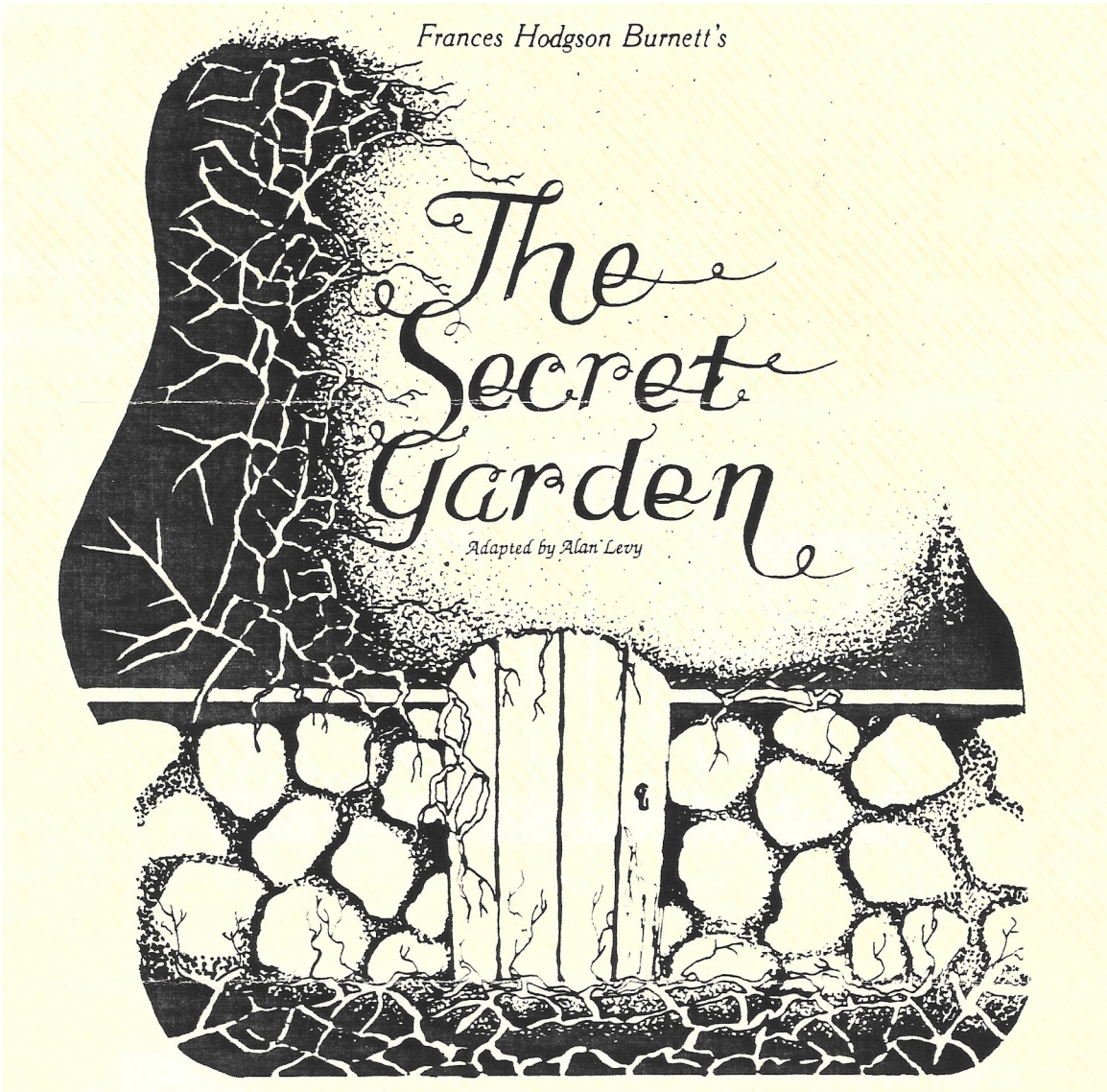


Frances Hodgson Burnett's

The Secret Garden

Adapted by Alan Levy



The Secret Garden

A full-length play in two acts

by

Alan Neal Levy

adapted from the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Characters

MARY LENNOX - A plain, sickly-looking girl of ten with a most disagreeable manner. She is the orphan child of British aristocrats, who largely ignored her while living in India where they perished of cholera.

COLIN CRAVEN - A slight-framed lad of ten, who has spent nearly his entire life sick in bed. He has been ministered to by an endless succession of doctors, nurses and servants who all must cater to his every whim.

DICKON SOWERBY - A somewhat odd-looking 12-year old country boy of Yorkshire. He is possessed of a free spirit and a keen sincerity. All who meet him love him, including the many animals who populate the moor. He speaks in a broad Yorkshire dialect.

ARCHIBALD CRAVEN - Colin's hunchbacked father. Although only in his forties, he looks much older and wretched due to the death of his wife during childbirth. He fears Colin will grow to be crippled like he is.

MRS. MEDLOCK - A stout, middle-aged, disagreeable woman. Head housekeeper of Craven's Misselthwaite Manor; she not only runs the entire household and its staff, but has had to care for Colin as well.

MARTHA SOWERBY - Dickon's older sister (late teens) who works as a housemaid to Mr. Craven and servant to Mrs. Medlock. A pleasant country lass with a generous heart, she has been charged with looking after Mary. Martha has generally learned to speak proper English, but often slips into her native Yorkshire dialect.

BEN WEATHERSTAFF - A foul-tempered, Yorkshire man in his sixties. A gardener kept on staff only because Mrs. Craven had liked him. His body is racked with rheumatism and too many years hunched over the gardens he loves. Ben also speaks in broad Yorkshire.

ANIMALS OF THE MOOR - A robin, fox, squirrel and crow may be portrayed by actors, puppets or live animals as desired.

The play premiered June 13-16, 1991 at The Roberts Theatre on the Kingswood-Oxford School campus in West Hartford, Conn.

Director	Alan Neal Levy
Accents Design	Debra Walsh
Lighting Design	Marc Silverstein
Costume Design	Emily Johnson
Sound Design	Kevin O'Toole
Original Music	Warren Byrd

Cast

Mary 1	Emma Walker on 6/13 and 6/15 evening
Mary 2	Meaghan McDowell on 6/14 and 6/15 and 6/16
Colin 1	Jason Sasportas on 6/13 and 6/15 evening
Colin 2	Keith Voets on 6/14 and 6/15 and 6/16
Dickon	Douglas McClintock
Martha	Sarah Wilson
Mrs, Medlock	Nora-Kare Daniels
Ben	Chad Taylor

Production Staff

Stage Manager	Julia Holiday
Assistant Stage Manager	Tara Kennedy
Vocal Coach	Debra Walsh
Assistant Costumer	Maura Kenney
Robin	Jason Karadimas
Set Construction	Joy Nirenstein, Amanda Bronfman, Meaghan McDowell, Emma Walker, Cortney Charnas, Nathan Berkowitz, Naomi Wilson
Running Crew	Amanda Bronfman, Nathan Berkowitz, Brooke Bersek-Jones

Summary

When cholera strikes ten-year old Mary Lennox's parents in India, the sickly and lonely orphan is sent to live at her uncle's great house on the edge of the Yorkshire moors in Britain. She soon finds that the estate is filled with secrets - locked doors, empty rooms and closed-mouthed servants. Inside she hears the muffled sounds of a boy crying. Outside, she meets Dickon, a country boy who can talk to and tame wild animals and birds. And a robin who becomes Mary's first friend, shows her the way into a walled garden that has been locked and untended for ten years.

Through further exploration, Mary discovers Colin, the boy who is the source of the mysterious crying and secrecy. Together with the help of the magical Dickon, Mary slowly begins to bring back life to both Colin and the 'secret garden'.

The play is set entirely within and without Misselthwaite Manor in Yorkshire shortly after the turn of the twentieth century.

The Setting

The set for THE SECRET GARDEN is a fragmentary unit set with three main areas:

1. Center Stage is outdoors at Misselthwaite Manor, the home of Craven's ancestors for six centuries. Up stage is a high garden wall and door covered with vines and down from there is the 'garden area' including an area of practical dirt with much dead brush and weeds.

2. Stage Left is Mary's bed room, a well-appointed, if somewhat austere place. In it are a bed, bedstand, and wardrobe. This area will also be used for the 'Secret Garden'. See below.

3. Stage Right is also the interior of Misselthwaite Manor. In the opening, it serves as the parlor room adjoining Mary's bedroom, with table, two straight back chairs and fireplace. Later, it also serves as Colin's bedroom, a much gloomier room with a bed, bedstand and large footstool it's only furnishings.

