



# Cambridge IGCSE™

**DRAMA**

**0411/11**

Paper 1

**May/June 2025**

PRE-RELEASE MATERIAL

**Centres should download this material from the School Support Hub and give it to candidates.**

## INSTRUCTIONS

- The questions in Paper 1 will be based on the **two** play extracts provided in this booklet.
- You may do any appropriate preparatory work. It is recommended that you explore both extracts as practical theatre, investigating performance and staging opportunities.
- You will **not** be allowed to take this copy of the material **or** any other notes or preparation into the examination.
- A copy of the pre-release material will be provided with the question paper.

This document has **32** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

## EXTRACT 1

Adapted from *The Prisoner of Second Avenue* by Neil Simon

These notes are intended to help you understand the context of the drama.

Extract 1 is taken from Neil Simon's play, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, which was first performed in 1971 in New York City. The play is in three acts and the extract starts at the opening of Act 1.

Neil Simon's comedies often examine the tensions among family members, friends and neighbours living in New York. In the early 1970s, New York City was beset by financial problems, high crime and strikes, which often made daily life difficult and sometimes dangerous.

*The Prisoner of Second Avenue* explores the devastating effect that city life can have on a middle-aged couple. Mel Edison is a 46-year-old, well-paid executive with a high-end Manhattan firm who is facing redundancy. Mel and his wife Edna live on the 14th floor of an apartment block. The building has failed to live up to their expectations because of its paper-thin walls and five taller buildings blocking their view from the terrace.

The play shows Mel and Edna's struggle to survive city life, battling against noisy neighbours, faulty plumbing, and the loss of employment.

## CHARACTERS

MEL EDISON

EDNA EDISON (*his wife*)

HARRY EDISON (*MEL's brother*)

PEARL (*MEL's sister*)

JESSIE (*MEL's sister*)

PAULINE (*MEL's sister*)

## ACT ONE SCENE ONE

*[The 14th floor apartment in New York's overpriced East Side. This one is on Second Avenue. This particular dwelling has been the home of MEL and EDNA EDISON for the past six years. What they thought they were getting were all the modern luxuries and comforts of the smart, chic East Side. What they got is paper-thin walls and a view of five taller buildings from their terrace.]* 5

*At curtain up, the stage is dark. It is two-thirty in the morning and a hot midsummer's day has just begun. It is silent ... MEL EDISON, in pyjamas, robe and slippers, sits alone on the tiny sofa. He rubs his face anxiously, then coughs ...* 10

*A light appears from the bedroom. EDNA, his wife, appears in her nightgown.]*

EDNA: What's wrong?  
 MEL: Nothing's wrong.  
 EDNA: Huh? 15  
 MEL: Nothing's wrong. Go back to bed.  
 EDNA: Are you sure?  
 MEL: I'm sure. Go back to bed.

*[EDNA turns and goes back to bedroom. EDNA returns, putting on her robe. She turns on switch on wall, lighting the room.]* 20

EDNA: What is it? Can't you sleep?  
 MEL: Do you know it's twelve degrees in there? July 23rd, the middle of a heat wave, it's twelve degrees in there.  
 EDNA: I told you, turn the air conditioner off.  
 MEL: And how do we breathe? *[Points to window.]* It's 89 degrees out there 25  
 ... 89 degrees outside, 12 degrees inside. Either way they're going to get me.  
 EDNA: We could leave the air conditioner on and open the window. *[She crosses into kitchen.]*  
 MEL: They don't work that way. Once the hot air sees an open window, it goes in. 30  
 EDNA: We could leave the air conditioner off for an hour. Then when it starts to get hot, we can turn it back on. *[Comes out eating jar of apple sauce.]*  
 MEL: Every hour? Seven times a night? That's a good idea. I can get eight 35  
 minutes sleep in between working the air conditioner.  
 EDNA: I'll do it. I'll get up.  
 MEL: I asked you a million times to call that office. That air conditioner hasn't worked properly in two years.  
 EDNA: I called them. A man came. He couldn't find anything wrong. 40  
 MEL: What do you mean, nothing wrong? I got it on Low, it's twelve degrees.  
 EDNA: *[Sits, sighs.]* It's not twelve degrees, Mel. It's cold, but it's not twelve degrees.  
 MEL: Alright, 17 degrees. 29 degrees. 36 degrees. It's not 68. 69. A 45  
 temperature for a normal person.  
 EDNA: *[Sits on sofa.]* I'll call them again tomorrow. I can't sleep when you're tense like this.  
 MEL: I'm not tense. I'm frozen stiff. July 23rd. *[He sits on sofa.]*  
 EDNA: You're tense. You were tense when you walked in the house tonight.

	You've been tense for a week. Would you rather sleep in here? I could make up the cot.	50
MEL:	You can't even sit in here. [ <i>Picks up small puff pillows behind him.</i> ] Why do you keep these ugly little pillows on here? You spend eight hundred dollars for chairs and then you can't sit on it because you got ugly little pillows shoved up your back. [ <i>He throws one of the pillows on the floor.</i> ]	55
EDNA:	I'll take the pillows off.	
MEL:	Edna, please go inside, I'll be in later.	
EDNA:	It's not the air conditioner. It's not the pillows. It's something else. Something's bothering you. I've seen you when you get like this. What is it, Mel?	60
MEL:	[ <i>Rubs face with hands.</i> ] It's nothing. I'm tired. [ <i>He gets up, crosses to terrace door.</i> ]	
EDNA:	I'm up, Mel, you might as well tell me.	
MEL:	It's nothing I'm telling you ... I don't know. It's everything. It's this apartment, it's this building, it's this city. Listen. Listen to this. [ <i>He opens terrace door. We hear the sounds of traffic, horns, motors, etc.</i> ] ... Two-thirty in the morning, there's one car driving around in Jackson Heights and we can hear it ... Fourteen stories up, I thought it would be quiet. I hear the subway up here better than I hear it in the subway ... All the sound goes up through this apartment and then out to the city.	65
EDNA:	We've lived here six years, it never bothered you before.	
MEL:	It's worse now, I don't know why. I'm getting older, more sensitive to sounds, to noise. Everything. [ <i>He closes door. Looks at himself.</i> ] You see this? I had that door opened ten seconds, you gotta wash these pyjamas now.	70
EDNA:	[ <i>Anything to please.</i> ] Give them to me, I'll get you clean pyjamas.	
MEL:	[ <i>Paces.</i> ] Two-thirty in the morning, can you believe that's still going on next door? [ <i>He points to wall.</i> ]	75
EDNA:	What's going on?	
MEL:	What, are you trying to be funny? You mean to tell me you don't hear that?	
EDNA:	[ <i>Puzzled.</i> ] Hear what?	
MEL:	[ <i>Closer to wall, still pointing.</i> ] That! That! What are you, deaf? You don't hear that?	80
EDNA:	Maybe I'm deaf. I don't hear anything	
MEL:	<i>Listen</i> , ... You don't hear Raindrops Falling on His Head? ... [ <i>Sings.</i> ] 'Da dum de dum da dum de da ... too big for his feet ...' You don't hear that?	85
EDNA:	Not when you're singing. I don't hear it.	
MEL:	[ <i>Stares at wall.</i> ] It's those two German airline hostesses. Every night they got someone else in there. Two basketball players, two hockey players, whatever team is in town, win or lose, they wind up in there ... Every night! ... Somewhere there's a 747 flying around with people serving themselves because those two never leave that apartment. [ <i>Grabs EDNA, pulls her.</i> ] Come here. You mean to tell me you don't hear that?	90
EDNA:	[ <i>Puts her head to the wall.</i> ] Yes, now I hear it.	
MEL:	You see! Is it any wonder I don't sleep at night?	95
EDNA:	[ <i>Walking away.</i> ] Don't sleep with your head next to the wall. Sleep in the bedroom.	
MEL:	[ <i>Turns, glares at her.</i> ] Go to bed, Edna. I don't want to talk to you now. Will you please go to sleep.	100
EDNA:	I can't sleep if I know you're up here walking around having an anxiety	105

attack.

MEL: I'm not having an anxiety attack. I'm a little tense.

EDNA: Why don't you take a Valium.

MEL: I took one.

