CHAPTER I THERE IS NO ONE LEFT When Mary Lennox was sent to Misselthwaite Manor to live with her uncle everybody said she was the most disagreeable-looking child ever seen. It was true, too . She had a little thin face and a little
hin body, thin light hair and a so ur expression. Her hair was yellow, and her face was yellow because she had been born in India and had always been ill in one way or another. Her father had held a position under the English Governm
ent and had always been busy and ill himself, and her mother had been a great beauty who cared only to go to parties and amuse herself with gay people. She had not wanted a little girl at all, a nd when Mary was born she handed her
over to the care of an Ayah, who was mad e to understand that if she wished to please the Mem Sahib she must keep the child out of sight as much as possible. So when she was a sickly, fre tful, ugly little baby she was kept out of the
way, and when she bec a me a sickly, fretful, toddling thing she was kept out of the way also. She never remembered seeing familiarly anything but the dark faces of he r Ayah and the other native servants, and as
they always ob eyed her and gave her her own way in everything, because the Mem Sahib would be angry if she was disturbed by her crying, by the time she was six years old she was as tyrannical and s
elfish a little p ig as ever lived. The young English governess who came to teach her to read and write disliked her so much that she gave up her place in th ree months, and when other governesses cam
e to try to fill it they al ways went away in a shorter time than the first one. So if Mary had not chosen to really want to know how to read books she would never have learned her letters at all. One frightfully ho
t morning, when she was a bout nine years old, she awakened feeling very cross, and she became crosser still when she saw that the servant who stood by her bed side was not her Ayah. "Why did you come?" sh
e said to the strange woman. "I will n ot let you stay. Send my Ayah to me." The woman looked frightened, but she only stammered that the Ayah could not come and w hen Mary threw herself into a passion and beat a
nd kicked her, she looke d only mor e frig htened and repeated that it was not possible for the Ayah to come to Missie Sahib. There was something mysterious in the air tha t morning. Nothing was done in its regular order
and several of the native ser vants seeme d mis sing, while those whom Mary saw slunk or hurried about with ashy and scared faces. But no one would tell her anything and he r Ayah did not come. She was actually left alone a
s the mornin g wen t on, and at last sh e wa ndered out into the garden and began to play by herself under a tree near the veranda. She pretended that she was making a flo wer-bed, and she stuck big scarlet hibiscus bloss
oms into l ittle heaps of ea rth, all the time growing more and more angry and muttering to herself the things she would say and the names she would call Sai die when she returned. "Pig! Pig! Daughter of Pigs
!" she said, because to c all a native a pig is the worst insult of all. She was grinding her teeth and saying this over and over again when she heard her mother come out on the veranda with some one. S
he was with a fai r young man a nd they stood talking together in low strange voices. Mary knew the fair young man who looked like a boy. She had heard that he was a very young officer who had just come from
En gland. The child stared at him, but she stared most at her mother. She always did this when she had a chance to see her, because the Mem Sahib--Mary used to call he r that oftener than anything else--was such a tall,
s lim, pretty person and wore such lovely clothes. Her hair was li ke curly silk and she had a delicate little nose which seemed to be disdaining things, and she had large laughing eyes. All her clothes were thin and floating, and Mary said the
y were "full of lace." They looked fuller of lace than ever this morning, but her eyes were not laughing at all. They were large and scared and lifted imploringly to the fair boy officer's face. "Is it so very bad? Oh, is it?" Mary heard h
e r say. "Awfully," the young man an swered in a trembli ng voice. "Awfully, Mrs. Lennox. You ought to have gone to the hills two weeks ago." The Mem Sahib wrung her hands. "Oh , I know I ought!" she cried. "I only stayed to go
t o that silly dinner party. What a fool I was!" At that v ery mo ment such a loud sound of wailing broke out from the servants' quarters that she clutched the young man's arm, and Mary stood shivering from head to foot. The wailing
