



Cast



Narrator 1



Mary



Mrs. Medlock



Narrator 2



Martha (a maid)



Ben Weatherstaff

Work with the children to allocate characters and prepare a short performance. Discuss the stage directions in advance and make sure the children understand how to follow the script.

(Mary has been sent to England to live with her uncle, Mr. Craven.)

Narrator 1:

Mr. Craven's housekeeper, Mrs. Medlock, traveled with Mary from London to her uncle's house in Yorkshire.

Mrs Medlock:

The house is very old and on the edge of the moor. There are nearly a hundred rooms, but many of them are locked. You'll have to look after yourself. Your uncle is away most of the time.

Narrator 2:

Mary said nothing. She never liked to show that she was interested in things.

*(Mary wakes up the next morning.
Martha is making a fire in the fireplace.)*

Narrator 1:

When Mary woke up the next day, a maid was making a fire in her room. Through the window, all Mary could see was land with no trees—like a flat purple sea.

Mary:

What's that?

Martha:

That's the moor. Do you like it?

Mary:

No. I hate it.

Martha: Oh, you'll like it when you've been here a while. My brother, Dickon, is always on the moor, so the sheep and the birds and the horses all know him.

Narrator 2: Mary was not usually interested in other people, but she liked the idea of someone who could make friends with animals.

(The next morning, Mary is finishing her breakfast.)

Martha: Go outside and get some fresh air. There's only one garden that you can't go in. Mr. Craven locked it when his wife died. He hates the place.

(Mary is exploring the gardens.)

Narrator 1: There were lots of gardens, each with high walls around, and Mary walked through the doors from one to another.

Narrator 2: None of the doors was locked, but she came to a wall with lots of ivy on it. When she looked up, she saw a robin on one of the trees behind the wall.

Mary: Perhaps that's the Secret Garden Martha was talking about!

Narrator 1: As Mary was walking back to the house, she saw an old man digging. He looked very unfriendly, but as she watched, the robin flew down from the trees and landed near his foot. The gardener smiled, and his face changed completely.

Mary: What's your name?

Ben: Ben Weatherstaff.
(Laughing) That robin's the only friend I have.

Mary: I've never had any friends.

Ben: You're probably as bad-tempered as you look. Just like me.

Narrator 2: At that moment, the robin flew up into a tree near Mary and started singing.

Ben: He likes you. He wants to be your friend.

Narrator 1: After that, Mary spent most days outside. Slowly, the fresh air began to make her stronger. She also began to be interested in things and people, like the robin, Ben, and Martha.

(One evening, Mary is talking to Martha.)

Mary: Why does Mr. Craven hate the locked garden?

Martha: It was Mrs. Craven's garden. She was sitting on the branch of a tree when it broke, and she fell and died.

Narrator 2: Mary suddenly heard a strange noise from somewhere in the house.

Mary: Can you hear that, Martha?

Martha: *(Quickly)* It's only the wind on the moors.