

SECRET GARDEN – HANGAR THEATER

ARCHIBALD Side

CONTEXT: Archibald has been mentally reliving his love affair with his dead wife, Lily. He is jolted out of his dream-state by Mary's arrival. Children are alien beings to him, and he has no idea how to speak to Mary, particularly when his mind is still full of Lily.

MARY

Are you my Uncle Archibald?

ARCHIBALD

Who's that?

MARY

It's Mary Lennox, sir. Are you my Uncle Archibald?

ARCHIBALD

(Tries to regain his composure.) Yes, I am. Good morning, child.

MARY

Are you going to be my father now?

ARCHIBALD

I am your guardian. Though I am a poor one for any child. I offer you...

(MARY pulls the photograph she brought with her from India out of her pocket.)

MARY

Is this my Aunt Lily, in this picture?

ARCHIBALD

(Looks at it quickly, this is hard for him.) Yes it is. Where did you get that?

MARY

It was on my dresser, in India. Maybe Mother put it there. I don't know.

ARCHIBALD

Your mother and my Lily ... *(She grabs the photo back from him.)* Please excuse me. *(He notices her coat.)* Who dressed you, child?

MARY

Martha tried to, sir.

ARCHIBALD

Yes, I see. I do hope you'll enjoy the gardens.

MARY

But I want to know what happens to dead people.

(He stops. Death is a subject he cannot resist.)

ARCHIBALD

Yes. Well. Quite natural that you should wonder that. *(A moment.)* We bury them. We put their things away, we remember things they said. We... talk to them, sometimes ... in our minds, of course...

MARY

Can they hear us?

ARCHIBALD

(And now he seems angry at himself.) And then one morning, when we think we're over them at last, we find ourselves in the ballroom, knowing full well we have been here all night, and we draw the painful conclusion that we have been dancing with them again.

MARY

I don't understand.

ARCHIBALD

Nor will you ever. They're not gone, you see. Just dead.

MARY

Is my Aunt Lily a ghost now?

ARCHIBALD

(He stops.) Why, have you heard her?

MARY

I heard someone crying in the house last night. But I don't know anything about ghosts. Is my father a ghost now? Does everyone who dies become a ghost?

ARCHIBALD

They're only a ghost if someone alive is still holding onto them.

MARY

Maybe what I heard was Mother, telling me to be nice so you'll keep me.

(Now, perceiving her fear, he attempts to reassure her.)

ARCHIBALD

The house is haunted, child. Day and night. But it is yours to live in as long as I am master here. I offer you my deepest sympathies on your arrival.

SECRET GARDEN – HANGAR THEATER

NEVILLE side

CONTEXT: Neville has spent the last decade of his life as the private doctor to his brother Archibald's son, Colin. Neville had been secretly in love with Archibald's wife, Lily, and he is subconsciously punishing Colin for it.

DR. CRAVEN

I'll speak with Mary alone, Medlock.

MARY

I'm going outside.

DR. CRAVEN

(Grabbing her.) You're going wherever I send you, young lady, and right this moment it's into that chair.

MARY

Uncle Archibald said I didn't have to go to a school.

DR. CRAVEN

Oh for God's sake. He doesn't care about you. All he wants is never to see you again. Why do you think he left without even saying goodbye to you?

MARY

Maybe he was in a hurry.

DR. CRAVEN

You drove him away. You remind him of his wife.

MARY

I look like my Aunt Lily?

DR. CRAVEN

Now it is my task to find you a suitable place to go so that my brother can return. The next school I will contact will send no representative. Your bags will be packed and you will leave Saturday week.

MARY

But I can't leave now. Colin needs me.

DR. CRAVEN

The last thing the boy needs is you. Another month of trying to keep up with you and we'll have to put him in hospital, or worse.

MARY

No, you won't. He's much better.

DR. CRAVEN

You have no idea how ill he is. When Colin was born, the midwife didn't expect him to live a week. But I, have kept the boy alive for ten years. Only now, thanks to you, he is in grave danger of relapse.

MARY

But you haven't seen how

DR. CRAVEN

Do you want him in hospital? Do you want him to die?

MARY

To die?

DR. CRAVEN

Yes! To die. If Colin is too active at this stage in his recovery, if you push him to take his first step too soon, before his heart is strong enough, he will not survive it. Do you understand, Mary? Colin's very life is in your hands.

DR. CRAVEN

One moment, he would be chatting away, and the next moment, he would sink to the ground and die.

MARY

And die?

DR. CRAVEN

Yes! You have choices in your life. Colin does not. I will not see the boy in hospital for the rest of his life, or dead before his life even begins. You must go, and go you will. Now that is all I have to say to you.

SECRET GARDEN – HANGAR THEATER

LILY side

ROSE

Lily, you've been dancing with that gloomy Archibald all evening!

LILY

He's just shy, Rose. I think Archie has the tenderest heart I've ever known.

ROSE

You can't marry this Archibald. He's a gloomy miserable cripple who hides himself away in that horrible house. You've said it yourself, he can't believe you love him. And neither can I!

LILY

No one is asking for your approval, Rose.

