



APPENDIX

SUMMARY

The Secret Garden is opened by introducing us to Mary Lennox, a sickly, foul-tempered, unsightly little girl who loves no one and whom no one loves. At the outset of the story, she is living in India with her parents—a handsome army captain and his careless, beautiful wife—but is rarely permitted to see them. They have placed her under care of native servants constantly, which are too hideous and tiresome to look after. Mary's circumstances become into complete upheaval when an outbreak of cholera devastates the Lennox household, leaving no one alive but herself.

Mary is sent to live in Yorkshire with her maternal uncle, Archibald Craven. Misselthwaite Manor is an old estate with over one hundred rooms, where most of those rooms have been locked up by Archibald Craven. A man whom everyone describes as "a miserable hunchback," Master Craven has been in a state of inconsolable grief ever since the death of his wife ten years before the novel begins. Shortly after arriving at Misselthwaite, Mary hears about a secret garden from Martha Sowerby, her good-natured Yorkshire maidservant. This garden belonged to the late Mistress Craven; after her death, Archibald locked the garden door and buried the key beneath the earth.

Mary becomes intensely curious about the secret garden, and determines to find it. This curiosity, along with the vigorous exercise she takes on the moor, begins to have an extremely positive effect upon Mary. She almost immediately becomes less sickly, more engaged with the world, and less foul-tempered. This change is also

influenced by Ben Weatherstaff, a rudely but kindly old gardener, and a robin redbreast who lives in the secret garden. She begins to count these two "people," along with Martha, Dickon Sowerby, and Susan Sowerby, as the friends she has had in her life. Her curiosity is increase when she hears strange, far-off cries coming from one of the manor's distant rooms.

However, Mrs. Medlock, the head of the servants at Misselthwaite, absolutely forbids her to seek out the source of the cries. She is distracted from this mystery when she discovers, the key to the secret garden with the robin's help. She immediately sets about working there, so that the neglected plants might thrive. Dickon, who brings her a set of gardening tools and promises to help her bring the secret garden back to life, gives a lot of helps to her in her efforts. Dickon is a boy who can charm the animals of the moor. He is only a common moor boy, but he is filled with so much uncanny wisdom that Mary comes to refer to him as "the Yorkshire angel".

One night, Mary hears the distant cries and, flagrantly disobeying Mrs. Medlock's prohibition, goes off in search of the crying's source. She finds Colin Craven, Master Craven's invalid son, shut up in an opulent bedchamber. Colin was born shortly before his mother's death, and his father cannot bear to look at him because the boy painfully reminds him of his late wife. Colin has been laid since his birth, and it is believed that he will become a hunchback and die in an early death. His servants have been commanded to obey his every whim, and Colin has become

fantastically spoiled and arrogant as a result. Colin and Mary strike up a friendship, but Colin becomes angry when Mary does not visit him because she prefers to plant in the garden with Dickon. That night, Colin throws one of the infamous tantrums. Mary rushes to his room in a fury and commands him to stop crying. Colin tells her that his back is beginning to show a hunch; when Mary examines him, she finds that nothing is wrong with his back. Mary tells him that Colin's illness is only in his mind and he will be better if only he makes up his mind to be.

Dickon and Mary secretly begin bringing Colin out into the secret garden. On the first of these outings, the children are discovered by Ben Weatherstaff, who has been covertly tending the secret garden once a year for ten years. Ben has done so out of love and loyalty for the late Mistress Craven: he was a favorite of hers. Weatherstaff refers to Colin as "the poor cripple," and asks if he has crooked legs and a crooked back. Colin, made furious by this question, forces himself to stand up on his own feet for the first time in his life. After this feat, Colin's health improves miraculously. The secret garden, the springtime, and Dickon's company have the same rejuvenating effect upon him that they did upon Mary. The children determine to keep Colin's improvement a secret, however, so that he can surprise his father with his recovery when Master Craven returns from his trip abroad.

The three children, along with Ben Weatherstaff, spend every day of the summer in the secret garden. Only one other person is admitted into the secret: Susan Sowerby, Dickon's saintly mother. Susan sends a letter to Master Craven, telling him

to go home as soon as possible, so he might see his son, Colin. She does not specify the reason why Master Craven has to go home earlier, in deference to Colin's secret. Master Craven complies, and returns immediately to Misselthwaite. His first act is to go into the secret garden, because the voice of his late wife in his dream told him that he might find her there. Just as he lays his hand to the doorknob, Colin comes rushing out and falls into his arms. Father and son are reconciled, and the miracle of Colin's recovery becomes known to all.

At the end of this story is happy ending, because finally Marry Lennox has not to be such a selfish and authoritative girl anymore, but she became a girl with love and understanding with another.