EDNA: Then take another one. 110

MEL: I took another one. They don't work anymore. [*He sits on chair.*]

EDNA: Two Valiums? They *have* to work.

MEL: They don't work anymore, I'm telling you. They're supposed to calm you down, aren't they? Alright, am I calm? They don't work. Probably don't put anything in them. Charge you 14 dollars for the word 'Valium.' [*Bangs on wall.*] Don't you ever fly anywhere? Keep somebody in Europe awake! [*He bangs the wall again with his fist.*] 115

EDNA: Stop it, Mel. You're really getting me nervous now. What's wrong? Has something happened? Is something bothering you?

MEL: Why do we live like this? Why do we pay somebody hundreds of dollars a month to live in an egg box that leaks? 120

EDNA: You don't look well to me, Mel. You look pale. You look haggard.

MEL: I wasn't planning to be up. [*He rubs stomach.*]

EDNA: Why are you rubbing your stomach?

MEL: I'm not rubbing it, I'm holding it. 125

EDNA: Why are you holding your stomach?

MEL: It's nothing. A little indigestion. It's that crap I had for lunch.

EDNA: Where did you eat?

MEL: In a health food restaurant. If you can't eat health food, what the hell can you eat anymore? 130

EDNA: You're probably just hungry. Do you want me to make you something?

MEL: Nothing is safe anymore. I read in the paper today two white mice at Columbia University got cancer from eating Graham Crackers. It was in The New York Times.

EDNA: Is that what's bothering you? Did you eat Graham Crackers today? 135

MEL: Food used to be so good. I used to love food. I haven't eaten food since I was thirteen years old.

EDNA: Do you want some food? I'll make you food. I remember how they made it.

MEL: I haven't had a real piece of bread in thirty years ... If I knew what was going to happen, I would have saved some rolls when I was a kid. You can't breathe in here. [*He crosses to terrace, then comes out.*] What a stink. Fourteen stories up, you can smell the garbage from here. Why do they put garbage out in eighty-nine degree heat? Edna, come here, I want you to smell the garbage. 140

EDNA: I smell it. I smell it.

MEL: You can't smell it from there. Come here where you can smell it.

EDNA: [*Walks to edge of terrace and inhales.*] You're right. If you really want to smell it, you have to stand right here. 145

MEL: This country is being buried by its own garbage. It keeps piling up higher and higher. In three years this apartment is going to be the second floor. 150

EDNA: What can they do, Mel? Save it up and put it out in the winter? They have to throw it out sometime. That's why they call it garbage.

MEL: I can't talk to you. I can't talk to you anymore. 155

EDNA: Mel, I'm a human being the same as you. I get hot, I get cold, I smell garbage, I hear noise. You either live with it or you get out. [*Suddenly a dog howls and barks.*]

MEL: If you're a human being you reserve the right to complain, to protest. When you give up that right, you don't exist anymore. I protest to stinking garbage and jiggling toilets ... and barking dogs. [*Yells out*] 160

EDNA:	<i>through terrace.</i> ] Shut up, shut up. Are you going to stay here and yell at the dog? Because I'm going to sleep. [ <i>The dog howls again.</i> ]	
MEL:	How can you sleep with a dog screaming like that? [ <i>The dog howls again.</i> MEL <i>goes to terrace and yells down.</i> ] Keep that dog quiet. There are human beings sleeping up here!!!!	165
VOICE:	[ <i>From above.</i> ] Will you be quiet, there are children up here.	
MEL:	[ <i>Yelling up.</i> ] What the hell are you yelling at me for? You looking for trouble, go down and keep the dog company.	170
EDNA:	Mel, will you stop it!	
MEL:	[ <i>Comes in, screams at EDNA.</i> ] Don't tell <i>me</i> to stop it! DON'T TELL ME TO STOP IT!	
EDNA:	I don't know what's gotten into you. But I'm not going to stand here and let you take it out on me ... If it's too much for you, take a room in the public library, <i>but don't take it out on me.</i> I'm going to sleep, <i>goodnight!!</i> [ <i>She turns angrily and heads for the bedroom. She gets almost to the door when MEL calls to her.</i> ]	175
MEL:	Edna!	
	[ <i>She stops, turns.</i> ]	180
	Don't go! ... Talk to me for a few minutes because I think I'm going out of my mind.	
	[ <i>She stops, looks at him, and crosses back into the room.</i> ]	
EDNA:	What is it?	
MEL:	I'm unraveling ... I'm losing touch!	185
EDNA:	You haven't been sleeping well lately ...	
MEL:	I don't know where I am half the time. I walk down Madison Avenue, I think I'm in a foreign country.	
EDNA:	Listen – Listen – What about if we get away for a couple of weeks. A two week vacation? Someplace in the sun, away from the city. You can get two weeks sick-leave, can't you, Mel?	190
	[ <i>He is silent. He walks to window, glances over at the plant.</i> ]	
MEL:	... Even the cactus is dying. Strongest plant in the world, only has to be watered twice a year. Can't make a go of it on 88th and Second.	
EDNA:	Mel, answer me. What about getting away? Can't you ask them for two weeks off?	195
MEL:	[ <i>Makes himself a Scotch.</i> ] Yes, I can ask them for two weeks off. What worries me is that they'll ask me to take the other fifty weeks as well. [ <i>He drinks.</i> ]	
EDNA:	You? What are you talking about? You've been there 22 years ... Mel. Is that it? Is that what's been bothering you? You're worried about losing your job?	200
MEL:	I'm not worried about losing it. I'm worried about keeping it. Losing it is easy.	
EDNA:	Has something happened? Have they said anything?	205
MEL:	They don't have to say anything. The company lost three million dollars this year. Suddenly they're looking to save pennies. The vice-president of my department has been using the same paper clip for three weeks now. A 62 year old man with a duplex on Park Avenue and a house in Southampton running around the office, screaming 'Where's my paper clip?' ...	210

- EDNA: But they haven't actually said anything to you.  
MEL: They closed the executive dining room. Nobody goes out to lunch anymore, they bring sandwiches from home. Top executives, making eighty thousand dollars a year, eating egg salad sandwiches over the waste paper basket ... 215
- EDNA: Nothing has happened yet, Mel. There's no point in worrying about it now.  
MEL: No one comes to work late anymore. Everyone's afraid if you're not there on time, they'll sell your desk. 220
- EDNA: And what if they did? We'd live, we'd get by. You'd get another job somewhere.  
MEL: Where? I'm gonna be 47 years old in January. 47! They could get two 23-and-a-half-year-old kids for half my money.  
EDNA: Alright, suppose something *did* happen? Suppose you *did* lose your job? It's not the end of the world. We don't have to live in the city. We could move somewhere in the country, or even out west. 225
- MEL: And what do I do for a living? Become a middle aged cowboy? Maybe they'll put me in charge of rounding up the elderly cattle ... What's the matter with you? 230
- EDNA: The girls are in college now, we have enough to see them through. We don't need much for the two of us.  
MEL: You need a place to live, you need clothing, you need food. A can of polluted tuna fish is still eighty-five cents.  
EDNA: We could move to Europe. To Spain. Two people could live for fifteen hundred dollars a year in Spain. 235
- MEL: [*Nods.*] *Spanish* people. I'm 47 years old, with arthritis in my shoulder and high blood pressure, you expect me to live in Spain.  
EDNA: You could work there, get some kind of a job.  
MEL: An advertising account executive? In Barcelona? They've probably been standing at the dock waiting for years for someone like that. 240
- EDNA: [*Angrily.*] What is it they have here that's so hard to give up? *What is it you'll miss so badly*, what do you want from me? *What do you want from anyone?*  
MEL: [*Buries face in hands.*] Just a little breathing space ... just for a little while. [*The PHONE RINGS. MEL looks up at EDNA.*] ... Who could that be? 245
- [EDNA *shakes her head not knowing.*]
- ... It couldn't be the office, could it?  
EDNA: A quarter to three in the morning? 250  
MEL: Maybe they got the night watchman to fire me, they'll save a day's salary. [*It keeps ringing.*]  
EDNA: Answer it, Mel, I'm nervous.
- [MEL *picks up the phone.*]
- MEL: [*Into phone.*] Hello? ... Yes? ... Yes, Apartment 14A, what about it? ... WHAT??? I'M KEEPING YOU UP??? ... Who the hell do you think got *me* up to get *you* up in the first place? ... Don't tell me you got a plane leaving for Stuttgart in the morning ... I'll talk as loud as I darn well please. This isn't a sub-let apartment, I'm a regular American tenant ... Go ahead and bang on the wall. You'll get a bang right back on yours. [*He covers phone. To EDNA.*] If she bangs, I want you to bang back. 260
- EDNA: Mel, what are you starting in for?