The 'Secret Garden' will have two completely different looks in Act I and later in Act II. To complete this transition, greenery and flowers are added to the US wall and CS 'garden' and the flats SR and SL revolve to reveal lattice-work covered with roses in full bloom at the end of Act II Scene 3. Lighting also accents the transition.

The Secret Garden

ACT I

Scene 1

(Misselthwaite Manor, Yorkshire, 1911. At rise: a well-appointed, if somewhat austere bedroom SL, and parlor SR. Enter MARY LENNOX, a sickly child of ten in a heavy overcoat led by MRS. MEDLOCK, the housekeeper, carrying a suitcase.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

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.

(She starts to exit.)

A more marred-looking young 'un I never saw in my life.

(She turns to see the girl still standing next to her suitcase. She sighs.)

I suppose I may as well tell you something about where you are. Do you know anything about your uncle?

MARY

No.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Never heard your father and mother talk about him?

MARY (frowning)

No.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Humph. Well, you needn't expect to see him, because you won't. And you must stay in these rooms here and not go wandering and poking about. Mr. Craven won't have it. There's near a hundred rooms here, though most of them's locked up. And there's a big park round the house with gardens and trees. But there's nothing else.

(MARY still stands next to her suitcase.)

Well, what do you think?

MARY

Nothing. I know nothing about such places.

MRS. MEDLOCK (laughing)

Eh!, but you are like an old woman. Don't you care?

MARY

It doesn't matter whether I care or not.

(MRS. MEDLOCK picks up the suitcase and unpacks it throughout the following. MARY hesitantly sits on the edge of the bed, still in her coat.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

You are right enough there. Parents both dead of the cholera. You coming all by yourself from India. Why you're to be kept here at Misselthwaite Manor, I don't know. Mr. Craven's not going to trouble himself about you, that's sure and certain. He never troubles himself about no one. He's got a crooked back, your uncle does. That set him wrong to begin with. He was a sour young man and got no good of all his money and big place. Until he was married, that is. Now she was a sweet and pretty thing, his wife was. And when she died...

MARY

Oh. Did she die?

MRS. MEDLOCK

Yes. And it made him stranger than ever.

(She scoots MARY off the bed, turns down the covers and fluffs up the pillows.)

Now, it's time you went to bed. When you get undressed, you'll find this will keep you nice and warm.

(She lays a nightgown down on the bed and starts to exit. MARY stands still in the center of the room, still in her coat and waiting to be undressed.)

Well, what are you waiting for? Take your things off.

MARY

I won't take anything off. You must undress me.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Surely you can undress yourself.

MARY

My Ayah always undressed me. And dressed me in the morning.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Your Ayah? What's that?

MARY

My nurse in India. She did everything I told her to.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Well, I dare say no one here is going to do everything for you. Here, I'll help you this time, but you're not to have a maid.

(MRS. MEDLOCK removes Mary's hat, coat, dress and petticoat, and puts the nightgown on over her chemise and bloomers.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

You've just been spoiled that's what your problem is. Perhaps that's why you're so pale and sickly looking.

(A howling wind is heard, as MRS. Medlock again turns to leave.)

MARY

Who is going to sing me to sleep?

MRS. MEDLOCK

You'll sleep well enough after that long carriage ride we had from the train station.

MARY

I will not. I hate it here! I'll stay awake all night. And I forbid you to leave me alone in this horrible place.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Oh, will you now? You may have bossed your nurse around in India, but not here, Miss Mary, Mary, quite contrary. And remember what I told you. This room and the next are yours. Tomorrow you can go out into the gardens. But no poking around anywhere else.

(She exits.)

MARY

I shall not want to go poking about.

(The sound of someone moaning is heard over the wind. MARY tries to hear where it comes from, then pulls the blankets up over her head. Blackout.)

Scene Two

(The same bedroom SL, early morning. MARY is under the covers. MARTHA, a young housemaid enters, walks quietly over to the bed, peaks under the covers at the sleeping child and then crosses SR to the fireplace and begins to rake out the cinders. There is the sound of a boy crying.)

MARY

Who are you?

MARTHA

I'm Martha. And who are you?

MARY

What's that?

MARTHA

What?

MARY

Don't you hear someone crying?

MARTHA (listening)

No. It's just th' wind wutherin'. Sometimes it sounds as if someone was lost on th' moor an' wailin'.

MARY

What's a moor?.

MARTHA (crossing into the bedroom SL)

'That's th' moor. Does tha' like it?

MARY

No. I hate it.

MARTHA

'That's because tha' are not used to it. But tha' will come to like it.

MARY

Do you like it?

MARTHA

Eh!, that I do. I just love it. It's covered wi' growin' things an' smells o' honey, an' there's such a lot o' fresh air. I wouldn't live away from th' moor for nothin'

MARY (sitting up in bed)

You are a strange servant.

MARTHA (laughing)

Eh!, that I am. If there was a grand Missus here at Misselthwaite I should never have been let upstairs.

MARY

Are you going to be my servant?

MARTHA (returning the pantry SR)

I'm to do the housemaid's work up here an' wait on you a bit. But you won't need much waitin' on now, will you?

MARY

Who is going to dress me?

MARTHA

Canna' tha' dress thysen?

MARY (after a beat)

I don't understand your language.

MARTHA

Eh! I forgot. I mustna talk too much Yorkshire, or you'll never know what I'm saying. I mean, can't you put on your own clothes?

MARY

No. My Ayah dressed me. It was the custom.

MARTHA

Well, it's time tha' should learn. It'll do thee good to wait on thyself a bit.

MARY

It is different in India.

MARTHA

Eh!, I can see it's different. When I heard you was comin', I thought you was an Indian.

MARY

What? You daughter of a pig!

MARTHA

Who are you callin' names, now? You needn't be so vexed.

MARY

You thought I was a native! You don't know anything about India. You don't know anything about anything!

(MARY throws herself on the bed.)

MARTHA

Eh! Stop that now. You're right. I don't know anythin' about anythin', just like you said. I beg your pardon, Miss.

(Gradually MARY is quieted.)

It's time to get up now. Mrs. Medlock said I was to carry tha' breakfast into the room next to this. I'll help thee on with thy clothes if tha'll get out o' bed.

(MARY provides no assistance at all, as MARTHA puts on her dress. After she is all buttoned up, MARTHA hands her stockings, and MARY lifts one leg up. After she puts on both stockings, MARTHA retrieves MARY's shoes.)

MARTHA

Why doesn't tha' put on tha' own shoes?

MARY

My Ayah did it. It was the custom.

MARTHA

Perhaps. Perhaps. But it is not the custom here.

(MARTHA exits. MARY stares after her. A beat. Then she looks down and struggles to put on the shoes. Meanwhile, lights up on the parlor SR, where MARTHA has entered with table settings. MARY exits and crosses to the parlor as well. MARTHA sets a bowl of porridge in front of her.)

MARY

I don't want it.

MARTHA

'Tha' doesn't want thy porridge?

MARY

No.

MARTHA

'Tha' doesn't know how good it is. Put a bit o' treacle on it or a bit o' sugar.

MARY

I don't want it.

MARTHA

Eh!, I can't bear to see good food go to waste. If my brothers and sisters was at this table they'd clean it bare in five minutes.

MARY

Why?

MARTHA

Why? Because there's twelve of us an' my father only gets sixteen shilling a week. They never had their stomachs full in their lives.

MARY

I don't know what it is to be hungry.

MARTHA

Well, it would do thee good to try it. I can see that plain enough. Now, here, at least have a bit of toast.

(MARY picks up a piece of bread reluctantly, and nibbles on it. The howling sounds again.)

MARY

There. I heard it again.

MARTHA

The wind.

MARY

But listen. It's in the house - down one of those long corridors.

MARTHA

It's the wind, I tell thee. An' if it wasn't, it was Betty Butterworth, th' scullery-maid. She's had th' toothache all day. Well, I've got work to do. Now you wrap up warm an' run out an' play.

MARY

Out of doors? Why should I?

MARTHA

Well, there's nought for you to do inside.

MARY

But who will go with me?

MARTHA

You'll go by yourself. You'll just have to learn to play alone. Why, my brother Dickon - he's twelve - he goes out on th' moor for hours. He's got a fox he's tamed himself. And a squirrel. An' birds - they come an' eats out of his hand, they do.

MARY

Really?

MARTHA

He's a kind lad, our Dickon, an' animals, they likes him.

MARY

I like him, too. And I've never met him.

MARTHA

Well, I wonder what Dickon would think of thee.

MARY

He wouldn't like me. No one does.

MARTHA

How does tha' like thysel'?

MARY

Not at all - really. But I never thought of it before.

MARTHA

Mother said that to me once when I was in a bad temper. Eh!, but just listen to me go on an' on about my family, now. I miss 'em so, now as it's been a month since I was last home.

