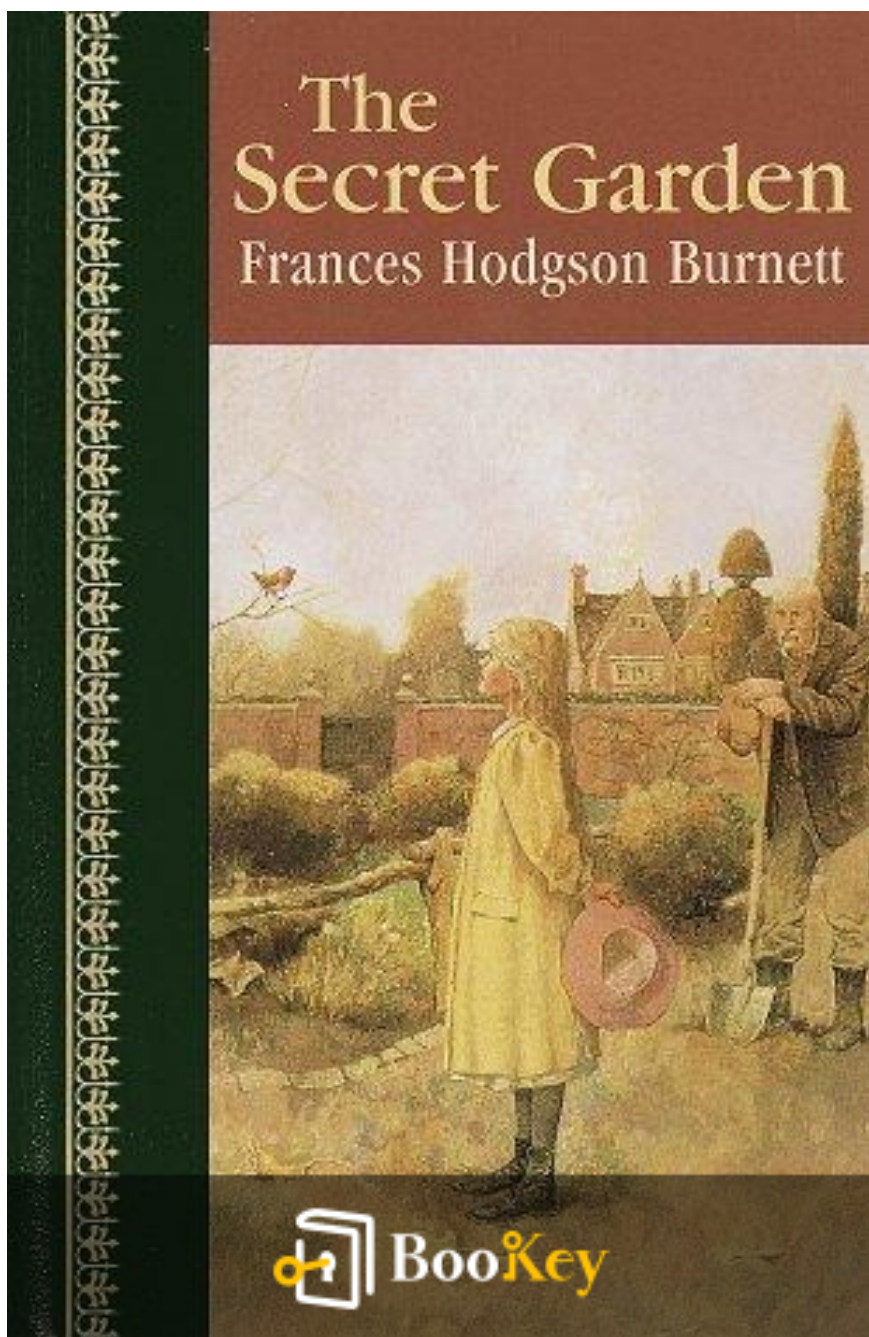


The Secret Garden PDF (Limited Copy)

Frances Hodgson Burnett



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The Secret Garden Summary

"Unlocking Hearts Through Nature's Wonders"

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About the book

emerging from the shadows of childhood loneliness into the vibrant embrace of nature, "The Secret Garden" by Frances Hodgson Burnett is a timeless tale that captivates the heart with its lush depictions of growth and renewal. Set against the hauntingly beautiful Yorkshire moors, the story follows young Mary Lennox, whose transformation from a sullen orphan to an adventurous and compassionate spirit mirrors the magical awakening of a long-abandoned garden. This hidden sanctuary, once neglected and forgotten, becomes a symbol of hope and healing not only for Mary but for all who enter its verdant confines. This novel masterfully interweaves themes of grief, friendship, and the rejuvenating power of the natural world, inviting readers into a world where harmony and beauty hold the potential to mend even the deepest of wounds.

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About the author

Frances Hodgson Burnett, born in Manchester, England in 1849, was a prolific author renowned for her timeless children's literature. After her father's death, her family's financial hardships prompted their emigration to the United States when Burnett was just 15 years old. This transatlantic shift was pivotal in shaping her literary voice. Initially penning stories to help support her family, Burnett's vivid storytelling and rich character portrayals quickly garnered attention. She firmly established her reputation with the renowned children's classics, "A Little Princess," "The Secret Garden," and "Little Lord Fauntleroy." A masterful creator of worlds imbued with hope and transformation, Burnett's legacy endures as her tales continue to enchant readers, teaching resilience and the profound impact of love and kindness. Her deep understanding of human emotions, intertwined with her own experiences of adversity, made her stories resonate across generations.

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Summary Content List

Chapter 1: There Is No One Left

Chapter 2: Mistress Mary Quite Contrary

Chapter 3: Across the Moor

Chapter 4: Martha

Chapter 5: The Cry in the Corridor

Chapter 6: “There Was Some One Crying—There Was!”

Chapter 7: The Key to the Garden

Chapter 8: The Robin Who Showed the Way

Chapter 9: The Strangest House Any One Ever Lived in

Chapter 10: Dickon

Chapter 11: The Nest of the Missel Thrush

Chapter 12: “Might I Have a Bit of Earth?”

Chapter 13: “I Am Colin”

Chapter 14: A Young Rajah

Chapter 15: Nest Building

Chapter 16: “I Won’t!” Said Mary

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Chapter 17: A Tantrum

Chapter 18: “Tha’ Munnot Waste No Time”

Chapter 19: “It Has Come!”

Chapter 20: “I Shall Live Forever—and Ever—and Ever!”

Chapter 21: Ben Weatherstaff

Chapter 22: When the Sun Went Down

Chapter 23: Magic

Chapter 24: “Let Them Laugh”

Chapter 25: The Curtain

Chapter 26: “It’s Mother!”

Chapter 27: In the Garden

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Chapter 1 Summary: There Is No One Left

In the first chapter of "The Secret Garden," we are introduced to Mary Lennox, an ill-tempered and disagreeable young girl, who is sent to live at Misselthwaite Manor with her uncle. Having been born in India, Mary is pale and sickly, with a thin face and a perpetually sour expression resulting from a lifetime of neglect. Her father, a British official, and her mother, a beautiful woman more interested in socializing than mothering, left her in the care of an Indian Ayah, who was instructed to keep Mary out of sight. Consequently, Mary grows up spoiled and demanding, accustomed to getting her way.

One morning, at the age of nine, Mary awakens to find her familiar Ayah missing. As she throws a tantrum, the new servant reveals in a fearful stammer that the Ayah won't be coming. The atmosphere at her home is unusually tense, with servants behaving strangely and disappearing mysteriously, but no one explains the situation to Mary. Left alone, she goes to the garden to play, but her solitude is interrupted when she overhears her mother, Mrs. Lennox, speaking with a young British officer. They discuss the outbreak of cholera, a deadly disease spreading rapidly and causing widespread panic.

Mary's mother is stricken with fear, realizing too late the gravity of their situation. As the disease claims the lives of servants and other British



families, chaos ensues, but Mary is forgotten. Confined to the nursery, she remains unaware as her parents and household succumb to the epidemic. Exhausted and frightened, Mary drinks a glass of wine left on the dining table, which leads her to sleep deeply through the tumult and tragedy unfolding around her.

Upon awakening, Mary surveys the still and silent house, puzzled over the absence of people. Forlornly, she encounters a snake, the only other living being around. The quiet is eventually broken by the arrival of men investigating the desolate household. Their discovery of Mary shocks them, as she has been overlooked by everyone in the frenzy. A man tentatively named Barney sympathetically breaks the news to her—her parents are dead, and her caretakers have fled, leaving her entirely alone. Through this encounter, Mary comprehends the depth of her isolation and begins a new chapter in her life, marking the end of her past in India and the beginning of her future in England.

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Chapter 2 Summary: Mistress Mary Quite Contrary

In the second chapter of "The Secret Garden," titled "Mistress Mary Quite Contrary," we are introduced to Mary Lennox, a young girl who has led a life marked by neglect and self-absorption. Raised in colonial India by a mother she only observed from afar and a host of servants who catered to her whims, Mary knows little love or familial connection. Following the tragic death of her parents from cholera, Mary is left utterly alone, reflecting her detached nature.

Initially placed with the family of a poor English clergyman, Mary finds herself out of place and disliked by the quarrelsome, shabby children of the household. An altercation with Basil, one of the children, results in Mary earning the mocking nickname "Mistress Mary Quite Contrary," inspired by a nursery rhyme. The children delight in provoking her, and Mary remains disgruntled and petulant.