*[From the other side of the wall, we hear a loud banging.]*

MEL: Okay, bang back. 265  
 EDNA: Mel, it's a quarter to three. Leave them alone, they'll go to sleep.  
 MEL: Will you bang back?!  
 EDNA: If I bang back, she's just going to bang back at me.  
 MEL: Will you bang back!!!?  
 EDNA: I'll bang, I'll bang! *[She bangs twice on the wall.]* 270  
 MEL: *[Into phone.]* Alright?

*[From other side of the wall, they bang again.]*

*[To EDNA.]*

Bang back!

*[She bangs again. They bang from other side again. He repeats instructions to EDNA.]* 275

Bang back!

*[She bangs again. They bang again.]* Bang back!

*[She bangs. The stage goes black ... then CURTAIN. The house remains in darkness ... the News Logo appears. We hear Roger Keating with the Six O'Clock Report ...]* 280

VOICE OF  
 ROGER KEATING: *[In darkness.]* ... This is Roger Keating and the Six O'Clock Report ... New York was hit with its third strike of the week, this time the city employees of 37 New York Hospitals walked out at 3 P.M. this afternoon ... The Mayor's office has been flooded with calls as hundreds of patients and elderly sick people have complained of lack of food, clean sheets and medicines. Water may be shut off tomorrow, says New York Commissioner of Health, because of an anonymous phone call made to the Bureau this morning, threatening to dump 50 pounds of chemical pollutants in the city's reservoirs – The unidentified caller, after making his threat, concluded with, 'It's gonna be dry tomorrow, baby.' ... And from the office of Police Commissioner Murphy, a report that apartment house burglaries has risen 7 point 2 percent in August. ... The Six O'Clock Report will follow with a filmed story of how 20 million rats survive under the city – But first this message from Ultra-Brite toothpaste. *[The News Logo fades.]* 285  
 290  
 295

## ACT TWO SCENE TWO

*[Two weeks later. Mid-afternoon.]*

*At curtain rise there are three women all in their late fifties and dressed quite well. Two are on a sofa, one sits in armchair. These are MEL's sisters, PAULINE, PEARL and JESSIE. PAULINE is doing needlepoint. ... Standing is MEL's older brother, HARRY. He wears an expensive business suit. He is looking out the window. A pot of coffee and cups are in front of the women on table ... At curtain rise, they sit there silently.]* 300

JESSIE: He was always nervous. 305

- PEARL: Always.
- JESSIE: As far back as I can remember, he was nervous. Never sat still for a minute, always jumping up and down. Am I lying, Pearl?
- PEARL: We're his own sisters, who should know better? Up and down, up and down ... You want some coffee, Harry? Take some coffee. 310
- HARRY: I don't drink coffee.
- JESSIE: He always used to fidget. Talked a mile a minute ... He even chewed fast ... remember how fast he used to chew?
- PEARL: Wasn't I there? Didn't I see him chew? I remember ... Harry, why don't you take some coffee? 315
- HARRY: When did you ever see me drink coffee? You're my sister fifty-three years, you never saw me drink coffee. Why would I drink coffee now?
- PEARL: When do I see you, two times a year? I thought maybe you took up coffee.
- PAULINE: He wasn't nervous, he was high strung. Melvin was high strung. 320
- PEARL: I call it nervous. As a baby he was nervous, as a boy he was nervous, in the Army he was nervous. How long did he last in the Army, anyway?
- JESSIE: Two weeks.
- PEARL: There you are. He was nervous. 325
- PAULINE: Where do you think nerves come from? From being high strung.
- PEARL: Then why weren't any of us high strung? We all had the same parents. He was nervous, he was fidgety, he chewed fast ... I never saw him swallow.
- JESSIE: No one could talk to him. Poppa could never talk to him, I remember. 330
- PAULINE: How could Poppa talk to him? Mel was three years old when Poppa died.
- PEARL: If he wasn't so nervous, Poppa could have talked to him.
- HARRY: I never drank coffee in my life. It's poison. Goes right through the system. [*Looks towards bedroom.*] Who's she on the phone with in there anyway? 335
- PEARL: He had the same thing in high school. A nervous breakdown. Remember when he had the nervous breakdown in high school?
- HARRY: [*Turns to her.*] Who you talking about?
- PEARL: Mel! He had a nervous breakdown in high school. You don't remember? 340
- HARRY: What are you talking about? He didn't have a nervous breakdown, he had a broken arm. He fell in the gym and broke his arm.
- PEARL: I'm not talking about that time.
- HARRY: And once on his bicycle he broke his tooth. 345
- PEARL: I'm not talking about that time.
- HARRY: Then when are you talking about?
- PEARL: I'm talking about the time he had a nervous breakdown in high school. I remember it like it was yesterday, don't tell me. Pauline, tell him.
- PAULINE: Mel never had a nervous breakdown. 350
- PEARL: Isn't that funny, I thought he had a nervous breakdown. Maybe I'm thinking of somebody else.
- HARRY: You can't even remember that I don't drink coffee.
- PAULINE: He must have had some terrible experiences in the army.
- HARRY: In two weeks? He wasn't there long enough to get a uniform. None of you know what you're talking about. There was never anything wrong with Mel. Never. His trouble was you babied him too much. All of you. 355
- JESSIE: Why shouldn't we baby him? He was the baby, wasn't he?
- HARRY: You babied him, that's his trouble. He never had the responsibilities as a child like I did. That's why he can't handle problems. That's why he flares up. He's a child, an infant. 360

PEARL: What if I put some milk in the coffee?  
HARRY: I DON'T WANT ANY COFFEE!!  
JESSIE: He doesn't want any coffee, leave him alone.  
HARRY: ... I was never babied. Poppa wouldn't allow it ... I was never kissed 365  
from the time I was seven years old ...  
JESSIE: Certainly you were kissed.  
HARRY: Never kissed ... I didn't need kissing. The whole world kissed Mel,  
look where he is today. Who's she talking to in there all this time?  
PEARL: ... Remember the summer he ran away? 370  
PAULINE: He didn't run away for the whole summer. He ran away for one night.  
PEARL: Who said he ran away for the whole summer?  
PAULINE: Who said it? You said it. You just said, 'Remember the summer he ran  
away?'  
PEARL: So? He ran away for *one night one* summer. 375  
PAULINE: But you should say it that way. Say, 'Remember the summer he ran  
away for one night?' ... Don't make it sound like he ran away for a  
whole summer.  
HARRY: Listen, I've got to get back to the office, Jessie's going back to  
Lakewood tonight, let's try to settle things now. What are we going to 380  
do?  
PAULINE: About what?  
HARRY: [*Looks at her as though she's deranged.*] About *what?* About the Suez  
Canal. What do you mean, about what? What are we here for? What  
did Jessie come all the way from Lakewood for? What are we doing in 385  
that woman's house – [*Points to bedroom.*] – where none of us have  
been invited for nine years? Our brother. Our sick brother who's had a  
nervous breakdown, for heaven's sake.  
JESSIE: [*Sniffles, wipes eyes with handkerchief.*] Every time I hear it ...  
HARRY: What are you crying *now* for? You didn't just hear. You've known for a 390  
week.  
JESSIE: You think I haven't been crying the whole week? He's my brother, it  
hurts me.  
HARRY: It hurts all of us. That's why we're here. To try to do something.  
PAULINE: Harry, let her cry if she wants. She came all the way from Lakewood 395  
... Go on Harry.  
HARRY: Fact number one, Mel has had a nervous breakdown. Fact number  
two, besides a nervous breakdown, Mel doesn't have a job. The man  
is totally unemployed.  
JESSIE: [*Sniffles again.*] You think that doesn't hurt me too? 400  
PAULINE: Jessie, let him finish, you can cry on the way home.  
HARRY: Fact ...  
PAULINE: Go on with the facts, Harry.  
HARRY: Fact number three, besides a nervous breakdown and not having  
a job, the man is practically penniless ... I don't want to pass any 405  
comments on how a man and a woman mishandled their money for  
twenty-seven years, it's none of my business how a man squandered  
a life's savings on bad investments for which he never asked my  
advice once, the kind of advice which has given me solvency, security  
and a beautiful summer place in the country, thank God, *I'll* never have 410  
a nervous breakdown ... none of that is my business. My business is  
what are we going to do for Mel? How much are we going to give?  
Somebody make a suggestion.  
  