gr ew wilder and wilder. "What is it? Wh at is it?" Mrs. Lennox gasp ed. "Some one has died," answered the boy officer. "You did not say it had broken out among your servants." "I did not kn ow!" the Mem Sahib cried. "Come with me! Co
me with me!" and she turned and r an into the house. After that , appallin g things happened, and the mysteriousness of the morning was explained to Mary. The cholera had br oken out in its most fatal form and people we
re dy ing like flies. The Ayah had be en taken il l in the night, and it wa s because she had just died that the servants had wailed in the huts. Before the ne xt day three other servants were dead and
others h ad run away in terror. There was p anic on e very side, and dyin g p eople in a ll the bungalows. During the confusion and bewilderment of the second d ay Mary hid herself in the nursery and wa
s forgotten by everyone. Nobody thought of her, nobody w anted her , and strange thi n gs happened of which she knew nothing. Mary alter nately cried and slept throug h the hours. She only knew that people
were ill and that she heard mysterious and frightening sounds. Once she cr ept into the di ning-room and found it empty, thoug h a partly finis hed meal was on the table an d chairs and plates looked as if they h
ad been hastily pushed back when the diner s rose suddenly for some reas on. The child ate some fruit and biscuits, and being thirsty she drank a gla ss of wine which stood nearl y filled. It was sweet, and she did n
ot know how strong it was. Very soo n it made her intensely drows y, and she went back to her nursery and shut herself in again, frightened by c ries she heard in the huts and by the hurrying sound of feet.
The wine made her so sleepy tha t she could scarcely keep h er eyes open and she lay down on her bed and knew nothing more for a long time. Many things happened during th e hours in which she slept s
o heavily, b ut she was not disturbe d by the wails and the sou nd of things being carried in and out of the bungalow. When she awakened she lay a nd stared at the wall. The house w as perfectly still.
She had never kn own it to be so sile nt before. She heard neith er voices nor footsteps, and wondered if everybody had got well of the cholera and al l the trouble was over. She wonder
ed also who would take care of her now her Ayah was dead. Th ere would be a new Ayah, and perhaps she would know some new stories. Mary had been rather tired of the old
ones. She did not cry because her nurse had died. She was not an affectionate child and had never cared much for any one. The noise and hurrying about and wailing o
ver the cholera had frightened her, a nd she had been angry beca use no one seemed to remember that she was alive. Everyone was too panic-stricke n to think of a little girl no on
e was fond of. When people had the chole ra it seemed that they r emembered nothing but themselves. But if everyone had got well again, surely so me one w ould remember and come to lo ok for h
er. But no one came, and as she lay waiting the h ouse seemed to g row more and more silent. She heard something rustling on the matting and whe n she looked down she saw a little snake gliding along and watch
ing her with eyes like jewels. She was not frightened , because he wa s a harmless little thing who would not hurt her and he seemed in a hurry to get ou t of the room. He slipped under the door as she watched him. "H
ow queer and quiet it is," she said. "It sounds as if there were no one in the bungalow but me and the snake." Almost the next minute she heard foot steps in the compound, and then on the veranda. They were men's fo
otsteps, and the men entered the bungalow and talked in low voices. No o ne went to meet or speak to them and they seemed to open doors and look into rooms. "What desolation!" she heard one voice say. "That pretty, pre
tty woman! I suppose the child, too. I heard there was a child, tho ugh no one ever saw her." Mary was standing in the middle of the nursery when th ey opened the door a few minutes later. She looked an ugly, cross little thing
and was frowning because she was beginning to be hungry and feel d isgracef ully neglected. The first man who came in was a large officer she ha d once seen talking to her father. He looked tired and troubled, but when he saw
her he was so startled that he almost jumped back. "Barney!" he cried out. "Ther e is a child here! A child alone! In a place like this! Mercy on us, who is she!" "I am Mary Lennox," the little girl said, drawing herself up stiffly. She th
ought the man was very rude to call her father's bungalow "A place like this!" "I fe ll asleep when eve ryone had the cholera and I hav e only just wakened up. W hy does nobody come?" "It is the child no o
