Thoughts of change troubled Colin often as his fourteenth birthday swiftly approached. Soon he would leave the familiar world of Misselthwaite Manor behind for long periods at a time; he would be taking the very first steps away from childishness towards young manhood.

As much as he regarded the coming changes with a nervous dread, Colin realised how necessary they were. Boarding school would help him towards the career in science and the study of magic that he sought. And the healing secret garden, Mary and Dickon would be there when he returned. They were already forever part of him.

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