[*The silence is deafening. No one speaks. No one looks at each other.*  
*There is a lot of coffee drinking, but no offers of how much they're*  
*going to give ... After an hour of silence, HARRY speaks again.*] 415

- ... Well?  
PEARL: You're a businessman, Harry. You make a suggestion. You tell us how much we should all give.
- HARRY: [*Thinks a moment.*] ... Let me have some coffee. 420
- [PEARL pours him a cup of coffee.]
- So let's face the facts ... The man needs help. Who else can he turn to but us. This is my suggestion ... We make Mel a loan. We all chip in X number of dollars a week, and then when he gets back on his feet, when he gets straightened out, gets a job again, then he can pay us all back. That's my suggestion. What do you all think? 425
- [*There is a moment's silence. PAULINE whispers to PEARL. PEARL nods.*]
- PEARL: Pauline has a question.  
HARRY: What's the question? 430  
PAULINE: How much is X number of dollars?  
HARRY: Forget X. Forget I ever said X ... [*He rubs head, drinks more coffee.*]  
... Let's figure what Mel needs to get over his nervous breakdown ... His biggest expense is the doctor, right? Edna says he's the best and he has to go five times a week. 435
- PAULINE: Five times a week to the best doctor? I'm beginning to see what X is going to come to.
- HARRY: The most important thing is that Mel gets well, agreed?  
ALL THREE: Agreed!  
HARRY: And that the only way he's going to get well is to see a doctor. Agreed? 440  
ALL THREE: Agreed.  
HARRY: And it is our obligation, as his only living relatives, not counting his wife, no disrespect intended, to bear the financial responsibility of that burden. Agreed?
- ALL THREE: Agreed. 445  
HARRY: And we'll all see this thing through to the end whether it takes a week or a month or a year or even five years. Agreed?
- [*There is stony silence.*]
- ... Okay. Our first disagreement.  
PAULINE: No one's disagreeing. We're all in agreement. Except when you mention things like five years. I don't see any sense in curing Mel and ending up in the poor-house. If God forbid that happened, would he be in any position to help us? He's not too able to begin with. 450
- JESSIE: So what should we do, Harry? You know how to figure these things. What should we do? 455
- HARRY: Well, obviously we can't afford to let Mel be sick forever. We've got to put a time limit on it. Agreed?
- ALL THREE: Agreed.  
HARRY: What do we give him to get better? Six months?  
PAULINE: It shouldn't take six months. If that doctor's as good as Edna says, it shouldn't take six months. 460

[*A door to the bedroom is heard closing.*]

- PEARL: Shhh... She's coming.  
PAULINE: We'll let Harry do the talking.

- PEARL: And then we'll settle everything. Thank God, it's almost over. 465
- [*They all assume a pose of innocence and calm. EDNA comes out of the bedroom.*]
- EDNA: I'm sorry I was so long. I was just talking to Doctor Frankel. Mel's on his way home, he'll be here in a minute.
- HARRY: So what's the diagnosis? What does the doctor say? 470
- EDNA: [*Shrugs.*] Mel needs care and treatment. He's a very good doctor, he thinks Mel's going to be alright but it's just going to take time.
- PAULINE: How much time? A month? Two months? More than two months?
- EDNA: He can't tell yet.
- PAULINE: He can guess, can't he? Three months? Four months? More than four months? 475
- EDNA: There's no way of telling yet, Pauline. It could be a month, it could be two months, it could be two years.
- PAULINE: No, two years is out of the question. I refuse to go along with two years. 480
- EDNA: I'm not saying it will be. I'm just saying we don't know yet.
- HARRY: Can I say something? Can I get a word in?
- PAULINE: [*Turning away.*] I wish you would say something, Harry. I wish you would do the talking.
- HARRY: We're all very concerned, Edna. Very concerned. After all, he's our brother. 485
- JESSIE: Since he was a baby.
- HARRY: Can I please do the talking?
- PEARL: Will you let him do the talking, Jessie? ... Go on, Harry.
- HARRY: We're very concerned. We appreciate that you're his wife, you're going to do all you can, but we know it's not going to be enough. We want to help. We've talked it out among ourselves and ... we're prepared to take over the financial burden of the doctor. You take care of the apartment, the food, the miscellaneous, we'll pay the doctor bills. Whatever they come to. 490
- EDNA: I'm ... I'm overwhelmed ... I'll be very truthful with you, I never expected that ... I am deeply touched and overwhelmed. I don't know what to say ... That's very generous of you all but I couldn't let you do that. Mel wouldn't let me do it.
- HARRY: Don't be ridiculous. Where you going to get the money from, a bank? 500
- EDNA: You can't put up a nervous breakdown as collateral.
- EDNA: ... I have no idea how long Mel will be in treatment. It could run into a fortune.
- HARRY: Let us worry about that. The money, we'll take care of.
- EDNA: But it could run as high as twenty, twenty-five thousand dollars. 505
- [*There is a long pause. The sisters all look at HARRY.*]
- PAULINE: ... Harry, can I say something to you in private?
- HARRY: We don't need any private discussions ...
- PAULINE: We just found out what X is ... Don't you think we ought to discuss X a little further? 510
- HARRY: It's not necessary. I don't care what it's going to cost. The three of you can contribute whatever you think you can afford, I'll make up the deficit ... If it's fifteen, if it's twenty, if it's twenty-five thousand, I'll see that it's taken care of, as long as Mel has the best medical treatment ... That's all I have to say. [*He nods his head as though taking a little bow.*] 515
- EDNA: [*Moved.*] ... I'm – I'm speechless ... What do I say? ...

- HARRY: You don't say nothing.  
PEARL: We just want to do the right thing.  
EDNA: I know none of us have been very close the last few years.  
PAULINE: Nine. Nine years was the last time we were invited. 520  
EDNA: Has it been that long? I suppose it's been my fault. Maybe I haven't tried to understand you. Maybe you haven't tried to understand me. Anyway, I appreciate it more than you can imagine, but we really don't need it.
- HARRY: What are you talking about? Certainly you need it. 525  
EDNA: Over the years, we've managed to save something. I have some jewellery I can sell ...
- HARRY: You're not going to sell your jewellery.  
PAULINE: Maybe she doesn't wear it anymore. Let the woman talk ...  
EDNA: Mel can cash in his insurance policy and I have my job. I can manage whatever the medical expenses come to ... but if you really want to help ... What I'm worried about is Mel's future. 530
- JESSIE: We all are, darling.  
EDNA: It's not easy for a man of Mel's age to get a job today, to start all over again ... If he could just get out of New York and move to the country somewhere, he would be a hundred percent better off. 535
- HARRY: I agree a thousand per cent.  
EDNA: I was thinking of a summer camp. Mel is wonderful with children and sports, I could do the cooking, the girls will help out, we can hire a small staff ... There's a lovely place in Vermont that's for sale. We could have it for next summer. Don't you think Mel would be better off there? 540
- HARRY: Again, a thousand per cent.  
EDNA: They want twenty-five thousand dollars down in cash ... So instead of giving it to us for the doctor, would you lend it to us for the camp? 545
- [*There is a hush. A definite hush ... HARRY looks at EDNA in disbelief.*]
- HARRY: ... A summer camp? ... 25 thousand dollars for a summer camp?  
EDNA: The price is a hundred thousand. But they want 25 thousand down.  
HARRY: *A hundred thousand dollars for a summer camp??* ... Run by a man with a nervous breakdown? 550  
EDNA: He'll be alright by next summer ...  
HARRY: Do you know what it is for a *healthy* person to be responsible for that many boys and girls? The law suits you're open for?
- EDNA: I don't understand. You were willing to give Mel the money for a doctor. Why won't you lend it to him for a camp? 555  
HARRY: Because with a camp you can go broke. With a doctor you can go broke too, but you get better.
- EDNA: Alright. *You* pay for the doctor. *I'll* invest in the camp.  
HARRY: You mean we should pay to get Mel healthy so you can lose your money in a camp and get him sick again! ... Then you'll come to us for more money for another doctor? 560
- EDNA: I thought you wanted to do something. I thought you wanted to help him.
- HARRY: *We do* want to help him. 565  
EDNA: *Then help him!*  
HARRY: Not when he's sick. When he's better, we'll help him.  
EDNA: [*Turns to the sisters.*] Is that how the rest of you feel? Do you all agree with Harry?