ne ever saw!" exclaimed the man, turning to his companions. "She has actually b ee n forgotte n!" "Why was I forg otten?" Mary said, stam ping her foot. "Why does nobody com
e?" The young man whose name was Barney looked at her very sadly. Mary even tho ught sh e saw him w ink his eyes as if to wi nk tears away. "Poor little kid!" h
e said. "There is nobody left to come." It was in that strange and sudden way that Mary f ound o ut that she had neither father nor mother left; that they ha
d died and been carried away in the night, and that the few native servants who had not die d also had l eft the house as quickl y as they could get out of it, none of them
even remembering that there was a Missie Sahib. That was why the place was so quiet. It was true t
e. CHAPTER II MISTRESS MARY QUITE CONTRARY Mary had liked to look at her mother from a distan
could scarcely have been expected to love her or to miss her very much when she was gone. She d id no
e thought to herself, as she had always done. If she had been older she would no doubt have been ve ry an
ways been taken care of, she supposed she always would be. What she thought was that she would like to
r own way as her Ayah and the other native servants had done. She knew that she was not going to stay a
to stay. The English clergyman was poor and he had five children nearly all the same age and they wore s
Mary hated their untidy bungalow and was so disagreeable to them that after the first day or two nobody
made her furious. It was Basil who thought of it first. Basil was a little boy with impudent blue eyes and
ee, just as she had been playing the day the cholera broke out. She was making heaps of earth and paths
ot rather interested and suddenly made a suggestion. "Why don't you put a heap of stones there and pre
er to point. "Go away!" cried Mary. "I don't want boys. Go away!" For a moment Basil looked angry, and t
ound and round her and made faces and sang and laughed. "Mistress Mary, quite contrary, How do es y
lds all in a row." He sang it until the other children heard and laughed, too; and the crosser Mary got,
at as long as she stayed with them they called her "Mistress Mary Quite Contrary" when they spo
oing to be sent home," Basil said to her, "at the end of the week. And we're glad of it." "I a m gl
is!" said Basil, with seven-year-old scorn. "It's England, of course. Our grandmama liv es th
dmama. You have none. You are going to your uncle. His name is Mr. Archibald Cra ven." "I
red. "You don't know anything. Girls never do. I heard father an d mother talk
one goes near him. He's so cross he won't let them, a nd they wouldn't
u," said Mary; and she tu rned her back and stu ck her fingers in her
afterward; and when M rs. Crawfor d told her that nig ht that she was going to s
at Misselthwaite Ma nor, she looked so s tony and stub bornly uninterested that they d
ace away when Mrs . Crawford attempted to ki ss her, and held herself stiffly when Mr. Crawfo
d her mother was such a pretty creature. She ha d a very pretty manner, too, and Mary has the
and though it's naughty of them, one can't help u nders tanding it." "Perhaps if her mother had c
ome pretty ways too. It is very sad, now the poor bea utiful thing is gone, to remember that man
sighed Mrs. Crawford. "When her Ayah was dead t h ere was no one to give a thoug
bungalow. Colonel McGrew said he nearly jumped out of his sk in when he
ong voyage to England under the care of an officer 's wife, who wa s taking
oy and girl, and was rather glad to hand the child o ve r to the wom an Mr. Arch ibald C
d her name was Mrs. Medlock. She was a stout wo ma n, with very red cheeks an d sha
bonnet with purple velvet flowers which stuck up and trembled wh en she moved her
able in that; besides which it was very evident Mrs . Med lock did not t hink much of h er. "
eauty. She hasn't handed much of it down, has sh e, ma'a m?" "Perhaps sh e will improv e as
icer expression, her features are rather good. Chi ldren alt er so much." "She'll have to a lter
waite--if you ask me!" They thought Mary was n ot listening because she was standing a li
uses and cabs and people, but she heard qu ite well and was made very curious abo
hback? She had never seen one. Perhap s there were no ne in India. Since she h
hts which were new to her. She ha d begun to wonde r why s he had
hi ldren seemed to belong to their fathers and m others, bu
nd clothes, but no o ne had taken any notice of her. She did not k now that this was because she was a disagreeable child; but then, of course, she d
d no t know she wa s disagreeable. She often thought that other people were, but s he did not know that she was so herself. She thought Mrs. Medlock the most disagre