Information about her future surprises Mary when she learns she will be sent to England to live with her uncle, Mr. Archibald Craven, at Misselthwaite Manor. Basil describes her uncle as a solitary and "horrid" hunchback, which stirs curiosity and anxiety in Mary. Mrs. Crawford, who hosted Mary temporarily, confirms her relocation, describing Mr. Craven's residence with a tinge of pity for Mary's unappealing demeanor, visibly disconnected from both her beauty and maternal affection.



Mary's journey to England is overseen by the indifferent wife of an officer. Upon arrival in London, she is entrusted to Mrs. Medlock, the brisk housekeeper of Misselthwaite Manor. Mrs. Medlock finds Mary neither attractive nor engaging, and their interaction is devoid of warmth. The chapter sketches a picture of transition and unfolds Mary's intrigue and unease about her new surroundings, especially the peculiar and ancestral dwelling she will call home.

As Mary travels with Mrs. Medlock, she learns more about Misselthwaite Manor and its reclusive master. The manor, described as vast and ancient, resting on the moors with countless locked-up rooms, paints a picture of isolation and mystery. Mrs. Medlock provides some insight into Mr. Craven's life, revealing that he was once married to a kind, beautiful woman whose death left him withdrawn. This revelation offers a glimpse into the strained and sorrowful past that permeates the household, heightening Mary's intrigue.

Despite Mrs. Medlock's attempt to prepare Mary for her new life, the young girl maintains her contrary demeanor. Mary's mind wanders as she considers her uncle's solitary existence, enveloped in the rain-soaked landscape of the English countryside—a stark contrast to the vibrant, colorful life she led in India. As the journey progresses, Mary falls into a restless slumber, surrounded by the foreboding atmosphere that hints at the challenges and



discoveries awaiting her at Misselthwaite Manor.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Transformation through Change

Critical Interpretation: In Chapter 2 of 'The Secret Garden', the air of uncertainty and mystery surrounding Mary's future at Misselthwaite Manor represents a transformative phase in her life. This shift from her isolated existence in India to the enigmatic moors of England becomes a metaphor for personal growth and self-discovery.

Embracing change, even when accompanied by discomfort or fear, opens doors to new beginnings and opportunities to reshape one's identity. This transition in Mary's life inspires us to view change not as an end, but as a bridge connecting past stagnancy to a future filled with potential, promising a richer understanding of ourselves amidst unfamiliar territories.



Chapter 3 Summary: Across the Moor

In Chapter 3, titled "Across the Moor," Mary Lennox transitions from the familiar environment of a train to the mysterious and vast landscape of the English moors. After a long nap, interrupted only by a meal of chicken and beef brought by Mrs. Medlock, Mary awakens to her new reality—a dreary, rain-soaked journey to Misselthwaite Manor. The chapter begins with an intimate glimpse of Mary's journey as she and Mrs. Medlock travel by train, the subdued light of the train carriage contributing to an atmosphere of transition and anticipation.

As they reach Thwaite Station, Mary encounters the robust Yorkshire accent of the station-master, a cultural novelty in stark contrast to her life in India, where her every need was catered to by native servants. This cultural shift is further underscored by the presence of the smartly dressed footman who assists them into the carriage awaiting outside, his waterproof attire glistening after continuous rain.

The carriage ride marks Mary's introduction to the moorlands, a place defined by its wild, untamed beauty and vastness—features that bewilder and unsettle Mary. Mrs. Medlock explains the moor to her, noting its bleakness but also its charm when covered in blooming heather. For Mary, this unfamiliar landscape parallels the sea, a boundless expanse with the wind creating a stirring, eerie sound among the bushes.



The journey across the moor is marked by the ominous darkness and the relentless, whistling wind. As Mary contemplates the moor's seeming endlessness, she becomes increasingly apprehensive about what awaits her at the manor. Her trepidation is mirrored by the uncertain, winding road and the fast-moving streams they cross, adding to the sense of wild desolation.

However, the appearance of a distant light brings relief, signaling their approach to Misselthwaite Manor. As they pass through the park gates and drive along a long, dark avenue, the manor looms into view. It is an enormous, low-built structure, suggesting both grandeur and a shadowy, almost oppressive presence. The large oak doors, opening to reveal a dimly lit hall, emphasize the gothic atmosphere of her new home.

Mary's introduction to her quarters is quick and unceremonious, guided by Mrs. Medlock and a terse Mr. Pitcher, who informs them that Mary's uncle does not wish to see her before his departure to London. In the expanse of the manor, Mary is led through a maze of corridors and staircases until she reaches a room prepared for her with a warm fire and supper.

This chapter sets the stage for Mary's new life at Misselthwaite Manor, marking a significant shift from her previous existence and conveying her feelings of isolation and curiosity as she steps into a world unknown, filled with the secrets and peculiarities of the English moorland landscape.



Chapter 4: Martha

In Chapter 4 of "The Secret Garden," we are introduced to a significant character named Martha, a young and cheerful housemaid with a Yorkshire accent, who becomes pivotal in Mary Lennox's early experiences at Misselthwaite Manor. Mary, having grown up in India with servants who catered to her every whim, finds herself in a curious and somewhat gloomy room at the manor, waking to Martha noisily tending to the fireplace.

Mary's initial impression of the manor is one of strangeness and loneliness, juxtaposed against her life in India where she was accustomed to being treated with deference. She reacts with disdain to the vast, barren moorland she sees from her window, which Martha optimistically describes with affection, suggesting that Mary might come to appreciate it in time. Unlike Indian servants, Martha exhibits a straightforward and pragmatic attitude, a contrast to the deference Mary is used to, leaving Mary puzzled and slightly intrigued by her manner.

The conversation reveals Martha's own background, indicative of the rustic and self-sufficient lifestyle of the Yorkshire moors, a stark contrast to Mary's pampered upbringing. When Mary expresses her expectation to be dressed by a servant, Martha breezily insists that Mary learn to dress herself, a foreign concept to the spoiled child.



Through Martha's chatter, readers learn about Dickon, Martha's brother, who is skilled with animals and connects with nature in a profound way. Dickon's portrayal piques Mary's curiosity, subtly planting the seed of transformation, as she begins to consider the existence of relationships beyond herself. This foreshadows Mary's eventual journey of self-discovery and growth.

Martha inadvertently encourages Mary to explore the manor's gardens, leading to a key plot development when Mary stumbles upon the mystery of a locked garden that has remained sealed for ten years following the death of Mr. Craven's wife. This garden, buried behind high walls with no visible door, becomes a symbol of the secrets of the manor and its residents.

While wandering, Mary encounters Ben Weatherstaff, the crotchety, yet secretly tender-hearted gardener. Through him, Mary discovers the lively robin redbreast, a charming and friendly bird adept at breaking through her stoic demeanor. The robin symbolizes hope and transformation and becomes an ally in Mary's quest to unravel the secrets of the manor's hidden garden.

Ben, despite his gruff exterior, reveals that the robin lives in the mysterious garden and shares a unique bond with Mary that mirrors his own friendship with the bird. Their encounter emphasizes Mary's increasing sense of loneliness and her deepening intrigue about the garden.



This chapter weaves together themes of isolation, cultural contrast, and budding curiosity, setting the stage for the transformative impact Misselthwaite's hidden garden and its mysteries will have on Mary's character development. It highlights her initial reluctance to adapt and her growing interest in the world beyond herself, catalyzed by her interactions with Martha, the robin, and the prospect of the secret garden.

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Chapter 5 Summary: The Cry in the Corridor

In Chapter 5 of Frances Hodgson Burnett's **The Secret Garden**, titled "The Cry in the Corridor," we follow Mary Lennox as she adjusts to her new life at Misselthwaite Manor. Initially, her days are monotonous and routine. Each morning she awakes in her dreary room and observes the empty expanses of the moor. Despite her initial disinterest, Mary begins to venture outdoors, a decision that unknowingly benefits her health and spirits. The moor's invigorating air stimulates her appetite, a novelty for the usually listless child, prompting Martha, the good-natured servant girl with a thick Yorkshire accent, to remark on the positive physical changes Mary is experiencing. Martha, who is intrigued by the foreign Mary, frequently chats with her, providing insights into life at the manor.

Mary's walks lead her to explore the gardens surrounding the manor, where she becomes curious about a particular ivy-covered wall. Despite her search, she finds no door and recalls the mysterious garden that is always locked and off-limits, a place that haunts her imagination. During one of her explorations, Mary encounters a cheerful robin redbreast, which captivates her with its whimsical presence. She finds a kind of kinship with the bird, as if it communicates with her through its chirps and melodies. The robin, inadvertently, guides Mary to the hidden garden, sparking her deep curiosity.

Back at the manor, as she converses with Martha by the fireside, Mary learns



a heart-wrenching piece of the Craven family's history. Martha reveals that the hidden garden was once beloved by Mr. Craven's late wife. It was their private sanctuary until a tragic accident there led to her death, causing Mr. Craven to resent the place ever since and lock it away from everyone. This poignant story stirs empathy in Mary, marking a significant emotional development as she begins to care about others' sorrow.

As the chapter concludes, Mary hears a mysterious cry echoing through the corridors of the vast manor. Though Martha dismisses it as the wind or the scullery maid's toothache, Mary is unconvinced. The persistent and child-like nature of the cry piques her curiosity, adding a layer of mystery and suspense to her stay at the manor. Thus, the chapter encapsulates Mary's transformation as she slowly awakens to empathy and intrigue in a once colorless world.