*[They all look at each other uncomfortably.]*

570

Alright ... Forget it. Forget the money, we don't need it ... We'll get along without it very nicely, thank you ... I'm surprised you even offered it ... It's good to know that the minute Mel is completely recovered and back on his own two strong feet again, I can count on you for help. That's just when we'll need it. *[She starts for bedroom.]* ... Will you please excuse me? I've got to make some calls before I go back to the office ... Just in case I don't see any of you for another nine years – *[Points to tray.]* – have some cookies –

575

*[She storms into the bedroom, slamming the door behind her. They all look at each other, stunned ...]*

## EXTRACT 2

Adapted from *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett

These notes are intended to help you understand the context of the drama.

The Secret Garden is a novel written by Frances Hodgson Burnett (1849–1924) and adapted for the stage by contemporary playwright Jessica Swale. It was first performed in Chester, UK, in July 2014. The play is in two acts, and the extract starts with Act One, Scene Two.

The play is set in 1910 at Misselthwaite Manor, Yorkshire. Mary Lennox is a spoiled young girl who has been orphaned following the death of her parents in an earthquake in India, where the family was living. Mary is the sole survivor of her family from the earthquake and is sent to England to live with her mysterious uncle, Archibald Craven. Mary finds the transition difficult as she has been used to being waited on hand and foot, and struggles to do things for herself.

## CHARACTERS

MARY LENNOX (*a young girl*)

MARTHA (*a servant, the same age as MARY*)

DICKON (*MARTHA's brother*)

COLIN CRAVEN (*a sickly boy*)

MRS MEDLOCK (*a strict housekeeper*)

ARCHIBALD CRAVEN (*COLIN's father (MARY's Uncle)*)

BEN WEATHERSTAFF (*the Gardener*)

MRS PHIPPS (*a servant at Misselthwaite*)

MR PITCHER (*a servant at Misselthwaite*)

NB The house garden to Misselthwaite Manor is distinct from the Secret Garden, which is accessed through a locked door, hidden in the undergrowth. The door to the Secret Garden has been locked for ten years since the death of Lilies Craven, wife of Archibald Craven.

## ACT ONE SCENE TWO

[MARY is on a carriage with MRS MEDLOCK, Misselthwaite's housekeeper, travelling across the moor towards Misselthwaite Manor:]

MRS MEDLOCK: Sandwich?

[MARY shakes her head.]

5

You sure? Corned beef and spring onion?

[MARY looks away. MRS MEDLOCK begins to unwrap one for herself.]

Well, you're going to be wondrous company, aren't you. I am glad we have six hours journeying together without another soul on the horizon. Well if you shan't talk, you'll have to listen, for you ought to know something of where we're going; it's a far cry from what you're used to, I'm sure. Misselthwaite Manor is six hundred years old and it belongs to your Uncle. There's near a hundred rooms in it though most of them's shut up and locked. And there's portraits and tapestries and dark old furniture, and chimneys that smoke and gardens which stretch to the moor's edge. But apart from that, there's nothing. Nothing at all. Why they're bringing you here I don't know, for it's no place for a child. Mr Craven won't want to be troubled by you, that's for sure.

10

15

20

[The carriage arrives and the staff are assembled. They watch MARY as she approaches.]

MARTHA: Is that her? Mary Lennox?

MRS PHIPPS: I've never seen such a miserable looking young 'un in my life.

MRS MEDLOCK: [Getting out of the carriage] Ah, Mr Pitcher.

25

MR PITCHER: Mrs Medlock.

MRS MEDLOCK: What did his Lordship say?

MR PITCHER: He said you are to take her to her room. He doesn't want to see her. He's going to London in the morning.

MRS MEDLOCK: Very well. So long as I know what's expected of me.

30

MR PITCHER: What's expected of you is to make sure he doesn't see what he doesn't want to see.

MRS MEDLOCK: Right. Well then, Mary. Say how do you do to Mr Pitcher.

[MARY says nothing.]

You're not going to be a rude little madam, are you? You ought to be grateful that you've anywhere to live at all.

35

MR PITCHER: Seems she doesn't deserve for him to see her anyhow.

[MARY turns away sadly.]

MRS MEDLOCK: There's nowt to be done with her. Martha take her to her room. See if you can make her talk. The rest of you, back to work.

40

[The scene transforms into MARY's bedroom. She stands silently with her suitcase, dressed in hat, coat, etc. It is late morning.]

- MARTHA: Miss. I'm Martha Sowerby. I'm to be tha maid. Good to meet you.
- [MARY says *nothing*.]
- I like tha shoes. And tha hat. And tha face. 45
- [MARY says *nothing*.]
- Why don't you speak? Can't you speak? You got no tongue in your mouth? Or do you just not want to speak? [*Pause*] Fair enough. Let us take your case.
- [*She steps towards MARY. MARY steps away immediately. It's like a game of cat and mouse.*] 50
- Or your coat?
- [*She takes another step forward, MARY steps away.*]
- Well, I say. Look, you don't have to talk to me. Maybe I'll just leave thee to be quiet by thyself. Tis a shame though, for ... well I wasn't going to say anything, but I have a mighty big secret to tell, and I have no-one to tell it to. I did think tha looked just the sort that might like to know a big shiny secret, but if you don't want to know, I shall just have to keep it to meself. Keep it quiet and go to my grave with it. Tis such a waste, for it is the best secret I ever heard, but nay matter. I shall come back to turn the bed later. [*Going*] Eh what a big secret it is, but I shall just have to tell Dickon instead – 55
- MARY: What's the secret?! [*She immediately covers her mouth with her hands*] 60
- MARTHA: Ha ha! I knew tha could talk, I knew it! They all said tha couldn't speak but I said that's hog swill – 65
- MARY: What's the secret?
- MARTHA: Well I can't just tell thee.
- MARY: Why not?
- MARTHA: Not without our being proper friends first. 70
- [*She puts her hand out for MARY to shake. MARY doesn't.*]
- Won't you shake my hand?
- MARY: No.
- MARTHA: Why not?
- MARY: We can't be friends. 75
- MARTHA: We can.
- MARY: We can't. You're a servant.
- MARTHA: Strange how tha doesn't talk for hours then when tha does, tha says such a funny thing.
- MARY: There are two types of people – proper people and serving people. Proper people only talk to serving people to give them their orders. 80
- MARTHA: Oh. Well that is a shame, for serving people most often know all the best secrets, and other things that are fascinating and curious, that proper people would love to know if only they took their noses out of the air. 85
- MARY: You can't say that!
- MARTHA: You just said I wasn't a proper person. What makes you more proper than me?

MARY: My father was the Viceroy of India. Who's yours?  
MARTHA: He's a tanner. He lives on the hills with me mam and my seven sisters. 90  
And my brother, Dickon, he can talk to animals.  
MARY: No-one can talk to animals.  
MARTHA: Dickon can. He tames them. They follow him around like he's dropping crumbs, but he ain't. He's just got a way with 'em.  
MARY: Is he a fakir? 95  
MARTHA: A what?  
MARY: A snake charmer.  
MARTHA: Not just snakes. Badgers, lapwings, hares.  
MARY: He can't tame hairs.  
MARTHA: Why not? 100  
MARY: He's not a hairbrush.  
MARTHA: No! Hares what are like rabbits, but with longer ears and quicker legs. Ain't you never heard of a hare before?  
MARY: Of course I've heard of a hare! Don't laugh at me, you filthy servant.  
MARTHA: I beg your pardon. 105  
MARY: Your parents are no-one, they're nobody!  
MARTHA: Course they are. Without 'em I'd just be air on the moor.  
MARY: They're nobodies!  
MARTHA: You're only saying that cos yours are dead.  
  