ea ble person she had ever seen, with her common, highly colored face and her co mmo n fine bonnet. When the next day they set out on their journey to Yorkshire, she
wa lked through t he station to the railway carriage with her head up and tryi ng to ke ep as f ar away from her as she could, because she did not want to seem to belong to
her . It w ould hav e made her angry to think people imagined she was her littl e girl. But Mrs. M edlock was not in the least disturbed by h er and her tho
ught s. Sh e was t he kind of woman who would "stand no nonsense from you ng ones." A t least, t hat is what she woul d hav e said
if she had been a sked. She had not wanted to go to London just whe n he r sister Maria 's daughter w a
s going t o be marri ed, but she had a comfortable, well paid place a s ho usekeeper at Miss elthwaite Mano
r and the o nly way in which she could keep it was to do at onc e wh at Mr. Archibald Craven told her to do. She never dar ed e
ven to ask a q uest ion. "Captain Lennox and his wife died of the cholera," Mr. Craven had said in his short, cold wa y. "Capta in L
ennox was my wife 's brother and I am their daughter's guar dian. The child is to be brought here. You must go to London and bri
ng her yourself." So she packed he r small trunk and made the journey. Mary sat in her corner of the railway carriage and loo ked plai n and fretf
ul. She had nothing to read or to look a t, and she had folded her thin litt le black-gloved hands in her lap. Her black dress made her look yellower than ever, and her limp light hair straggle d from under her bla
ck crepe hat. "A more marred-looking y oung one I never saw in my lif e," Mrs. Medlock thought. (Marred is a Yorkshire word and means spoiled and pettish.) She had never seen a child w ho sat so still without
doing anything; and at last she got tired of watching her and began to talk in a brisk, hard voice. "I suppose I may as well tell you something about where you are going to," she said. "Do you kn ow anything ab
out your uncle?" "No," said Mary. "Never heard your father and m other talk about him?" "No," said Mary frowning. She frowned because she remembered that her father and mother had neve r talked to her ab
out anything in particular. Certainly they had never told her thi ngs. "Humph," muttered Mrs. Medlock, staring at her queer, unresponsive little face. She did not say any more for a few mom ents and then she beg
an again. "I suppose you might as well be told something--t o prepare you. You are going to a queer place." Mary said nothing at all, and Mrs. Medlock looked rather discomfited by her a pparent indifference, but,
after taking a breath, she went on. "Not b ut that it's a gra nd big place in a gloomy way, and Mr. Craven's proud of it in his way--and that's gloomy enough, too . The house is si x hundre d years old and it's o
n the edge of the moor, and there's near a hundred roo ms in it, though most of them's shut up and locked. And there's pictures and fine old furniture and th ings that's been there for ages, and there 's a bi
g park round it and gardens and trees wit h branches trailing to the ground--some of them." She paused and took another breath. "But there's nothing else ," she ended suddenl y. Mary had begun to list
en in spite of herself. It all sounded so un like Indi a, and anything new rather attracted her. But she did not intend to look as if she were interested. That w as one of h er un happy, disagre eable ways. So she s
at still. "Well," said Mrs. Medlock. "What d o you think of it?" "Nothing," she answered. "I know nothing about such places." That made Mrs. Medlock laug h a short sor t of laugh. "Eh!" she said, "but you are like an
old woman. Don't you care?" "It doesn't m atte r" said Mary, "whether I care or not." "You are right enough there," said Mrs. Medlock. "It doesn't. What you'r e to be kept at Misselthwaite Mano r for I don't kno w, unless becaus
e it's the easiest way. He's not going to tro u ble himself about you, that's sure and certain. He never troubles himself about no one." She stopped herself as if she had j ust remembered som ething in tim e. "He's got a crooked
back," she said. "That set him wrong. He w as a sour young man and got no good of all his money and big place till he was married." Mary's eyes turned toward her in spite o f her intenti on no t to seem to care. She had never thoug
ht of the hunchback's being married and s he was a trifle surprised. Mrs. Medlock saw this, and as she was a talkative woman sh e continued with more interest. Thi s was one way of passin g some of the time, at any rate.