MARY

A month?

MARTHA

Eh!. But I'll be going there tomorrow, it bein' my day out. Now, if tha' goes round that way tha'll come to th' gardens.

(MARY rises and MARTHA helps her on with her coat.)

There's lots o' flowers in summer-time, but there's nothin' bloomin' now. One of th' gardens is locked up. No one has been in it for ten years.

MARY

Why?

MARTHA

Mr. Craven shut it when his wife died so sudden. He won't let no one go inside. It was her garden. He locked th' door an' dug a hole and buried th' key. There's Mrs. Medlock's bell ringing - I must run.

(MARTHA exits.MARY crosses to CS 'outside' area.)

MARY

Everything looks cold and dead. If I could only find that other garden that's been shut up.
Perhaps that one would be different.

(She exits DL. BEN WEATHERSTAFF enters UC, then MARY.)

MARY

What is this place?

BEN

One o' th' kitchen-gardens.

MARY (pointing US)

What is that?

BEN (shortly)

Another of 'em. There's another o'er th' wall an' there's orchard t'other side o' that.

MARY

Yes, I was just in the orchard.

BEN

'There was nothin' to prevent thee.

MARY

There was no door there into the other garden, though.

BEN

What other garden?

MARY

The one on the other side of the wall. I saw the tops of the trees there. A bird with a red breast was sitting in one of them and he sang.

(Hearing this BEN ignores the girl and whistles a tune. More whistling is heard off stage. BEN whistles again and ROBIN enters, crosses to BEN and nuzzles him.)

MARY

Does he always come when you call him?

BEN

Eh!, that he does. I've knowed him ever since he was a fledgling. He come out of th' nest in th' other garden an' when he first flew over the wall he was too weak to fly back for a few days an' we got friendly.

MARY

What kind of a bird is he?

BEN

Doesn't tha' know? He's a robin redbreast. When he went over th' wall again, th' rest of th' brood was gone. He was lonely an' he came back to me.

MARY

I'm lonely, too.

BEN

Are tha' the little wench from India? (She nods.) Then no wonder tha' art lonely. Tha'll be lonelier still before tha's done.

MARY

What is your name?

BEN

Ben Weatherstaff. I'm lonely mysel' - except when he's with me. He's th' only friend I've got.

MARY

I have no friends at all. My Ayah didn't like me and I never played with anyone.

BEN

Tha' an' me are a good bit alike. We're neither of us good lookin' an' we're both of us as sour as we look.

(Suddenly the ROBIN approaches MARY and bursts into song.)

MARY

What is he doing?

BEN

He's made up his mind to make friends with thee.

MARY

With me? (To the ROBIN) Would you make friends with me? Would you?

BEN

Why, that's the first time I've heard tha' talk like a real child instead of a sharp old woman. Tha' said it almost like Dickon talks to his wild things on th' moor.

MARY

Do you know Dickon?

BEN

Everybody knows Dickon. 'Th' very blackberries an heather-bells know him.

(The ROBIN exits.)

MARY

He's gone over the wall. He went into the garden with no door!

BEN

He lives there. He came out o' th' egg there up among the rose-trees.

MARY

Rose-trees. Are there rose-trees?

BEN

'There was ten year' ago.

MARY

I should like to see them. Where is the door? There must be a door somewhere.

BEN (picking up his shovel again)

'There was ten year' ago, but there isn't now.

MARY

No door? There must be.

BEN

None as anyone can find, an' none as is anyone'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.

(BEN throws his shovel over his shoulder and exits.)

(Blackout.)

Scene 3

(The next morning, MARTHA is laying out MARY's breakfast in the sitting room.)

MARTHA

Eh!, it was wonderful. Mother was so glad to see me and the children just shouted for joy. In the evening we all sat around a fire, and Mother and I sewed patches on torn clothes and mended stockings. And I told them all about you. I told them how you had come from India and how you had been waited on all your life by natives until you didn't even know how to put on your own stockings. They wanted to know all about the natives, and about the ship you came in. I couldn't tell them enough.

(MARY enters her bedroom during the above, and begins dressing herself.)

MARY

I'll tell you a great deal more before your next day out so that you will have more to talk about. I dare say they'd like to hear about riding on elephants and camels, and about the officers going to hunt tigers.

(MARY, having finished dressing herself, enters the sitting room and begins eating her oatmeal.)

MARTHA

My word! It would set them clean off their heads. Would tha' really do that, Miss?

(MARTHA crosses into the bedroom and makes the bed.)

MARY

India is quite different from Yorkshire. I never thought of that. Did Dickon and your mother like to hear you talk about me?

MARTHA

Why, our Dickon's eyes nearly started out of his head, they got that round. But mother, she was put out about your seeming to be all by yourself. She said you should be having yourself a governess.

MARY

I don't want a governess.

MARTHA

But mother says you ought to be learning your books by this time and you ought to have a woman to look after you.

(MARTHA enters the sitting room.)

'Tha' got on well enough with that this mornin', didn't tha'?

MARY

It tastes nice today.

MARTHA

It's th' air of th' moor that's makin' thee hungry. You keep on playin' outdoors an' you'll get some flesh on your bones an' you won't be so yeller.

MARY

I have nothing to play with.

MARTHA

Oh, I nearly forgot. I brought thee a present.

(MARTHA crosses to MARY with something held under her apron.)

MARY

A present. How could a cottage full of fourteen hungry people give any one a present?

MARTHA

A peddler stopped his cart at our door, but mother had no money to buy anything. Just as he was going away, Mother calls out quite sudden, 'Here, stop, Mister! How much are the skipping ropes?' And he says 'Tuppence,' and mother she begins fumbling in her pocket and she says to me, 'Martha, tha's brought me thy wages like a good lass, and I've got four places to put every penny, but I'm just going to take tuppence out of it to buy that child a skipping rope,' and she bought one and here it is.

MARY

What is it for?

MARTHA

For! Does tha' mean that they've not got skipping ropes in India, for all their elephants and tigers and camels? This is what it's for; just watch me.

(Martha skips and counts until she reaches twenty.)

I could skip longer than that. I've skipped as much as five hundred when I was twelve, but I wasn't as fat then as I am now, and I was in practice.

MARY

It looks nice. Your mother is a kind woman. Do you ever think I could ever skip like that?

MARTHA

You just try it. You can't skip a hundred at first, but if you practice you'll mount up.

MRS. MEDLOCK (bursting in)

Martha, you're taking too long here. You're needed downstairs.

MARTHA (picking up the tray of food)

Yes, mum. Now, you run outdoors and practice your skipping, Miss Mary. I'll see you at dinner.

(MARY runs to exit with the rope, then turns back to MARTHA.)

MARY

Martha, they were your wages. It was really your twopence.
(She holds out her hand.) Thank you.

MARTHA (laughing)

Eh!, tha' art a queer, old-womanish thing. If tha'd been my sister tha'd have given me a kiss.

MARY

Do you want me to kiss you?

MARTHA (laughing again)

Nay, not me. If tha' was different, perhaps tha'd want to thyself. But tha' isn't. Now, run off outside and play with thy rope.

(MARY exits. MARTHA hums a song as she picks up the dirty dishes. Lights down on the scene.)

Scene 4

(MARY enters C 'outside' area, skipping. She is a not very good at first, but soon catches on. BEN is digging in the garden talking to the ROBIN, and MARY skips toward them trying to gain their attention.)

BEN

Well, upon my word! Perhaps tha' art a young 'un after all. Tha's skipped red into thy cheeks as sure as my name's Ben Weatherstaff. I wouldn't have believed tha' could do it.

MARY

I never skipped before. I'm just beginning. I can only go up to twenty.

BEN

'Tha' keep on. Tha's doing just fine for a young 'un that's lived with heathen. Just see how Mr. Robin Red-breast is watching thee. He's determined to find out what thy skipping-rope is. He's never seen one.

MARY

Mister Weatherstaff?

BEN

Yes, child?

MARY

What's that fresh damp smell? I've noticed it all morning.

BEN (laughing)

Why, that's the good rich earth. Springtime's coming. The earth's making ready to grow things. Pretty soon you'll see bits of green spikes sticking up.

MARY

What will they be?

BEN

Crocuses and snowdrops and daffydowndilys. Has tha' never seen them?

MARY

No. Everything is hot, and wet, and green after the rains in India. And I think things grow up in a night.

BEN

These won't grow up in a night. Tha'll have to watch for them.

MARY

I will.

BEN (To the ROBIN who has been poking at the jump rope.)

Eh!, tha's curiosity will be the death of thee yet if tha' doesn't look sharp.

MARY

Are things stirring down in the ground in that garden where he lives, too?

BEN

What garden?

MARY

The one where the old rose-trees are. Are all the flowers dead, or do some of them come again in the summer? Are there ever any roses?

