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A LITTLE PRINCESS

Ralph Crewe lives in India, with his little daughter Sara. He is a rich man, and when he brings Sara to Miss Minchin's school in London, Miss Minchin is very pleased. She likes girls with rich fathers, because it is good for her school. Mr Crewe loves Sara very much, and he buys her lots of beautiful dresses, and books, and dolls. Miss Minchin smiles, but she says to her sister: 'Sara looks like a little princess, not a schoolgirl!'

Mr Crewe goes back to his work in India, and Sara begins her new life at school. She is a kind, friendly girl. Everybody likes her, and she soon makes friends.

But when you are rich, everybody is your friend. On Sara's eleventh birthday, there is some terrible news from India. Poor Sara is very unhappy, and she quickly learns who her true friends are . . .

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A Little Princess

Retold by
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CONTENTS

STORY INTRODUCTION	i
1 School in England	1
2 The diamond mines	8
3 The new servant-girl	16
4 Ram Dass and the monkey	22
5 The magic	30
6 Lost and found	37
GLOSSARY	42
ACTIVITIES: Before Reading	44
ACTIVITIES: While Reading	45
ACTIVITIES: After Reading	48
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	52
ABOUT THE BOOKWORMS LIBRARY	53

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1

School in England



One cold winter day a little girl and her father arrived in London. Sara Crewe was seven years old, and she had long black hair and green eyes. She sat in the cab next to her father and looked out of the window at the tall houses and the dark sky.

‘What are you thinking about, Sara?’ Mr Crewe asked.



‘What are you thinking about, Sara?’ Mr Crewe asked.

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A Little Princess

‘You are very quiet.’ He put his arm round his daughter.

‘I’m thinking about our house in India,’ said Sara. ‘And the hot sun and the blue sky. I don’t think I like England very much, Father.’

‘Yes, it’s very different from India,’ her father said. ‘But you must go to school in London, and I must go back to India and work.’

‘Yes, Father, I know,’ said Sara. ‘But I want to be with you. Please come to school with me! I can help you with your lessons.’

Mr Crewe smiled, but he was not happy. He loved his little Sara very much, and he did not want to be without her. Sara’s mother was dead, and Sara was his only child. Father and daughter were very good friends.

Soon they arrived at Miss Minchin’s School for Girls and went into the big house.

Miss Minchin was a tall woman in a black dress. She looked at Sara, and then gave a very big smile.

‘What a beautiful child!’ she said to Mr Crewe.

Sara stood quietly and watched Miss Minchin. ‘Why does she say that?’ she thought. ‘I am not beautiful, so why does she say it?’

Sara was not beautiful, but her father was rich. And Miss Minchin liked girls with rich fathers, because it was good for the school (and good for Miss Minchin, too).

‘Sara is a good girl,’ Mr Crewe said to Miss Minchin.

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Miss Minchin was a tall woman in a black dress.

‘Her mother was French, so she speaks French well. She loves books, and she reads all the time. But she must play with the other girls and make new friends, too.’

‘Of course,’ said Miss Minchin. She smiled again. ‘Sara is going to be very happy here, Mr Crewe.’

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A Little Princess

Mr Crewe stayed in London for a week. He and Sara went to the shops, and he bought many beautiful, expensive dresses for his daughter. He bought books, and flowers for her room, and a big doll with beautiful dresses, too.

Miss Minchin smiled, but she said to her sister Amelia: 'All that money on dresses for a child of seven! She looks like a little princess, not a schoolgirl!'



Mr Crewe bought many expensive dresses for his daughter.

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School in England

When Mr Crewe left London, he was very sad. Sara was very sad too, but she did not cry. She sat in her room and thought about her father on the ship back to India.

‘Father wants me to be happy,’ she said to her new doll. ‘I love him very much and I want to be a good daughter, so I must be happy.’

It was a very big, and very beautiful doll, but of course it could not answer.



It was a big, beautiful doll.

Sara soon made new friends in the school. Some little rich girls are not very nice children – they think they are important because they have money and lots of expensive things. But Sara was different. She liked beautiful dresses and dolls, but she was more interested in people, and books, and telling stories.

She was very good at telling stories. She was a clever child, and the other girls loved to listen to her. The

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The stories were all about kings and queens and princesses.

stories were all about kings and queens and princesses and wonderful countries across the sea.

‘How do you think of all those things?’ asked her best friend, Ermengarde.

‘I have all these pictures in my head,’ said Sara. ‘So it’s easy to tell stories about them.’

Poor Ermengarde was not clever. She could never remember any of her school lessons, and Miss Minchin was always angry with her.

Sara often helped Ermengarde with her lessons. ‘Listen, Ermie,’ she said. ‘You remember that French king, Louis the Sixteenth? Well, this is a story about him. One day in 1792 ...’

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School in England

And so Ermengarde learnt her lessons through Sara's stories, and she loved her friend very much. But not everybody was Sara's friend. Lavinia was an older girl. Before Sara came, Lavinia was the richest and the most important girl in the school. But Sara's father was richer than Lavinia's father. So now Sara was more important than Lavinia, and Lavinia did not like that.

'Oh, Sara is so clever!' Lavinia often said. 'Sara is so good at French! Her dresses are so beautiful, and she can sing so well! And she is so rich! Of course Miss Minchin likes her best!'

Sara did not answer when Lavinia said these things. Sometimes, it was not easy, but Sara was a kind, friendly girl, and she did not like to be angry with anyone.



Now Sara was important, and Lavinia did not like that.

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