"She was a sweet, pretty thing and he'd have walked the world over to get her a blade o' grass she wanted. Nobody though t she'd marry him, but she did , and people said she married him f or his money. But she didn't--she di
dn't," positively. "When she died--" M ary gave a little involuntary jump. "Oh! did she die!" she exclaimed, quite without meaning to. She had just re membered a French fairy story sh e had once read called "Riquet a la Ho
uppe." It had been about a poor h unchback and a beautiful princess and it had made her suddenly sorry for Mr. Arc hibald Crav en. "Yes, she died," Mrs. Medlock answered. "And it made him queerer than ever. He cares about no
body. He won't see people. M ost of the time he goes away, and when he is at Misselthwaite he shuts himself up i n the West Wing and won't let any one b ut Pitcher see him. Pitcher's a n old fellow, but he took care of him when he
was a child and he knows his ways." It sounded like something in a book and it did not make Mary feel cheerfu l. A house with a hu ndred rooms, nearly a ll shut up and with their doo rs locked--a house on the edge of a moor--whats
oever a moor was--sou nded dreary. A man with a crooked back who shut himself up al so! She st ared out of the window with h er lips pinched together, a nd it seemed quite natural that the rain should have
be gun to pour down in gray slantin g lines and splash and stream down the w indow-p anes. If th e pretty wife had b een alive she might have made things cheerful by being something like her own
mot her and by running in and o ut and going to parties as she had d one in fr ocks "f ull of lace." But sh e was not there any m ore. "You needn't expect to see him, because ten to one yo
u won 't," said Mrs. Me dlock. " And you mu stn't expect that there will be peo ple to tal k to you. You'll h ave to play about an d look after yours
elf. You 'll be told wha t rooms you can go i nto and what rooms you're to keep ou t of. Ther e's gardens enou gh. But when you' re in t
he hous e don't go w anderin g and poki ng about. Mr. Craven won't have it." "I shall not want to go poking about," sai d sour little Mar
y and jus t as sudde nly as she had begun to be rather sorry for Mr. Archibald Crav en she began to cease to be sorry and to t
hink he w as unple asant eno ugh to deserve all that had happened to him. And sh e turned her face tow ard the str eaming panes of the
window of the rai lway carriage and gazed out at the gray rain-storm which lo oked a s if it w ould go on forever and ever. She wat
ched it so l ong a nd steadily that the grayness grew heavier and heavier before her eyes and she fell asleep. CHAPTER III ACROS
S THE MOO R Sh e slept a long time, and when she awakened Mrs. Medlock had b ought a lunchbasket at one of the stations and they had so
me chicken and cold beef an d bread and butter and some hot tea. The rain seemed to be streaming down more heavily than ever and everybody in the station wore wet
and glisteni ng waterproofs. The guard lighted the lamps in the carriage, and Mrs. Medlock cheered up very much over her tea and chicken and beef. She ate a great deal and afterward fell asleep
herself, and Mary sat and stared at her and watched her fine bonnet slip on one side until she herself fell asleep once more in the corner of the carriage , lulled by the splashing of the rain against the windows. It was quite dark when s
he awakened again. The train had stopped at a station and Mrs. Medlock was shaking her. "You have had a sleep!" she said. "It's time to open your ey es! We're at Thwaite Station and we've got a long drive before us." Mary stood up and tr
ied to keep h er eyes open while Mrs. Medlock collected her parcels. The little girl did not offer to help her, because in India native servants always p icked up or carried things and it seemed quite proper that other people should wait on one.
The station was a small one and nobody but themselves seemed to be getting out of the train. The station-master spoke to Mrs. Medlock in a rou gh, good-natured way, pronouncing his words in a queer broad fashion which Mary found out aft
erward was Yorkshire. "I see tha's got back," he said. "An' tha's browt th' young 'un with thee." "Aye, that's her," answered Mrs. Medlock, spea king with a Yorkshire accent herself and jerking her head over her shoulder toward Mary. "How's thy
Missus?" "W ell enow. Th' carriage is waitin' outside for thee." A brougham stood on the road before the little outside platform. Mary saw that i t was a smart carriage and that it was a smart footman who helped her in. His long waterproof coat and t
he waterproo f covering of his hat were shining and dripping with rain as everything was, the burly station-master included. When he shut th e door, mounted the box with the coachman, and they drove off, the little girl found herself seated in a comfo
rtably cushio ned corner, but she was not inclined to go to sleep again. She sat and looked out of the window, curious to see something of the road over which she was being driven to the queer place Mrs. Medlock had spoken of. She was not at all a ti
mid child and she was not exactly frightened, but she felt that there was no knowing what might happen in a house with a hundred room s nearly all shut up--a house standing on the edge of a moor. "What is a moor?" she said suddenly to Mrs. Medlock.