Chapter 6 Summary: “There Was Some One Crying—There Was!”

In Chapter 6, "There Was Some One Crying—There Was!", Mary Lennox is faced with another rainy day, preventing her from exploring the moor at Misselthwaite Manor. She questions Martha, the maid, about what people do in such dreary weather. Martha shares stories of her large, lively family and her brother Dickon, who ventures out in the rain and finds abandoned animals to rescue, like a fox cub and a crow named Soot. Mary finds herself intrigued by Martha's stories and the vibrant life Martha describes, so different from her own lonely existence.

Mary misses having something to do and has no possessions from India, such as her Ayah's stories or her own books, as they were left behind. Martha suggests she could read if she could access the manor's library, which sparks Mary's curiosity about the unexplored parts of the house. With the manor's freedom and little oversight from Mrs. Medlock, Mary decides to venture out to explore on her own.

The manor, a sprawling and seemingly deserted place, offers a maze of corridors and mysterious closed doors to keep her curiosity piqued. As she wanders through the house, she imagines the stories of the people in the portraits she passes—children in old-fashioned clothes and faces who seem to watch her silently.



In a moment of discovery, Mary explores a room filled with Indian artifacts that remind her of her past. She's drawn to a little cabinet filled with carved ivory elephants, engaging her imagination and momentarily alleviating her loneliness. However, a tiny sound draws her attention to a mouse nest in a cushion, a rare sign of life in this magnificent but empty household.

Mary's discovery takes a more mysterious turn when she hears a faint, fretful cry nearby, not for the first time. Her curiosity becomes more intense because this is no accidental sound—there is someone or something in distress within these walls. As she attempts to trace the sound, her exploration is abruptly interrupted by Mrs. Medlock, who sternly ushers her back to her room, denying the existence of any unexplainable cries.

Despite the stern warning, Mary remains defiant and convinced of what she heard. She resolves to uncover the source of the mysterious cries, fueling her new sense of purpose amidst the manor's secrecy. The chapter closes with Mary, energized by her adventures and contemplating the mysteries she is determined to solve about the vast and enigmatic Misselthwaite Manor.



Chapter 7 Summary: The Key to the Garden

Chapter 7 Summary: The Key to the Garden

In this chapter, "The Key to the Garden," Mary Lennox is greeted by a rare sight—a clear, deep blue sky over the moor, a stark contrast to the hot, burning skies of India. The storm has passed, leaving behind a promising sign of spring. Martha, the cheerful housemaid with a broad Yorkshire accent, explains that English weather can change rapidly and shares her excitement about the coming bloom of flowers and bustling wildlife on the moor. Mary, curious and yearning for adventure, asks if she could visit Martha's family cottage, showcasing her growing interest in her surroundings.

Mary's interaction with Martha unfolds to reveal more about Martha's family, particularly her fondness for her mother, who is resourceful and kind-hearted. Martha's brother, Dickon, is also mentioned as someone beloved by creatures, sparking Mary's curiosity about him. This interaction serves to highlight Mary's transformation from a lonely, disinterested child to someone beginning to open up to human connections and the beauty around her.

After Martha leaves for a day out at her home, Mary explores the gardens of



Misselthwaite Manor. The renewal in the weather finds her intrigued by the gardeners' conversations about the coming signs of spring. During her explorations, Mary's attention is again captured by a friendly robin that seems to recognize her, deepening her sense of connection to the garden.

Her exploration suddenly turns fortuitous when she discovers an old, rusty key hidden in the freshly-turned soil. Realizing it might be the key to the mysterious locked garden spoken of throughout Misselthwaite Manor, Mary is filled with wonder and excitement. The chapter closes on this mysterious note, as she whispers to herself, "Perhaps it is the key to the garden!"

This chapter marks a pivotal moment in the story, emphasizing themes of renewal, discovery, and the potential for personal transformation, as Mary's journey towards understanding herself and her world continues. The robin, representing nature's quiet magic, acts as a catalyst for Mary's pivotal discovery, foreshadowing her further adventures in the garden and beyond.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Discovery and Renewal

Critical Interpretation: The discovery of the rusty key serves as a metaphor for unlocking potential and finding new paths. Likewise in life, embracing curiosity and exploration can lead to personal renewal and growth. Just like Mary, seizing the moments of wonder around you can encourage significant introspection and transformation. Her excitement and anticipation upon finding the key symbolize how uncovering something new, whether an idea, opportunity, or understanding, can ignite the drive for change and inspire a deeper connection with the world around us.

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Chapter 8: The Robin Who Showed the Way

In Chapter 8, titled "The Robin Who Showed the Way," the protagonist, Mary Lennox, is captivated by a key she believes might open the mysterious locked garden, concealed for a decade. The notion of unveiling the secrets of this garden ignites her imagination and curiosity, a change spurred by the invigorating air of the moor. Having come from a life of privilege in hot, stagnant India, the vibrant English countryside begins to awaken Mary's senses and interests.

As Mary contemplates the key, Martha, the cheerful maid, returns from a refreshing trip to her family's cottage on the moor. Martha regales Mary with tales of her rustic life, a stark contrast to Mary's solitary existence at Misselthwaite Manor. Martha's stories of her brother Dickon, her family's simple joys, and their curiosity about Mary's life in India foster a budding friendship between the two girls, despite their different backgrounds.

Martha presents Mary with a skipping-rope, a rarity in India, bought by Martha's mother with love despite their poverty. Excitedly, Mary learns to skip, a simple joy that lightens her mood and draws her further outdoors. The activity also signifies her growing acceptance of her new environment and lifestyle.

During her explorations, Mary encounters Ben Weatherstaff, the surly old



gardener. Impressed by her skipping, Ben remarks on the healthy color in her cheeks, and a robin, often seen with Ben, appears curious about Mary, trailing her movements. This robin, previously observed during her garden walks, seems to become her companion and guide.

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Chapter 9 Summary: The Strangest House Any One Ever Lived in

In Chapter 9, "The Strangest House Any One Ever Lived in," Mary Lennox explores a mysterious and enchanting hidden garden, discovering it to be vastly different from anything she had encountered before. The garden is surrounded by high walls covered with the dormant stems of climbing roses, creating a tranquil and otherworldly atmosphere. Mary, familiar with roses from her life in India, is captivated by the place and wonders whether the garden, seemingly untouched for ten years, is dead or holds secret life within its bounds.

Inside, she is greeted by the stillness, broken only by the presence of a curious robin. As she explores further, Mary finds tiny hints of life—sharp green points emerging from the black earth. She recalls Ben Weatherstaff's knowledge and realizes there may be crocuses, snowdrops, or daffodils beginning to grow. Her discovery turns the mystical garden into her newfound private world, igniting excitement and optimism within her.

Feeling a strong desire to nurture the garden, Mary begins clearing overgrown grass to help the green shoots breathe. The activity brings her joy and warmth, and she becomes so engrossed that time passes quickly. As Mary works, her companion, the robin, observes her gardening endeavors, reminiscent of something the gardener Ben might do.



Returning from the garden for lunch, Mary shares her discovery with Martha, the maid, who explains the gardening basics, such as bulbs growing into spring flowers. Intrigued, Mary asks about a little spade, sparking the desire to cultivate her own corner of happiness in the vast and lonely estate. Martha, surprised by Mary's newfound interest, suggests writing to her brother Dickon for seeds and garden tools.

Mary writes a letter with Martha's help, marveling at the thought of involving Dickon, whom she imagines as someone skilled with nature and animals. Martha proposes asking Mrs. Medlock, the housekeeper, for permission to visit Martha's family cottage over the moor, which further excites Mary. The idea of meeting the family, seeing Dickon, and experiencing life beyond Misselthwaite Manor fills Mary with anticipation.

As the chapter concludes, Mary's sense of wonder deepens with the mystery of distant crying sounds in the corridors, hinting at secrets yet uncovered. Exhausted but content, Mary falls asleep, reflecting on the strangeness and solitude of her new home. The chapter intertwines the discovery of the garden with themes of solitude, discovery, and hope, foreshadowing Mary's journey toward transformation and connection with her surroundings.



Chapter 10 Summary: Dickon

Chapter 10 of "The Secret Garden," entitled "Dickon," unfolds as Mary continues to nurture her clandestine garden, which she's taken to calling the Secret Garden. The name not only suits the mystery of the hidden haven but aligns with the fairy tales she's read about similar enchanted places. Far from being inclined to the hundred-year slumbers from those tales, Mary finds herself more awake and invigorated by each day spent outdoors. Her physical stamina improves, and the neglected bulbs in the garden start showing signs of life under the sun's warmth and her care.

As the garden begins to stir, Mary's fascination with it grows. Her diligence in weeding and planting transforms the activity into an absorbing pastime rather than a chore. She finds new sprouts each day, recalling Martha's stories about the multiplying snowdrops and hoping for a similar floral explosion. Her attention also turns toward Ben Weatherstaff, the curmudgeonly gardener, with whom she develops an unusual camaraderie. Despite his gruff exterior, Ben seems quietly pleased by her company and impressed by her growing interest in gardening. Their bond deepens as they discuss flowers, particularly roses, which hold sentimental value for Ben.

