CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Princess and Curdie

George MacDonald · *1883 · original English text*

Curdie was the son of Peter the miner. He lived with his father and mother in a cottage built on a mountain, and he worked with his father inside the mountain. A mountain, the book says, is a strange and awful thing. This is the sequel to The Princess and the Goblin. The hosted text is MacDonald's original English, Project Gutenberg #709, complete. For younger readers (catalogue 3–5), and serious in its later warning.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

What is asked of a miner's son when he is sent from the mountain to a city that has grown false, and how should a school read a children's sequel that becomes a judgment?

"Curdie was the son of Peter the miner. He lived with his father and mother in a cottage built on a mountain, and he worked with his father inside the mountain."

Chapter 1, The Mountain

The book begins in awe of the mountain and in the ordinary work of a miner's cottage. The great-great-grandmother will send Curdie, and the creature Lina, on a mission to Gwyntystorm, where the king is in danger and the people have grown base. Teach the earlier wonder, and the later judgment, without softening the close. It is a sequel; name The Princess and the Goblin as the first book, but tell this story from this file. For 3–5, with an older ear for the ending.

KEY CHARACTERS

Curdie
The miner's son, sent from the mountain to a city that has grown false

Peter the miner, and Curdie's mother
Of the cottage on the mountain, where the book begins in ordinary work

The grandmother / Mistress of the Silver Moon
Who gives the mission and the test

Princess Irene and the king
Whose house in Gwyntystorm is in danger

Lina
The strange, faithful companion of the road

A COTTAGE ON A MOUNTAIN

> *"Curdie was the son of Peter the miner. He lived with his father and mother in a cottage built on a mountain, and he worked with his father inside the mountain."*
>
> Chapter 1, The Mountain

Grades 3–5
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

The Mountain

CHAPTER 1

Curdie works with his father inside the mountain. A mountain is a strange and awful thing: portions of the heart of the earth that have escaped from the dungeon down below. To the narrator they are beautiful terrors.

- The first two sentences are exact, including "Peter the miner" and the cottage on the mountain
- "A mountain is a strange and awful thing." Keep that cadence
- Chapter 1 is titled "The Mountain."
- The book begins in work and in awe, not yet in the city

> *"Curdie was the son of Peter the miner. He lived with his father and mother in a cottage built on a mountain, and he worked with his father inside the mountain."*
>
> Chapter 1, The Mountain

02

The Mistress of the Silver Moon

THE EARLY CHAPTERS

The white pigeon, the grandmother, and a gift that will test what Curdie touches belong to the first movement. He must learn to trust a command he does not yet fully understand.

- This is a sequel; Irene and the grandmother are already known if the class has read the first book; this file can still introduce them as they appear here
- The gift of hands that know what they hold is a moral test, not a mere magic trick
- Curdie's father and mother, and the miners, remain in view
- For younger readers; keep the wonder, and keep the obedience

03

Lina, and the Road to Gwyntystorm

THE JOURNEY

Curdie is sent. Lina, strange and faithful, goes with him. The road and the city will not be kind.

- Do not treat Lina as a joke; she is a companion and a test of seeing
- The heath, the baker's wife, and the dogs of Gwyntystorm belong to the approach
- Courage here is ordinary faithfulness on a hard road
- The city has a name: Gwyntystorm

04

The King, and a Judgment

THE LATER CHAPTERS, THROUGH "THE END"

The king is in danger in his own house. False servants, a loaf, a battle, and a last judgment close the book. The ending is severe for a children's tale; teach it without softening, and without harshness toward the young reader.

- The later chapter titles in this file include "The Loaf," "The Battle," "Judgement," and "The End" — "Judgement" with that spelling
- The warning is about a people that grows base, and about a house that forgets its king
- Do not invent a merely pretty close the last chapters do not give
- A Christian school may hear, in MacDonald's way, a judgment and a mercy; keep to what the book writes

05

The Hosted File, a Sequel

PG #709

The hosted text is complete, original English, 1883 (serialized 1882). It is the sequel to The Princess and the Goblin, which is a separate work.

- Label it honestly as a sequel
- For grades 3–5, with care at the close; older students can hear the warning more fully
- Quote the hosted wording, including the two-space habits of this file if you check them; ordinary spacing will still verify
- MacDonald's tone is of awe, work, obedience, and a hard mercy

Awe of the Mountain | Obedience and a Mission | True Seeing | Faithful Companionship | A City Grown False | Judgment and Mercy

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 3–5

1. The book opens: "Curdie was the son of Peter the miner. He lived with his father and mother in a cottage built on a mountain, and he worked with his father inside the mountain." Chapter 1 is "The Mountain." "A mountain is a strange and awful thing."
2. This is the sequel to The Princess and the Goblin, original English, 1883, PG #709, complete. Label it honestly as a sequel.
3. Curdie is sent to Gwyntystorm, where the king is in danger and the people have grown base. Teach the later judgment without softening the close, and without harshness toward a young reader. Catalogue band: 3–5; the ending is serious.
4. Lina is a companion and a test of seeing, not a joke. The gift of hands that know what they hold is a moral test.
5. In this file a late chapter is titled "Judgement," with that spelling.

Quotations are verbatim from the original English text, Project Gutenberg #709, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/the-princess-and-curdie/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.