

# Episode 1

## Chapter 1

**The film opens with a scene overlooking the countryside. A train moves along the tracks. It is the mid-1800's in England.** Margaret Hale is looking out of the train carriage window. She holds a yellow hedge rose in her lap along with some papers. Beside her, her father leans back against his seat with his eyes closed.

### Caption: Two Months Earlier

**Carriages and people go past a large London house on a corner.** A dance orchestra can be heard, and inside the house is Margaret Hale dressed in pink for a big occasion, her cousin Edith's wedding. Edith, a pretty little blonde, is dancing with her groom, a young British officer in his red coat. Edith's mother watches from her seat nearby.

Aunt Shaw: What a business this wedding has been! What an expense! You know, sometimes, my dear sister, I envy you your little country parsonage. [Mr. and Mrs. Hale are sitting with her] You two married for love, I know. Now, of course, Edith can afford to do that. [turning her gaze back to the dancers] Go on, Captain. Dance! Dance with your bride.

[Henry Lennox is passing through the company..]

Henry: You are bored, Miss Margaret!

Margaret: No. I'm tired.

Henry: Ah!

Margaret: I'm exhausted. And a little too grown-up for ornaments like this. [pulling a butterfly comb from her hair] When I get married I want to wake up on a sunny day,...put on my favorite dress, and just walk to church. [She bends to put the butterfly in a little girl's hair.] There! [laughing] There, is that better?

Henry: [Henry looks a little overwhelmed by Margaret's confiding attitude] I think you look very well. You would look very well whatever you wore.

Margaret: [giggles] I love my cousin dearly, I've been very happy in this house. But I'll be even more happy to go home to Helstone tomorrow.

Henry: Ah, the wonderful Helstone. You cannot be kept away?

Margaret: No. I cannot. It's the best place on earth.

\*[Dancing fades to a shot of trees overhead. Margaret is lying asleep in the grass below. Everything is very green.]\*

Henry: Margaret. Is that you? [Her eyes open slowly, then she sits up quickly on seeing

Henry standing there with his traveling bag, and top hat in his hands.]

Margaret: M-Mr. Lennox! W-What's happened? Is it Edith? Some accident?

Henry: No, no, no! Calm yourself. No such calamity. I have come to visit paradise...as you suggested.

Margaret: Well...Mr. Lennox. Y-You'd better sit down. [Henry sits beside her uncertainly, smiles, breathing hard from his walk there. Margaret laughs a little nervously.]

**[They walk to Margaret's house. Henry stops at the hedge to pick a rose for her, doffing his hat as he presents it.]**

Margaret: This is home. [They approach her mother in front of the parsonage.] Mama, you remember Mr. Lennox?

Mrs. Hale: Oh, yes. Yes, yes, of course, I...

**[Later, Margaret walks arm in arm with Henry to the church.]**

Margaret: I could walk this route with my eyes closed. I've been visiting Father's parishioners since I was a very small girl. Did you... hear what I just said?

Henry: Sorry. I was just remembering your prescription for a perfect wedding. "I should like to walk to church on a sunny morning?" Was this the path you were describing?

Margaret: Why, yes, I suppose so. I...wasn't actually thinking of MY wedding, you understand.

Henry: I was wondering, Margaret, whether...

Margaret: Please, don't... go on.

Henry:...whether you might consider making that walk, sharing that morning with one who... -Please, listen, Margaret.

Margaret: Please. Don't continue. I'm sorry.

Henry: Excuse me. I... You led me to believe that such an offer would not be unwelcome. A London girl would have known not to talk of wedding days in such ambiguous terms.

Margaret: Excuse me, I...said nothing I am ashamed of. I-I'm sorry if you have been mistaken in my affections for you.

Henry: Is there someone else, someone else you prefer?

Margaret: No! I DO like you, Henry. But I'm not ready to marry anyone. You must believe that I mean what I say.

**[Later, Mrs. Hale and their servant Dixon standing out front of the parsonage watching Mr. Henry Lennox depart, followed anxiously by Margaret.]**

Margaret: Henry, I...I-I'm sorry.

[Henry stops to look at her for a moment, then turns to continue on.]

**[Fade back to Margaret on the train gazing out the window]**

## Chapter 2

Mrs. Hale: [Coughing] We'll be on the streets.....in a strange place.

Margaret Hale: Mama, I told you, we'll stay at a hotel until we find a house. It won't take long.

Mrs. Hale: Perhaps Dixon and I could stay on the coast while you look.

Dixon: Yes!...as the missis is so delicate.

Mr. Hale: No, Maria. Your place is with us. It will not take us long to find a house. My old college friend, Mr. Bell, has agreed to help. He's already organised a list of potential pupils. There'll be plenty of teaching for me. [unhappy looks from Maria Hale and Dixon]

Mrs. Hale: There will be no people there like us in Milton. How can there be?

Margaret: We will manage, Mother. It's not another planet.

**[Train arrives at the station with a screech of brakes, crowds passing in the twilight.]**

Conductor: Outwood, Milton! Outwood, Milton! All change! All change for stations north!

Mrs. Hale: [Weeping] Why have we come here, Dixon? It's going to be awful. I know it is!

Dixon: Shh.... [soothing Mrs. Hale]

Conductor: Outwood, Milton!

Margaret: Dixon. Take care and find a porter. [Opening the train door] We have arrived.

Conductor: All change! [Mouth whistle blows.]

Girl: I see him!

[The Hales and Dixon leave the train, Maria holding her handkerchief over her mouth and nose.]

Dixon: [Motioning to a man] Porter! Take these, please. [Another mouth whistle blown, and the train chugs away as they leave the station platform going down stairs.]

**[Outside their hotel building the next day]**

Margaret: We'll find a house faster if we go separately.

Mr. Hale: Are you sure?

Margaret Hale: Of course.

**[Margaret walks along looking at the paper in her hand as she travels down a busy street past some shop windows. She stops, looks up, and surveys the street around her. It is crowded with carts, boxes and crates from the vendors of the street market.]**

Peddler: Eggs, fresh-laid eggs this mornin'!

Barrow Men: Fresh fruits. Fresh fruits! Fruits and vegetables!

[Margaret navigates around all the carts and merchandise in the street. A woman plucks a fresh-killed chicken.]