BEN

Ask him. He's the only one that knows. No one else has seen inside it for ten years.

(BEN exits and MARY turns her attention to the ROBIN who has begun singing quite persistently)

MARY

Why, you really are a noisy creature, aren't you? What are you trying to tell me?

(She crosses to the bird, and ROBIN suddenly begins pecking at the ground near the wall. MARY investigates)

MARY

Where are you going? Oh, looking for a worm are you? Here let me help. Look how fresh and moist the soil is here. I wonder if anything is growing down there yet. What's this? Why, look Mr. Robin.

(She digs up a huge iron key, as ROBIN flies off)

A key! Perhaps it's the key to the garden! Mr. Robin, you brought me here, didn't you? Mr. Robin?

(ROBIN reappears atop the wall and begins dancing and singing like never before, always indicating the wall beneath. MARY crosses US of the wall, tries the key, opens the door and enters the 'secret garden'.)

MARY

I am standing in the secret garden! How still it is! I am the first person in ten years who has spoken in here. (Looking at the vines and rose stalks) Are you all quite dead? Are you all a quite dead garden? I wish you weren't. Wait. You're alive. But you can't breathe, can you?

(Without really knowing what she is doing, MARY begins weeding, giving room to the green stalks. All during the following, ROBIN follows after the girl, delighted that someone is tending his home.)

There -- now you look like you can breathe. I'm going to do ever so much more. I'll do all I can see. And if I haven't got time today I can come tomorrow.

(Blackout, as she continues weeding.)
Scene 5

(Afternoon, outside of the wall of the 'secret garden'. DICKON, a funny looking country boy of twelve is sitting DL against a tree, playing a pipe. A CROW, a SQUIRREL and a FOX are nearby listening to his music. MARY skips on.)

DICKON

Don't tha' move. It'd flight them. I'm Dickon. 'This here is Captain, an' that's Soot an' that there is Nut. And I know tha' art Mary.

(He rises slowly, carefully.)

MARY

But how did you --? Why --?

DICKON

Martha told me. Now, where's that robin that's callin' us?

MARY

Is it really calling us?

DICKON

Eh!, he's callin' someone he's friends with. 'There he is.

(ROBIN enters.)

MARY

Do you understand everything birds say?

DICKON

I think I do. And they think I do. I've lived with 'em on th' moor so long, sometimes I think p'raps I'm a bird, myself. Or a fox, or a squirrel, or even a flower.

MARY

Dickon, I don't know anything about boys. Could you keep a secret, if I told you one?

DICKON

Sure, I can keep secrets. I'm keepin' 'em all the time. If I couldn't keep secrets about fox cubs, an' birds' nests there'd be naught safe on th' moor.

MARY (clutching his arm, unknowingly)

I've stolen a garden. It isn't mine. It isn't anybody's. Nobody wants it. Nobody ever goes in it. Perhaps everything in it is dead already - I don't know. But nobody has the right to take it from me when I love it and they don't.

DICKON

Eh-h-h, there.

MARY

I've nothing to do. Nothing belongs to me. I found it myself and I got into it myself.

DICKON

Where is it?

MARY

Come with me and I'll show you.

(They rise and cross US of the wall and enter the 'secret garden'.)

DICKON

I never thought to see this place. It's like a body was in a dream.

MARY

Did you know about it?

DICKON

Martha told me there was one no one ever went into. We used to wonder what it was like. Eh!, the nests 'at will be here come springtime. It be the safest nestin' place in all of England - all tangles o' trees an' roses to build in.

MARY

Will there be roses? Can you tell? I thought perhaps they were all dead.

DICKON

No! Not all of 'em. Look here!

MARY

That one? Is that one quite alive?

DICKON

It's as wick as you or I.

MARY

Wick?

DICKON

Alive.

MARY

I'm glad it's wick! I want them all to be wick.

DICKON

Why, there'll be a fountain o' roses here this summer.

Eh, now. Who did that?

MARY

I did it.

DICKON

Why, I thought tha' didn't know anythin' about gardenin'.

MARY

I don't. But they were so little, and the weeds were was so thick and strong, and they looked as if they had no room to breathe. So I made a place for them.

DICKON

A gardener couldn't have done it better. They'll grow now like Jack's bean-stalk.

MARY

Dickon, are there any flowers that look like bells?

DICKON

Lilies o' th' valley does. An' there's Canterbury bells, an campanulas.

MARY

Oh, do let's plant some. There's a rhyme about cockle shells and silver bells.

DICKON

Oh, that. Mistress Mary, quite contrary, How does your garden grow? With silver bells, and
cockle shells... (He stops suddenly.) But thee, contrary?

MARY

When I lived in India there were some children there who always said I was. They would
always call me 'Mistress Mary, quite contrary'. I hated them. But I like you, Dickon. And you
make the fifth person.

DICKON

Only five people tha' likes? Who's t'other four?

MARY

Your mother and Martha and Ben Weatherstaff - and the robin. (DICKON laughs. After a
while, MARY continues.) Does tha' like me?

DICKON

Eh!, that I does. I likes thee wonderful, an' so does th' robin, I do believe.

MARY

That's two, then. That's two for me.

DICKON (Rising.)

Well, there sure as a lot of work to be done here!

MARY

Will you come again and help me do it?

DICKON

I'll come every day if tha' wants me. It's the best fun I ever had in my life - shut in here an'
wakenin' up a garden.

MARY

Let's not make it a tidy garden, though. I like the way it runs wild. It wouldn't seem like a secret garden if it was tidy.

DICKON

It's a secret garden sure enough, but it seem like someone must have been in it since it been shut up ten year' ago.

MARY

But the door was locked and the key was buried.

DICKON

That's true. But there's been a bit o' prunin' done, later than ten year' ago.

MARY

But how could it have been?

DICKON

Eh, how could it? It's a puzzle all right.

(They exit. Blackout.)

Scene 6

(Later, in MARY's bedroom SR. MARTHA is cleaning the room as MARY enters.)

MARTHA

'Tha's a bit late. Where has tha' been?

MARY

I've seen him. I've seen Dickon!

MARTHA

I knew he'd come. How does tha' like him?

MARY

I think - I think he's beautiful!

MARTHA (rather taken aback)

Well, he's th' best lad as ever was born, but we never thought he was handsome. Oh, I nearly forgot. I think Mr. Craven will be wantin' to see you before he goes away tomorrow.

MARY

Oh! Is he going away tomorrow?

MARTHA

He's goin' away for a long time. He may not come back till winter. He's always goin' off to travel in foreign places.

MARY

Oh! I'm so glad - so glad! When do you think he'll -

(MRS. MEDLOCK enters. MARY goes stiff.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

Your hair's rough. Go and brush it. (MARY exits to bedroom.) Martha, go and help her.
(MARTHA also exits.) And do hurry. Mr. Craven is on his way right now.

(MR. CRAVEN enters. He walks with a cane and a slight hunch to one of his shoulders. He is not ugly, though. In fact, he would be handsome, if he were not so miserable. He looks around the room looking for MARY and MRS. MEDLOCK points off. With a slight wave of his hand he dismisses the woman. MRS. MEDLOCK exits as MARY peeks her head out.)

MR. CRAVEN

Come here.

(MARY goes to him.)

Are you well?

MARY

Yes.

MR. CRAVEN

Do they take good care of you?

MARY

Yes.

MR. CRAVEN

You are very thin.

MARY

I'm getting fatter.

MR. CRAVEN

I'm sorry I forgot you. I've been away a great deal.

MARY

It doesn't matter.

MR. CRAVEN

I intended to send you a governess, or a nurse or someone of that sort, but I forgot.

MARY

Please. Oh, please, sir.

MR. CRAVEN

What is it?

MARY

I'm much too big for a nurse. And please don't make me have a governess yet.

MR. CRAVEN

What do you want to do?

MARY

I want to play outdoors. I never liked it in India. But here, it makes me hungry. And I am getting fatter.

MR. CRAVEN

Where do you play?

MARY

In the gardens. Martha's mother sent me a skipping-rope. I skip and run, and I look about to see if things are beginning to stick out of the earth. I don't do any harm.

MR. CRAVEN

Don't look so frightened. How could you do any harm? - a child like you. You may do what you like.

MARY

(putting her hand to her throat
and taking a step towards him.)

I may?

MR. CRAVEN

Please don't look so frightened. Of course you may. I am your guardian, though I am a poor one for any child. I cannot give you time or attention, but I want you to be happy - comfortable. Is there anything you want? Toys, books, dolls?

MARY

Might I - might I have a bit of earth?

MR. CRAVEN

Earth! What do you mean?

MARY

To plant seeds in -- to make things grow -- to see them come alive.