The chapter introduces a pivotal moment when Mary ventures into the woods and discovers Dickon, a 12-year-old boy with an extraordinary connection to nature. Described as vibrant and friendly, Dickon captivates



Mary with his ability to charm animals with a simple pipe tune. His earthy smell and cheerful demeanor break through Mary's shyness, and they strike a natural rapport.

Dickon's knowledge of flora and fauna fascinates Mary, and she confides in him about her secret garden, a revelation driven by a mix of trust and desperation. She passionately declares her claim over the neglected plot, arguing that her affection and care for it justify her right to it. Moved by her earnestness, Dickon promises to keep her secret, understanding the importance of having a private sanctuary.

This chapter deepens Mary's growth and personal connections, highlighting how her environment and relationships transform alongside her beloved garden. The introduction of Dickon is significant, suggesting that he will play a crucial role in bringing the garden—and Mary—further to life.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: The Power of Connection and Shared Secrets

Critical Interpretation: In Chapter 10 of "The Secret Garden," you witness how forming genuine connections and sharing your innermost secrets can breathe new life into both you and others around you. As Mary confides in Dickon about her secret garden, she unlocks a realm of trust and companionship, allowing her passion for nurturing the neglected space to flourish. This chapter serves as a poignant reminder that when you open your heart and collaborate with those who understand and nurture your dreams, mutual growth becomes inevitable. By embracing the strength of shared secrets and connections, you discover fresh perspectives and the motivation to further cultivate your personal aspirations, just as Mary finds solace and rejuvenation through her friendship with Dickon and her dedication to the garden.



Chapter 11 Summary: The Nest of the Missel Thrush

In Chapter 11 of "The Secret Garden," titled "The Nest of the Missel Thrush," Mary Lennox discovers a newfound companionship with Dickon, Martha's brother, as they explore the mysterious, neglected garden. This chapter delves deeply into the bond that forms between these two characters as they connect over their shared love for nature and the secretive beauty of the garden.

Mary quietly watches as Dickon gently surveys the garden, his eyes sweeping over the gray trees and tangled creepers as if he's taking in the hidden life within them. Dickon expresses wonder at finally seeing the garden, revealing that he'd heard about it from his sister Martha but had never seen it himself. Concerned about being overheard, he advises Mary to speak softly.

Mary, newly aware of the garden's potential, becomes fascinated by Dickon's knowledge of plants. He points out which branches are "wick," a Yorkshire term meaning lively and full of life, contrasting them with the dead wood that needs pruning. Together, Mary and Dickon explore each tree and brush, marveling at the signs of life amidst apparent decay. Dickon enthuses about how, under their care, the garden could burst into vibrant bloom come summer.



The chapter charmingly emphasizes the transformative power of gardening as both Mary and Dickon engage in pruning, weeding, and digging. Through Dickon's gentle instruction, Mary learns to recognize the vitality in the garden's overgrown state. She becomes exhilarated by the work, feeling stronger and more alive herself. Dickon relates his own love for the outdoors, sharing his experiences on the moor and his immunity to colds due to the fresh air.

As they work, Dickon notices Mary's own small clearings around new plant shoots, praising her instinctive gardening efforts. He identifies various flowers and predicts their future bloom—crocuses, snowdrops, and daffodils, drawing a link to Mary's memories of a nursery rhyme, "Mistress Mary, Quite Contrary."

A trust deepens between Mary and Dickon, as she tentatively asks if he likes her. Dickon, with his characteristic openness, assures her he does, likening their bond to the familiarity and safety of a bird's nest. His promise to return daily to help her rejuvenate the garden fills Mary with hope and a sense of friendship unfamiliar to her until now.

The chapter ends with Mary reluctantly leaving for lunch, enchanted by this newfound camaraderie and the promise of the garden's rebirth. Dickon reassures her of his discretion; like a missel thrush keeping its nest hidden, her secret is safe with him. This chapter vividly illustrates the healing,



magical influence of nature and connection, and foreshadows the life-affirming transformation the garden symbolizes.

Section	Summary
Introduction	Mary Lennox befriends Dickon, Martha's brother, through their shared interest in the garden.
Exploration of the Garden	They explore the neglected garden, with Dickon expressing awe and familiarity with its potential beauty.
Nature's Wonders	Dickon shares his knowledge of plants, identifying lively branches and prunable dead wood.
Transformative Gardening	Mary learns gardening from Dickon, feeling enlivened and discovering a sense of purpose and vitality.
Recognition of Vibrancy	Dickon praises Mary's instinctive efforts and identifies upcoming flowers, linking them to a rhyme.
Building Trust	A trust is established between Mary and Dickon, marked by his assurance and their emerging friendship.
Promise and Discretion	Dickon promises daily visits and assures Mary of his secrecy, strengthening their bond.
Closing	The chapter concludes with Mary's departure, filled with hope and transformation potential.



Chapter 12: “Might I Have a Bit of Earth?”

In Chapter 12 of "The Secret Garden," titled "Might I Have a Bit of Earth?," Mary Lennox is elated and out of breath as she rushes to her room after meeting Dickon, a local boy who possesses a deep understanding and love for nature. Observing her excitement, Martha, the maid who has befriended Mary, is pleased to learn that Mary has taken a liking to Dickon, despite his unconventional looks. Martha speaks highly of Dickon's character, explaining that all in Yorkshire know him as a trustworthy and kind lad.

Their conversation soon turns to the seeds and gardening tools Dickon has brought for Mary, stirring in her a particular interest in gardening. However, when Martha asks where Mary plans to plant the flowers, Mary hesitates as she hasn't sought anyone's permission to take over a piece of the garden yet. Martha suggests that she speak to Ben Weatherstaff, an experienced and long-time gardener who had been loyal to Mrs. Craven, Mary's late aunt.

The scene transitions as Martha mentions that Mr. Craven, Mary's reclusive uncle, has returned and intends to see her. This unexpected development makes Mary anxious, as she recalls being told that Mr. Craven had initially been uninterested in meeting her. Martha explains that her mother, Mrs. Sowerby, had spoken to Mr. Craven about Mary, prompting his decision to see her.



When Mary finally meets Mr. Craven, described as having a sorrowful and distracted appearance due to his hunchback, their encounter reveals his struggle with emotional distance and open communication. Mr. Craven, who absentmindedly acknowledges his neglectfulness, asks Mary about her well-being. When Mary courageously requests "a bit of earth" to garden, Mr.

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Chapter 13 Summary: “I Am Colin”

In Chapter 13, titled "I Am Colin," Mary Lennox discovers a mysterious picture that reveals a message from her friend Dickon, which assures her of his discretion regarding her secret haven, the garden. She shows the picture to Martha, who recognizes Dickon's clever depiction of a missel thrush, reinforcing their shared secret about the garden.

As Mary is filled with anticipation for the next day, Yorkshire's unpredictable spring weather disrupts her plans with heavy rain and wuthering winds. Unable to sleep, she hears a distant, familiar crying that piques her curiosity. In the dead of night, she decides to explore the source of the sound, confident in the absence of Mrs. Medlock, the housekeeper known for her stern demeanor.

Guided by her candle through dark corridors, Mary finds her way to a secluded room where she encounters a boy named Colin Craven, who is fretfully crying in bed. Colin introduces himself as Mary's cousin and the son of Mr. Craven, the owner of Misselthwaite Manor. Surprisingly, Mary learns that Colin has been kept a secret from her, just as she was unaware of the reasons for his isolation and the nature of his supposed illness.

As the dialogue unfolds, Colin admits his disdain for his condition, fearing he might become a hunchback like his father, and expressing his father's



reluctance to see him. The boy shares his own struggles with illness and the burden of unwanted expectations placed upon him, fueling his isolation and melancholy.

Mary, compelled by a mix of empathy and intrigue, reveals her own secret about the garden, sparking Colin's curiosity. As they converse, Mary paints a vivid picture of the hidden garden, igniting Colin's imagination and desire to see it. Mary's depiction of the garden as an untouched sanctuary captivates Colin, who is unused to such vivid imagery due to being confined indoors.

Mary and Colin's shared yearning for a secret cultivates a new bond between them. As they explore the notion of discovering the hidden garden together, Colin's demeanor shifts from sullen to hopeful, illustrating the profound impact of having something to look forward to. Mary, feeling responsible for Colin's growing excitement, pleads for the garden to remain a secret between them.

As their conversation winds down, Colin reveals a portrait of his late mother, expressing conflicting emotions about her death and its impact on his life. This shared moment of vulnerability fosters a deeper connection between the two, as both grapple with their sense of loneliness and the secrets they keep.

Promising to keep their meeting and the desire to unlock the garden a secret,

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Colin expresses a wish for Mary to visit him often, as her presence brings a sense of solace. Mary, agreeing to return whenever possible, leaves him with a soothing lullaby that lulls him to sleep, ending the chapter on a poignant note of newfound friendship and hope.

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Chapter 14 Summary: A Young Rajah

Chapter 14: A Young Rajah

As the morning mist enveloped the moor and rain poured relentlessly, Mary found herself confined indoors. In the quiet solitude of the afternoon, she invited Martha to the nursery to sit with her, during a rare lull in the housemaid's bustling duties. Prepared with her knitting, Martha noticed something on Mary's mind and encouraged her to share her thoughts.

