There be one door that was not locked. It be a fancy bedroom with fine embroidered tapestries and furniture all in pink and white. A fine lady's room.

MARY: Could it be Lily's room? I wonder . . . *(Walks about the room carefully.)* Yet it looks like it has been dusted and cleaned today. And every day. Maybe for ten years . . .

GHOST OF LILY enters and crosses the room slowly. She moves naturally toward the door past MARY without looking at her. MARY is stunned and does not move. GHOST OF LILY goes out the door and down the hallway, MARY following almost against her will. COLIN is heard crying offstage and GHOST OF LILY moves toward the sound. Suddenly MRS. MEDLOCK comes down the hall. She doesn't see GHOST OF LILY who exits right in front of her but she does see MARY.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Mary Lennox!

MARY: I . . . I think I made a wrong turn. I've lost my way.

MRS. MEDLOCK: You are not even allowed on this floor! *(Goes to MARY and grabs her by the arm.)* What did I tell you? You are not to go wandering about this house! *(Pulls MARY across the stage.)* You know very well where you belong!

MARY: I heard crying—

MRS. MEDLOCK: You heard nothing but the wind!

MARY: And I saw—

MRS. MEDLOCK: You saw nothing because there is nothing in this wing of the house to see!

SERVANTS set up MARY'S bed center stage then exit.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Back to your rooms before I box your ears!

MARY: There was someone crying — *(they have arrived in her bedroom.)*

MRS. MEDLOCK: Now you stay where you are told to stay or you'll find yourself locked up! *(Exits.)*

MARY: It wasn't the wind! It was someone crying . . .

Lights fade out and MARY gets in bed under the covers.

OLD DICKON: That night Mary had herself a dream about the woman she saw in Miss Lily's bedroom.

GHOST OF LILY enters and crosses the stage in front of MARY'S bed.

OLD DICKON: Or were it not a dream at all?

MARY sits up in bed and watches GHOST OF LILY exit.

OLD DICKON: Back in India Mary heard much talk of ghosts but never had she set eyes on one. Could this be the ghost of Lily Craven?

The lights fade out and MARY gets out of bed and is looking out the window facing the audience as bright light rises in MARY'S bedroom.

ACT ONE, SCENE 11

AT START: *SFX: stops. OLD DICKON addresses the audience.*

OLD DICKON: The storm stopped its wuthering that night and the next morning be bright and fresh.

MARTHA enters.

MARY: Martha, look at the moor! Just look at it!

MARTHA: *(Joining her at the window.)* Aye. It does that this time of year. One day it looks like it was pretending to be dead forever then after a big storm it seems to wake up overnight.

MARY: Look at the color!

MARTHA: It's starting to show green in spots. That's because spring is coming for sure. There be buds on the gorse bushes and wee little flowers on the heather branches. And every day there be more and more color, I promise ye.

MARY: I can't wait to get outside! Do you think Dickon will be on the moor?

MARTHA: He'll not want to miss a day as fine as this. You'll find him out and about for sure.

MARY: I've so much to tell him! He doesn't know about the key! (*Exits.*)

MARTHA: Key? What key?

Lights out on the bedroom and MARTHA exits. SERVANTS remove the bed and set up a piece of garden wall upstage.

OLD DICKON: Mary found me on the moor in no time at all and told me about robin showing her where the key be buried. We rushed to the garden wall, making sure we not be seen by Ben Weatherstaff.

MARY and DICKON run on and stop in front of the wall.

MARY: I've searched every inch of this wall but could find no door. Yet there must be a door if there is a key. What do you think, Dickon?

DICKON: I be thinking you're asking the wrong person again. Robin showed you where the key be hidden. If we ask him nice and polite, maybe he'll show us the door.

MARY: Of course! (*Shouts.*) Robin! Robin!

DICKON: Not that way, Mary. It sound like ye are planning to scold poor robin. (*Whistles.*) We best announce ourselves friendly like. (*Whistles*)

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: (*Points.*) There he is!

DICKON: (*To the robin.*) Still building your nest I see.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

DICKON: Aye, that storm must have been fearful hard on your poor nest.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

MARY: Ask him about the door!

DICKON: In good time, Mary. (*To the robin.*) With such a fierce wind, there be many sticks and straws all about.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

DICKON: Aye.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

DICKON: Robin, ye was so kind the other day to show Miss Mary where the key be hidden.

SFX: Robin bird chirping.

DICKON: Will ye be knowing where the door be that goes with that key?

SFX: chirping is heard about the stage as the bird flies about.

MARY: Where is he going? Don't let him fly away!

DICKON: He's taken a bit of branch from that tree.

SFX: chirping as MARY and DICKON follow the flight of the bird around and end up facing the wall.

MARY: He's dropped it!

MARY and DICKON go up to the wall.

DICKON: It's fallen in this thorn bush. (*Puts his hand in the bush.*)

MARY: (*Upset, looking offstage.*) Look! He's flown away!

DICKON: I can feel something . . .

MARY goes to DICKON.

DICKON: Ouch! Curse these thorns . . . I feel something metal . . .

MARY: Do you think . . . ?

DICKON: I need my knife. (*Pulls out a small knife and pantomimes cutting through the branches.*) It be a door knob for sure. (*Still cutting.*) But where is the key hole?

MARY: Oh, Dickon!

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