[A stand off. MARY might cry if she wasn't so stubborn. Instead, she runs for the door.] 110

Mary! Mary! I didn't mean ...

[But she's gone.]

#### SCENE FOUR

#### Hints of a Thaw

[MARY and MARTHA are in MARY's bedroom.]

MARTHA: Here, Mrs Medlock says you're to change out of those old things. 115  
MARY: I don't want to.  
MARTHA: You can have 'em back once they're washed. I'll press 'em for you. I'll do 'em nice. With spray! Please?  
MARY: If you tell me the secret.  
MARTHA: What secret? 120  
MARY: The shiny one.  
MARTHA: Oh. [Pause] Mary, I really shouldn't have –  
MARY: Then I shan't change.  
MARTHA: [Pause] Alright, I'll tell thee. But only if you change first.  
  
[MARY puts her arms out expectantly.] 125  
  
What are you doing?  
MARY: You said I was to change.  
MARTHA: Aye.  
MARY: Well then. Undress me.  
MARTHA: You can't do it yourself? 130  
MARY: It's your job.

[MARTHA *starts laughing.*]

MARTHA: Don't laugh at me!  
Eh, I meant no harm. Here, put tha arms up. Take hold of the hem and pull! 135

[MARTHA *helps MARY change. MARY gets the dress stuck over her head.*]

MARY: I'm stuck!  
MARTHA: Pull!  
MARY: I can't! 140

[MARY *pops through.*]

MARTHA: See! Was that too hard? Here you are. Look!

[*She takes some clothes out.*]

MARY: They're not mine. Mine are black.  
MARTHA: The Master's orders. He won't have thee moping around in mourning making the place even sadder. Mrs Medlock bought 'em 'specially. 145  
MARY: But they're not mine. My mother always chooses mine!

[*Suddenly MARY gets upset, though she's desperate for MARTHA not to see.*]

MARTHA: Mary? 150

[MARY *is upset and moves away.*]

Mary? [*Pause*] You must miss em. I can't imagine it, not having me Mam. Here.

[MARTHA *hands her a handkerchief and MARY takes it. MARTHA tries to cheer her up with a new dress.*] 155

Eh, look at this one. Fancy having a dress all to thaself, and not having to share it.

[*She helps MARY into the dress.*]

MARY: Look at you. Th'art white as a goose and tha's eaten nothing since tha got here. 160  
MARTHA: I'm not hungry.  
You'll never get hungry whilst you mope around. You need to run and breathe and lark about, like Dickon does. Then you'll have an appetite.

[*Elsewhere, DICKON emerges on the moor. He takes out a pipe whistle and starts to play.*] 165

MARY: What's the secret? [*Pause*] You promised!  
MARTHA: You swear you won't breathe a word.  
MARY: I swear.  
MARTHA: Swear on your heart. On your life. 170

MARY:	I swear.	
MARTHA:	Once, years ago, your Uncle was married, to the most sweet natured creature. They loved each other like swans do, I swear he'd have chased half way round the earth to pick her a blade of grass if she'd asked. She loved the open air, and the moor, and one Summer she built a garden. From a patch of mud she raised the most wondrous place; cowslips and lilacs, fox gloves and blue bells. It was like paradise, so they said. And they'd go inside and read together, talk and sing and caper about. For her birthday, he built her a swing, with honeysuckle wound round the ropes of it. But then, in the Autumn, when a chill was in the air ... one day the ropes snapped, and she fell. And though the doctor came straightways, no-one could save her. And since that day the house has been cold. He had the garden locked up and he buried the key. That was ten years hence, and now there's not a soul, save the Master himself, who knows where the garden is or where the key is buried.	175
MARY:	But there must be a door?	
MARTHA:	None has ever seen it.	
MARY:	I want to go there.	
MARTHA:	You can't! You must forget I ever told you. It's not to be spoken of. Not the garden, nor the lady.	180
MARY:	What was her name?	
MARTHA:	Lilias Craven.	
MARY:	She was my aunt. My mother's twin. I didn't know.	
	<i>[MARY and MARTHA look at each other. DICKON begins to sing. As he does, a fox appears and sits by him, followed by a squirrel. DICKON sings for the entranced animals. During the song MARY goes out into the garden and comes across DICKON. She hides and listens.]</i>	190

## SCENE EIGHT

## Weeds

	<i>[MARY goes out into the garden and skips around, improving as she goes. As she skips through the gardens, BEN WEATHERSTAFF arrives unseen, and scoops the unwitting MARY up into his wheelbarrow.]</i>	195
BEN:	Hey, what's this then? Tha's a funny looking weed for me to put in the composting.	200
MARY:	Martha bought me a skipping rope.	
BEN:	Did she now? Well I think that makes you the luckiest weed I've ever met.	
MARY:	I'd like to be a weed.	
BEN:	You are an odd 'un. Most lasses would like to be a cowslip, or a primrose, or summat sweet smelling, but you'd be an old piece of crabgrass, would ya? Or a ragwort?	205
MARY:	Weeds are wild. They can do as they choose. When a garden's kept properly, all the wild's chased away – but if it's left to itself, that's the best. That's what Dickon said.	210
BEN:	Well, Dickon needs get a clip round the ear talking like that, for he'll have me out of a job.	215

- MARY: What would you be, if you could be a plant?  
 BEN: I don't know. What doest tha think?  
 MARY: I think you'd be a rataloo. 220  
 BEN: I beg your pardon?  
 MARY: It's a vegetable from India.  
 BEN: A vegetable? [*Tipping her out of the barrow*] Well thank you very much.  
 MARY: Some people call them elephant's feet cos they're big and rough 225  
 looking –  
 BEN: Now you watch it –  
 MARY: But inside they are delicious. They're a bit like you, Mr Weatherstaff.  
 BEN: What, 'cause I'm hardy on the outside but soft underneath?  
 MARY: No. 'Cause they're bumpy and muddy and have funny stumpy hairy 230  
 bits.  
 BEN: You!  
 MARY: Come on, you have to choose. What would you be?  
 BEN: A potato.  
 MARY: Why? 235  
 BEN: Cos then I could sit in the dark on me own and not be bothered by the likes of you. Eh, look, it's your friend.  
  
 [*The robin flutters around.*]  
 MARY: Hello Mr Robin.  
  
 [*The robin flies off.*] 240  
  
 Where's he going?  
 BEN: He's got a life of his own, Lord only knows.  
 MARY: I'm going to follow him.  
  
 [*She follows the robin off.*]  
 BEN: You mind where you go. Hey! What have I told you, stick to the paths! 245  
 [*Exits*]  
  
 [*She chases after the robin, who loops around and lands behind her. She keeps turning round to see him and, each time she does, he flies over her head to land behind her again. They are both enjoying the game. It turns into grandmother's footsteps, whereby each time MARY has her back to him, he hops towards her, then she whips round to catch him moving, and he freezes and starts pecking as if he's innocent.*] 250  
 MARY: You! I was supposed to be following you, now you're following me!  
  
 [*The robin tweets in response, then starts pecking the ground at one particular place.*] 255  
  
 What are you doing? Digging for food?  
  
 [*He carries on pecking then starts dancing around on the spot.*]  
  
 What have you found?  
  
 [*The robin pulls a worm out of the soil and brandishes it proudly,* 260

*before depositing it on MARY's lap.]*

Urgh!

*[She throws it away. The robin cocks his head sarcastically at her then goes off to eat the worm on his own, at a distance.]*

Oh. Sorry Mr Bird.

265

*[The robin hops back over, then goes back to pecking at a new spot.]*

What is that? What is it?

*[She digs it up with her hands, and when she pulls it out, it's a key!]*

A key! Is it the key to the secret garden? You knew, you knew all along!

270

*[The robin twitters and bounces about, then flies off.]*

Mr Robin!