Mary revealed her discovery of the mysterious crying she had heard: she had met Colin, a hidden and misunderstood resident of the manor. Startled, Martha feared for her position, having never disclosed anything about Colin to Mary. Yet Mary reassured her of Colin's reaction—he wasn't angry but rather intrigued and pleased by her company. She recounted their late-night conversation and described singing Colin to sleep as he willingly shared his mother's picture with her.

Martha was astounded by Mary's boldness, likening it to walking into a lion's den. Colin, often spoiled and given to violent tantrums, had welcomed Mary, and such behavior from him was unusual. Nonetheless, Mary's discovery had to remain a secret, at least for now, as Colin wielded significant influence in the household due to his father's orders.



Colin's history unfolded through Martha's hesitant revelations: he was often ill and kept indoors to protect his purportedly weak back, a result of years of overmedication and coddling. Mr. Craven, still shattered after his wife's death, had distanced himself from Colin, fearing he would also become a hunchback. This fear directed Colin's upbringing, fostering an atmosphere more suffocating than nurturing.

Mary, contemplating these revelations, pondered if a change—like spending time outdoors in a garden—might do Colin good, just as it had benefited her. Despite his fears and feigned illnesses, triggered by previous unfortunate experiences during brief outings, Mary believed fresh air could fortify Colin's weak constitution.

Later, summoned by Colin to visit him again, Mary found his lavish room adorned with rich colors and vibrant books. The somber rain outside seemed distant as Colin recounted morning thoughts of Mary, and her visit dispelled concerns over Martha's fears regarding Mrs. Medlock, Colin assertively reminded Martha to follow his wishes.

Sitting together, Mary seized upon the chance to enthrall Colin by talking about Dickon, Martha's twelve-year-old brother, famed for his affinity with the creatures of the moor. Dickon's ability to charm animals akin to an Indian snake charmer drew attention to the delights of nature that Colin had



been denied. Colin expressed a yearning to learn more about Dickon's world, a stark contrast to his previous dismissal of the moor as desolate and dreary.

Unsettled by frequent whispers about his impending death, Colin's life had been shaped around the idea that he was doomed. Yet Mary, with her plain speaking, bluntly challenged these notions, suggesting that his attitude might reshape his destiny. She encouraged him to focus on living instead of brooding over dying—a fresh perspective she hoped could inspire change in him.

Their laughter filled Colin's room as they talked of joyful things. This newfound happiness alarmed the adults—Dr. Craven and Mrs. Medlock—who stumbled upon the unanticipated scene of merriment. Yet Colin, asserting his authority, reassured them he benefitted from Mary's presence. Dr. Craven, though skeptical, acknowledged the visible improvement in Colin's demeanor, and he took his leave, his thoughts clouded with uncertainty.

With a craving for sustenance and companionship, Colin shared his tea with Mary, hungry for both food and tales of Rajahs, continuing a conversation that now anchored his days with wonder instead of despair.



Chapter 15 Summary: Nest Building

Chapter 15 of "The Secret Garden" explores the theme of rejuvenation and the blossoming of relationships alongside nature. After a week of relentless rain, the sky clears, allowing Mary and her newly formed friendships to flourish just as the garden does.

During the rainy week, Mary spends more time with Colin, a young, isolated boy who is the heir of the manor. Their daily conversations cover various topics, from the exotic tales of Rajahs to the enchanting world of gardens and the mysterious Dickon. With each passing day, Colin seems less like the sickly boy everyone believed him to be, primarily because Mary has unknowingly started to rejuvenate his spirit. Even the nurse, who once considered leaving due to Colin's tantrums, finds renewed hope in the child's transformation, attributing it to Mary's influence.

Mary is cautious in her discussions about the secret garden, wanting to ensure Colin is trustworthy enough to share her secret. Colin's interest in the idea of a hidden garden ignites Mary's hopes that he would appreciate the garden's beauty and possibly even improve his health by spending time there, breathing fresh air and enjoying nature.

Mary herself has changed since her arrival at Misselthwaite Manor, her demeanor and appearance softening and growing livelier under the influence



of the Yorkshire moor air. Observations from Martha, the housemaid, and Mary's self-awareness confirm this transformation.

The chapter shifts to a sunny morning, and Mary wakes up invigorated by the sight of the clear sky. Unable to contain her excitement, she dashes to the secret garden. The moor and the garden seem alive, basking in the sun with a symphony of birds celebrating the change in weather.

As she arrives at the garden, she encounters Dickon, the nature-loving boy who has an almost magical connection with animals. Accompanied by a crow and a fox cub, Dickon has practically become one with the natural world, which captivates Mary. Together, they marvel at the garden's subtle transformations—buds breaking, shoots emerging, and flowers beginning to bloom. Mary feels compelled to kiss the crocuses, so enchanted is she by their beauty.

While they admire the garden, a robin attracts their attention by collecting twigs for its nest. Dickon's understanding of the robin's activities segues into a profound piece of wisdom: the ritual of nest-building has been part of spring for centuries. He impresses upon Mary the importance of respecting this process, as meddling could scare off the robin, paralleling how fragile human relationships can be.

Mary then confides in Dickon about Colin and her desire to bring him to the



garden. Dickon supports the idea, recognizing that the garden's healing powers—already transforming Mary—could also benefit Colin. They fantasize about bringing Colin out under the guise of needing fresh air, potentially sparking a shared journey of recovery and growth.

The chapter closes with a mutual understanding between Mary, Dickon, and the robin, reinforcing the secret, reciprocal, and growing relationship between all involved. It sets the stage for future adventures in the garden, suggesting that just like the robin building its nest, new bonds and life can emerge from delicate beginnings. This chapter, rich with the metaphor of nest-building, symbolically represents the personal growth and newfound connections that Mary, Colin, and Dickon are forging.



Chapter 16: “I Won’t!” Said Mary

In Chapter 16 of "The Secret Garden," Mary is too absorbed in gardening with her friend Dickon to remember her commitment to visit Colin, a sickly and demanding boy who is accustomed to getting his way. Mary, transformed by the fresh air and physical activity, prioritizes the garden over Colin, causing friction. When Martha, the maid, warns Mary that Colin will be upset by her absence, Mary, unlike others, is not afraid of Colin's mood swings and decisively returns to her gardening.

The shared garden is coming to life under Mary and Dickon's care. Their dedicated work begins to reveal a vibrant wilderness of growth, filled with promises of blossoms and fragrant grass. Charmingly, Dickon's animals—the fox, the rook, and the robin—are busy and lively companions in this enchanting transformation. As Mary and Dickon rest, they notice Mary's improving health and spirits, which boost her confidence and sense of belonging.

Upon returning home, Mary learns from Martha that Colin spent the afternoon in a foul mood due to her no-show, as he had anticipated her visit. Insensitive to his feelings, Mary confronts Colin in his room. Colin, accustomed to indulgence and surrounded by worries about his fragile health, including a fear that he is developing a hunchback like his father, is upset. This fear, fueled by overheard whispers, perpetuates his tantrums and



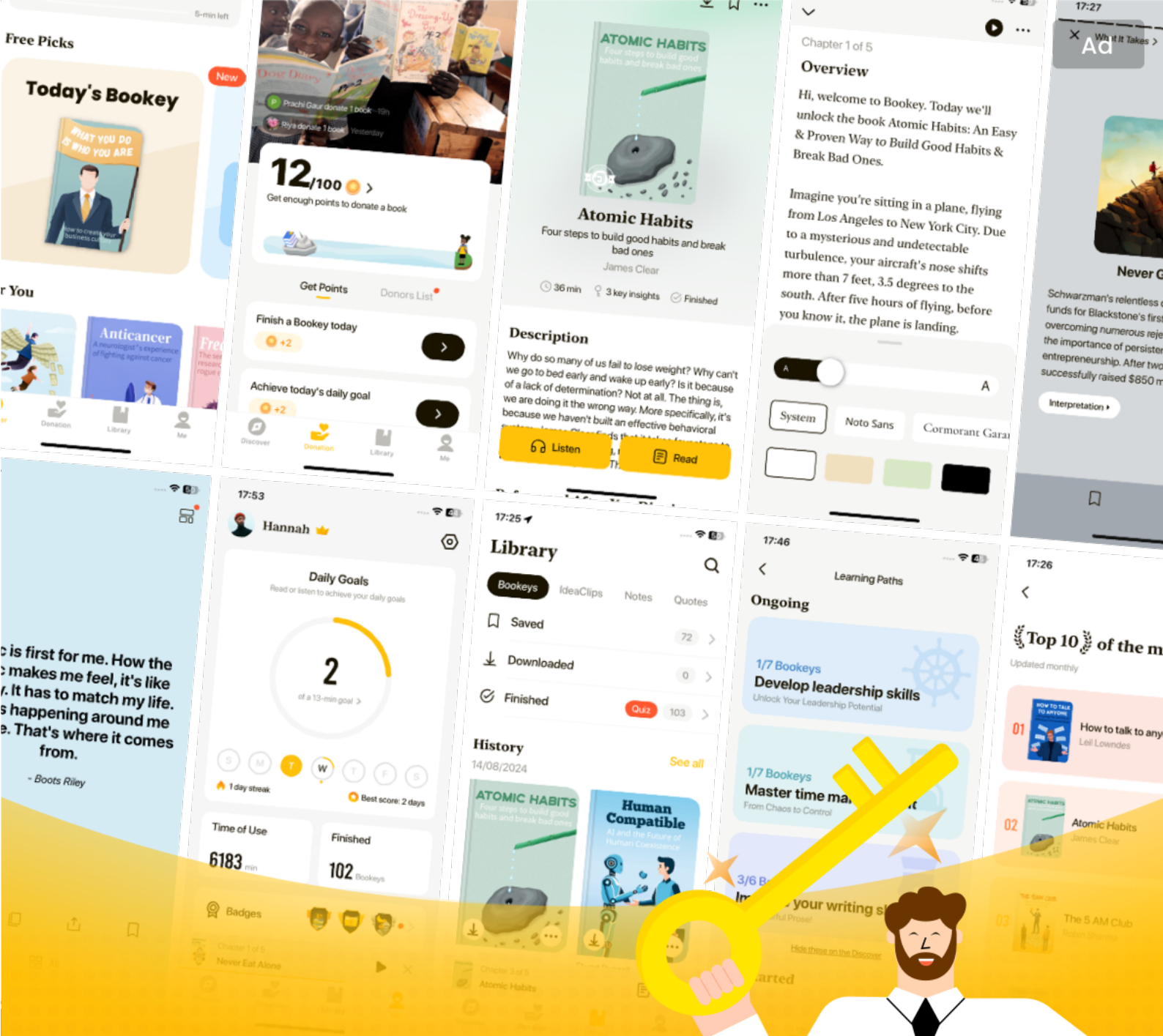
feelings of isolation.