"Look out of the window in about ten minutes and you'll see," the woman answered. "We've got to drive five miles across Missel Moo r before we get to the Manor. You won't see much because it's a dark night, but you can see something." Mary asked n
o more quest ions but waited in the darkness of her corner, keeping her eyes on the window. The carriage lamps cast rays of light a little distance ahead of them and she caught glimpses of the things they passed. After they had left the station they had d
riven through a tiny village and she had seen whitewashed cottages and the lights of a public house. Then they had passed a chur ch and a vicarage and a little shop-window or so in a cottage with toys and sweets and odd things set out for sale. Then they
were on the h ighroad and she saw hedges and trees. After that there seemed nothing different for a long time--or at least it see med a long time to her. At last the horses began to go more slowly, as if they were climbing up-hill, and presently there seemed
to be no more hedges and no more trees. She could see nothing, in fact, but a dense darkness on either side. She leaned forw ard and pressed her face against the window just as the carriage gave a big jolt. "Eh! We're on the moor now sure enough," said
Mrs. Medlock . The carriage lamps shed a yellow light on a rough-looking road which seemed to be cut through bushes and low-growing things which ended in the great expanse of dark apparently spread out before and around them. A wind was rising and
making a sin gular, wild, low, rushing sound. "It's--it's not the sea, is it?" said Mary, looking round at her companion. "No , not it," answered Mrs. Medlock. "Nor it isn't fields nor mountains, it's just miles and miles and miles of wild land that nothing grows o
n but heather and gorse and broom, and nothing lives on but wild ponies and sheep." "I feel as if it might be the sea, if t here were water on it," said Mary. "It sounds like the sea just now." "That's the wind blowing through the bushes," Mrs. Medlock said. "It's
a wild, dreary enough place to my mind, though there's plenty that likes it--particularly when the heather's in bloom. " On and on they drove through the darkness, and though the rain stopped, the wind rushed by and whistled and made strange sounds. The
road went up and down, and several times the carriage passed over a little bridge beneath which water rushed ver y fast with a great deal of noise. Mary felt as if the drive would never come to an end and that the wide, bleak moor was a wide expanse of blac
k ocean throu gh which she was passing on a strip of dry land. "I don't like it," she said to herself. "I don't like it," and she pinched her thin lips more tightly together. The horses were climbing up a hilly piece of road when she first caught sight of a light. Mrs.
Medlock saw it as soon as she did and drew a long sigh of relief. "Eh, I am glad to see that bit o' light twinkling ," she exclaimed. "It's the light in the lodge window. We shall get a good cup of tea after a bit, at all events." It was "after a bit," as she said, for wh
en the carriag e passed through the park gates there was still two miles of avenue to drive through and the tr ees (which nearly met overhead) made it seem as if they were driving through a long dark vault. They drove out of the vault into a clear space and sto
pped before an immensely long but low-built house which seemed to ramble round a stone court. At first Ma ry thought that there were no lights at all in the windows, but as she got out of the carriage she saw that one room in a corner upstairs showed a dull gl
ow. The entran ce door was a huge one made of massive, curiously shaped panels of oak studded with big iron nails and bound with great iron bars. It opened into an enormous hall, which was so dimly lighted that the faces in the portraits on the walls and the
figures in the s uits of armor made Mary feel that she did not want to look at them. As she stood on the st one floor she looked a very small, odd little black figure, and she felt as small and lost and odd as she looked. A neat, thin old man stood near the manserva
nt who opened the door for them. "You are to take her to her room," he said in a husky voice. "He does n't want to see her. He's going to London in the morning." "Very well, Mr. Pitcher," Mrs. Medlock answered. "So long as I know what's expected of me, I can m
