

Ben: Adult (tenor)
Mary: Child (soprano)

Start

THE SECRET GARDEN

33

BEN. Back again today, are you? What have you been doin' out there?

MARY. Just wandering around. I don't have anybody to play with and nothing to do.

BEN. Dickon's here. Why don't you go talk to him? I saw him myself not five minutes ago, conjurin' with that stick of his.

MARY. I haven't met Dickon. I'm not sure he even exists. I think you and Martha just made him up.

BEN. Well, then, I'll give you a spade if you want to dig a little hole somewhere.

MARY. A little hole for what?

BEN. You and me are a good bit alike. We're neither of us good looking, and we're both as sour as we look.

(There is a moment.)

MARY. I saw that robin again today.

BEN. Well, of course you did. There never was his like for bein' meddlesome. He's the real head gardener around here. Chirpin' at me to come see some bush needs prunin'.

MARY. I know where he lives too. It's that walled garden with the tall hedge all around it, and no door, and that funny tree growing out over the top of the wall. I think that tree is the same one my Aunt Lily is sitting in, in this picture.

(MARY pulls the photo out to show him. He is so moved by the picture, he doesn't say anything.)

MARY. Am I right?

BEN. That's the one, missy. That it is. That was Miss Lily's garden.

MARY. Her garden? But I want to see it. Can you show me the door?

BEN. No I can't. When she died, your Uncle Archibald locked the door, said nobody was ever to go in

Mary: child (soprano)
Martha: adult (mezzo-soprano)

~~MARY. Aren't you going to dress me first?~~

~~MARTHA. Canna tha' dress thyself, then?~~

[MUSIC CUE #6B: INDIA STING #1]

Start

MARY. In India, my Ayah dressed me.

MARTHA. Well then, it'll do tha' good to wait on thyself a bit. Tis fair a wonder grand folks children don't turn out fair fools, bein' washed and took out to walk like they was puppies.

MARY. *What* is this language you speak?

MARTHA. Well, of course, you've not heard any Yorkshire, livin' in India, have ye? Mrs. Medlock said I'd have to be careful or you wouldn't understand what I was sayin'. But I didn't know what to expect from you either. When I heard you was comin' from Bombay, I thought you'd be a solid brown, I did. But you're not brown at all. More yellow, I'd say.

(MARY's hands fly up to her eyes, as she bursts into tears and doesn't want MARTHA to see it.)

MARTHA. Eh, now lassie, I didn't know you'd be so easy vexed. I'll help you on with your clothes this time, if you like. You just pretend you're back in India, and I'm your servant, and you just give me that little yellow foot.

MARY. I'm quite all right. Thank you.

MARTHA. Look there. Out the window. It's the moor, it is. Like a dull purple sea this morning. Do you like it?

MARY. I hate it.

MARTHA. Ah, you wait 'til spring, then. For the moor is fair covered in gorse and heather, and there's such a lot of fresh air. My brother Dickon goes off and plays on the moor for hours. He's got a pony that's made friends with him, and birds and sheep and such as eats right out of his hand.

MARY. (*Has been examining the closet.*) These are not my clothes.

MARTHA. Ay, miss, your Uncle ...

MARY. (*Interrupting her to keep her from talking on and on.*) These are nicer than mine.

MARTHA. You get these new clothes on then, and wrap up warm and [MUSIC CUE #6C: MEDLOCK BELL#1] run out and play. That'll give you stomach for your porridge.

MARY. Mrs. Medlock told me there's nothing out there but a big old park.

MARTHA. Well, maybe you'll run into our Dickon out there. Maybe he'll give you a ride on his pony. Maybe he'll ...

MARY. I don't know anything about boys.

END

(*MARTHA sighs, and proceeds to dress MARY as she sings:*)

[MUSIC CUE #7: IF I HAD A FINE WHITE HORSE]

MARTHA.