Their confrontation is intense as both display their stubborn and selfish sides. Mary equally matches Colin's temper, not backing down even when he throws a pillow in anger. Their altercation is overheard by Colin's nurse,

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Chapter 17 Summary: A Tantrum

In Chapter 17 of "The Secret Garden," titled "A Tantrum," Mary Lennox experiences a harrowing and transformative night. After a day of hard work in the garden with Dickon, she climbs into bed, anticipating more work in the morning and a visit to Colin, her cousin who is bedridden and often hysterical.

Mary is abruptly awakened in the middle of the night by dreadful screams resonating through the corridors of Misselthwaite Manor. She quickly realizes that these are the sounds of one of Colin's infamous tantrums, which has thrown the household into chaos. The screams are filled with such intensity that the normally composed servants are unnerved. Mary, initially terrified and overwhelmed by Colin's hysterics, becomes angry. She decides to confront him, driven by a mixture of fear, frustration, and a burgeoning sense of determination.

Although hesitant at first, Mary gives in to the nurse's urging to intervene, as the nurse believes that Mary's presence might calm Colin. Surprisingly, all the adults seem to rely on Mary, a young girl, to manage the situation. When she enters Colin's room, she chastises him, startling him into silence with her blunt and fierce words. Her outburst is a shock to Colin, who is not used to being contradicted or disciplined.



Colin's tantrum stems partly from his deep-seated fear that a lump on his back, a perceived sign of an impending hunchback, will lead to his death. Mary, however, dismisses these fears as mere hysterics. She demands to see Colin's back for herself, and much to everyone's relief, her inspection reassures him that there is no such lump. Her confidence and defiance begin to unravel Colin's fear, helping him recognize that the terror might be mostly in his mind.

For the first time, Colin's vulnerability surfaces as he asks the nurse if he might live to grow up—a fundamental question he had been too frightened to ask before. The nurse, referring to advice from a London doctor, reassures him that he could indeed grow up, provided he goes outside more and controls his temper.

Colin, now calm and exhausted, makes peace with Mary by holding her hand. They tentatively reconcile, agreeing to venture outdoors together, perhaps with Dickon and his animals. Mary, feeling an unexpected softness towards Colin, describes her visualized image of the secret garden—a lush, forgotten place, reborn with the promise of life and beauty. Her soothing words lull Colin into a peaceful sleep, marking the beginning of his journey towards healing, courage, and discovery.

This chapter highlights themes of fear, courage, and transformation through the power of friendship and the natural world. Colin, once isolated by fears



and misconceptions, takes a significant step towards hope, influenced by Mary's bold honesty and the enchanting mystery of the secret garden.

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Chapter 18 Summary: “Tha’ Munnot Waste No Time”

In Chapter 18, titled "Tha' Munnot Waste No Time," Mary experiences a late awakening after an exhausting previous day. Upon waking, her maid Martha informs her of Colin's frail and feverish state following an emotional outburst. Despite this, Colin expresses a wish to see Mary again, having developed a fondness for her following their heated exchange. Martha shares insights from her mother about the challenges of raising children who are either deeply spoiled or never allowed their own way, noting that Colin has been indulged for far too long.

Mary decides to visit Colin before heading to see Dickon, her friend who has a knack for communing with nature. Upon entering Colin's room, she finds him looking weak but eager for company. She tells him of her upcoming visit to Dickon and hints at some secret about a garden, which invigorates Colin's spirits.

Mary then meets Dickon in the secret garden. They are joined by Dickon's animal companions, a fox, a crow, and two tame squirrels named Nut and Shell. They bask in the vibrant spring atmosphere, full of new life and cheerful bird songs. As they sit, Dickon passionately muses about the beauty of springtime and emphasizes the necessity of helping Colin experience it firsthand, advocating for bringing him outside to absorb nature's healing effects.



Inspired by Dickon's insight, Mary plans to take immediate action. She decides to ask Colin if Dickon can visit him the next day, bringing along his animal friends. She develops a plan to eventually sneak Colin out into the garden, foreseeing the positive impact it will have on him. Trying her hand at speaking in Dickon's broad Yorkshire dialect, she amuses herself and Dickon with her humor.

Returning to Colin, Mary carries with her the scent of the outdoors. Colin notices it immediately and delights in the freshness she brings. When Mary humorously speaks in Yorkshire dialect, Colin is amused, and the two find themselves laughing together. This levity surprises Mrs. Medlock, the housekeeper, who unintentionally eavesdrops on the joyous sound.

The conversation shifts to the marvels of nature, with Mary briefing Colin on Dickon's rapport with animals and their outings. Colin expresses a desire to befriend nature despite having never had the chance. Mary reassures him of Dickon's genuine character and shares her previous bitterness before discovering friendship and connection with the world around her.

Finally, Mary decides it is time to trust Colin with the biggest secret of all—there is a hidden door to the secret garden, and she has found it. She tells him of the wondrous garden they might explore together. Colin is in awe, elated yet delicate due to his condition. Mary, with her unwavering



belief and candid nature, bolsters his spirits, promising him access to the garden and a future that includes its magic.

As Mary describes the garden, Colin transitions from exhaustion to enraptured fascination, experiencing a newfound joy and anticipation for life outside his room. He is encouraged by Mary's revelation of her previous visits to the garden, which she had kept secret until she was sure of his trust. This chapter beautifully illustrates the power of nature, friendship, and trust as transformative forces in healing and emotional growth.

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Chapter 19 Summary: “It Has Come!”

In Chapter 19 of "The Secret Garden" titled "It Has Come!", the dynamics at Misselthwaite Manor begin to shift in response to Colin's recent change in behavior. After a severe tantrum the previous night, Dr. Craven, who typically attends to Colin during such episodes, is surprised to find a transformed atmosphere in the boy's room. Instead of encountering the usual sullen and hysterical Colin, he witnesses a lively exchange between Colin and Mary, the 'plain' girl who has an unexpected influence on him.

Mrs. Medlock, the housekeeper, introduces Dr. Craven to these changes, remarking on how Mary managed to calm Colin's tantrum in a way none could anticipate. The doctor finds Colin spiritedly discussing gardening books with Mary, planning the garden's reawakening in spring and learning about flowers with enthusiasm. This interaction is a dramatic improvement, showing Colin in high spirits, something that was once unimaginable.

Colin expresses his newfound desire for fresh air and insists on planning to go outside, a stark contrast to his former belief that fresh air would harm him. This shift astonishes Dr. Craven, who is aware that if Colin recovers, it may threaten his own inheritance of the manor. Nevertheless, aware of the health benefits, he begrudgingly agrees to Colin's demand. Mary's influence continues to be prominent, as Colin refuses to have a nurse accompany him on his outing, stating that Mary will be sufficient company, along with



Dickon—a local boy known for his affinity with animals.

Dr. Craven, though apprehensive, is comforted when he hears Dickon's name, as Dickon is well-regarded for his strength and reliability. During this exchange, the doctor learns of Colin's improved state, as the boy explains that Mary's presence helps him forget his sickness, thus promoting healing.

Upon leaving Colin's room, Dr. Craven ponders the new state of affairs, acknowledging to Mrs. Medlock that the remarkable changes in Colin's behavior could indeed be beneficial. Mrs. Medlock shares a story from Susan Sowerby, Dickon's mother, emphasizing the importance of children interacting with other children—a sentiment that underscores the chapter's theme of growth through companionship and shared experiences.

The following morning, Colin wakes up feeling rested and joyful, attributing his wellbeing to the plans hatched with Mary, and eagerly anticipates the coming of spring. Mary bursts into his room, invigorated by her morning outdoors, and shares with Colin the sights and scents of spring's arrival, reinforcing the theme of renewal that permeates the chapter. They plan to enjoy the fresh air together, with Mary describing the world's beauty, including the awakening garden and the animals, drawing Colin further out of his shell.

