

# THE SECRET GARDEN

**Book, music and lyrics  
by Frumi Cohen**

**Based on the book  
by Frances Hodgson Burnett**

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**STORY OF THE PLAY**

After losing her parents to a cholera epidemic in India, young Mary Lennox is sent to the English Misselthwaite Manor to stay with her uncle, Archibald Craven. Archibald, who has never recovered from the death of his wife, has had most of the mansion locked up, including his wife's beloved garden, and even his son, Colin, a sickly boy, to obliterate her memory.

Mary, an unhappy girl herself, finds Colin, unlocks the secret garden and brings it to life. In her process of healing and self-discovery, she brings life back to Colin and Archibald Craven.

This enchanting, hour-long musical includes two amusing numbers for the servants' chorus, "Misselthwaite" and "A New State of Affairs"; the wistful ballads, "My Mother's Eyes" and "Dickon"; and the inspirational finale, "The Right Kind of Magic."

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**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(3 m, 3 w, 1 g, 2 b, 13 flex, extras, doubling possible)*

**MARY LENNOX:** A bitter, 10-year-old English orphan brought over from India.

**SUMRI:** Mary's Indian guardian.

**MRS. MEDLOCK:** Head servant at Misselthwaite Manor.

**PITCHER:** Archibald Craven's servant.

**ARCHIBALD CRAVEN:** Sad, hunchbacked master of Misselthwaite Manor, Mary's uncle.

**MARTHA:** Mary's servant, Dickon's sister.

**DICKON:** A 14-year-old country boy of the English moors.

**BEN WEATHERSTAFF:** Gardener at Misselthwaite.

**COLIN CRAVEN:** Archibald Craven's sickly, 10-year-old son.

**SERVANTS INCLUDE:**

**ELIZABETH**

**CROMWELL**

**NELLY**

**MORGAN**

**VICTOR**

**BESS**

**GREGORY**

**LAURA**

**ELLEN**

**CHURCHILL**

**PHOEBE**

**MELANIE**

**SUE**

**EXTRAS (ACT I, Sc. 2)**

FOR A SMALLER CAST: Sumri can double as Martha, and a girl may easily play the part of Dickon. Many of the servant roles can be doubled.

FOR A LARGER CAST: The script allows for considerable expansion with the optional opening of Act I, Scene 2.

**Performance time:** About 75 to 90 minutes.

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**SONGS**

- SONG #1: "Misselthwaite" sung by the Servants.  
SONG #2: "Dickon" sung by Ben and Mary.  
SONG #3: "Inspiration" sung by Dickon and Mary.  
SONG #4: "My Mother's Eyes" sung by Mary.  
SONG #5: "New State of Affairs" sung by the Servants.  
SONG #6: "The Right King of Magic" sung by Mary, Colin,  
Dickon and Ben.  
SONG #7: "Finale" sung by Cast.

*A CD with both vocal and instrumental tracks of all the songs is available. Call Eldridge Publishing Co. at 1-800-HI-STAGE to order.*

**PROPS**

- Sumri - Suitcase.  
Servants - Trays, teapots, and other serving implements.  
Martha - Polishing cloth, light-colored set of clothing, shoes, tray of food.  
Ben - Spade, cap.  
Dickon - Flute, small package (with little trowel, spade, rake, seeds), knife.  
Mary - Old rusty key.  
Craven - Book, letter.  
Colin - Wheelchair, blanket, tools, plant.

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**SETTING**

The show requires some changing of scenes which can be done very simply using blackouts, as well as a few strategic furniture pieces (bed, serving table, chest of drawers, Colin's wheelchair, Archibald Craven's wing back chair, etc.) and optional fly-ins (painting of Colin's mother, window).

The gardens can be set behind the curtain after Act I, Scene 2, and remain there for the duration of the show to simplify set changes. All other scenes can take place in front of curtain with a spotlight. The door to the secret garden can be done with two flats on wheels which part to reveal the garden behind.

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**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: Train station, sparsely suggested. SUMRI is draped in traditional Indian dress, hooded in mourning. She carries a suitcase. MARY walks beside her, dressed in black. Her coloring is sallow. She has a sulky, pouting face and is dragging her feet in a bratty way. MRS. MEDLOCK enters, formal, stiff and aloof.)*

SUMRI: *(Bowling.)* Good-day, Mrs. Medlock. This is Mary Lennox. We are so thankful she will be taken care of. She has no one now.

MARY: *(Vacant.)* My mother and father died of the cholera, you see, back in India.

MRS. MEDLOCK: My word, she's a plain bit of goods. And we'd heard her mother was a beauty. She hasn't handed much of it down, has she?

SUMRI: Beg pardon, but perhaps she will improve as she grows older.

MRS. MEDLOCK: She'll have to alter a good deal. There's nothing likely to improve children at Misselthwaite, if you ask me.

SUMRI: Good-bye, child. May Allah watch over you. *(Tries to kiss MARY who stiffens and pulls away. SUMRI exits.)*

MRS. MEDLOCK: Well, now, Mistress Mary. I suppose I might as well tell you something about where you are going to. Do you know anything about your uncle?

MARY: No.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Never heard your mother and father speak of Archibald Craven?

MARY: No.

MRS. MEDLOCK: Then I suppose I had better warn you. You are going to a very queer place. *(MARY shrugs.)* Come along, then. Onward to Misselthwaite Manor. *(To herself.)* So plain, so contrary. A more marred-looking young one I never saw in my life. *(SHE tries to take MARY'S hand, but Mary pulls away. BLACKOUT.)*

**End of Scene**

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**Scene 2**

***(Optional opening to add servant characters and lines.)***

*(LIGHTS up on SERVANTS sitting around slacking off, serving each other tea in activity groups around stage. After song begins the slacking off activity changes to its listed counterpart.)*

Cigar smokers - repair men

Gossips - dusters

Nappers - leaning on brooms

Magazine readers - polishers

Poker players slouching on furniture - furniture movers

Tea servers - do this throughout both

Clothes modellers - laundry folders

Horse bettors - repair men

Pitcher and Martha scheduling - overseeing throughout

BRIAN: I say, nothing like a good cigar before tea.

ELLEN: *(Serving.)* One lump or two, Master Brown?

MIKE: Twenty pounds says it's Landrover in the third.

GEORGE: No, no. I hear it's Mister Chips who's got the odds in that one.

EMILY: Have you heard the latest order from Mrs. Medlock?

ALYCIA: Yes. We are to be in proper full uniform by 3:00 today.

PHIL: I can't remember the last time I was in proper full uniform.

HALLY: Nor I. I 'aven't seen my white gloves for about six months.

IVAN: They gave us white gloves? I don't recall.

NELL: Full uniform? Whatever for?

ANDREW: I hear tell there's some girl arriving here from India.

CLAY: India?

NATALIE: Yes. A distant relative or something of Master Craven's.

BARRIE: Ah, that one. She'll be lucky to catch a glimpse of 'im, the way that man shuts 'imself up all day.

STEPH: You've got that right. I've worked 'ere for six years and

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