ROSE

If you don't care what happens to you, think about your children. Do you want your children to be crippled as well?

LILY

I will marry him!

ROSE.

Don't do this.

LILY

I love him.

ROSE

I won't forgive you.

LILY

How can I leave him? Rose, I promised.

ROSE

Think of the children.

LILY.

I am thinking of the children!

SECRET GARDEN – HANGAR THEATER
MARTHA side

MARY
Are you my servant?

MARTHA
Well there, Mary Lennox. Me name is Martha. And now tha'rt up, I'll make tha' bed

MARY
Aren't you going to dress me first?

MARTHA
Canna tha' dress thyself, then?

MARY
In India, my Ayah dressed me.

MARTHA
Well then, it'll do tha' good to wait on thysel' 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.

(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 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.

(MARTHA sighs)

SECRET GARDEN – HANGAR THEATER

DICKON side

CONTEXT: Dickon is a bit of a wild creature, more interested in nature than people. He is wary of Mary, but his mother and his sister set him a task. Mary's interest in the robin helps him warm to her.

DICKON

Hello there, MARY

MARY

Who are you?

DICKON

I'm Martha's brother, Dickon. I hope I didn't fright thee.

MARY

But what are you doing here?

DICKON

I did fright thee. I'm sorry.

MARY

But why haven't I seen you before?

DICKON

A body has to move gentle and speak low when wild things is about.

MARY

You mean you're here all the time?

DICKON

Well, if somethin' is sick I take a look at it, sure I do. And find the ponies that wander off and the eggs that roll out of the nests, but look here. Me mother's sent you a penny's worth of seeds for your garden. There's columbine and poppies by the handful.

MARY

I don't have a garden.

DICKON

But don't you want one? One of your own, I mean.

(MARY isn't sure she wants to talk to him, but his spell is beginning to work on her.)

DICKON

Come and look at your seeds, why don't you? *(She doesn't respond.)* Well, if you don't want 'em, I'll...

(She approaches quickly now, and he pours the seeds in her hand. The ROBIN is heard.)

MARY

I want to go in that garden. Where the robin lives.

DICKON

I wasn't sure you'd seen him.

MARY

Seen him? He's done nothing but chirp at me ever since I got here.

(The ROBIN whistles.)

DICKON

Well, you have to understand, he's makin' his nest. And he can't afford to have you interferin' if you're not friendly.

MARY

How do you know that?

DICKON

Because we were just talkin' about you, how do you think?

MARY

He was talking too, or just you?

DICKON

What he thinks, is that you're lookin' for a nest yourself, only it looks to him like your nest would have to be pretty big.

MARY

Have you ever been in there?

DICKON

It's not mine to go into, Mary. But it might be yours, I can't say. He's been keepin' it safe for somebody, that much I know.

MARY

He has?

DICKON

Same way as the ivy grown up to hide the door. But maybe the robin is waitin' to hear why you want to go in there, exactly. Bein' as he's got the safest nestin' spot in all England, he's wise to be wary.

MARY

Can you tell him I'm friendly?

DICKON

I could, but what if you wanted to tell him something else and I wasn't here. Be much quicker if you learned to talk to him yourself.

MARY

But what could I say that he would understand?

DICKON

Well I wouldn't mention you were an egg-eater, if you know what I mean. But are you interested in flyin' perhaps? Or bugs?

MARY

I'm afraid not.

DICKON

Well, then just tell him about yourself, and I'll translate into Yorkshire for you 'til you get the way of it.

SECRET GARDEN – HANGAR THEATER
BEN WEATHERSTAFF side

MARY

Good morning, Ben

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

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.

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 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.

MARY (*thinks a moment.*)

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, 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?

SECRET GARDEN – HANGAR THEATER
MRS. MEDLOCK side

MRS. MEDLOCK

(Turns to MARY.) Well, now. I suppose you'd like to know something about where you are going.

MARY

Would I.

MRS. MEDLOCK

But don't you care about your new home?

MARY

It doesn't matter whether I care or not.

MRS. MEDLOCK

Now in all my years, I've never seen a child sit so still or look so old. Well, you're right not to care. Why you're being brought to Misselthwaite I'll never know. Your uncle isn't going to trouble himself about you, that's sure and certain. He never troubles himself about anyone. He's a hunchback, you see. And a sour young man he was, and got no good of all his money and big place till he were married.

MARY

To my mother's sister?

MRS. MEDLOCK

Her name was Lily. And she was a sweet, pretty thing and he'd have walked the world over to get her a blade of grass that she wanted. Nobody thought she'd marry him, but marry him she did, and it wasn't for his money either. But then when she died.

MARY

How did she die?

MRS. MEDLOCK

It made him worse than ever. He travels most of the time now. It's his brother, Dr. Craven, who makes all the decisions these days.

MARY

Is it always so ugly here?

MRS. MEDLOCK

It's the moor. Miles and miles of wild land that nothing grows on but heather and gorse and broom, and nothing lives on but wild ponies and sheep.

MARY

What is that awful howling sound?

MRS. MEDLOCK

That's the wind, blowing through the bushes. They call it wuthering, that sound. But look there, that tiny light far across there. That'll be the gate it will.