MR. CRAVEN (rising)

A bit of earth. (Pause, as he reflects.) You can have as much earth as you want. You remind me of someone else who loved the earth and things that grow. When you see a bit of earth you want, you just take it, child, and make it come alive.

MARY

May I take it from anywhere - if it's not wanted?

MR. CRAVEN

Anywhere. There! I must go now. I'm glad we met. (He shakes her hand.)
Good-bye, Mary. I shall be away all summer.

(He exits. MARY takes off her dress and puts on her dressing gown. MARTHA enters.)

MARY

Martha. Martha. I can have my garden! I may have it wherever I like!

MARTHA

Eh!, that was nice of him wasn't it? And now into bed with you. You've had quite the day, haven't you?

MARY

Martha. He really is a nice man. It's only his face is so miserable and his forehead is all drawn together.

MARTHA

Eh!, that's right, he is. Good night, Mistress Mary.

MARY (kissing her good night) Good night.

MARTHA (exiting)

Well, I'll be. How the moor does change a one.

(After a beat, the wind 'wuthers' even louder, mixed with sobbing offstage.)

MARY

It sounds just like a person lost on the moor, wandering on and on crying.

(The crying gets louder.)

That's not the wind now. That's the crying I heard before. And it's not a grown-up crying either. (Rising.) I'm going to find out what it is.

(MARY puts on a wool shawl, takes a candle and exits. Lights come up SL on another bed with someone thrashing about under the covers. The crying is even louder. MARY enters and sneaks closer. She is seen.)

COLIN

Who are you? Are you a ghost?

MARY

No, I am not. Are you one?

COLIN

No. I am Colin.

MARY

Colin?

COLIN

Colin Craven. Who are you?

MARY

I am Mary Lenox. Mr. Craven is my uncle.

COLIN

He is my father.

MARY

Your father! No one ever told me he had a boy.

COLIN

Come here.

(She approaches the bed and he touches her.)

You are real, aren't you? I have such real dreams, very often. I thought you might be one of them.

MARY

Why were you crying?

COLIN

Because I couldn't go to sleep, and my head ached. Tell me your name again.

MARY

Mary Lennox. Did no one ever tell you I had come to live here?

COLIN

No, they wouldn't dare.

MARY

Why?

COLIN

Because I should have been afraid you might see me. I won't let people see me.

MARY

Why?

COLIN

Because I am always ill and having to lie down. You see, if I live, I may be a hunchback.

MARY

Ooooh.

COLIN

But I shan't live. My father hates to think I might have a crooked back like him.

MARY

Do you really think you won't live?

COLIN

I don't suppose I shall.

MARY

Do you want to live?

COLIN

No. But I don't want to die. When I feel ill, I lie here and think about it until I just cry and cry.

MARY

Does your father come to see you often?

COLIN

Mostly when I'm asleep. I don't think he likes me.

MARY

Why?

COLIN

Because my mother died when I was born. He thinks I don't know, but I've heard people talking. He almost hates me.

MARY

He sure hates the garden, because she died.

COLIN

What garden?

MARY

Oh, just a garden she used to like.

COLIN

Why do you say he hates it?

MARY

Because when your mother died the garden door was locked and the key was buried. And it's been locked for ten years now.

COLIN (intrigued)

The garden door was locked? Who did it? Where is the key buried?

MARY

Your father locked the door. No one - no one knows where he buried the key.

COLIN

What sort of garden is it?

MARY

No one's been allowed to go in it for ten years.

COLIN

But where is it? Haven't you ever tried to look for the door. Haven't you ever asked any of the gardeners?

MARY

They won't talk about it. I think they have been told not to answer any questions.

COLIN

I could make them. Everyone has to do whatever I want. They all know that. I could make them tell me where it is.

MARY

Oh, don't - don't - don't do that!

COLIN

Why? Don't you want to see it?

MARY

I do. But if you make them open the door and take you in like that it will never be a secret again.

COLIN

A secret? What do you mean?

MARY

Well, if the garden was to stay a secret, and if we could get into it and shut ourselves in, no one would ever know that we were inside. We could pretend we were missel thrushes in our nest. We could play there almost every day, and dig and plant seeds, and watch things grow bigger and bigger and see how many roses are alive. Oh, don't you see? Don't you see how much nicer it would be if it was a secret?

COLIN

I never had a secret. Except that one about not living to grow up. They don't know that I know that, so it is a sort of secret. But I like this kind better.

MARY

I'm sure I can find out how to get in. And perhaps we might find some boy to push your chair, and we could all go into our secret garden.

COLIN

I should like that. I should not mind fresh air in a secret garden. (pause) Why do you look at me like that?

MARY

How different you are from Dickon.

COLIN

Who is Dickon? What a strange name.

MARY

He's Martha's brother. He's twelve years old and he's not like anyone else in the world. He can charm foxes and squirrels and birds just as the natives in India charm snakes. It's like Magic - but a good Magic. And he doesn't call it Magic, at all. He says it's because he lives on the moor so much and he knows their ways.

COLIN

I can't go on the moor.

MARY

You might -- sometime.

COLIN

Go on the moor? How could I? I'm going to die.

MARY

How do you know?

COLIN

Oh, I've heard it ever since I remember. They all whisper about it and think I don't notice. They wish I would, too.

MARY

Who?

COLIN

All the servants. I think my father wishes it too.

MARY

I don't believe he does.

COLIN

See here. Let's not talk about dying. I don't like it. Let's talk about living.

(He sits up suddenly. MRS. MEDLOCK enters.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

Good Heavens! What is the meaning of this? Who told you about Master Colin? Martha. It was Martha, wasn't it?

COLIN

Nobody told her anything. She heard me crying and found me herself. I'm glad she came.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Well, you mustn't forget how easily you get tired. You mustn't forget that you're ill.

COLIN

But I want to forget. She makes me forget it. That's why I want her here. But I don't want you. Now, get out!

(MRS. MEDLOCK exits in a huff.)

MARY

She thought you had gone mad like a dog.

COLIN

I don't care what she thought.

MARY

I wonder why you didn't scream and bite me when I first came into your room.

COLIN

I thought you were a ghost. Or a dream. You can't bite a ghost or a dream, and if you scream, they don't care.

MARY

Would you hate it if - if a boy looked at you?

COLIN

There's one boy. There's one boy I believe I shouldn't mind. It's that boy who talks to foxes and birds - Dickon.

MARY

I'm sure you wouldn't mind him.

COLIN

The birds and other animals don't mind. Perhaps I shouldn't either. He's a sort of animal charmer, and I'm a boy animal.

(Blackout. End of Act I)

The Secret Garden
ACT II

Scene 1

(At Rise: COLIN and MARTHA in COLIN's bedroom.)

COLIN

Help me. I want to be sitting up when Mary comes.

MARTHA

Oh, I'm sorry Master Colin. Miss Mary told me to tell you she won't be in until later today.

COLIN

Why not? She always comes to see me in the morning.

MARTHA

Well, today she went out to the garden as soon as the sun was up.

COLIN

Why?

MARTHA

My brother Dickon's come. They're off making a garden somewhere.

COLIN

Dickon? Tell him to go away.

MARTHA

Eh!, but he's a good lad.

COLIN

I want you to send him away!

MARTHA

There, there, Master Colin. You just lay back...

COLIN

No. I don't want to. I have a headache. And my back hurts. And I'm tired. Leave me.

(As MARTHA exits, Lights come up in the 'secret garden', DICKON is showing MARY some new Spring growth. The FOX, the CROW and the SQUIRREL follow after. ROBIN is building a nest.)

DICKON

See here. See how these have pushed up, an' these, an' these. (He rises.) An' Eh! Look at --

(He stops suddenly, seeing ROBIN.)

We canno' stir. We canno' scarce breathe. I knowed he was mate-huntin' when I seed him last. He's buildin' his nest now. We mustn't seem as if we was watchin' him too close.

MARY

If we talk about him I can't help but look at him. Let's talk of something else. There's something I want to tell you. Do you know about Colin?

DICKON

What does tha' know about him?

MARY

I've seen him.

DICKON

You have? But he doesn't let anyone...

MARY

I've been to talk to him every day this week. He wants me to come. Do you think he really wants to die?

DICKON

No, but he wishes he'd never been born. Mester Craven, he'd buy anythin' money could buy for th' poor lad but he'd like to forget he's on th' earth. For one thing, he's afraid he'll look at him some day and find he's growed hunchback.

MARY

Colin's so afraid of it himself that he won't sit up.

DICKON

Eh!, he oughtn't to lie there thinkin' things like that. No lad could get well as thought them sort o' things. (DICKON stops a moment, pets the FOX and looks around.) When we first got in here, it seemed like everything was gray. Look round now and tell me if tha' doesn't see a difference.