anage." "What' s expected of you, Mrs. Medlock," Mr. Pitcher said, "is that you make sure that he's no t disturbed and that he doesn't see what he doesn't want to see." And then Mary Lennox was led up a broad staircase and down a long corridor and up a short f
light of steps a nd through another corridor and another, until a door opened in a wall and she foun d herself in a room with a fire in it and a supper on a table. Mrs. Medlock said unceremoniously: "Well, here you are! This room and the next are where you'll live--
and you must k eep to them. Don't you forget that!" It was in this way Mistress Mary arrived at Miss elthwaite Manor and she had perhaps never felt quite so contrary in all her life. CHAPTER IV MARTHA When she opened her eyes in the morning it was because a y
oung housema id had come into her room to light the fire and was kneeling on the hearth-rug rak ing out the cinders noisily. Mary lay and watched her for a few moments and then began to look about the room. She had never seen a room at all like it and thought
it curious and g loomy. The walls were covered with tapestry with a forest scene embroidered o n it. There were fantastically dressed people under the trees and in the distance there was a glimpse of the turrets of a castle. There were hunters and horses and dogs
and ladies. Ma ry felt as if she were in the forest with them. Out of a deep window she could s ee a great climbing stretch of land which seemed to have no trees on it, and to look rather like an endless, dull, purplish sea. "What is that?" she said, pointing out of th
e window. Mart ha, the young housemaid, who had just risen to her feet, looked and pointed also. "That there?" she said. "Yes." "That's th' moor," with a good-natured grin. "Does tha' like it?" "No," answered Mary. "I hate it." "That's because tha'rt not used to it,
" Martha said, g oing back to her hearth. "Tha' thinks it's too big an' bare now. But tha' will l ike it." "Do you?" inquired Mary. "Aye, that I do," answered Martha, cheerfully polishing away at the grate. "I just love it. It's none bare. It's covered wi' growin' things as sm
ells sweet. It's f air lovely in spring an' summer when th' gorse an' broom an' heather's in f lower. It smells o' honey an' there's such a lot o' fresh air--an' th' sky looks so high an' th' bees an' skylarks makes such a nice noise hummin' an' singin'. Eh! I wouldn't live
away from th' m oor for anythin'." Mary listened to her with a grave, puzzled expression. The native servants she had been used to in India were not in the least like this. They were obsequious and servile and did not presume to talk to their masters as if they were
their equals. Th ey made salaams and called them "protector of the poor" and names o f that sort. Indian servants were commanded to do things, not asked. It was not the custom to say "please" and "thank you" and Mary had always slapped her Ayah in the face
when she was a ngry. She wondered a little what this girl would do if one slapped her i n the face. She was a round, rosy, good-natured-looking creature, but she had a sturdy way which made Mistress Mary wonder if she might not even slap back--if the person who
slapped her wa s only a little girl. "You are a strange servant," she said from her pillo ws, rather haughtily. Martha sat up on her heels, with her blacking-brush in her hand, and laughed, without seeming the least out of temper. "Eh! I know that," she said. "If there w
as a grand Miss us at Misselthwaite I should never have been even one of th' under house-maids. I might have been let to be scullerymaid but I'd never have been let upstairs. I'm too common an' I talk too much Yorkshire. But this is a funny house for all it's so gra
nd. Seems like t here's neither Master nor Mistress except Mr. Pitcher an' Mrs. Med lock. Mr. Craven, he won't be troubled about anythin' when he's here, an' he's nearly always away. Mrs. Medlock gave me th' place out o' kindness. She told me she could never hav
e done it if Miss elthwaite had been like other big houses." "Are you going to be m y servant?" Mary asked, still in her imperious little Indian way. Martha began to rub her grate again. "I'm Mrs. Medlock's servant," she said stoutly. "An' she's Mr. Craven's--but I'm to
do the housema id's work up here an' wait on you a bit. But you won't need much waitin' on." "Who is going to dress me?" demanded Mary. Martha sat up on her heels again and stared. She spoke in broad Yorkshire in her amazement. "Canna' tha' dress thysen!" s