The chapter culminates with the much-anticipated arrival of Dickon, who,



along with his animals, captivates Colin's interest. The young boy marvels at Dickon's connection with the animals, marking a significant turning point in Colin's isolation. Dickon introduces his animal friends, including a newborn lamb, much to Colin's delight, providing him a taste of the outside world's life and vibrancy. Through nature and friendship, the once ailing and withdrawn Colin begins to find joy and a sense of belonging.

The chapter beautifully illustrates the power of nature and companionship in healing and transforming lives, setting the stage for further adventures and emotional growth for Colin and his friends.

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Chapter 20: “I Shall Live Forever—and Ever—and Ever!”

In Chapter 20 of "The Secret Garden," the story continues to unfold as Colin, Mary, and Dickon plan a secret excursion to the hidden garden. The chapter begins with a delay in their plans due to bad weather and Colin's health, but this time reinforces the bonds among the trio, solidifying their collective determination and anticipation.

Dickon, characterized by his deep connection with nature and animals, keeps Colin enthralled with stories of the moor's wildlife, which echoes with a bustling life unseen by most. As Colin absorbs these tales, he is swept away by the excitement and finds solace in imagining the secret garden, which he believes holds transformative powers.

Careful planning ensues as they devise a clandestine way to bring Colin to the garden without raising suspicions among the staff. Disguised as a regular stroll, their route is plotted with military precision to avoid any unwanted attention, preserving the garden's secrecy—part of its magical allure.

In a surprising move, Colin summons Mr. Roach, the head gardener, and calmly dictates his orders, displaying newfound confidence and authority. This encounter with the boy who was thought to be at death's door sparks curiosity amongst the staff, hinting at the remarkable changes unfolding



within the manor.

The narrative culminates with Colin, buoyed by the sense of impending discovery, finally being wheeled into the garden. As the door opens, the beauty of spring envelops him, revealing a vibrant world he had never truly

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Chapter 21 Summary: Ben Weatherstaff

CHAPTER 21: Ben Weatherstaff

In this chapter, the essence of life's continuity and timeless beauty is wonderfully captured through the perspectives of the characters, especially Colin. There is a profound feeling of eternity, much like witnessing the tranquility of dawn or the mystery of the night sky. Colin, confined to a wheelchair due to his prolonged illness, finds himself in a magical garden that transcends such limitations. It is a place where the natural world displays its wondrous cycles of growth.

On that particular afternoon, the garden envelops Colin, Mary, and Dickon in its spring enchantment. They find themselves surrounded by blooming cherry and apple trees with bees humming among the blossoms. It is in this perfect setting that Colin begins to feel a deep connection to life and health. Dickon, who possesses a unique ability to connect with nature and animals, facilitates this experience, helping Colin reconnect with the world.

The sense of wonder is shared among them. Dickon observes the day with childlike joy, expressing an admiration for the beauty around them. Colin's perception shifts from one of frailty to awe, and he begins to wonder if this beauty was bestowed upon the garden for his sake. Mary and Dickon share



this harmonious moment with him, weaving through the garden and introducing him to all its spring miracles.

The presence of a robin, busy with its nesting duties, sparks joy among the trio, and they note the robin's role in leading them to the garden. This moment rekindles the belief in Magic—a recurring theme symbolizing hope and transformation in Frances Hodgson Burnett's "The Secret Garden."

As the afternoon progresses, Colin makes a decision to have tea in the garden, further embracing this new experience. The simplicity of the tea, with buttered toast and crumpets, becomes a delightful event, shared even by some of Dickon's animal companions, heightening the sense of connection and belonging.

Colin's physical limitations are addressed when he expresses a desire to walk and dig in the garden like others. Despite his physical frailty, there is an expressed belief, both from him and his friends, that he will overcome these limitations. They acknowledge that fear is the real barrier, not his legs themselves, instilling a sense of confidence and resolve in Colin to heal and grow with the garden.

Suddenly, a disturbance arises when Ben Weatherstaff, the crotchety old gardener, appears over the garden wall. He is astonished to find the children there, especially Colin, whom he mistakes for a "poor cripple." Enraged and



indignant, Colin commands Dickon to wheel him closer to confront the gardener directly. This act takes on a regal quality, transforming Colin from a bedridden child into a commanding presence, akin to a young Rajah—a testament to his newfound strength and determination.

Ben Weatherstaff's surprise escalates as Colin, inspired by a surge of emotions, rises from his chair and stands unaided, proving his health and vitality. This act of defiance and self-belief shocks Ben, who reacts with unexpected tears of relief, recognizing Colin as more than just a frail boy. Colin asserts his authority over the garden and demands that Ben keeps their secret, marking his transition from weakness to power and control.

Ultimately, this chapter emphasizes themes of rebirth, healing, and the magical essence of nature. It marks a pivotal moment in Colin's transformation, where he begins to shed his past perceptions and limitations, aligning his growth with that of the garden's. It underscores the novel's message that nurturing nature leads to nurturing one's self.



Chapter 22 Summary: When the Sun Went Down

In Chapter 22 of "The Secret Garden," titled "When the Sun Went Down," Colin finally confronts his fears and takes a monumental step towards his own healing. Encouraged by Dickon and Mary, Colin surprises himself by standing upright and walking to a nearby tree. This triumphant moment is infused with the "Magic" that seems to emanate from the garden, an idea that Dickon subtly affirms by comparing it to the magic that brings flowers from the earth.

When Ben Weatherstaff, the gruff but kind-hearted gardener, arrives, Colin commands his attention, asking him to notice if he has any signs of being a hunchback or having crooked legs—both fears that have haunted him due to his fragile health and isolation. Ben reassures him, expressing a mixture of surprise and pride at Colin's transformation. This interaction reveals a tender understanding between them, as Ben reflects on how Colin's late mother had entrusted him with the garden, a place she cherished deeply.

Colin declares the garden to be his sanctuary, vowing to visit it every day in secret, with Dickon and Mary as his companions. This plan pleases Ben, as he reminisces about his own secret visits to care for the garden during the years it was neglected. Mary's influence is evident as she had previously conveyed the importance of the garden in Colin's healing process.



The chapter reaches a poignant climax when Colin attempts his first act of gardening. Though his hands are weak, his determination is unwavering as he uses a trowel to dig in the soil, insisting on planting a rose before the sun sets. Ben, Mary, and Dickon rally to assist him, each playing their part in this symbolic act of rebirth and growth. When the rose is finally planted, Colin stands with newfound confidence, witnessing the sunset as if it were a testament to the magical transformation taking place within him.

This chapter captures the essence of hope and renewal, depicting the profound impact of friendship and nature in overcoming personal doubts and fears. Colin's miraculous improvement, both physical and emotional, underscores the power of belief and the transformative magic of the secret garden.



Chapter 23 Summary: Magic

In Chapter 23, titled "Magic," the narrative unfolds with Dr. Craven's concern over Colin's newfound activity in the garden, suspecting that overexertion might not be wise for the boy's health. Despite Dr. Craven's apprehensions, Colin confidently dismisses any notion of fatigue, proclaiming that the garden is his source of wellness. The chapter highlights Colin's transformation from a domineering and self-centered boy, unfamiliar with social norms due to his isolated upbringing, to one gradually discovering camaraderie and self-awareness, largely inspired by his interactions with Mary and the charm of the secret garden.

Colin discusses with Mary the concept of "Magic" within the garden, convinced that it holds some mysterious power contributing to his perceived improvement in health and spirits. They both agree that, if not real, the Magic can at least be imagined and believed in, suggesting that it holds transformative power. As spring progresses, the garden illustrates the life-affirming cycle of nature with vivid descriptions of its burgeoning flora, symbolizing rejuvenation and hope.

Colin's newfound joy in observing life in the garden creates a ripple effect of curiosity and enthusiasm among the children and Ben Weatherstaff, the elderly gardener. Their fascination extends beyond the physical realm to include the idea of Magic as a force of change, akin to a scientific discovery,



and Colin becomes determined to harness and experiment with it to enhance his own vitality.

Embraced by his friends and the natural world, Colin gathers them to witness his "scientific experiment"—his quest to internalize Magic and emerge strong and healthy. They proceed through rituals and chants, underlining the power of positive reinforcement and communal belief in the impossible. Colin's experiment centers on the optimistic repetition of positive phrases to manifest his desired transformation, evoking the idea that the power of thought and belief can indeed lead to miraculous changes.

The garden becomes a place of both physical and mental rehabilitation for Colin. As he practices walking and strengthens his resolve, an exuberant realization takes hold that maybe "Magic" is indeed real, or at least real enough in the realm of self-belief and resilience. This chapter emphasizes self-motivation, community support, and nature's restorative potential, as Colin, triumphantly, plans to reveal his newfound strength to his absent father as proof of his recovery, motivated by the prospect of familial acceptance and personal achievement.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Belief in Magic as a Transformative Force

Critical Interpretation: Throughout Chapter 23, you'll find that embracing the idea of 'Magic'—whether literal or metaphorical—can profoundly inspire a journey of transformation. Allow yourself to believe in the power of positive thinking and the possibility of change, much like Colin does. This belief can be a source of inner strength and resilience when you face your own adversities. Engage in rituals, affirmations, and embrace the support of those around you to foster an atmosphere of encouragement and renewal, similar to the way the secret garden renews both Colin's health and spirit. By harnessing this 'Magic,' you may discover that belief, coupled with action, holds the potential to transform your life, promoting healing and growth in ways you never anticipated.