## SCENE NINE

### One Man and his Dog

*[Inside the house, later, MRS MEDLOCK and MARTHA catch MARY on her way past.]*

MRS MEDLOCK: Mary Lennox, how did you get in a state like that? 275

MARY: I fell in the wheelbarrow.

MRS MEDLOCK: You'll be dragging the mud in all over the house. And your hair! It's rough as a wild cat. Can't you try and look a little respectable.

MARY: Why do I need to look respectable to go to my room?

MRS MEDLOCK: You're not to go to your room. You're to meet your Uncle. 280

MARY: Uncle Craven! But –

MRS MEDLOCK: This way.

*[MARY looks at MARTHA fearfully. MRS MEDLOCK leads the way.]*

MRS MEDLOCK: I hope you're on your best behaviour, for your Uncle never sees a soul, so you'd best be a good, quiet child. 285

*[They are standing outside a big door.]*

MR CRAVEN: *[Off]* Come!

*[They push the door and we are inside MR CRAVEN's study. It is dark and gloomy and at the far end lurks a hunched figure. An enormous ugly grey dog is prowling. MR CRAVEN doesn't turn round.]*

290

So this is her. The girl.

MRS MEDLOCK: Yes, Sir.

MR CRAVEN: Leave us.

MRS MEDLOCK:	Would you like me to wait outside?	
MR CRAVEN:	I'd like you to go.	295
	<i>[The dog looks at her menacingly.]</i>	
MRS MEDLOCK:	As you wish. <i>[Exits]</i>	
	<i>[MARY stands silent, not knowing what to do. She takes a step forward, the grim dog growls. MARY jumps back.]</i>	
MR CRAVEN:	So. Well. Mary. <i>[Pause. He has prepared a speech but now doesn't know quite what to say].</i> I hope ... I hope Misselthwaite is to your liking. It is a long while since young people roamed about here. I'm sure there are places which, had your parents not ... if the circumstances had been ... Suffice to say, I hope you find it satisfactory. Well? Do you?	300 305
	<i>[She doesn't reply.]</i>	
	Mary?	
	<i>[The dog growls.]</i>	
MARY:	Yes. <i>[Remembering]</i> Yes, Sir.	
MR CRAVEN:	And are you well?	310
MARY:	Well? Yes, Sir.	
MR CRAVEN:	They take good care of you?	
MARY:	Yes, Sir.	
MR CRAVEN:	And are you lonely?	
MARY:	Lonely?	315
MR CRAVEN:	Yes, solitary. As I am. Do you feel alone?	
MARY:	Sometimes.	
MR CRAVEN:	I am sorry for your loss.	
MARY:	I'm sorry for yours.	
	<i>[MR CRAVEN is a little taken aback.]</i>	320
MR CRAVEN:	Thank you. Thank you. <i>[Pause]</i> It's not easy, is it. I think we both know that.	
MARY:	<i>[Pause]</i> What's wrong with your back?	
MR CRAVEN:	I only wish I knew. It's unsightly, isn't it. Do I scare you?	
MARY:	A little. Have you always been – like that?	325
MR CRAVEN:	Since I was a boy. There was a time when it troubled me less. When my wife was alive. But now, as you see, it is my lot. <i>[Pause]</i> What do you need, here. To fill your time. A nurse? A governess?	
MARY:	No, thank you. Dickon is teaching me things.	
MR CRAVEN:	But do you want for anything? Books? Paper? Is there anything you would like to help ease your way.	330
MARY:	No. Except ...	
MR CRAVEN:	Go on.	
MARY:	If I found a place ... if I could find a patch of earth, just a small bit that no-one cared for, a place where I could make things grow ...	335
MR CRAVEN:	Grow?	
MARY:	I'd like to see it. Shoots growing out of the earth. If I could have some seeds to plant –	
MR CRAVEN:	<i>[Quietly]</i> Don't talk about it –	

MARY:	I'm sorry?	340
MR CRAVEN:	[Cross] Don't talk like that! There's to be no talk of ... I don't want to hear it, Mary.	
	[MR CRAVEN <i>has caught a closer look at her face and stands staring. She's terrified.</i> ]	
	Good grief. It's not possible! Come here.	345
	[MARY <i>shakes her head.</i> ]	
MARY:	Let me see your face. Come here. You're scaring me –	
	[ <i>He moves towards her.</i> ]	
MR CRAVEN:	Your face ... it can't be. It can't be! You need to go.	350
MARY:	Sorry?	
MR CRAVEN:	Get out, get out of here! I can't look at you, please, please! Get out!	
	[ <i>The dog launches towards MARY, and she runs for the door. MR CRAVEN howls and the dog barks and MARY wants to cry. She runs and runs down various corridors, getting lost, until she is bewildered. Then she sees the mouse.</i> ]	355
MARY:	You! How do I get back?	
	[ <i>The mouse squeaks and she follows it along the corridors until the mouse stops.</i> ]	
	But this isn't my room.	360
	[ <i>All of a sudden there's a cry from somewhere nearby.</i> ]	
	It's coming from inside!	
	[ <i>The cry happens again. The mouse disappears under the door.</i> ]	
	Oh no, no!	
	[ <i>She says a very quick prayer.</i> ]	365
	Dear Jesus, I'm sorry if I was ever bad, I'm sorry for all the naughty things I've done, especially for telling Raman that there was a crocodile in the sandpit when it was just my foot and for stealing his jelapi when he wasn't looking. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, amen One – two	
	[ <i>... and she pushes the door open.</i> ]	370

## SCENE TEN

Colin

[MARY arrives in COLIN CRAVEN's bedroom. A boy with a face the colour of ivory is lying in a bed. He is wearing odd dark glasses and various mechanical accoutrements to keep him from moving. He is weak, and more sour than a crab apple.]

COLIN: Who are you? Are you a ghost? 375  
 MARY: No. Are you?  
 COLIN: No. I'm Colin Craven.  
 MARY: And I'm Mary Lennox. What are you doing here?  
 COLIN: What do you mean, what am I doing here? What are you doing here?  
 I've always been here. 380  
 MARY: What are all those metal things? Are you a prisoner? Or a criminal?  
 COLIN: Don't be stupid.  
 MARY: And why are you wearing sunglasses? Are you on holiday?  
 COLIN: Don't laugh at me!  
 MARY: I'm not. 385  
 COLIN: They're smoked glass. I have to wear them so the sunlight doesn't hurt my eyes. And these are my calipers. They keep me still because I'm sick. Really sick. And if I move, I might die. So don't touch me.  
 MARY: Why would I want to touch you?  
 COLIN: What are you doing here? 390  
 MARY: I live here. Mr Craven is my Uncle.  
 COLIN: Your Uncle? He's my father.  
 MARY: Your father? But ... so you're my cousin. And you're here. Why did no-one say?  
 COLIN: The servants are forbidden from mentioning me. Father can't look at me. He only visits when I'm asleep. I don't think he likes me. I think maybe he hates me. 395  
 MARY: Why?  
 COLIN: I remind him of my mother. And she died and it broke his heart. So now he doesn't want to see me. That's why they shut me away. If I live they say I'll be a hunchback, like he is, and he can't bear it, but I shan't live. 400  
 MARY: How do you know?  
 COLIN: Everybody knows. Ever since I remember, people have said it. They used to think I was too young to understand. And now they think I don't hear, but I do. 405  
 MARY: But a doctor could help you.  
 COLIN: My doctor's my father's cousin. He's quite poor and if I die, he'll inherit Misselthwaite when father dies. I'm sure he'd be glad if I was dead. So would Mrs Medlock – and father, I'm sure – 'cause I only make them sad. I bet they'd all rather I'd just hurry up and die. 410  
 MARY: But don't you want to live?  
 COLIN: I don't know. Why would I? It's so lonely here. Sometimes, when I think of it, it makes me cry.  
 MARY: I heard you. 415  
 COLIN: No you didn't. I don't cry out loud.  
 MARY: It's alright to cry. I cried when I got here.  
 COLIN: But you're a girl.  
 MARY: So? We're just the same, it's just boys have dangly bits.