IF I HAD A FINE WHITE HORSE,
I'D TAKE YOU FOR A RIDE TODAY.
BUT SINCE I HAVE NO FINE WHITE HORSE
INSIDE I'LL HAVE TO STAY,
AND EMPTY ALL THE CHAMBER POTS
AND SCRUB THE FLOORS AND SUCH.
BUT WHAT'S THERE TO DO ON A FINE WHITE
HORSE?
IT SEEMS TO ME NOT MUCH.

IF I HAD A WOODEN BOAT,
I'D TAKE YOU FOR A SAIL TODAY.
BUT SINCE I HAVE NO WOODEN BOAT
INSIDE I'LL HAVE TO STAY
AND CATCH AND KILL THE MICE,
AND PLUCK THE CHICKENS FOR THE COOK.

that garden again, and buried the key. And now the ivy's grown up over the door such that I don't even know where it is now.

MARY. But aren't you worried that the garden is all dead with nobody taking care of it?

BEN. Of course I am. But if I so much as set foot in there ...

MARY. Maybe the real reason the robin is chirping at you is he wants you to climb over his garden wall and work on it.

BEN. Maybe he does, but I can't go losin' my job on the advice of a bird, now can I? And the same goes for you.

MARY. My Uncle Archie said ...

BEN. Your Uncle Archie is gone most of the time, missy, and who's to say what might happen if he weren't here to stop it.

END

(She thinks a moment. [MUSIC CUE # 9A: INDIA STING #2] The FAKIR appears.)

MARY. Do you believe in spirits?

BEN. Old place like this there's more of them than there are of us.

MARY. I heard that crying in the house again last night.

BEN. That could well be a spirit you heard. They like a tall ceiling and a long hallway to swoop around in.

MARY. In India, once, [MUSIC CUE # 9B: BIG DEAD SNAKE] I saw a spirit pull a big dead snake right up out of a basket and make him dance.

BEN. I'm sure you think you've seen just about everything, Missy, except the inside of that garden ... and you keep it that way. You hear me?

(MARY hears the sound of the ROBIN.)

Archibald: Adult (baritone)
Dr. Craven: Adult (baritone)

THE SECRET GARDEN

43

SCENE 4
ARCHIBALD'S LIBRARY

DR. CRAVEN is seated at the desk, as ARCHIBALD enters, wearing a heavy raincoat.

ARCHIBALD. Will this rain never stop?

DR. CRAVEN. Archie, I'm so pleased. I've finally located a suitable school for young Mary.

ARCHIBALD. A school?

DR. CRAVEN. She needs the company of other children. Particularly after a tragedy such as this.

ARCHIBALD. But she's practically just arrived, Neville. Does she want to leave?

DR. CRAVEN. This is no house for a child. What will she have to do here? Wander the halls?

ARCHIBALD. As I do, you mean? What a wretched house this is. Father should have given Misselthwaite to you, Neville, not me.

DR. CRAVEN. You are the elder brother, Archie. That would never have occurred to him. But if you continue to feel you cannot live here, then leave. You were happy once before. In Paris. You're still a young man. There is no reason ...

ARCHIBALD. I can't leave, Neville.

DR. CRAVEN. But what good does it do to sit by the boy's bed, night after night, hoping for a miracle?

ARCHIBALD. They have been known to happen.

DR. CRAVEN. When Lily died, I gave up my practice to care for the ...

ARCHIBALD. You've been completely faithful, Neville. I am deeply grateful.

DR. CRAVEN. But I did not give up my responsibility to *you*, Archie. I cannot allow you to waste your life waiting for the inevitable end. I cannot.

ARCHIBALD. I am not wasting my life, Neville. This *is* my life now.

Mary: Child (soprano)
Colin: Child (soprano)

THE SECRET GARDEN

53

COLIN. Because I hear everybody whispering about it. If I live, I may be a hunchback, but I shan't live.

MARY. Well, I've seen lots of dead people, and you don't look like any of *them*.

COLIN. Dead people! Where did you *come* from?