Chapter 24: “Let Them Laugh”

In Chapter 24 of **The Secret Garden**, titled "Let Them Laugh," we delve into Dickon's life outside the secret garden, revealing his dedication to another garden near his cottage on the moor. This small patch of land is a testament to his nurturing skills, as he tends to vegetables and flowers, creating a picturesque and productive space. Dickon's connection to nature is evident as he works alongside his "creatures" and brings life to the garden with his gentle care. His mother, Mrs. Sowerby, appreciates the magic he seems to cast on the land, making everything grow with exceptional vigor and flavor.

Mrs. Sowerby finds solace in the evenings, sitting by the garden's low stone wall, enjoying the stories of Misselthwaite Manor that Dickon brings back. It is during one of these tranquil twilight hours that Dickon reveals the secrets of the hidden garden to his mother, telling the tale of Colin's transformation and Mary's role in it. Mrs. Sowerby is touched by the children's accomplishments, particularly Colin's journey from being a frail, misunderstood boy to standing on his own two feet.

The chapter explores the delightful subterfuge that Mary and Colin engage in to maintain the secret of Colin's recovery. The two children, with Dickon's help, enjoy the thrill of "play actin'" to mislead the staff at the manor, ensuring that no one suspects Colin's incredible progress. Colin continues to



play the part of a sickly invalid even as he gathers strength from the garden's magic. This deception is both a source of amusement and necessary to keep the news from reaching Mr. Craven prematurely.

Mrs. Sowerby devises a clever plan to supplement the children's burgeoning

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Chapter 25 Summary: The Curtain

In Chapter 25, titled "The Curtain," of "The Secret Garden" by Frances Hodgson Burnett, the enchanting transformation of the secret garden continues, bringing new discoveries and personal growth for the characters involved.

As the days pass, the garden is teeming with life and new miracles each morning. In a secluded corner of the garden, a robin and his mate diligently guard their precious Eggs, an embodiment of new life and potential. The robin, possessing an innate sense of trust for Dickon, perceives him as a kindred spirit. Dickon, who communicates fluently with the robin—almost as if he speaks a language akin to the birds—nurtures a peaceful coexistence within the garden. This tranquil harmony emphasizes the garden as a sanctuary where all living creatures understand and respect one another.

Initially, the robin is wary of Mary and Colin, the new human presence in the garden. The robin particularly finds Colin, who arrives in a wheelchair and is wrapped in animal skins, perplexing and possibly threatening. Yet, as Colin begins to gain strength and learns to walk, much like a young bird learning to fly, the robin becomes reassured. The boy's gradual transformation reminds the robin of fledglings venturing into the world. Eventually, the presence of the children, their odd exercises inspired by a wrestler named Bob Haworth, and other activities become an accepted part



of the garden's lively rhythm.

On a rainy day, when the garden is inaccessible, Colin expresses a restless desire to move, filled with a magical energy that seems to renew his spirit and body. Inspired, Mary proposes an exploration of the vast, unused rooms in the manor. With hundreds of rooms in the house to discover, the prospect is both thrilling and full of mystery. Colin is eager, and they venture into these forgotten spaces, invigorating their imaginations and deepening their bond as they explore.

Their explorations reveal myriad hidden treasures, including rooms filled with curious objects and portraits of Colin's ancestors, which fascinate them both. These discoveries are not just physical but also metaphorical, symbolizing Colin's journey towards self-discovery and understanding his family's legacy. They also remind Colin of his mother's likeness, reflecting shared mysteries and a magical connection that runs through his life.

As the day ends, the effects of their adventures are visible—increased appetites and invigorated spirits, which bewilder the household staff. The marvel and mystery of the family and its rebirth seem contagious, bringing life to the very walls of the manor.

Back in Colin's room, Mary notices a significant change—a curtain, once shielding a portrait of Colin's mother from his view, is now drawn aside.

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This signifies Colin's healing and acceptance, symbolizing his reconciliation with his past. He no longer feels anger when he sees his mother's picture. Instead, he sees her as a vessel of magic, bringing a new sense of joy and hope. Mary observes that Colin is becoming more like the woman in the portrait, suggesting that the magic and spirit of his mother imbue his transformation.

Colin expresses his emerging desire for his father's affection and hints at revealing the garden's magic to him, believing it might uplift his father's spirits. This foreshadows potential reconciliation and the spreading of the garden's healing power beyond its walls.

Overall, Chapter 25 beautifully encapsulates the themes of growth, healing, and the wondrous connection between nature and human spirit, as each character begins to bloom alongside the secret garden.



Chapter 26 Summary: “It’s Mother!”

In Chapter 26 of "The Secret Garden," Colin's growing belief in the mystical power of "Magic" continues to flourish. To him, this concept is a combination of the healing power of nature and the positivity surrounding him. He's begun delivering what he calls "Magic lectures" to Mary, Dickon, and even Ben Weatherstaff, using these moments to practice for the scientific discoveries he plans to make when he grows up. Colin is animated by the idea that the Magic strengthens when they themselves work and contribute to the garden's life.

Ben Weatherstaff, although sometimes skeptical, is deeply amused and engaged by Colin's speeches, primarily because he's witnessing a remarkable transformation in the boy. Colin's health is visibly improving, influenced by nutritious food from Mrs. Sowerby and the nurturing environment of the garden. This growing strength allows him to become actively involved in gardening tasks alongside his friends, further affirming his improving health.

During one such session, Colin experiences a powerful realization that he is indeed well. He becomes overwhelmed with joy and calls the attention of his companions to share in this newfound certainty of his health. Eager to express his gratitude and joy, he asks Dickon about a hymn known as the Doxology. As Dickon and the others sing it, Colin experiences it as an anthem of his personal triumph over illness, drawing a connection between



the Magic and his own recovery.

The chapter takes a poignant turn when Dickon's mother, Susan Sowerby, unexpectedly enters the secret garden. Her presence is warmly welcomed, as she is the embodiment of nurturing care that the children have talked about. Colin and Mary are quickly drawn to her, and she greets them with affection, calling Colin "dear lad" and commenting on the progress of his health.

Susan's arrival serves as a bridge between Colin's past isolation and his emerging life. She notes Colin's resemblance to his mother and offers reassurance that his father, Mr. Craven, will love him more for it. Her visit underscores the communal and healing power of the garden—how it has helped restore not only Colin but also Mary. Susan Sowerby's understanding and kindness create a comforting environment, almost as magical as the garden itself.

Towards the end of the chapter, Susan Sowerby's warmth and caring nature prompt a touching interaction with Colin. In a moment of vulnerability, he expresses his wish that she could be his mother. Her embrace and reassuring words hint at the larger theme of family and belonging, further entwining her life with the children's.

Ultimately, Chapter 26 encapsulates the theme of transformation and healing. Colin's growth in strength and spirit, fueled by the magical



environment of the garden and the companionship surrounding him, heralds a hopeful future, moving beyond his past frailties and toward a life full of potential and discovery.

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Chapter 27 Summary: In the Garden

Chapter 27 of "The Secret Garden" presents a profound transformation through the power of positive thoughts and magical connections with nature. The story underscores the notion that just as scientific discoveries can change the world, our thoughts possess a potent influence on our well-being.

The chapter initially reflects on the transformative power of thoughts over one's life, comparing them to electric batteries capable of great good or harm. This idea sets the stage for the evolving transformation of two central characters: Mary Lennox and Colin Craven. Mary, who once harbored negative thoughts and detestations, becomes a vibrant and healthy child as her mind is filled with images of nature, friendships, and secret gardens. Similarly, Colin, initially a recluse obsessed with his physical weaknesses and fears, begins embracing life and health as his thoughts become increasingly positive and hopeful.

While Mary and Colin flourish in their newfound connections to the secret garden, another central character, Archibald Craven, is introduced. Craven, who has been wandering Europe shrouded in grief and dark thoughts since the death of his wife, experiences a pivotal moment in the Austrian Tyrol. While observing a beautiful valley, a simple thought disrupts his despair, suggesting that, like the garden, he too might "come alive."



Craven's transformation is fueled by an uncanny dream where he hears his deceased wife's voice beckoning him to the garden. The dream, juxtaposed with a letter from Susan Sowerby urging him to return to Misselthwaite, propels him homeward. Throughout the journey, Craven grapples with parental guilt and a longing for reconciliation with his son, Colin.

Upon returning to Misselthwaite Manor, Craven learns from Mrs. Medlock that Colin has changed dramatically. Master Colin, who was previously too ill to leave his room, is now vibrant and healthy, thanks to his time in the company of Mary and the garden's magic. Craven is propelled into the garden, where he witnesses Colin's transformation firsthand.

Colin, now strong and full of life, introduces himself to his father, stunning Craven with his vitality. In an enthusiastic manner, Colin shares the story of the garden's magic and his transformation. Craven, overwhelmed with joy, embraces this new reality. He is led into the garden, a symbol of rebirth and renewal, where he joins the children in their sanctuary.

The chapter closes by highlighting the societal shift within Misselthwaite, acknowledging the role of the servants who witness Craven and Colin walking together. Craven's newfound happiness spreads, impacting others and reinstating the vitality of life at the manor.



Author Frances Hodgson Burnett, known for her exploration of themes like nature's healing power and the magic of kindness, constructs a story of personal redemption and connection with this chapter. Published in the early 20th century, her work remains a poignant reminder of the capacity for love and nature to transform lives.

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