Reading Heidi



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TCM Teacher Created Materials

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Up the Alm 5

Chapter Two: Goats and Grandfather 11

Chapter Three: Moving In 17

Chapter Four: A Bed, a Meal, a Stool 25

About Us 32

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CHAPTER ONE



Up the Alm

SOS 😰
Didn't read the book Heidi for English
Stuck in my room reading til Sunday 😓
Ugh
This book was written 140 years ago…
so crazy

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The little old town of Mayenfeld is charmingly situated. From it, a footpath leads through green, well-wooded stretches to the foot of the heights, which look down imposingly upon the valley. Where the footpath begins to go steeply and abruptly up the Alps, the heath, with its short grass and pungent herbage, sends out its soft perfume to meet the wayfarer.

One bright, sunny morning, a woman climbed up the narrow path, leading a little girl by the hand. The youngster's cheeks were in such a glow that it showed even through her sun-browned skin. In spite of the heat, the little one, who was scarcely five years old, was bundled up as if she had to brave a bitter frost.

Her shape was difficult to distinguish; she wore two dresses—if not three—and around her shoulders was a large red cotton shawl. With her feet encased in heavy boots, this hot and shapeless little person toiled up the mountain.

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The pair had been climbing for about an hour when they reached a hamlet halfway up the great mountain named the Alm. This hamlet was called "Im Dörfli" or "The Little Village." It was the woman's hometown. She was greeted from nearly every house; people called to her from windows and doors. There, a few cottages lay scattered about. A voice called out to her through an open door:

"Deta, please wait one moment! I am coming with you if you are going further up."

When the woman stood still to wait, the child instantly let go of her hand and promptly sat down on the ground.

"Are you tired, Heidi?" Deta asked the child.

"No, just hot," she replied.

"We shall be up in an hour if you take big steps and climb with all your might!" she said to encourage her small companion.

The woman, named Barbara,

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stepped out of the house and joined them. Heidi stood and wandered behind the women. Barbara and Deta started gossiping about their friends in the neighborhood and the people of the hamlet.

"Where are you taking the child, Deta?" asked the newcomer. "Is she the child your sister left?"

"Yes," Deta replied, "I am taking her up the Alm to live with her grandfather."

"You aren't really taking her there, Deta! You must have lost your senses. I am sure the old man will show you the door and won't even listen to what you say."

"Why not? As he's her grandfather, it is high time he should do something for the child. I have taken care of her until this summer, and now a good job has been offered to me. The child shall not hinder me from accepting it, I tell you that!"

"It would not be so hard if he

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were like other people. But you know him. How could he look after a child, especially such a little one? She'll never get along with him, I am sure of that! But tell me of your new job."

"I am going to a splendid house in Frankfurt. Last summer, some people visited on holiday, and I took care of their rooms. As they got to know me, they wanted to take me along, but I could not leave. They have come back now and have persuaded me to go with them this time."

"I am glad I am not the child!" exclaimed Barbara with a shudder. "Nobody knows anything about the old man's life up there. He doesn't speak to a living soul, and from one year's end to the other, he keeps away from church. People get out of his way when he appears once a year down here among us. We all fear him, with those thick, gray eyebrows and that huge beard. When he wanders along the road with his twisted stick, we are all afraid to

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meet him alone."

"That is not my fault," said Deta stubbornly. "He won't do her any harm; and if he should, he is responsible, not I."

Then, Deta looked around to make sure that Heidi was not so close to them as to overhear what was said; but the little girl was nowhere to be seen. As the two women had talked, they had not noticed her absence; quite a while must have elapsed since the little girl had given up following her companions. Deta scanned the area. No one was on the path, which—except for a few curves—was visible as far down as the village.

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