Man: Hello, how are you?

Another Man: All right.

[Chickens squawking. Margaret's handkerchief is at her nose as she passes the crates of chickens to pause at a doorway. Then she starts up the steps to the door, which is open, looking back at the busy marketplace as she goes in.]

Landlord: The living room's quite spacious, as you can see.

Williams: The property's not for me. I'm making inquiries on behalf of one of me master's business acquaintances. [Meanwhile, Margaret is downstairs in the same house looking around.] The man is still living as a clergyman. Or rather a former clergyman. He's used to living simply. I don't think he's ever been a man of great property or fortune.

[Margaret has made it to the staircase and begins to climb up. She can hear the two men speaking now.]

Williams: ... A matter of conscience, I believe.

Landlord: Ah, conscience. That never put bread on the table. South, eh?

Williams: Mm-hm.

Landlord: A little, er ... indiscretion took place, maybe?

Williams: Well, they do say the Devil makes work for idle hands, don't they? Maybe his hands weren't so idle. [Both men chuckle]

[Margaret has reached the top of the steps and overhears the two men speaking.]

Landlord: Well, he'll certainly find things...quite different up north.

Williams: Oh, aye. Oh, aye.

Landlord: I'll make good the repairs, but the decoration's good enough. Hey, what a business, eh? For a man to uproot his wife and child to come all the way to Milton. Conscience or no conscience, that's strange behavior.

[Margaret enters the room]

Williams: Excuse me, madam, can I help you?

Margaret: My name is Margaret Hale. Who are you?

Williams: I'm Williams, Mr. Thornton's overseer. He asked me to look out properties for your father.

Margaret: How much is the rent for the year?

Williams: These are details Mr. Thornton will discuss with your father. There's no need to concern yourself in money matters, ma'am.

Margaret: I've no idea who your Mr. Thornton is. I thank him for his trouble, but my father and I are sharing the task of securing a property. [The men are looking a little uncomfortable.] I have spent two days viewing what Milton has to offer, so I have a fairly good idea of price.

Williams: Mr. Thornton thinks this will do very well for your father.

Margaret: Where *is* Mr. Thornton?

Williams: Excuse me?

Margaret: Take me to see this Mr. Thornton. If he won't deal with me, I'll have to deal with *him*.

[They leave as the landlord looks on with his mouth open.]

### Chapter 3

**[Margaret entering the mill courtyard, Williams coming after he pays the cab at the gate. They face a large house alongside the factory.]**

Margaret Hale: Does Mr. Thornton live here?

Williams: Aye, but he'll be at work. [He leads her to an office.] Stay here, miss. I'll find Master.

[Margaret looks out the windows at the workers, around the room, at the clock which reads 3:37. She looks at the ledger on the desk, then out the window again.

Now the clock reads 3:52 from where she has seated herself while waiting.

She gets up and walks purposefully down the passage past workers, coughing when the white lint in the air gets in her throat. She gets to a large door, the particles in the air ever thicker, and slides it open. To her astonished eyes is revealed a huge room filled with clanking machines weaving cotton into cloth, the white fluff clogging the

air around the workers who are overseeing their operation. As she walks further in, her eyes are drawn to a tall figure dressed in black, standing on a raised walkway watching the work being done. Then...his expression suddenly changes.]

- Thornton: [shouting] Stephens! Put that pipe out!  
[The man, Stephens, looks back, then starts running as he stuffs his pipe in a pocket. Thornton pursues, coming down the stairs shouting]  
I saw you! Stephens! Stephens! Come here!  
[Thornton catches up to Stephens when he falls. Thornton pulls him up off the floor, pinning him against some cotton bales with his arm to search Stephens pockets with the other hand.]
- Thornton: Smoking again.
- Stephens: I wasn't!
- Thornton: Where is it?
- Stephens: I wasn't smoking, I swear!
- Thornton: [Producing the pipe from Stephen's pocket.] Still warm! I warned you.  
[He grabs Stephens by the collar.]
- Stephens: No! No! Please, sir! [as Thornton lands his first punch]  
Please don't...Please! [More beating from Thornton.]
- Thornton: You stupid idiot!
- Stephens: Please, sir! [Thornton is hitting him in the face.]
- Thornton: Look at me! Look at me! [as he bloodies Stephen's nose]
- Margaret: [She has followed the chase, and sees the horrible sight.]  
Stop! [Thornton kicks Stephens as he falls to the floor.]  
Stop! Please, stop!
- Thornton: Who are you? What are you doing in here?
- Margaret: My name is Margaret Hale.
- Williams: Miss Hale! I'm sorry sir, Mr. Thornton, I told her to stay in the office.
- Thornton: Get her out of here! [to Stephens] Aye, crawl away on your belly and don't come back.
- Stephens: Please, sir...I have little ones. [as he grovels on the floor, a kick from Thornton]
- Thornton: You know the rules!
- Stephens: My children will starve, sir.
- Thornton: Better they starve than burn to death. Get out before I call the police! [turning to

Williams] Get that woman out of here! [He turns and leaves.]

Williams: Please, miss. [Stephens starts crawling off, and the camera rises to Bessy Higgins and some other girl workers watching.]  
Miss! Miss, please! Miss, please, miss...Please!  
[Margaret cannot take her eyes off Stephens as she is led out of the mill. Bessy watches Margaret and Williams go.]

[Margaret emerges out into the mill's courtyard, her handkerchief to her nose, heading for the gate as workers move cotton bales. She spots a movement at the house window. Mrs. Hannah Thornton is standing there looking as Margaret leaves through the gate.]

**[Edith sits next to a colorful bouquet at a table writing a letter to Margaret]**

Edith: [reading out her letter to Margaret] My darling Margaret, we are back at last from our honeymoon in Corfu. We've been away so long I'm almost fluent in Greek - or so the Captain says. But you know, everything he says is always so agreeable. Oh, dear Margaret...now I'm going to say something that will make you very angry, but I can't help it. What was uncle thinking of taking you all so far away from home? What on earth are you doing in that awful place where they make cotton, when no one who is anyone wishes to buy it? I'm sure we'll always wear linen.

