



## The Secret Garden

Written by: Frances Hodgson Burnett

Genre: Historical Fiction

Assignment: Literary Review

Review by: Melissa Golden

# My Rating System



I don't like this at all. It was very boring



It held my attention for 20 minutes and then I became bored.



It was a good book. I would probably recommend it!



THIS IS AN AWESOME BOOK! IF YOU DON'T READ THIS YOU ARE MISSING OUT ON SOMETHING AWESOME!

The assignment I am doing is a Literary Review. I am reviewing the book *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. The genre is historical fiction. I will now give you a short summary of the book.

Mary Lennox is a ten-year-old girl who lives in England. She used to live in India with her mother and father and servants, but then her parents and servants died from cholera. Then she was taken to the English clergyman's house where she was taken in. She didn't stay there long and she didn't like it there. She sailed on a ship to her Uncle Archibald Craven's house in England. Her uncle was very cross, horrid and a hunchback. No one went near him. Mary was very disagreeable and skinny. The text says, "She had a little thin face and a little thin body, thin light hair and a sour expression." This explains to me that no one really liked the way she looked and she wasn't the most pleasant child to look at. The house was very mysterious and there were many long corridors and locked rooms that she wasn't allowed to go into.

First, Mary meets Martha. She is very nice and she is the housemaid and she lights Mary's fireplace in her room every day. She tells Mary many good stories about her younger brothers and sisters. Mary gets used to the stories and actually likes the stories! Martha knows about Colin (I will explain about him later) and she speaks Yorkshire. The other girls make fun of her for speaking Yorkshire.

Next, Mary meets Ben Weatherstaff. He is one of the kitchen gardeners. Ben is very nice and kind though he may seem rough on the outside. He has a friend that is a robin redbreast. The bird is very lonely and it cheers him up when Ben is talking about him to other people. The text says, "He likes to hear folks talk about him." This bird becomes Mary's friend too. Mary later finds out that Ben has been secretly taking care of the secret garden. The secret garden used to be Mrs. Craven's, but she died ten years ago so it has been locked up for ten years.

Before Mary's secret garden was her own, it was Mr. Craven's wife's garden. Ever since she died from falling out of a tree, Mr. Craven lets no one go in it. He even buried the key so no one could unlock the door to the garden! One day, Mary is wandering around in the garden when she came upon a pile of dirt that a dog had dug up. In the hole was the buried key to the secret garden!! She immediately started looking for the door but she couldn't find it! She looked everywhere!

Finally, one day she was looking for the door to the secret garden when she came across a wall of ivy. She pushed aside the curtain-like material to reveal the door!! She was very excited. She fitted the key into the lock-used both hands to turn it- then pushed open the creaking door! Inside,

Mary felt breathless with excitement!! She was the first one who had been in that garden in ten years! She looked around and saw that if it was alive it would be beautiful! She noticed little green plants poking through the surface and that there was so many weeds in the garden. She started pulling up weeds and did this for about three hours! She had never felt so happy in her life!! When she has to go to lunch, she promises that she will only tell someone that she trusts about the secret garden!

One day, Mary finds Dickon, Martha's younger brother, in the park. She had asked previously for Martha to have Dickon bring her some gardening supplies and tools. He had finally come with the supplies! She started talking to him and immediately liked him! She made him promise to tell no one about the secret Garden. Then she showed him it! He plants the seeds there and he promises to come back soon. He also promises to help her with the garden. Then he has to leave.

One night when it was raining outside, Mary heard crying down one of the long corridors. She went into the hall to investigate the sound. She found that it is coming from behind a tapestry. She touched the tapestry and a secret door flew open!! She followed the crying noise to a bedroom where the light was on. She opened the door and saw a boy lying on the bed crying. She cautiously tiptoed into the room and to the bedside. The boy suddenly noticed her and said, "Are you a ghost?" This explains to me that the boy wasn't used to having visitors. She found out that his name was Colin and that he was her cousin. She also found out that he couldn't walk and that he could make people do anything he said they were to do. Mary and Colin immediately liked each other, and Mary told Colin stories.

Mary tells Colin many stories about the secret garden and then finally reveals to him that she has been there. Then Colin asks to go there. Mary, Dickon, and the servants had to obey his wishes so they showed him the secret garden one week after that! He loved it and wanted to go there every day, morning until night. He started to eat more because he was getting more fresh air. He would stay there all day and try to learn how to walk. He kept trying and trying to walk until one day, he could walk! Then he started playing games with Mary.

When Mr. Craven came home from a trip he took, he had a feeling inside him that told him to go into the secret garden. So, when he went to the secret garden, he heard running and laughing. The sounds were getting closer and closer. Suddenly, the door burst open and out flew Colin! He ran almost straight into his father! His father was so shocked and surprised!! They had a happy reunion and then everyone was very excited and happy!! Then the book ends!! The author's message is tell you that everyone can change if you give them time and to treat everyone with respect.

## What I would have rated it



I would have rated this book a:

I would give this book this rating because I couldn't put it down. It was very well-written book and it held my attention for the whole book! For example, Miss Burnett wrote, "Then she slipped through it, and shut it behind her, and stood with her back against it, looking about her and breathing quite fast with excitement, and wonder, and delight. She was standing *inside* the secret garden."

I would recommend this book to fans of Nancy Drew, The Babysitters Club, and The Beacon Street Girls because it has a small mystery entwined in the book and it feels like it could have really happened in the 1800's.

I am recommending this book because it deserves my highest rating. I gave it my highest rating because it is a beautifully written story that exceeded my expectations. This book was a good read!