



A Little Princess

Frances Hodgson Burnett, adapted by LAMDA

Sara is enrolled in boarding school by her father who serves in the Army. Upon her father's death, eleven-year-old Sara is left an orphan with nowhere to go. The stern headmistresses Miss Minchin takes away all of Sara's possessions and forces her to live in a cold, worn attic, away from all her friends. At the start of this speech, Lottie discovers Sara's living situation.

SARA: Lottie! How did you get in here? No- shh. Shh. You must be quiet. Miss Minchin will be very angry with me if she finds you here. You mustn't cry or make any noise. Okay?

(Lottie is looking around the room, shocked. Sara follows her gaze)

It's- it's not such a bad room, Lottie. Look- you can see all sorts of things you can't see downstairs. Like chimneys- quite close to us- with smoke curling up in wreaths and clouds and going up into the sky- and sparrows hopping around and talking to each other just as if they were people- and other attic windows where heads may pop out any minute and you can wonder who they belong to. And it all feels as high up as if it was another world.

(Sara peers out of the attic window)

Come here and you can see. I wish someone lived over there! It is so close that if there was somebody in the attic, we could talk to each other through the windows and climb over to see each other, if we were not afraid of falling. And look at that sparrow!

(Sara giggles and walks around the room)

We're so high above everything it's almost like a nest in a tree. The slanting ceiling is so funny. See, you can scarcely stand up at this end of the room; and when the morning begins to come, I can lie in bed and look right into the sky through that flat window in the roof. It is like a square patch of light. If the sun is going to shine, little pink clouds float about, and I feel as if I could touch them. As if it rains, the drops patter and patter as if they were saying something nice. Then if these are stars, you can lie and try to count how many go into the patch. It takes such a lot. And just look at that tiny, rusty grate in the corner. If it was polished and there was a fire in it, just think how nice it would be. You see, it's really a beautiful little room.

(Sara hears noises downstairs)

You must go, Lottie- before Miss Minchin find you here. Quick. And remember to be quiet!

(Sara ushers Lottie downstairs and re-enters her attic, alone. She stands in the middle and looks around. She sits down and lets her head drop in her hands.)

It's a lonely place. Sometimes it's the loneliest place in the world.

Chapter 9