Margaret: [sitting at her desk writing back to Edith] Dear Edith, I'm pleased to report that we've replaced the horrible wallpapers with altogether more agreeable colours. Dixon has only - if you think this possible - grown in energy. She has set herself the task of engaging an under-maid, but as yet there isn't anyone within a radius of at least 50 miles who is remotely suitable to wait on us hand and foot.

**[The Kitchen of the Hale's home]**

Prospective Maid: I'll sit, if you don't mind.

Dixon: Hm. You'll be expected to be well up before the family to light the fires.

Prospective Maid: I'm sorry, I'm not getting up at five in the morning. And I'm not working for those wages. I can get four shillings as a piecer up at Hamper's. Anyway, if you don't mind me asking, where's money coming from to pay for me? This house must be costing thirty pound a year, and there's not much coming in from what I've heard.

[Dixon's hand setting down a pitcher forcefully...Then we see Margaret at the top of the stairs coming down, the outraged prospective maid coming from the kitchen below, Dixon following.]

Prospective Maid: I'll come and go as I please! And I don't need no bossy, jumped-up servant to tell me what's what and how to think and how to behave! You can keep your rotten job!  
[Leaves, banging the door shut]

**[Margaret hurries back upstairs quietly smiling. She sits down with her mother as Dixon is heard stomping upstairs with a vase of flowers. As she enters and sets the vase down...]**

Dixon: Me, a servant, indeed! I don't know what the master was thinking of, subjecting us to all this gossip! [She goes out again]

## Chapter 4

[More footsteps coming down the stairs from an upper floor.]

Mrs. Hale: Margaret?

[Mr. Hale enters with a book in his hands, turns to look at his wife and daughter.]

Mr. Hale: What's the matter?

Mrs. Hale: [clearing her throat] There is some talk...Margaret?

Mr. Hale: Margaret, what does she mean "talk"?

Margaret Hale: I did hear some people talking, when we were house-hunting.

Mrs. Hale: About why we moved to Milton...so abruptly. Why you left the church.

Mr. Hale: People are...talking?

Mrs. Hale: Well, it's only natural, after all, that people should wonder. It's not usual for clergymen to leave their parish, travel hundreds of miles, as if to escape something. Just because we follow you without question...

[Mr. Hale pulls a letter out of his pocket, opens it and hands it to his wife.]

Mrs. Hale: It's from the bishop. It's not about Frederick?

Mr. Hale: No. I keep that letter with me at all times. To reassure me that I made the right decision.

Mrs. Hale: [reading the letter] I-Is this all? [quoting]"I ask that all rectors in the diocese of the New Forest reaffirm their belief in the Book of Common Prayer."

Mr. Hale: Yes, there! Exactly. The effrontery! The man's ten years our junior. [sighs] He tries to treat us all like children.

Mrs. Hale: But this is a formality, surely...to reaffirm.

Mr. Hale: My conscience will not let me. I can and have lived quietly with my doubts for ... well, for some years now, but...I cannot swear publicly to doctrines I am no longer sure of. Now we men of conscience have to make a stand.

Mrs. Hale: We?

- Mr. Hale: Yes, there are others who have doubts. We all agreed. We could not reaffirm.
- Mrs. Hale: [rising from her seat] Are you telling me that all the rectors of the New Forest have decamped to industrial towns? [sarcastic and angry]
- Mr. Hale: Well, some thought it possible to yield, but...I did not.
- Mrs. Hale: [shouting] How many? How many refused?
- Mr. Hale: I could not avoid it. I was *forced* into it. You must understand. [pleading]
- Mrs. Hale: I understand.[calmer now] I understood...that the very worst must have happened...that you had lost your faith...or that you felt that God wished you to preach his word in these new places.[voice rising again] That some very *great* matter must have happened to make you uproot us all, *dragging* us up to this God-forsaken place! [Margaret flinches]
- Mr. Hale: Maria! [Margaret leaves quickly]
- Mrs. Hale: You gave up your livelihood...our source of income...on a formality. [she starts backing out of the room]
- Mr. Hale: It was not like that Maria. [very distressed] Really, it *is* not like that. I already have work - teaching. And I - I will find more. And...maybe I will discover *that* is my real vocation after all.
- Mrs. Hale: The people here don't want learning. They don't want books and culture. It's all money and smoke. That's what they eat and breathe. [she backs into the shadows of the doorway]

**[Margaret walking through streets hung with drying cloth. A woman stirring a big pot, dying fabric nearby. A baby is heard crying in the narrow passage.]**

- Margaret Hale: [voice heard as she writes another letter to her cousin] ...And you're right, Edith. Milton is very far from home, but it is quite an interesting and modern sort of place. There are at least twenty mills, all very prosperous, in and around the town, and it's full of new industry of one sort or the other. It is, of course, not remotely green like Helstone, and so large that I often lose my way. But the people are friendly enough, and there is nearly always someone to point me in the right direction.

**[Margaret going down some stairs in the street, a mill whistle sounds loudly. Many footsteps sound behind soon after, Margaret sees workers rushing down behind her. She holds onto her hat on her head and moves to the wall to avoid them.]**

- Worker 1: Ey up, what have we got here?
- Worker 2: Watch out, lass! [as he roughly brushes past]
- Woman Worker: [laughter] 'Scuse us!  
[She purposely knocks Margaret off balance down the stairs. Then they are all teas-

ing and touching her.]

Margaret: Please. [gasping as they knock her about] Please...Please don't.[drops her purse] ...Just stop. Please...please stop. [more laughter as a young man coming down the stairs spies her bag on the ground and picks it up, holding it just out of her reach]

Young Man: Is this yours? [An older worker comes upon him from behind.]

Nicholas Higgins: Leave the lass alone.

Young Man: Here y'are!

Higgins: [repeats as he grabs the hand holding Margaret's purse] Leave the lass alone!

Young Man: She shouldn't take on so. We were only having a bit of fun.

Higgins: [handing Margaret her bag] Come on, miss. Be careful where you walk when the whistle sounds for the break. [accompanies her down the rest of the steps] But don't worry, they won't harm you. They just like a bonny face. And yours is a picture. [takes her arm] Come on. [leads her to a cab]

Margaret: I'm - I'm obliged to you. Thank you, sir.