MARY

Why, the gray wall is changing. It is as if a green mist were creeping over it. Almost like a magic green veil.

DICKON

Eh!, and it'll be gettin' greener and greener till th' gray's all gone. Can tha' guess what I'm thinkin'?

MARY

I believe it's something about Colin.

DICKON

I was thinkin' that if he were out here he wouldn't be watchin' for lumps to grow on his back. He'd be watchin' for buds to break on th' rose bushes.

MARY

I've been wondering that myself.

DICKON

It'd be good for him, I bet.

MARY

He won't go out for other people, but he likes to hear about the garden. He said he wanted to see it.

DICKON

I could push his chair well enough.

MARY (rising)

And he could order the gardeners to keep away so they wouldn't find out.

DICKON

Has tha' noticed how th' robin has been workin' while we've been settin' here? Look at him. He knows we won't trouble him. We is nest-buildin', too.(To ROBIN.) Look out tha' doesn't tell on us, now.

(Lights fade to COLIN's bedroom. MARY enters and COLIN does not turn towards her.)
MARY

Why didn't you get up this morning?

COLIN

I did when I thought you were coming. Why didn't you come?

MARY

I was working in the garden with Dickon.

COLIN

I won't let that boy come here if you go and stay with him instead of coming to talk to me.

MARY

If you send Dickon away, I'll never come into this room again.

COLIN

You'll have to if I want you.

MARY

I won't!

COLIN

I'll make you. They shall drag you in.

MARY

Oh, shall they? They may drag me in but they can't make me talk when they get me here. I'll sit and clench my teeth and never tell you one thing. I won't even look at you. I'll stare at the floor.

COLIN

You are a horrible selfish girl.

MARY

And you're even more selfish than I am. You're the most selfish boy I ever saw.

COLIN

I am not. What about Dickon? He keeps you playing in the dirt when he knows I'm all by myself. That's selfish.

MARY

He's nicer than any other boy that ever lived. He's - he's like an angel.

COLIN

Some angel. He's a common cottage boy off the moor.

MARY

He's better than a common Rajah like you.

COLIN

He is not. I'm always ill, and I'm going to die.

MARY

No you're not.

COLIN

I am. You know I am.

MARY

I don't believe it. You just say that to make people feel sorry. If you were a nice boy it might be true - but you're too nasty.

COLIN

Get out. Get out of my room!

MARY

I'm going. And I won't come back either. I was going to tell you all sorts of nice things. Now I'm not going to tell you a single thing.

(Blackout, as she exits.)

Scene 2

(Late evening. COLIN is thrashing in bed SL whining and crying. MRS. MEDLOCK is trying to get him to take some medicine as MARTHA looks on. MARY is in bed SL trying to sleep.

COLIN

No. No. I don't want it.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Come on now. Just try a little bit.

COLIN

No, I tell you. No!

(He turns over and knocks the medicine from her.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

Oh dear. Now look what you've done.

COLIN (as she cleans up the spill)

Oh, my head. And my back. There's something wrong with my back. Aaah!, my back. My back.

(He begins screaming hysterically. MARY sits up.)

MARTHA

Oh you poor child. Does your back hurt?

COLIN

Yes. Of course it does.

(MARTHA attempts to look at his back and he screams in agony even louder. She exits.)

MARY

It's Colin. He's having one of those tantrums Martha called hysterics. How awful it sounds.

(She puts her pillow over her head.)

MRS. MEDWICK

Here try this.

COLIN

I won't. I won't. Take it away. It'll make me worse. I'll throw up all over the bed.

MRS. MEDWICK

All right, Master Colin. All right.

MARY (sitting up extremely agitated.)

I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do. I can't bear it. (rising from bed) He ought to be stopped. Somebody ought to make him stop. Somebody ought to beat him!

MARTHA (Entering Mary's room SR)

He's worked himself into hysterics. He'll do himself harm. No one can do anything with him. You come and try. He likes you.

MARY

He turned me out of the room this evening.

MARTHA

That's right You go in and scold him. Give him something new to think about.

(They exit Mary's bedroom. MRS. MEDWICK starts to exit Colin's room.)

COLIN

Where are you going?

MRS. MEDWICK

To fetch the doctor.

COLIN

No. I don't want him here.

MRS. MEDWICK

But Master Colin, I don't know -

COLIN

NO! No doctor. You must do as I say. You must. You must.
(MARY storms into COLIN's room. MARTHA enters after.)

MARY

You stop it. Stop it right now. I hate you. Everybody hates you. I wish everybody would run out of the house and let you scream yourself to death. You will in a minute, and I wish you would. (COLIN looks at her in surprise.) If you scream another scream, I'll scream too. And I can scream louder than you can and I'll frighten you. I will - I'll frighten you.

(He has stopped screaming by now, but is sobbing.)

COLIN

I can't stop. I can't - I can't.

MARY

You can. It's just hysterics and temper - hysterics and temper!

COLIN (whining, but not screaming)

But, I felt the lump, Mary. I felt it. I shall have a hunch on my back and then I shall die.

MARY

You didn't feel a lump. If you did it was only a hysterical lump. Hysterics make lumps. There's nothing the matter with your back - nothing but hysterics. Now turn over and let me look at you. (He turns over and she pulls up his night shirt. She examines his back carefully.) There's not a single lump there. There's not even a lump as big as a pin. If you ever say there is again, I shall laugh.

(COLIN says nothing for a while.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

I didn't know he thought he had a lump on his spine. His back is weak because he won't sit up. I could have told him there was no lump there.

COLIN

C-could you?

MRS. MEDLOCK

Yes, sir!

MARY

There!

COLIN (after a while)

Do you think - I could - live to grow up?

MRS. MEDLOCK

You probably will if you do what you are told and not give way to your temper. And you should stay out in the fresh air a good deal.

(Worn out from the tantrum which has now passed, COLIN reaches out weakly for MARY's hand. She takes it.)

COLIN

I will. I'll go out with you, Mary. I shan't hate the fresh air if we can find the secret...
(catching himself) I shall go out with you if Dickon will come and push my chair. I do so want to see Dickon and the fox and the crow.

(MRS. MEDLOCK gives COLIN his medicine without any trouble as MARTHA straightens up his bed again.)

MARTHA (To Mary)

You must go back and get your sleep, now. He'll drop off after a while. Then I'll lie down in the next room.

MARY (softly, to Colin)

Would you like me to sing you that song I learned in India?

COLIN

Oh, yes! It's such a soft song. I shall go to sleep in a minute.

MARY

I'll put him to sleep. You can go if you like.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Well, if he doesn't go to sleep in half an hour, call one of us.

MARY

Very well.

(They exit.)

COLIN

I almost told, but I stopped myself. You said you have a whole lot of nice things to tell me. Did you find out anything about the way into the secret garden?

MARY

Yes. I think I have. And if you go to sleep I'll tell you all about it tomorrow.

COLIN

Oh, Mary. If I could get into it I think I should live to grow up. Do you suppose that instead of singing your song - you could just tell me, softly as you did that first day, what you imagine it looks like inside?

MARY

Of course. Now, shut your eyes. I think it has been left alone so long, that it has grown all into a lovely tangle - almost like a strange gray mist. Some of the flowers have died but most of them are alive and when the summer comes there will be curtains and fountains of roses. Now the spring has come, perhaps there are clusters of purple crocuses and gold ones coming up through the grass. Perhaps the leaves are just now beginning to break out and uncurl - and perhaps - the gray mist is changing and a magic green veil is creeping over everything.

(MARY looks at COLIN who by now is sleeping deeply. Blackout.)

Scene 3

(Morning. COLIN is in bed, not well. MARY is straightening her bed and listening to MARTHA as she cleans.)

MARTHA

He says he wishes tha' would go and see him as soon as tha' can. It's queer what a fancy he's took to thee. Tha' did give it him last night for sure, didn't tha'? Nobody else would have dared to do it. Eh!, poor lad. He's been spoilt till salt won't save him. But he says to me first thing this morning, "Please ask Miss Mary if she'll please come an' talk to me?" 'Think o' him saying please! Will you go, Miss?

MARY

I'll run and see Dickon first. No, I'll go and see Colin first and tell him -- I know what I'll tell him.

(They exit. MARY enters Colin's room.)

COLIN

I'm glad you came. My head aches and my back - I ache all over because I'm so tired. Are you going somewhere?

MARY

I won't be long. I'm going to Dickon, but I'll come back. Colin, it's -- it's something about the garden.

COLIN (brightening)

Oh, is it? I dreamed about it all night. I heard you say something about a gray mist changing to a magic green veil, and I dreamed I was standing in a place all filled with trembling little green leaves - and there were birds on nests everywhere and they looked so soft and still. I'll lie and think about it until you come back.