MARY. From India. My parents died there of the cholera. But I don't know what happened to them after that. Perhaps they burned them, I don't know.

COLIN. My mother died when I was born. That's why my father hates me.

MARY. He hates the garden too.

COLIN. What garden?

MARY. (*Wishes she hadn't said anything about the garden.*) Just a garden your mother liked. Have you always been in this bed?

COLIN. Sometimes I have been taken to places at the seaside, but I won't stay because people stare at me. And one time a grand doctor came from London, and said to take off this iron thing Dr. Craven made me wear, and keep me out in the fresh air. But I hate fresh air, and I won't be taken out.

MARY. If you don't like people to see you, do you want me to go away?

COLIN. Yes, but I want you to come back first thing tomorrow morning and tell me all about India. In the books my father sends me, I've read that elephants can swim. Have you ever seen them swim? They seem altogether too large to be swimmers, unless maybe they use their ears to ...

MARY. I can't come talk to you in the morning. I have to go outside and look for something with Dickon.

COLIN. Who's Dickon?

MARY. He's Martha's brother. He's my friend.

(*Suddenly, COLIN's despotic temperament flares.*)

COLIN. If you go outside with that Dickon instead of coming here to talk to me, I'll send him away.

Start

MARY. You *can't* send Dickon away!

COLIN. I can do whatever I want. If I were to live, this entire place would belong to me someday. And they *all* know that.

MARY. You little Rajah! If you send Dickon away, I'll never come into this room again.

COLIN. I'll make you. They'll drag you in here.

MARY. I won't even look at you. I'll stare at the floor.

COLIN. You are a selfish thing.

MARY. You're more selfish than I am. You're the most selfish boy I ever saw.

COLIN. I'm selfish because I'm dying.

MARY. You just say that to make people feel sorry for you. If you were a nice boy it might be true, but you're too nasty to die!

*(MARY turns and stomps away toward the door.
[MUSIC CUE #15A: INDIA STING #3] The AYAH appears.)*

COLIN. No, please don't go.

(She stops.)

COLIN. It's just that the storm scares me so that if I went to sleep, I'm afraid I might not wake up.

[MUSIC CUE #16: ROUND-SHOULDERED MAN]

MARY. Then close your eyes, and I will do what my Ayah used to do in India. I will pat your hand and stroke it and sing something quite low.

(The AYAH begins to hum.)

COLIN. And I have such terrible dreams.

MARY. I have bad dreams too. Last night I dreamed about my father. Only he had this lump on his back, like your father. And then, when he turned around, he was your father.

COLIN.

SOME NIGHTS I DREAM
THAT A ROUND-SHOULDERED MAN
COMES IN MY ROOM
ON A BEAM OF MOONLIGHT.
HE NEVER SAYS WHAT HE WANTS,
HE JUST SITS WITH A BOOK IN HIS HANDS.

AND THEN I DREAM
THAT THE ROUND-SHOULDERED MAN
TAKES ME OFF ON A RIDE
THROUGH THE MOORS BY MOONLIGHT.
HE NEVER SAYS, WHERE WE'LL GO
WE JUST RIDE 'CROSS THE HILLS TILL DAWN.

AND SOME NIGHT I'M GOING TO ASK
HIM,
IS THE NIGHT SKY BLACK OR BLUE?
I KNOW THE ANSWER'S IN HIS BOOK
OF ALL THAT'S GOOD AND TRUE.

MARY. It's no wonder you have bad dreams. The shadows in this room are so strange.

COLIN.

AND ONCE I DREAMED
THAT THE ROUND-SHOULDERED MAN
TOOK MY HAND AND WE WALKED
TO A SECRET GARDEN.
I HEARD MY FATHER SPEAK MY NAME
AS WE SAT IN THE CROOK OF A BROKEN TREE.

COLIN.

MARY.

AND SOME NIGHT I'M GOING TO ASK HIM

AND SOME NIGHT I
THINK YOU
SHOULD ASK HIM

END