Higgins: You're welcome, lass. [As he opens the carriage door for her, Margaret offers him a coin from her purse] No charge, miss. [He sees her up and into the cab, closes the door and watches it drive off with a thoughtful smile.]

Cab Driver: Get up! Hup, hup, hup!

**[A man is sitting in a public hall ( the Lyceum) listening to Mr. Hale's lecture.]**

Mr. Hale: So this century was probably the most productive, simply in terms of the number of...[sound fades out]

Margaret: [her voice as she continues her letter to Edith] Father is working hard. He teaches students and also lectures [shows other men yawning and sleeping] though some of it is unpaid [snoring from the sleeping man]...and, I fear, unwanted. But he keeps happy.

Mr. Hale: ... Thank you. [some limp applause] Until, um...next Sunday.  
[Mr. Hale begins his walk down the aisle out of the auditorium.]

## Chapter 5

[Margaret is just home, coming into the hall. We hear her quoting from the letter she is writing to Edith.]

Margaret Hale: He entertains his private pupils at home.

Mr. Hale: [heard from another room] We have to make a choice, John. Now it's difficult, I know. Margaret, is that you? Well, Margaret! Come in, Margaret. Come in. Meet my new friend and, erm, first proper pupil, Mr. Thornton. This is my daughter, Margaret.

[Margaret was ready with a smile, until Mr. Thornton turns around with a bit of a smirk on his face. She freezes.]

Thornton: I believe your daughter and I have already met.

Mr. Hale: [oblivious to the tension between these two] Ah... Now, Mr. Thornton can't decide between Aristotle and Plato. I suggest we start with Plato, and then move on. What do you think?

Thornton: I'm afraid Miss Hale and I met under less than pleasant circumstances. I had to dismiss a worker for smoking in the sorting room.

Margaret: I saw you beat a defenseless man who is not your equal!

Mr. Hale: Margaret!

Thornton: No, she's right. [pause] I was angry. I have a temper. Fire is the greatest danger in my mill. I have to be strict.

Margaret: A gentleman would not use his fists on such a...pathetic creature, or shout at children.

Thornton: [his voice raising] I dare say a gentleman has not had to see 300 corpses laid out on a Yorkshire hillside as I did last May. And many of THEM were children. And that was an accidental flame. The whole mill destroyed in 20 minutes. [sighs heavily] I should go. [to Mr. Hale] You'll join us for dinner next week?

Mr. Hale: Oh, yes, of course. Erm...thank you. Erm...we'll start with Plato next Tuesday. [incoherent sounds]

Thornton: I will ask my mother to call ... when you're settled. [frowning, takes a parting look at Margaret]

Mr. Hale: Of course, erm... Now by all means. We're always here. Aren't we, Margaret? [Margaret looks positively sullen and refuses to answer as John Thornton takes his leave.]

**[Margaret climbing the path uphill through the cemetery]**

Margaret: [continuing with her letter to her cousin Edith] I'll admit that Milton doesn't have any grand palaces or works of art, but it does have some pleasant parks where we take our daily walk and meet our friends... while the weather holds.

[Margaret sees a familiar face, the girl at the mill who also witnessed the beating of Stephens. She hurries to catch up.]

- Bessy Higgins: Are you following me?
- Margaret: No. Well...yes.[laughing] I didn't mean any offence. I recognised you from Marlborough Mills.
- Bessy: [stops walking a moment] And I recognise you. Giving Thornton back as good as he gave. You don't see that every day. [continues along the path]
- Margaret: Well, I-I don't want to keep you.
- Bessy: What important appointments might I have? [stops and changes her tone] I'm going to meet my father. He works at Hampers, a mile across town.
- Margaret: But, you work at Marlborough Mills. [puzzled]
- Bessy: Yes. It's nearer home. And the work's easier. Here's Father now. [walks to meet him] Father? Young woman I told you about. The day Thornton beat up Stephens and sent him packing.
- Nicholas Higgins: Yes. He deserved it. The fool put everyone at risk.  
[Margaret looks like she doesn't quite agree with his point of view.]
- Nicholas: You're not from this part of the world, are you?
- Margaret: No. I'm from the South. From Hampshire.
- Nicholas: Mm. That's beyond London, I reckon. [smiling]
- Margaret: Mm. [agrees with a smile]
- [Bessy and her father look at each other, she chuckles and takes his arm before they begin walking home.]
- Margaret: [still following] Where do you live?
- Nicholas: We put up Francis Street, in Princeton. Behind Golden Dragon.
- Margaret: And your name? [Nicholas and Bessy stop] My name is Margaret Hale.
- Nicholas: My name is Nicholas Higgins. This is my daughter Bessy Higgins. Why do you ask?
- Margaret: [sensing that she has somehow offended] W-well, I...thought that I might come and bring a basket. Excuse me. A-at home, when my father was a clergyman, of course...
- Bessy: A basket? [laughing with her father] What would we want with a basket? We've little enough to put in it. [they continue on]
- Nicholas: See, I don't much like strangers in my house. I dare say in the South, where you come from, a young lady such as yourself feels she can wander into anyone's house whenever they feel like it. But up here, we wait to be asked into someone's parlour before we go charging in.

Margaret: [chagrined] Excuse me, Mr. Higgins, Bessy, I-I didn't mean any offence.

Nicholas: That's why I reckon you can come if you want, but you'll not remember us. I'll bet on that.

[Bessy looks sad. Nicholas nods a farewell and they walk off.]

## Chapter 6

[The Hale's home]

Mrs. Hale: Margaret!

Margaret: [runs up the stairs.]What's the matter? Are you unwell?

[Mrs. Hale is looking out of the window, Margaret joins her. Below they see Mrs. Thornton & Fanny Thornton stepping down from the carriage.]

Mrs. Hale: It must be Mr. Thornton's mother.

Margaret: There's no mistaking that stern brow. And that must be the sister. What a deal of starch! It would take someone all day to iron that petticoat.

[Fanny gives a little wiggle to settle her petticoats.]

Margaret: Where will we put them, Mama? I don't think the two of them will fit in here.

[They look around the room and both chuckle. Margaret turns around so Mrs. Hale can untie her apron.]