(She exits. MRS. MEDLOCK enters and examines him, gives him medicine.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

Are you sure you are not chilly, Master Colin?

COLIN

No, no. I'm fine thank you.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Should you be wanting the doctor now, sir.

COLIN

No. I'm better now. Much better. I'm going to go out in my chair in a day or two if it's fine. I want some fresh air. (MARY enters, out of breath.) What is it you smell of? It's cool and warm and sweet all at the same time.

MARY

It's th' wind from th' moor. It comes o' sittin' on th' grass under a tree wi' Dickon. It's the springtime an' out o' doors an' sunshine smells so graidely.

COLIN (laughing)

What are you doing? I never heard you talk like that before. How funny it sounds.

MARY

I'm givin' thee a bit o' Yorkshire. I canna' talk as graidely as Dickon an' Martha can, but tha' sees I can shape a bit. Doesn't tha' understand a bit o' Yorkshire when tha' hears it? An tha' a Yorkshire lad thysel' bred an' born. Eh!, I wonder tha' art not ashamed o' thyself. (She also laughs.)

MRS. MEDLOCK

Well, upon my word. Whoever heard th' like?

(She exits. COLIN and MARY laugh even harder.)

COLIN

Mary, do the animals really understand everything Dickon says?

MARY

It seems as if they do. Dickon says anything will understand if you're friends with it for sure. But you have to be friends for sure -

COLIN

I wish I was friends with things, but I'm not. I never had anything to be friends with, and I can't bear people.

MARY

Can't you bear me?

COLIN

Yes, I can. It's funny, but - I even like you. Mary, did you used to feel as if you hated people?

MARY

Yes. I should have detested you if I had seen you before the robin and Dickon.

COLIN

I hated you when you said Dickon was like an angel, but perhaps he is.

MARY

Well, it was rather a funny thing to say, but if there was a Yorkshire angel, I believe he would understand the green things and how to make them grow and he would know how to talk to the wild creatures as Dickon does.

COLIN

I shouldn't mind Dickon looking at me. I want to see him.

MARY (rising)

Really? I'm glad you said that, because -- because --

COLIN

Because what?

(MARY crosses towards the door.)

Because what, Mary?

MARY

Listen. Did you hear a caw?

COLIN

Yes.

MARY

'That's Soot. He's coming!

COLIN

Dickon? He's coming here?

(MARY nods.)

Oh! Oh!

MARY

But that's not all. The rest is better.

COLIN

Oh? What? Tell me, Mary. What is it?

MARY

Can I trust you? I trusted Dickon because birds trusted him. Can I trust you, for sure - for sure?

COLIN

Yes -- yes!

MARY

'There is a door into the garden. I found it. It is under the ivy on the wall. And I've found the key as well.

COLIN

Oh, Mary! Shall I see it? Shall I get into it? Shall I really live to get into it?

(DICKON enters pushing a wheel chair, followed closely by the CROW, FOX and SQUIRREL.)

DICKON

O' course tha'll be seein' it. Don't be silly, now.

COLIN

Dickon? Oh, Dickon, I'm so pleased to finally meet you.

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

(Lights up in the 'secret garden'. DICKON enters pushing COLIN in the wheel chair with MARY next to him.)

MARY

This is it.

COLIN

Oh! It's beautiful. It's more beautiful than I ever imagined. I shall get well here. Mary!
Dickon! I shall get well. And I shall live forever and ever.

DICKON

Eh! it is graidely. I'm twelve goin' on thirteen an' there's a lot o' afternoons in thirteen years, but seems to me like I never seed one as graidely as this 'ere.

MARY

Eh!, it is a graidely one. I'll warrant it's the graideliest one as ever was in the world.

COLIN

Does tha' think it were made loike this all o' purpose for me?

MARY

My word, that there is a good bit o' Yorkshire. 'Tha' art shapin first-rate - that tha' art.

(They all laugh delightedly.)

MARY

Shush now, both of you, or someone'll hear us.

COLIN

I don't want this afternoon to go, but I shall come back tomorrow, and the day after, and the day after that.

MARY

You'll get plenty of fresh air, won't you?

COLIN

I'm going to get nothing else. I've seen the spring now and I'm going to see the summer. I'm going to see everything grow here. I'm going to grow here myself.

DICKON

'That tha' will. We'll have thee walkin' about here an' diggin' same as other folk afore long.

COLIN

Walk! Dig! Shall I?

DICKON

For sure tha' will. 'Tha - tha's got legs o' thine own, same as other folks.

COLIN

Nothing really ails them, but they are so thin and weak. They shake so that I'm afraid to try and stand on them.

DICKON

When tha' stops bein' afraid then tha'll stand on 'em. An' tha'll stop bein' afraid in a bit.

COLIN

I shall?

(DICKON nods and MARY crosses to assure him. Meanwhile BEN's head appears over the wall, from atop a ladder.)

Who is that man?

DICKON

Man?

COLIN

Look. Just look.

MARY

Ben Weatherstaff!

BEN (shaking his fist at MARY)

If I wasn't a batchelder, an' tha' was a wench o' mine, I'd give thee a hidin'. I never thowt much o' thee. I couldna' abide thee th' first time I set eyes on thee. Scrawny buttermilk-face young wench, allus askin' questions an' pokin' tha nose where it wasna' wanted.

MARY

Ben Weatherstaff, it was the robin who showed me the way.

BEN

'Tha' young bad 'un. Layin' the badness on a robin. Him showin' thee th' way? Eh! tha' young nowt - however i' this world did tha' get in?

MARY

It was the robin. He didn't know he was doing it but he did. And stop shaking your fist at me.

COLIN (overlapping MARY)

Wheel me over there and stop right in front of him.

DICKON does so.)

Do you know who I am? Answer.

BEN

Who tha' art? Eh!, that I do - wi' tha' mother's eyes starin' at me out o' thy face. Lord knows how tha' come here. But tha' art th' poor cripple.

COLIN (sitting up perfectly straight)

I'm not a cripple. I'm not.

MARY

He's not. He's doesn't have a lump. I looked and there was none there - not one!

BEN

'Tha' - tha' hasn't got a crooked back?

COLIN

No.
BEN

'Tha' - tha' hasn't got crooked legs?

COLIN (tearing the blankets off his legs)

Dickon, come here.

MARY

He can do it. He can do it. He can do it. He can.

(With DICKON as a crutch, COLIN stands on his own.)

COLIN

Look at me. Just look at me - you!

DICKON

He's as straight as I am. He's as straight as any lad i' Yorkshire.

BEN (crying)

Eh!, th' lies folks tell. 'Tha' art as thin as a lass an' as white as a wraith, but there's not a knob on thee. 'Tha'll make a man yet. God bless thee.

COLIN

I'm your master when my father is away. And you are to obey me. Now get down from that ladder and go out to the Long Walk and Miss Mary will meet you and bring you here. I want to talk to you. Be quick!

BEN (disappearing)

Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

COLIN (to MARY)

Go and meet him.

(She exits. Then, to DICKON, grandly.)

I can stand.

DICKON

I told thee tha' could as soon as tha' stopped bein' afraid. An' tha's stopped.

COLIN

Yes, I have stopped. Are you making Magic?

DICKON

Tha's doin' Magic thysel'. Same Magic as made these 'ere break out o' th' earth.

COLIN

Eh!, there couldn't be bigger Magic than that. (He stands up even straighter.) Dickon, take me over to that bench, please. I'm going to be standing when Weatherstaff comes in, but I can rest if I like.

(BEN WEATHERSTAFF enters with MARY who, seeing COLIN standing, continues to mutter to herself "You can do it, You can, I told you you could, etc.)

COLIN

Look at me, Weatherstaff. Look at me all over. Am I hunchback? Have I got crooked legs?

BEN

Not tha'. What has tha' been doin' with thysel' - hidin' out o' sight an' lettin' folk think tha' was cripple?

COLIN

Everybody thought I was going to die. But I'm not.

BEN

'Tha' die? Nowt o' th' sort. Tha's got too much pluck in thee. Now, sit thee down a bit young Mester an' give me thy orders.

(They all sit around him.)

COLIN

What work do you do in the gardens, Weatherstaff?

BEN

Anythin' I'm told to do. I'm only kep' on by favor - because she liked me.

COLIN

She?

BEN

Thy mother.

COLIN

My mother? This was her garden, wasn't it?

BEN

Eh!, that it was. She were main fond of it.

COLIN

It is my garden now. And I am fond of it. I shall come here every day. But it is to be a secret. My orders are that no one is to know that we come here. Dickon and my cousin have worked and made it come alive. I shall send for you sometimes to help - but you must come when no one can see you.

BEN

I've come before when no one saw me.