[He looks at her taken aback, then starts to laugh. She joins in.] 420

COLIN: Why did you come here?  
 MARY: My parents died, in India.  
 COLIN: You're Indian?  
 MARY: Don't be stupid, I'm not a native. I'm the daughter of the Viscount.  
 COLIN: Did you ever meet a fakir? 425  
 MARY: How do you know about fakirs?  
 COLIN: I've read about them in my books. I've read all four volumes of Magic and Enchantment, the Complete History of Sorcery. I'm an expert.  
 MARY: I bet you don't know everything.  
 COLIN: I bet I do. I know all about the mystic clock, and Mephistopheles' hat, 430  
 and the Hindu cup trick.  
 MARY: But you've never seen it happen. In front of your eyes.  
 COLIN: Have you? You have, haven't you? You have to tell me.  
 MARY: I don't have to do anything.  
 COLIN: You do. You do if I want you to. I'm the Master of this house. 435  
 MARY: Your dad is.

[MARY gets up to leave.]

COLIN: Stop! Wait! You can't just leave!  
 MARY: So get up and stop me. [Exits]

## SCENE ELEVEN

### The Secret Garden

[MARY is skipping in the garden, following the robin.] 440

MARY: Hey, slow down. Where are you going?

[The robin leads her on a long chase all round the grounds.]

Stop, stop! You're too fast, I can't keep up.

[She trips, landing on her knees.]

Ow! I told you we were too quick. 445

[As she looks up, she spots something in the wall along side her.]

What's that?

[Her expression changes to one of wonder.]

It can't be. [She looks closer] A keyhole! Mr Robin, you knew!

[She nervously takes the key from round her neck. Magical transformation as she steps into ... the Secret Garden. As she watches, the garden grows around her. The plants seem to sing. It is a magical place. She walks around it, unable to believe her eyes.] 450

It's like a jungle. It's like India.

[Cut to MR CRAVEN visiting COLIN, who is asleep in bed.] 455

- MR CRAVEN: Sweet boy. Tomorrow I'm going away – to the mountains and the snow. Your mother would have liked it there; on the crags there are rock jasmine and lupines. They said the walking will be good for my back. Look at you. So peaceful. Sometimes I can hardly bear it.
- [He kisses him and leaves.]* 460
- [Cut to a little while later, MARTHA is walking across the lawn in the house garden with her freshly gathered washing, when MARY catches her.]*
- MARY: Martha, what are those white roots that look like onions?  
 MARTHA: You mean bulbs? The spring flowers grow from 'em. The small ones are snowdrops an' crocuses and the big ones are cyclamen and celandine. 465
- MARY: But if they're white – if they're so pale they must have never seen the sun, are they dead? Can we save them?  
 MARTHA: I don't know. You'll have to ask Dickon. He can grow flowers out of a brick wall. *[She goes, then turns back to MARY]* Why are you asking? 470
- MARY: No reason. Thank you Martha!
- [MARTHA exits. MARY turns and we cut straight to mid conversation with DICKON.]*
- DICKON: Dead? No. They're only white cos they're fresh come up. Why do you ask? Mary? 475  
 MARY: I've found it.  
 DICKON: What?  
 MARY: I found the secret garden! But I think everything in it is dying, all shut in by itself with no-one to care for it. You need to help me make it live. 480
- DICKON: Of course!  
 MARY: But you can't tell a soul.  
 DICKON: You know I wouldn't.
- [At that moment BEN arrives with his wheelbarrow, whistling as he goes.]* 485
- MARY: Quick! Hide!
- [MARY and DICKON dive out of the way. BEN stops whistling and stands still. He's sure there's something funny going on.]*
- BEN: Eh? Must be me old age – I'd have sworn I saw some little weed or other. 490
- [MARY and DICKON exchange glances.]*
- Hm. Maybe not.
- [BEN continues on his way. MARY and DICKON re-emerge in the Secret Garden.]*
- DICKON: Well I never! Look at this place! 495  
 MARY: Is it dead? Are we too late?  
 DICKON: Is it dead? I've never seen owt more alive in me life! It's like nature's taken off her shoes and thrown herself down and rolled around and

MARY:	here it is – shoots and plants and life!	
DICKON:	But look at all the dead wood. It's just nature playing a magic trick. Look here.	500
	<i>[He takes a knife out of his pocket and cuts into a piece of wood and reveals green inside.]</i>	
	It's green inside. It's as alive as you or me. If we cut the old wood off and make some space for it, there'll be a fountain of roses by the time we're done. Though I'd bet there's been someone in here more recent than ten years hence.	505
MARY:	There can't have been. The door was locked and the key was buried.	
DICKON:	Someone's pruned it, I'd swear to it.	
	<i>[Cut to MRS MEDLOCK and MARTHA in a corridor. They are removing their face masks, after visiting COLIN.]</i>	510
MRS MEDLOCK:	You heard the doctor; we have to keep him still.	
MARTHA:	He had a cramp. And he looks so sad! I hate it when he cries.	
MRS MEDLOCK:	I know. And if there was any other way ... but Dr Craven knows best. We must put our faith in him. We must do as we are told, for Colin's sake, and his Father's.	515
MARTHA:	I think Mr Craven is dying.	
MRS MEDLOCK:	Why on earth would you say a wicked thing like that?	
MARTHA:	His hunch is getting worse.	
MRS MEDLOCK:	They're going to try and heal him. In Switzerland.	520
MARTHA:	In Switzerland?! Do you think he might like a maid to go with him?	
MRS MEDLOCK:	Now that really would be the death of him. Be off with you.	
	<i>[Cut to COLIN and MARY.]</i>	
COLIN:	I wanted to draw you but now it's too late.	
MARY:	Why would you want to draw me?	525
COLIN:	Because I'm an artist. I'm very talented.	
MARY:	Would you make me look ugly on purpose?	
COLIN:	No ... not on purpose.	
MARY:	Colin!	
COLIN:	Can I draw you tomorrow?	530
MARY:	No. I don't like sitting still.	
COLIN:	Well what do you like?	
MARY:	Crumble. And tea cake. And playing outside with Dickon.	
COLIN:	Who's Dickon?	
MARY:	He's my friend.	535
COLIN:	Why do you need another friend? You have me.	
MARY:	I can have more than one. Dickon lives on the scarp.	
COLIN:	If I live, this land will all belong to me. But I don't suppose I will. I'll probably die soon.	
MARY:	Don't be stupid. You're only ten.	540
COLIN:	How do you know I'm ten?	
MARY:	Because ten years ago they locked the garden door.	
COLIN:	What garden door? <i>[Pause]</i> What garden door?	
MARY:	You mustn't tell anyone.	
COLIN:	Who would I tell? You're the only one that talks to me.	545
MARY:	There's a garden. It was your mother's, and it's the most precious place in the world. But when she died, Mr Craven locked it up and no-one's found it since.	

COLIN: You mean it's a secret garden?  
 MARY: Yes. 550  
 COLIN: Someone must have been in.  
 MARY: They haven't.  
 COLIN: Well ask the gardeners!  
 MARY: They won't talk about it.  
 COLIN: I'll make them. 555  
 MARY: No!  
 COLIN: But I want to see it!  
 MARY: But then it'll never be secret again.  
 COLIN: What?  
 MARY: Don't you see? If no-one knew but us, if we could find the hidden 560  
 door, and shut it behind us we could call it our garden, and pretend  
 that – that we're mistlethrushes, and that it's our nest – and we could  
 make it come alive!  
 COLIN: Is it dead?  
 MARY: It will be if no-one cares for it. It was all overgrown and tangled when 565  
 we found it, but now we've cut the dead away ... Oops.  
 COLIN: You've found it!  
 MARY: Please don't tell. We have to save it. Promise or I'll never come and  
 see you again. Promise, Colin!  
 COLIN: I suppose. Though I'll never be able to sleep, now you've made me all 570  
 excited.  
 MARY: When I couldn't sleep, Ayah would sing to me. I can sing to you if  
 you like. You have to close your eyes, and think of what you want to  
 dream about –  
 COLIN: The Secret Garden. 575  
 MARY: That's a good dream. Now think of the wrens and the skylarks, and  
 the fox in the night time, and the owls watching out from their nests.

[MARY begins to sing. As she does COLIN drifts off to sleep.]





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