[Fanny and Mrs. Thornton are seated, Margaret offers Fanny a small cake. Fanny has her hand out to take one, but hesitantly puts her hand back down. Mrs. Thornton sips her tea. Margaret sits back down, Mrs. Hale is seated near her. There is silence in the room. Margaret takes a sip of her tea. The women look at each other.]

Mrs. Hale: How exquisite.

[Mrs. Thornton looks at her questioningly.]

Mrs. Hale: [looking at Hannah's dress bodice] I haven't seen English pointwork quite like that for years.

Mrs. Thornton: [smugly] Our Milton craftsmanship can compare with the very best.

[Mrs. Hale takes a sip of her tea.]

Fanny: I suppose you are not musical, as I see no piano.

Margaret: I am fond of music, but I cannot play well myself. [After a slight pause.] As you can see, this house would hardly bear a grand instrument.

[Fanny gives a polite chuckle.]

Margaret: We sold ours when we moved.

Fanny: Yes, these rooms are far too small for entertaining. Our staircases are wider than the whole width of this room.

[Mrs. Thornton looks grim and gives Fanny a stern look. There is a somewhat uncomfortable silence.]

Fanny: I wonder how you can exist without a piano. It almost seems to me a necessity of life.

[Margaret and Mrs. Hale look at each other.]

Margaret: There are concerts here I believe.

Fanny: Oh, yes. Rather crowded. They let in anybody. But we have whatever is the fashion in London. A little later, unfortunately. You know London, of course.

Margaret: Oh yes. I lived there with my aunt and cousin for a while.

[Fanny looks impressed.]

Fanny: Oh! London and the Alhambra. They are the two places I long to see.

Margaret: The Alhambra?

Fanny: Yes, ever since I read the "Tales of the Alhambra". Do you know them?

Margaret: Oh... I don't... think so. [hesitates] But it's a very easy journey to London and not half so far.

Fanny: Yes, but... Mama has never been to London. She cannot understand why I long to go. She's very proud of Milton. [lowers her voice] Dirty, smoky place that it is. [whispers] I can't wait to leave.

Mrs. Thornton: [addressing Mrs. Hale] May I ask w-why you chose to come and live in Milton? I mean... why did you leave wherever it was?

Mrs. Hale: Helstone.

[Mrs. Thornton looks slightly taken aback, but listens on.]

Mrs. Hale: Well, it... it, it was my husband's decision. It was a matter of... of conscience.

Mrs. Thornton: But Mr. Hale is no longer a clergyman, I thought.

[Mrs. Hale looks down, then back at Mrs. Thornton.]

Mrs. Hale: My husband very much enjoys his lessons with Mr Thornton. [smiling at Margaret] I think it makes him feel young again.

Mrs. Thornton: Classics are all very well for men who loiter their lives away in the country or in colleges. But Milton men ought to have all their energies absorbed by today's work. They should have one aim only. [She pauses briefly.] Which is to hold and maintain an honourable place amongst the merchants of this country. Go where you will, [she carries on with much pride in her voice], the name of John Thornton in Milton, manufacturer and magistrate, is known and respected amongst all men of business. [She adds with even more pride.] And sought after by all the young women in Milton.

Margaret: [with a chuckle] Not all of them, surely.

[Mrs. Hale smiles at Margaret, but becomes solemn when she turns to see Mrs. Thornton looking serious.]

Mrs. Thornton: If you had a son like mine, Mrs. Hale, you would not be embarrassed to sing his praises.

[Mrs. Hale lowers her head.]

[Mrs. Thornton abruptly stands up, Fanny then stands also.]

Mrs. Thornton: If you can... bear... to visit our dirty, smoky home [she looks at Fanny, Fanny gives a tentative smile], we shall receive you next week.

[Margaret and Mrs. Hale are standing. Mrs. Thornton inclines her head, turns and makes her way out of the room. Fanny follows her.]

**[The mill workers are busy in the yard, moving bales of cotton. Mr. Hale is making his way through the yard, while Mrs. Thornton watches from the balcony. Mr. Hale goes up the steps to greet Mrs. Thornton.]**

Mr. Hale: [smiling warmly] Mrs. Thornton.

[Mrs. Thornton smiles back.]

Mr. Hale: Well, what a splendid house. Erm... but, er... do you not find the proximity to the mill a little, erm... well, noisy?

Mrs. Thornton: [proudly] Never. I've not become so fine as to forget the source of my son's power and wealth. [She looks out at the yard.] The mill is everything. There is no other factory like it in Milton.

[Mr. Hale looks out at the yard.]

Mrs. Thornton: This house is my son's achievement.

**[The mill masters and Mr. Hale are seated around the dinner table. They are laughing.]**

Slickson: Did I tell you, Thornton, about the price of raw cotton I found in Le Havre?

Thornton: I believe you did.

Slickson: Come on, Thornton. Even you can spot a bargain when you see it. Cotton's a great deal cheaper from the Caribbean than from America.

Henderson: I bet you Egyptian cotton is still much cheaper.

Thornton: I don't believe they can offer those prices for long. They'll be bankrupt in a year and we'll have our supply interrupted. I'd rather pay more and have a steady supply through Liverpool. The others can do as they wish, we'll all lose in the end.

Hamper: [turning to Mr. Hale] Thornton's as straight as they come. He won't risk Marlborough Mill in any risky enterprise, even if it means passing up the chance to speculate.

Mr. Hale: But that's the best way surely, with so many lives depending on the factory's continued success? Well, erm... that would be the Christian way.

[There is some suppressed laughter around the table.]

Watson: By the way, everyone, hear the latest over clamouring for a new wheel?

Henderson: I thought you'd agreed to the wheel.

Watson: Yeah, well, I had. [He smirks.] First the men threatened to turn out if I didn't install the infernal wheel. Yeah, which would've cost me six hundred pound.

Hamper: [turning to Mr. Hale again] The wheel blows away the strands of cotton that flies off in the sorting rooms. It helps keep the fluff off the workers lungs. It doesn't stop it, but it does help.

[Mr. Hale smiles at Hamper.]

Henderson: So, what was the problem?

Watson: Well, some of the workers started claiming they'd need more money to work in a place with a wheel.

Slickson: What?!

Watson: Yes, believe me. They'd heard it'd make 'em hungry. Even hungrier than they claim they always are!