COLIN

What? When?

BEN

Oh, th' last time was about two year' ago.

COLIN

But no one has been in it for ten years. There was no door.

BEN

Well, I'm one. An' I didn't come through no door.

DICKON

Tha' come an' did a bit o' prunin'! I couldn't make out how it had been done.

BEN

She was so fond of it - she was. An' she was such a pretty young thing. She says to me once, "Ben", she says, "if ever I'm ill or if I go away you must take care of my roses." When she did go away, th' orders was no one was ever to come nigh. But I come. Over th' wall I come - until th' rheumatics stopped me - an' I did a bit o' work once a year. She'd gave her order first.

DICKON

It wouldn't've been as wick as it is if tha' hadn't done it.

COLIN

I'm glad you did it Weatherstaff. You'll know how to keep a secret.

BEN

Eh!, I'll know, sir. An' it'll be easier for a man wi' rheumatics to come in at th' door.

(As BEN starts to exit, COLIN picks up Mary's trowel from in front of him and walks DC. He drives the end of the trowel into the dirt. BEN turns and watches with interest.)

MARY

You can do it! You can do it! I tell you, you can.

(Blackout.)

Scene 6

(The 'secret garden'. Weeks later. DICKON is lying on the ground "watching things grow" and MARY is helping COLIN get up from sitting on the ground. BEN enters.)

COLIN

Good morning, Ben Weatherstaff. I want you and Dickon and Miss Mary to stand in a row and listen to me because I am going to tell you something very important.

BEN

Aye, aye, sir.

COLIN

I am going to try a scientific experiment. When I grow up I am going to make great scientific experiments and I am going to begin now with this experiment.

BEN

Aye, aye, sir.

COLIN

The great scientific experiments I am going to make are about Magic. When Mary found this garden it looked quite dead. Then something began pushing things up out of the soil and making things out of nothing. I kept asking myself "What is it? What is it?" It's something. It can't be nothing. I don't know it's name, so I call it Magic. I have never seen the sun rise, but Dickon and Mary have, and from what they tell me I am sure that is Magic too. I am sure there is Magic in everything - leaves and trees, flowers and birds, foxes and squirrels, and people - only we don't have sense enough to get hold of it and make it do things for us. The Magic in this garden made me stand up. I don't know how, but I think if you keep thinking about it and calling it perhaps it will come. That first time I tried to stand Mary kept saying to herself as fast as she could, "You can do it! You can do it!" and I did. I had to try myself at the same time, of course, but her Magic helped me - and so did Dickon's. Every morning and evening and as often as I can remember I'm going to say, "Magic is in me! Magic is making me well! I am going to be as strong as Dickon!" And you must all do it, too. That is my experiment. Will you help, Ben Weatherstaff?

BEN

Aye, aye, sir! Aye, aye!

COLIN

If you keep doing it every day we shall see what will happen and find out if the experiment succeeds.

MARY

I once heard an officer in India tell my mother that there were fakirs who said words over and over thousands of times.

DICKON

I've heard Jem Fettleworth's wife say th' same thing over thousands o' times - callin Jem a drunken brute. Sumthin' allus comes o' that, sure enough. He gave her a good hidin' an' went to th' Blue Lion an' got drunk as a Lord.

COLIN

Yes. You see, she used the wrong Magic. If she had said something nice perhaps he wouldn't have got drunk as a Lord and hit her.

BEN

'Tha' art a clever lad, Mester Colin. Next time I see Bess Fettleworth I'll tell her what Magic'll do for her.

COLIN (to Dickon)

Do you think the experiment will work?

DICKON

Eh!, that I do. It'll work same as th' seeds do when th' sun shines on 'em. Shall we begin it now?

COLIN

Here, sit crosslegged in the shade just like the Indian fakirs do. It'll be like sitting in a sort of temple. And I am rather tired.

DICKON

Eh! 'Tha' mustn't begin by sayin' tha' art tired. 'Tha' might spoil the Magic.

COLIN

That's true. I must only think of the Magic.

(The group assembles in a half-circle with COLIN at the center. During the following the ANIMALS join in.)

COLIN

Now we shall begin. Mary, should we sway backward and forward like dervishes?

BEN

I canna' do no swayin' back'ard an' for'ard. I've got the rheumatics.

COLIN

The Magic will take them away. But we won't sway until it has done it. We will only chant.

BEN

I canna' do no chantin'. They turned me out o' th' church choir th' only time I ever tried it.

COLIN

Then the rest of us will chant. The sun is shining. The sun is shining. That is the Magic.

MARY & DICKON

That is the Magic.

COLIN

The flowers are growing. The roots are stirring. That is the Magic.

MARY & DICKON

That is the Magic.

COLIN

Being alive is the Magic.

MARY & DICKON

Magic.

COLIN

Being strong is the Magic.

MARY & DICKON

Magic.

COLIN

The Magic is in me.

MARY & DICKON

Yes.

COLIN

It is in me.

MARY & DICKON

Yes.

COLIN

It is in me.

MARY & DICKON

Yes.

COLIN

It's in every one of us.

MARY & DICKON

Magic.

COLIN

It's in Ben Weatherstaff's back.

MARY & DICKON

Magic.

COLIN

Magic! Magic! Come and help!

MARY & DICKON

Magic! Magic! Come and help!

COLIN

Now I am going to walk all the way around the garden.

(BEN's head drops forward and lifts with a jerk.)

COLIN

You have been asleep.

BEN

Nowt o' th' sort. I heard every bit of it. You said th' Magic was in my back. 'Th' doctor calls it rheumatics.

COLIN

'That was the wrong Magic. You will get better. You have my permission to go back to work. But come back tomorrow.

BEN

I'd like to see thee walk 'round the garden.

(COLIN ,weakly at first, begins his procession. Gradually he gains strength.)

MARY (overlapping Colin)

You can do it. You can do it. I know you can do it, etc.

COLIN (repeating, as he walks)

The Magic is in me. The Magic is making me strong. I can feel it. I can feel it. The Magic is in me. The Magic is in me, etc. (When he finishes his walk, he returns to the group, triumphant.) I did it! The Magic worked.

MARY

What will Mrs. Medlock say?

COLIN

She won't say anything, because she will not be told. This is to be the biggest secret of all. No one is to know anything - not even my father - not until I am so strong that I can walk and run like any other boy. Then, when he returns here to Misselthwaite, I'll just walk into his study and say, "Here I am, father. I'm like any other boy.

MARY

He will think he is in a dream. He won't believe his eyes.

COLIN

He'll have to believe them.

(Blackout.)

Scene 7

(The 'secret garden'. COLIN, DICKON and MARY are working.)

COLIN

The Magic works best when you, yourself, are working. You can feel it in your bones and muscles.

(He stops working. Rises.)

Mary! Dickon! Look at me. Do you remember that first morning you brought me in here?

DICKON

Eh!, that we do.

COLIN

Just this minute, all at once, I remembered it, too. When I looked at my hand digging with the trowel - and I had to stand up on my feet to see if it was real. And it is real! I'm well - I'm well!

DICKON

Eh!, that tha' art.

COLIN

I'm well. I'm well. I shall grow to be a man, and I shall find out thousands and thousands of things. I shall find out about people and creatures and everything that grows - like Dickon - and I shall never stop making Magic! I shall live forever and ever and ever.

DICKON

Or at least until next Thursday.

COLIN

Why, you --

(He chases after DICKON and they start wrestling on the ground, good-naturedly. It is an even match. Soon, MARY tries to break things up, and gets caught in the horseplay. There is lots of laughter and childish squeals, as MR. CRAVEN enters.)

MR. CRAVEN

What in heaven's name do I hear? Is someone in the garden? Now, where is that key?

(He searches along the ground, looking for the key, and disappears US of the wall. DICKON and MARY are running after COLIN. The door to the garden opens, MR. CRAVEN steps through, and COLIN crashes into him.)

MR. CRAVEN

Who -- What? Who!

COLIN (appearing to stand even taller)

Father. I'm Colin. You can't believe it. I scarcely can myself. I'm Colin.

MR. CRAVEN (muttering to himself)

In the garden?

COLIN

Yes, it was the garden that did it - and Mary and Dickon and the creatures - and the Magic. No one knows. We kept it a secret to tell you when you came. I'm well. I can even beat Mary in a race. Aren't you glad Father? Aren't you glad? I'm going to live forever and ever and ever.

MR. CRAVEN (putting his arm around his son)

Take me through your garden, son. Tell me all about it.

(Curtain.)

hat is the Magic.

MARY & DICKON

o you say he hates it?

MARY

Be

row, it bein' my day out. Now, if tha' goes round that way tha'll come to

did you --? Why --?

DICKON

Martha told me. Now, where's that robin that's callin'