Henderson: The wheel would make them hungry?

Watson: Yes, I swear! Some of them said that if I put the wheel in, there wouldn't be so much fluff to swallow, so their bellies'd be emptier. [There is a few chortles around the table.] Oh yes, so... oh, and this is the beautiful part... they were saying I'd have to pay 'em more. And now the men are split amongst themselves and can't agree to what they want, so, I've been spared six hundred pound. And the men have only them-

selves to thank for the carding rooms being like Christmas every day with all that sneezing.

[There is laughter around the table, apart from Mr. Thornton and Mr. Hale, who looks concerned.]

Slickson: Oh come on Thornton. Surely you wouldn't approve of your workers telling you what to pay 'em?

Thornton: I've had a wheel in all my sheds for these past two years.

Watson: More fool you, I can't see profit in it.

Thornton: There is no immediate profit. None that you can count in pounds, shillings and pence.

Watson: But... [he smirks again]... well, there is a 'but,' in't there?

Thornton: But... [he gives a slight shake of his head]... my workers are healthier. Their lungs don't clog so easily. They work for me longer. Their children work for me longer. Even you can see the profit in that.

Mr. Hale: But surely, erm... it's the right path, also.

Thornton: Sound business sense, Mr. Hale, and I cannot operate under any other moral law. I do not run a charitable institution. My workers expect me to be hard, but truthful. I always tell them how things are and they either take it or they leave it.

Henderson: Harkness 's always tryin' little tricks with his workers.

Harkness: You've got to keep them on their toes. It's a war, and we masters have to win it or go under.

[There is laughter around the table, apart from Mr Thornton and Mr. Hale.]

Watson: Hear, hear!

**[Mrs. Hale is sitting doing needlework. Margaret enters the room holding a letter.]**

Margaret: [smiling] Mama, I have a letter from Edith. Would you like me to read it to you? She sends love from Aunt Shaw.

Mrs. Hale: I wonder that your father prefers the company of Milton tradesmen.

[Dixon enters the room, quite flustered. She starts putting cloth away in a drawer in a very agitated manner.]

Dixon: As if there wasn't enough to do already! We've got no help to speak of. I have to do everything! It's all the master's fault.

[Mrs. Hale looks taken aback.]

Dixon: He took leave of his senses when he brought us here. He is not the vicar of Helstone anymore.

[Margaret looks at Dixon, then at Mrs. Hale.]

Dixon: He has thrown away his position in society and brought us all down with him. He'll be the death of us all!

[Mrs. Hale looks upset. Dixon strolls back out of the room. Margaret pauses, then follows Dixon.]

[Margaret follows Dixon halfway down the stairs.]

Margaret: Dixon!

[Dixon turns to face her.]

Margaret: I know you love my mother, but you forget yourself. Please don't talk about my father in that way. It... it's not for you to question his motives or judgment. You're a servant in this house. If you have such thoughts, keep them to yourself or you are free to leave and go back to Helstone whenever you choose. [She puts her hand on Dixon's arm.] Like it or not, we are here.

[Dixon nods.]

Margaret: I will help you.

Dixon: You, Miss Margaret? In the kitchen?

Margaret: Yes. Me. I can learn to starch and iron, and I will until we find suitable help. You'll do as I say, Dixon.

**[Margaret is in Princeton, with a basket on her arm. There is a child wailing in the background and a few other people in the street. Margaret turns to a woman with a baby in one arm and a girl close at her side.]**

Margaret: Excuse me. I'm looking for Bessy Higgins. I must have come in the wrong direction.

Woman: She lives along the way, just round't corner. [The girl is grizzling into her mother's side.] It's all right, she's not frightened of you. She's hungry, that's why she cries.

[Margaret opens her purse to give the woman some money, but the woman interrupts.]

Woman: Bessy's just round't corner.

[Margaret carries on, looking back at the woman for a moment. Margaret makes her way down the noisy street. Other people are wandering around and some children are doing the laundry.]

[Margaret reaches the Higgins house and knocks on the door. Margaret waits a few moments, then starts walking away. Mary Higgins opens the door, Margaret turns back.]

Margaret: Excuse me, I thought Bessy Higgins lived here.

[Mary opens the door wider.]

\*[Bessy and Margaret are seated at the table. Mary is taking the food out of the basket on the table.]\*

Margaret: I'm sorry I didn't come earlier. To tell you the truth, I didn't know that I would be welcome. I thought the groceries would be offensive. But then if I had come without anything...

Bessy: If there's a remote possibility of us finding offence, you can be sure we will. We're very good at that in Milton.

Margaret: I feel I've lived in Milton for quite some time now, but I still find myself constantly at fault whichever way I turn. How long do you think it will take for that to change?

Bessy: [quite seriously] Oh, a couple of years at least, in your case.

[Margaret looks aghast, Bessy starts laughing and Mary joins in. Margaret starts smiling. Bessy's laughter turns to coughs.]

Bessy: Sorry. It's just I have a bit of cold, I can't seem to shift.

[The door opens, Nicholas Higgins walks in looking serious. The girls all look at each other. Nicholas looks at Margaret.]

Nicholas: She were right. She said you'd come.

Bessy: How was the meeting, father?

[Nicholas hesitates.]

Margaret: Oh, do not worry on my account. I have no-one to tell any secrets to.

Nicholas: [as he sits down] Well, your father the parson's been seen supping with the bosses.

Margaret: Mr. Thornton is his pupil. He's certainly not my friend.

Bessy: [to Nicholas] And Boucher? [turning to Margaret] He's our neighbour down the way.

Nicholas: He's holding up. Just. But he'll be with us when the fire goes up right enough, if he knows what's good for him. Miss Margaret, your father teaches at the Lyceum Hall, doesn't he?

Margaret: Yes he does. Sunday afternoons.

**[Back at Thornton's house, Mr Thornton walks into the parlour. Fanny is heard in the background playing the piano and trilling. Mr. Thornton rolls his eyes at Fanny's singing as he puts his jacket on.]**

Thornton: Mother, remember I go to the Hales this evening.

[Mrs. Thornton is seated, doing needlework.]

Thornton: I will be home to dress, but then out till late.

Mrs. Thornton: [sounding surprised] Dress? Why should you dress up to take tea with an old parson? Ex-parson!

Thornton: [smiling] Mr. Hale is a gentleman and his daughter is an accomplished young lady.

[Mrs. Thornton looks at him with her eyebrows raised.]

Thornton: Don't worry, Mother. I'm in no danger from Miss Hale. She's very unlikely to consider me a catch. She's from the South. She doesn't care for our Northern ways.

Mrs. Thornton: Huh! Airs and graces! [She stands up and starts adjusting Mr Thornton's cravat.] What business has she? A renegade clergyman's daughter, who's now only fit to play at giving useless lectures to those who do not wish to hear them! What right has she to turn up her nose at you?

Thornton: [warmly] Board up the windows. There'll be a storm later.

[He kisses his mother's cheek and leaves the room. Mrs. Thornton sits back down, looking contemplative.]

## Chapter 7

[Margaret is at the ironing table. She sprinkles some water onto the cloth and starts ironing.]

[The roll of thunder is heard as John Thornton walks to the front door of the Hale's house. He knocks on the door, takes his hat off and smiles.]

[In the sitting room, John Thornton talks energetically to Mr. Hale while Margaret tries not to fall asleep in a chair.]

Thornton: ...All motion and energy but truly a thing of beauty. Classics will have to be re-written to include it. [Mr. Hale chuckles]

[John Thornton turns to look at Margaret and she stirs from her half-asleep state.]

Thornton: Ah... I'm afraid we're boring Miss Hale with our enthusiasm for Arkwright's invention.

Margaret Hale: [sitting up] No...indeed I'm sure it's fascinating. I'm a little tired that's all.

[Margaret gets up to pour the tea. Rain and thunder can be heard outside. As Margaret pours the tea, John Thornton watches her intently. Margaret hands John a cup, glancing into his eyes before looking down. As John accepts the cup, their fingers touch briefly.]

[Mrs. Hale enters the room, putting on a smile for their guest, but it is clearly half-hearted. John Thornton and Mr. Hale stand as she comes in.]

Mr. Hale: Er...Mr Thornton has been admiring our newly redecorated rooms, Maria.

Mr. Hale: Oh yes, Mr. Thornton. Hmm ...well, there...there wasn't a great deal of choice but these papers are of a similar shade to our drawing room in Helstone. But not quite.

Thornton: [smiling] Well.... On behalf of Milton taste, I'm glad we've almost passed muster.

[John Thornton glances over at Margaret. Margaret looks away.]

Mrs. Hale: Yes..yes well... clearly you're very proud of Milton. My husband admires its energy and its ....its. people.. are very busy making their businesses successful.

Thornton: I won't deny it – I'd rather be toiling here success or failure than leading a dull prosperous life in the south ....with their slow careless days of ease.

Margaret Hale: [indignantly] You are mistaken. You don't know anything about the South. It may be a little less energetic in its pursuit of competitive trade but then there is less suffering than I have seen in your mills....and all for what?

Thornton: We make cotton.

Margaret Hale: Which no one wants to wear!

Thornton: I think that I might say that you do not know the North. We masters are not all the same whatever your prejudice against Milton men and their ways.

Margaret Hale: I've seen the way you treat your men. You treat them as you wish because they are beneath you.

Thornton: [frustrated but calm] No. I do not.

Margaret Hale: [Interrupting with her continued tirade before he can finish his response.] You've been blessed with good luck and fortune, but others have not..

Thornton: [speaking with some emotion] I do know something of hardship... [He gives Margaret a pointed look and she now sits silently.] ...sixteen years ago my father died... in very miserable circumstances. I became the head of the family very quickly. I was taken out of school. I think that I might say that my only good luck was to have a mother of such strong will and integrity. I went to work in a draper's shop and my mother managed so that I could put three shillings aside a week. That taught me self-denial. Now I'm able to keep my mother in such comfort as her age requires and I thank her, every day for that early training... so, Miss Hale, I do not think that I was especially blessed with good fortune or luck...

[Margaret's eyes slowly lower away from his searching gaze.]

Thornton: I have overstayed my welcome.

[John stands.]

Mr. Hale: Oh..no, John... [Mr. Hale stands also.]

Thornton: Come Miss Hale, let us part friends despite our differences. If we become more familiar with each other's traditions, we may learn to be more tolerant, I think.

[John Thornton puts out his hand to shake Margaret's as she turns to let him pass to the door, refusing his polite handshake. Confused by this rejection, he clinches his fist and lowers his hand.]

[John Thornton walks out with Mr. Hale. Mr. Hale glances at Margaret as he accompanies John out of the room.]

Thornton: [to Mr. Hale.] I'll see myself out.

Mr. Hale: Please, please come again, John.

[Mr. Hale returns to drawing room where Margaret is clearing away the tea things.]

Mr. Hale: Margaret! The handshake is used up here in all forms of society... I think you gave Mr. Thornton real offence by refusing to take his hand.

Margaret Hale: I'm sorry Father...I'm sorry I am so slow to learn the rules of civility in Milton... but I am tired...I have spent the whole day washing curtains so that Mr Thornton should feel at home.... [Margaret takes a seat on the sofa.] so please... excuse me if I misunderstood the handshake... I'm sure in London, a gentleman would never expect a lady to take his hand like that... all unexpectedly.

[Mrs. Hale looks very sympathetically at her daughter.]

Mrs. Hale: And I'm sure I didn't know where to look when he talked about his past... his father might have died in the workhouse!

Mr. Hale: ...I think it might have been worse than that. [He takes a seat in an easy chair.] According to my friend Mr. Bell, his father speculated wildly, and lost...he um...he was swindled by a business partner in London. He...um...he killed himself...because he couldn't bear the disgrace. [Margaret looks ashamed and chastised while Mrs. Hale appears very uncomfortable with the conversation.] Mother, and son and daughter lived on nothing for years, so that the creditors could be repaid... long after they had given up any hope of settlement.... Margaret?

Margaret Hale: I think it very fine Father. I'm sorry to have offended your friend. And I must go to bed.

[Margaret leaves the room]

## Chapter 8

**[View of The Lyceum. The street is busy with carriages. Margaret Hale stands at the bottom of the Lyceum steps briefly watching the workers as they**

**enter the building.**

**John Thornton and another master watch the arrivals to the Lyceum from a second story window.**

As Margaret reaches mid-way up the Lyceum stairs, she turns to look in the direction of the window as if she senses she is being watched. John Thornton is watching her and she turns to continue her ascent into The Lyceum. John turns from the window.

Mill Master Hamper, who is holding a tankard, raises it to point out a worker he sees.] \*

Mill Master Hamper: Ah ...put him down. He's one of ours isn't he?

Mill Master Henderson: Boucher ... he's Thornton's.

Hamper: [turning to John] Aren't you interested, Thornton? All mills together if you please. We need to show 'em. We know what they're up to and who they are.

Thornton: [still looking out of the window] Let them meet, if that's how they want to spend their leisure time.

[View of room with the seven Mill Masters. Four are standing, three are seated.]

Henderson: We're all trying to work together Thornton.

Thornton: [turns to face the room and Henderson] Are we? [He sounds sceptical.]

Henderson: What does that mean?

Thornton: [moves towards Henderson] I overheard some of my men talking. It seems you're planning to give in to them. We agreed...we'd all be in line.... so that the men would know we meant business and know that we kept our word.

Henderson: Well....I...

[John Thornton turns and walks away. Henderson turns to look at Watson but has been rendered speechless by Thornton's words].

**[Meanwhile men continue to arrive at the Lyceum. Mr Hale is sitting on a bench in the corridor watching them arrive. Margaret appears and greets him.]**

Margaret Hale: Father?

[She sits down beside him on the seat.]

Mr Hale: My pupils asked me if they could use the Hall for a special meeting. Who am I to force ecclesiastical architecture on them? [Margaret chuckles].

[A cheer goes up in the Hall which is now full of men.]

Higgins: Friends! ... Quiet please! [takes his cap off] Friends,... Welcome... Now this is the first time, we have ever gathered together!

[The men applaud]

Higgins: Now don't worry, we'll all get a chance to speak as long as we take our turn. Now I'm Nicholas Higgins, I work up at Hamper's Mill... --Now there's quite a few of us...

[Loud cheer]

Higgins: ... and some men from Thornton's at Marlborough Mill. [cheer]. Where's Henderson's? [cheer]... What about Slickson's [cheer].... Now.... Up at Hamper's, we've got a lot of work,..... the orders are flooding in....., and cheap cotton to meet them..... Now there's those of us that know..., that soon..., bosses'll be telling us although they are making a fat profit, they can't make our pay what it were five years ago!

[Enter Stephens]

Higgins: They'll make up a load of excuses - it's all because cotton's suddenly become more expensive... this, or that the machinery's packed up, the buyers can't pay so that there's no money to pay us! You've all heard it before!!

[Loud cheers and clapping from the men]

Worker 1: Aye the bosses make their own rules! Henderson says one thing, Hampers another! Different from one week t'next...but what's to stop them cutting pay again, eh?

Workers [shouting] Aye, aye, aye...

[Higgins points to worker 2 who has his hand raised.]

Worker 2: ...and if we quit over wages, there's more'll take our places

Higgins: ...and that is why, we must all work together. ... because next time one of our bosses plays tricks, we'll all know about it and if we all decide on a fair wage and none of us, none of us work for less, then for once, we'll have a say!!

[Loud cheers and clapping]

Worker 1: [yelling over cheering] What if bosses don't like it, eh? If bosses don't like it, what'll we do then?..... What'll we do then?

[Boucher raises hand to speak]

Higgins: [pointing to him] Boucher.

Boucher: Its.. ah..it's all right some of you talking brave. Nicholas here earns what? 15, 16 shillings in a week. He's only three to keep on it.... My wife's sick, I have six children, none of them old enough for factory work, If I turn out, we'll not be able to live on 5 shilling strike pay from Union. Me children... they'll starve.

[There is silence in the Hall. All look to Higgins for an answer.]

Higgins: Look, I'm not saying that we're coming out today, I'm not saying we're coming out

tomorrow, ... what I'm saying is, when the time comes, we will be ready. .. and we will...stick...together!!

[Loud cheers and clapping. Boucher looks disheartened]

**[Margaret and Mr Hale walk through the darkened streets]**

Mr Hale: Margaret, I know you and your mother feel I've let you down...

Margaret Hale: Father, no!

Mr Hale: No, you do. I know. ...but I hope you realise that the people up here,.. they aren't so very different, ... you know, they just have different ways.

[They continue walking.]

**[John Thornton is locking the gates of the Mill. As he goes to shut the gate, Stephens appears out of the shadows]**

Stephens: Master,...

Thornton: What are you doing here?

Stephens: I beg you to take me back...

Thornton: Get out!

Stephens: I were at meeting this evening...

[John Thornton walks towards him].

Stephens: [walking backwards] I could tell you what they're planning...what's in their thoughts... Please sir... I beg you.

Thornton: [taking Stephens by the collar and shouts] Get out and don't come near this mill again!

[John pushes him away. He hears someone approaching]

Thornton: Who's there?

Mr Hale: It's only us.

Stephens: [moving towards John again] I promise you...

Thornton: [pushing him away yelling] Get away from here!!

[Margaret and Mr Hale watch Stephens retreat into the darkness, they turn back looking shocked.]

Mr Hale: Couldn't you show a little mercy?

Thornton: Mr Hale! Please..... [calming down] do not try to tell me my business!

Margaret Hale: Remember, they do things differently here! [She turns her back on John.] Come, Father. [They walk away together.]

[John Thornton watches them walk away and sighs. He turns and walks back into the Mill, turning, with his hand on the gate, to give them one last look.]

**[Margaret Hale is in her bedroom. She is asleep with her head on her writing desk. She has been writing a letter and the quill is still in her hand]**

Margaret Hale: [narrating her thoughts for the letter] I wish I could tell you, Edith, how lonely I am. How cold and harsh it is here.

[Cotton mill with machines, the workers and white cotton fluff floating in the air]

Margaret: Everywhere there is conflict and unkindness.... I think God has forsaken this place. .... I believe I've seen hell..... its white... it's snow white....

[In the background, John Thornton is seen pacing through the mill, visible only as a dark shadow through the floating cotton].

